



PART 7: WILL & GRACE

INTRODUCTION – Choosing Jesus Over The Bible

Deuteronomy 6:25

Look To The Book

Romans 7

A QUICK SUMMARY...

1. Paul has argued in chapter 6 that in some way we who are “baptized into Christ” have died with him and been raised to new life. Now Paul says that in order to live a Spirit-led life (chapter 8) we not only need to die to sin, but, shockingly, we need to die to *the Law*. (See also **3:20, 28; 4:15; 5:13; 5:20; 6:14**.)
2. He begins with a general analogy (not an allegory) about marriage (**7:1-4**). While we’re alive, the law of marriage is binding. When death occurs, we are “released” (*katargeo* = to abolish; said of the Law in **Ephesians 2:15**) to marry another.

CLARIFICATION QUESTION: Who is the husband who dies? Who is the woman who remarries? _____ Paul’s point = Jesus puts us in a position of choice. If we want to “marry” him we’ll need to die to our other lovers, including the Law.

3. Not only is the Law incapable of freeing us from sin, but it is actually used by sin to tempt us all the more (**7:5**)!
4. The only way to experience true freedom is to leave our old relationship with the Law behind and to live a new life married to Jesus (**7:4**) following the new way of the Spirit as opposed to the old way of the letter (**7:6**). This hints at the focus of chapter 8.
5. This raises another extreme question – If the net effect of the Law is to increase rather than decrease sin, does that mean the Law is itself sinful? The answer is *me ginomai* (May it never be!). The Law is not sinful; rather it raises our awareness of sin (**7:7**).
6. Paul personifies Sin as an evil entity that took over the pure Law and used it as a base of operations to multiply its evil (**7:8-12**). Which again raises the extreme question – Does this mean that the Law is ultimately the cause of our death? The answer again is *me ginomai* (May it never be!). Sin itself is the ultimate villain, not the Law (**7:13**).
7. Paul then writes his famous confessional passage, about wanting to do right, but not always following through (**7:14-20**). Note: These verses depict an incomplete picture of Paul apart from chapter 8.

CLARIFICATION QUESTION: Who is Paul really talking about in the last portion of this chapter? Paul is talking about _____ in a way that identifies with _____, who in turn identifies with _____, who in turn represents all people. When Paul does not walk in the Spirit (Ch. 8) he fixates on Law (like Israel) and so is easily deceived by sin (like Adam & Eve).

NOTE: *This is not set out as the standard of what is “normal” Christian experience. This is a warning of what life can look like when we rely on the Law instead of the Spirit.*

8. Paul concludes that there is war being waged between his true self (his “inner being”) and his external self (the “members of his body”) that he cannot win on his own (**7:21-25**). Only God himself, through Jesus the Messiah and our Lord, can rescue us.

So What?

TAKE OUT #1:

Our Scriptures are intensely _____ and therefore intensely _____. For instance, our relationship with Jesus should give birth to practical works of service (**7:4**).

TAKE OUT #2:

If chapter 7 describes a situation to which Christians may _____, in light of chapter 8 it is not a situation in which Christians should _____.

TAKE OUT #3:

Freedom cannot be found in the way of self-indulging _____ (chapter 6) nor in the way of moralizing _____ (chapter 7).

TAKE OUT #4:

Your fight to follow Jesus is not a battle between _____ but _____ internal forces (e.g., your good half and your evil half), but between your real self and your false self, your inner person and your peripheral persona, your spirit and your flesh, your centre and your circumference (**7:22-23**).

CONCLUSION – God’s Rescue Plan

7:24-25

JESUS...

MESSIAH...

LORD...

HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS...

WARMING UP & REVIEW...

1. Discuss the implications of this quote by Craig C. Hill: *Moses was not the answer to Adam. The law did not provide a way out of the human dilemma; quite to the contrary, it made an already bad situation worse.*

2. Use your notes to review this week’s message. As you go, talk about what challenged, perplexed, or encouraged you.

LOOK TO THE BOOK...

3. Review our key text (**Romans 7**). a) What verse or thought stands out to you the most? Why? b) What are three key truths in **verse 4**? c) What is the profound truth of **verses 17 & 20**? What might be some implications of this for our lives? d) Read **1 Corinthians 15:56-57**. Examine how these two verses relate to and interact with our primary passage (**Romans 7**). e) Do the same for **Galatians 5:16-17**.

4. If, as Paul says in Romans 7, the net result of law is that it merely adds to our temptation, then what about Paul’s ethical instructions later in the book of Romans (e.g., chapters 12-14)? Should Paul even bother teaching ethics? Is there a difference between instruction and law? How so?

SO WHAT?...

5. Review TAKE OUT #1. In your life with Jesus, what “fruit” are you bearing (**v. 4**)? Are there times you also still bear dead fruit (**v. 5**)? Pray for each other regarding this.

HOMEWORK...

6. Read ahead. What questions does **Romans 8:1-30** raise for you?

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