

# 18

## OBJECTIONS TO JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH: CAN I NOW LIVE HOWEVER I WANT? (PT 3)

*Romans 7:1-6*

**Introduction: Paul wants to explain *how* it is that we are not under law but under grace**

### **I. The Principle Stated: Death Sets You Free From Legal Obligations (v.1)**

- A. While we are sinners, the law has dominion over us
  - o v. 1 says, “the law is binding (κυριεύει) on a person as long as he lives.” The Greek term here means to “rule over.” This is another way of saying that we stand under the law’s condemnation.
  - o *Clarification:* Paul is not saying the law is bad. The problem is not the law; the problem is that we are sinners. And when the law is applied to a sinner, it only brings condemnation.
- B. But, death frees a person from the law’s dominion
  - o If a person dies, then the law no longer applies
  - o *Modern Example:* Someone has built up serious unpaid bills. The law is about to throw them in jail. But, if they die then they no longer have to pay the penalty.

### **II. The Principle Illustrated: It Works This Way in Marriage (v.2-3)**

- A. The legal obligations of marriage only apply to the living
  - o “For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives” (v.2)
- B. Through death, the laws of marriage are no longer in force
  - o “But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress” (v.3)

### **III. The Principle Applied: You Have Died to the Law in Christ (v.4-6)**

- A. Before You Died to the Law
  - o “we were living in the flesh” (v.5)
    - For Paul, the word “flesh” is not a reference to our physical bodies, but to our sinful fallen nature



- o Our “sinful passions” were “aroused by the law” (v.5)
  - The law does not cause us to sin, but gives sin an opportunity. It “stirs up” sin in us.
  - Illustration: Sin is like fire, and the law is like oxygen. Oxygen is good, but it causes a fire to grow!
- o Main point: *bringing together a sinful nature and the law is a combination that only leads to death! This is why we needed to be set free from the bondage of the law. For a sinner, the law only heaps on condemnation.*

#### B. How You Died to the Law

- o “you have also died to the law through the body of Christ” (v.4a)
- o Your faith in Christ joins you to him. Thus, when Christ died, you died.

#### C. Why You Died to the Law

- o To have new relationship: “so you may belong to another” (v.4a)
  - How does this language fit the marriage analogy?
- o To have a new obedience: “in order that we may bear fruit for God” (v.4b)
  - Again, Paul makes the point that the purpose of our relationship to Christ is not for sin but for obedience!
- o To have a new ability: “so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code” (v.6)
  - This doesn’t mean the written word is bad. It means that the Bible is only words on a page unless we have the power of the Spirit to obey it.



# Discussion Groups

1. Can you give examples of how the Law “stirred up” sin in you, even though the law is good?

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2. How does remembering that you are in a *relationship* with Christ help you obey more faithfully?

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3. How does it look different to serve in the Spirit rather than the old way of the written code?

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