

#7: **Remarried With Children****INTRODUCTION:**

2 Corinthians 5:17 *Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.*

[As Peter Parker found out, when you get bitten by a radioactive spider and wake up the next morning feeling better than ever, what you need to know is...]

TWO IMPORTANT PRACTICAL QUESTIONS:

Exactly what “old things” have “passed away”? Exactly what “new things have come”?

ROMANS 5-8 “THE BENEFITS OF BEING JUSTIFIED”**ROMANS 6** Two Parenthetical Questions (about our relationship to sin)

QUESTION #1 Verse 1 *What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?*

ANSWER #1 Verse 2-14 *May it never be! “We have died with Christ...”*

QUESTION #2 Verse 15 *What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace?*

ANSWER #2: Verse 15-23 *May it never be! “Having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness...”*

→ Actually TWO parenthetical CHAPTERS interrupting the “Benefits Descriptions” of Rom. 5-8

“Not under law but under grace”?

Romans 7:1-3 *Or do you not know, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives?*

For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband.

So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man.

Romans 6, in explaining about our being and not being a slave of sin:

“Death can sort of be good news... for a slave!” And especially for a dead slave who can get resurrected!

Romans 7, in explaining about being not under the Law:

“Death can also sort of be good news... for an unhappily married woman!”

“Especially if it is the bad husband who does the dying.”

(Crusty, and it seems half-crazy American general in WW II. George Patton: *“I’m not asking you to die for your country. Dying for your country is NOT the point. The point is to get your enemies to die for THEIR country!”*)

So an unhappily married woman might actually hope that her husband dies.

(Winston Churchill and Lady Astor, *“If you were my husband I would put poison in your tea.”*

“If I were your husband, I would drink it.”)

But this analogy doesn’t work that way.

1. We who are united to Christ in His death and His resurrection play the role of BOTH the unhappy wife who dies AND the surviving spouse who is free to remarry.

What is really being explained here are the implications of the change of covenants... a detail that his Jewish readers would be very aware of (See 7:1), and needing help with... “No more Temple sacrifices?” “No more Passover feast?”

Now what Paul wants his “Law-oriented” readers to see is that

2. The blame for “the unhappy first marriage” was all ours!

Jeremiah 31:31-33 "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, **My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,**" declares the LORD.

"But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

And so it follows, that

3. Since "the wife" is the one at fault, it is "the wife" who should die.

Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness

James 4:4 You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Adultery was a capital offence! So it's the unfaithful "woman" in this case who should do the dying!

The "husband" is the "eternal God"... or "the eternal Law of God."

Romans 7:4-6 *Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.*

For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death.

But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

NOTE TO US GENTILES: Paul is explaining the major upgrade to our relationship with God that we experience by being united with Christ. (What "old things have passed away." What "new things have come.") Up until the death and resurrection of Christ, the "old covenant" was "as good as it gets."

For us Gentiles, it is even a more stunning promotion, for we find ourselves leapfrogging out of nowhere into this brilliant new relationship with God. But it's one we are less likely to appreciate!

4. "Remarried to Christ," we are now able to "bear fruit for God"

Romans 6:21 *Therefore what benefit (lit. "fruit") were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death.*

The "children" produced by this marriage (the "fruit") --- Christlike character (Romans 8:29) in our lives and in the lives of others!

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,**

gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Ephesians 5:8-9 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in **all goodness and righteousness and truth**),

5. "Remarried to Christ," we are able to "serve in newness of the Spirit."

The big deal about this new covenant is the change of heart that is produced by the Holy Spirit's intrusion into our lives. His law written on our hearts....

Romans 5:5 and hope does not disappoint, because **the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit** who was given to us.

Romans 14:17

for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but **righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.**

Romans 15:13

Now may the God of hope fill you with **all joy and peace** in believing, so that you will **abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.**

AND THEN, THE TWO ADDITIONAL PARENTHETICAL QUESTIONS (ABOUT OUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE LAW)

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QUESTION #1: Verse 7) *What shall we say then? Is the Law sin?*

SAME GREAT ANSWER: *May it never be!*

EXPLANATION: *On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, "YOU SHALL NOT COVET." But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead. I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died; and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me; for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. **So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.***

QUESTION #2: (Verse 13) *Therefore did that which is good become a cause of death for me?*

AND AGAIN, THAT ANSWER: *May it never be!*

EXPLANATION: *Rather it was sin, in order that it might be shown to be sin by effecting my death through that which is good, so that through the commandment sin would become utterly sinful. **For we know that the Law is spiritual**, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good. So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.*

Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.