

Wonderful Is His Name

Lesson 8

Main Idea: Paul describes how Christians have been released from the law and wedded to Jesus Christ, enabling them to now serve in the new way of the Spirit (7:1-6). Before unpacking this more fully in chapter 8, he addresses God's purpose for giving the law, reminding the readers of the law's goodness, but then he dramatically describes how one cannot keep the law perfectly, thus magnifying our need for the Messiah (7:7-25).

Introduction: Throughout Romans Paul articulates the nature of the good news of salvation in Christ by grace alone through faith alone, at the same time affirming the value of the Old Testament. He boldly proclaims the good news, but he also defends the unity of the Scriptures.

Many Jews raised objections to Paul's preaching (as the synagogue sermons in Acts demonstrate), so Paul constantly had to defend his position against these objections. In Romans Paul goes out of his way to show the priority of Israel in God's plan, the privileges they enjoy, and the promises they received but he also shows how none of these truths are inconsistent with what he preaches.

The coming of Christ is the fulfillment of all of these hopes and longings, and therefore Paul weeps over the unbelief of the Jews. Here in Romans 7 is another example of “confirming” the gospel and “defending” the gospel.

Paul confirms the truthfulness of a “released from the law and wedded to Christ” gospel (vv. 1-6) but then defends his argument, insisting that this in no way devalues the law (vv. 7-25). When properly understood, the law should lead us to Jesus who alone can deliver us from the penalty of sin, from the controlling power of sin, and eventually from the presence of sin.

The law reveals the holiness of God. It shows us our sin. It condemns us. It cannot acquit us or change us. *Only the gospel can do that.* We need something more than the law. We need the law-fulfilling and sin-bearing substitute, Jesus Christ. Through our union with Christ, we have the power of the Spirit to bear fruit for God.

1. Wedded to Christ, Serving in the New Way of the Spirit (7:1-6)
 - a. The legal principle (7:1)
 - b. The marriage illustration (7:2-3)
 - c. The application (7:4)
 - d. A further contrast (7:5-6)
2. Thankful for Christ, Longing for Deliverance (7:7-25)
 - a. The value of the law (7:7-12)
 - b. Human inability to keep the law (7:13-23)
3. Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord (7:24-25)!