

Christ is Mine, and I Am His (Romans 7:1-6)

Sermon Series Title: The Law of Christ and Continuity and Discontinuity between the Old and New Covenant.

- A. *Sermon #1:* There are various genres of law, including the Mosaic law, positive law, and natural law.
- B. *Sermon #2 (Matt. 5:17-20):* The Law and Prophets (Law) collectively speak of the Old Testament. Jesus was not primarily addressing the Mosaic law in Matthew 5:17-20, but the general “flow” of redemptive history. While Jesus fulfilled many prophecies of His first coming, many are still to come. As a result, Jesus has not come to abolish the Law or Prophets but to fulfill them. All of them must be fulfilled (Lk. 24:44).
- C. *Sermon #3 (Gal. 3:15-29):* The Mosaic law was given to the nation of Israel 430 years after God’s covenant with Abram. It was subsidiary, not supplemental, to God’s covenant with Abram (Gen. 12-22). The “Guardian” is a metonym for the Mosaic law and was always intended to be temporary until the promised Seed (Jesus) came. No one is justified by the Mosaic law (Gal. 2:16; 3:7, 24).

1. The “Old Man” in Covenant with the law

- The word “law” (nomos) is used 50 times in Paul’s letter to the Romans (Rom. 2:12-15, 17; 5:13, 20; 6:15; 7:1-7). Depending on its context, it can refer to the Mosaic law, the Pentateuch, positive law, natural law, or the principle of a thing.
- Paul uses marriage to illustrate the believer’s relationship to the law before and after salvation.
- What “law” is Paul speaking of?
 - Everyone is under the Law of God (natural law) because death has reigned from Adam to Moses (5:12-14).
 - Paul is writing to both Jews and Greeks. Gentiles who came to faith in Jesus were without the Torah (Law) and would have come to faith through the conviction of natural law (perhaps some of the stipulations of the Mosaic law).
 - All image-bearers are under natural law, which, in its essence, is love toward God and man. The law that Paul is referring to is both the natural law and Mosaic law, as his audience would have been familiar with both. He is also alluding to the covenant of marriage.
- In the illustration of the marriage covenant, both spouses are bound to one another if both are living. Suppose the woman “lives with another man,” which is a euphemism for having extra-marital relations. In that case, she is in adultery since she is bound by the covenant of marriage (v.3). However, if her husband dies, she is released from the marriage covenant: she is free to marry again and not be in violation of the covenant.

Life under covenant with the natural law (including Mosaic law) is in the flesh (v.5):

- Flesh: depending on the context, it can have several different connotations. It can refer to the humanity of Jesus (Rom. 1:3), the physical body (Rom. 2:28), mankind (Rom. 3:20), the ethical, immoral, unregenerate state (Rom. 7:5), or the “remain” or “stain” of the old nature that must be “put off” and mortified (Col. 3:1-17; 5:17-21).

The law in the realm of sin and the flesh is a terrible husband who is strict, inflexible, stern, rigid, demanding, and unbending. This husband (law) knows no mercy or grace. It issues commands that cannot be met and threatens punishment for violating them. Those in the realm and sphere of the flesh in the old man (first Adam) are married to the law and will transgress, die, and be damned while under that covenant. Only in death is the spouse released from the covenant.

2. The “New Man” in Covenant with Jesus

- The husband has died (v.3-4). Paul is not implying that the law has died but that the governing rule of the law as a covenant has.
- The believer, through faith alone, is no longer in covenant with the law but is in covenant with Jesus. This union has occurred in faith once the Guardian is no longer needed and the principles have been endowed in the grown child (Gal. 3:23-24).
- This covenant is birthed through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ (New Covenant):
 - The promised faith (Gen. 12-15) has arrived and enacted a New Covenant, New Union, New Principle, and New Relationship (Rom. 7:6).
- In dying to the law, in Christ, the law has no jurisdiction over the new creature.
- The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). Since Jesus has died, those in Him have also died (v.4). Just as He was raised, we have been raised to life (Col. 3:1).
 - In death, the believer is released from the realm of the flesh and the law. The believer, however, is not without a law.
- The law cannot justify, sanctify, or produce fruit toward God in the realm (sphere) of the flesh, sin, and law. It is only in union with Christ and consequent second birth (John 3:1-1-21), sealing of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:3-14), and animation of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:16-24) that man can “produce fruit unto God” (Rom. 7:4).
 - God produces the fruit through the redeemed sinner’s willing, joyful, and thankful cooperation (Phil. 2:12-13; Col. 1:29). The Holy Spirit deposits God’s DNA when the sinner is “born again” (Jas. 1:18).

The unspeakable riches of God as Trinity: The Lawgiver (YHWH) came under the law He gave to transgressors (Rom. 3:20; 5:13-14) to pay the wages of sin, which is death (Rom. 6:23). In this Trinitarian plan, God will Himself assume the penalty of the law He gave to sinners so that sinners can be justified, reconciled, and sanctified. The doctrine of substitution and atonement has been the plan from the beginning (Gen. 3:21).

- From the beginning, God intended to write His law in the hearts of men as image-bearers (Gen. 1:27; Rom. 2:12-16). As an iteration of that law, the Mosaic law and positive laws were given to the nation of Israel under a covenant (Mosaic).
- Programmed in the law is the temporary nature of it: the law sets the lawbreaker free from the law. The law, however, cannot justify sinners. The Lawgiver can justify lawbreakers by coming under the law they have broken.
- By His goodness, the Lawgiver sets lawbreakers free from the wages of the sin by assuming on Himself a body, taking upon Himself the wages justly owned to the sinner.
 - By faith alone, the believer is in union with Jesus Christ. Through faith, the believer is regenerated, justified, and adopted.
 - In regeneration, the sinner is “born again,” taking on a new nature, new covenant, new Husband, and new iteration of authority under a new covenant.

The covenant of marriage and union with Christ:

- In marriage, the husband and wife assume each other’s liabilities. For God to be in union with His creation, there must be no iniquity (Isa. 59:2; 1 Jn. 1:5-10). This is accomplished through Jesus’ active obedience (He upheld and obeyed the natural and Mosaic laws) and passive obedience (He became sin, though he never sinned). As the Second Adam, by faith alone, He justifies the ungodly (Rom. 4:5).
- But now (v.6), being released from the law, having died to that which held us captive (law), believers can serve God in a new way, not according to the letter (law).
- Believers are no longer under the Old Covenant of the tyranny of the law in the sphere of the flesh, but the loving union in a New Covenant procured by faith alone in Christ alone.