

Romans: Verse-by-Verse

Romans 7:3b-4

Student Notes

- **The Continuing Illustration:** Husband and Wife/Old Testament Law

Paul's illustration or allegory – about believers and the Mosaic Law. Paul is speaking of the entire Law – not just the Ten Commandments.

The husband: “over the wife” – in the sense of having authority over her. The wife: “under” the husband – in the sense of being submissive to him.

The Mosaic Law was over every one of God's people, for as long as they lived. They were “under” the authority and requirements of the Mosaic Code as long as they lived.

What is the only thing that could break that relationship? It is death.

Verse 3: “... But if her **husband dies**, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress if she marries another man.”

The second marriage is morally legitimate because death has terminated the first. In Paul's illustration, only death can secure freedom from the marriage law and secure the right to remarry.

- **The Illustration Applied – v. 4:**

“So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.”

What provided us relief from 613 rules, codes, requirements, and

conditions? Death made the difference. Just as death terminates a marriage contract – death freed us from the Old Code so we could remarry or belong to another.

“... You also died to the law through the body of Christ...”

By “the body of Christ”, Paul does not mean the church as Christ’s body. Instead, Paul means Christ’s physical body. We died to the Law through the death of the body of Christ. The authority or power of sin was broken off by Christ’s death and resurrection – and our new union with him.

A Similarity Of Language: Romans 6 & 7:

To die to sin and to die to the law are identical. In both cases, the curse or condemnation of sin has been taken away. See: Galatians 2:19; 3:13

A comparison between Romans 6 and 7:

- In Romans 6 we have freedom from sin, while Romans 7 has freedom from the law.
- In Romans 6:2 we died to sin ... while in Romans 7 we died to the Law.
- In Romans 6:3 we died to sin by union with Christ’s death ... while in Romans 7:4 we died to the Law through the body of Christ.
- In Romans 6:7 we have been justified and freed from sin ... while in Romans 7:6 we have been released from the Law.
- In Romans 6:4-5 we have shared in Christ’s resurrection ... while in Romans 7:4 we belong to him who was raised from the dead.
- In Romans 6:4 we now live in newness of life ... while in Romans 7:6 we serve God in newness of the Spirit.

- In Romans 6:22 we reap fruit to holiness ... while in Romans 7:4 we bear fruit to God.

- **A Change In Metaphors:**

In the Law illustration, how is a man released from the requirements of the Old Code? He has to die, doesn't he? In the marriage illustration, who dies so the woman can be freed from the requirements of her husband's law? He does.

In the Mosaic Law metaphor ... it is the person under the Law that dies. Death has released us from the law and paved the way for our remarriage to Christ.

- **Bearing "Fruit" To God:**

"So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, **in order that we might bear fruit for God.**"

The immediate result of our dying with Christ is our liberation from the Mosaic Law. The long-term point of us dying to the Mosaic Code is that we would bear fruit to God.

What does Paul mean by "bear fruit" to God? Many commentators believe that Paul is extending telescoping his illustration of marriage to Christ here.

Was this possible under the Old Code? Evidently not. Paul concludes that the law was impotent to do this. It could not produce the virility and the potency to produce children through us.

In other words, the Mosaic Code could not produce a life which consistently produced fruit to God's praise. See Romans 8:1-7.