



SERMON SUMMARY

What if the freedom we desperately seek isn't found in breaking free from rules, but in discovering who we truly belong to? This powerful exploration of Romans 7:1-6 challenges our understanding of spiritual freedom by using the vivid metaphor of marriage contracts. We learn that we're never truly independent—we're always under contract to something or someone. Before Christ, we were bound to the law, a contract we could never fulfill no matter how hard we tried. But through Jesus' death and resurrection, that old contract has been voided. We've died with Christ, and in that death, we've been released from our impossible obligation to the law. The beauty is that we're not left masterless—we now belong to Christ as His bride. This isn't just a legal transaction; it's a relational transformation. Our obedience is no longer motivated by fear of judgment or desperate attempts to earn acceptance. Instead, we serve out of joy, like a spouse who delights in making their beloved happy. The law still exists, but our relationship to it has fundamentally changed. We follow God's ways not because we have to, but because we want to please the One who has already fully accepted us. This is the paradox of the gospel: true freedom comes not from autonomy, but from finding our fulfillment in Christ first, which then releases us into genuine liberty.

Key Takeaways

- 1. We all serve someone or something—there is no neutral ground**
- 2. The law can inform, restrain, and expose, but it cannot transform**
- 3. Through Christ's death, we have died to the law and been raised to new life**
- 4. Grace is our motivation, not our contract of acceptance**
- 5. We are new creations in Christ—not just once, but continuously**
- 6. Obedience flows from joy in pleasing God, not fear of punishment**
- 7. Fulfillment in Christ leads to freedom, not the other way around**

INTO THE SERMON

ROMANS 7:1-6

- **What from this weekend sermon connected with you?**
- **The sermon mentioned we're either "children of God or children of wrath." Why is there no middle ground? How does our culture resist this either/or reality?**
- **"The paradox of the gospel is: in your freedom you will never find fulfillment. Jesus fulfills you, then you experience freedom." Discuss this statement. How does it challenge the world's approach to happiness?**

INTO THE TEXT

- **Read Romans 7:1-6 together as a group.**
- **1.) In Romans 7:1, Paul says the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives.**
 - **What does that reveal about the scope and limit of the law's authority?**
 - **How does that connect with what Paul has already said in Romans 6 about dying with Christ?**
- **2.) How does Romans 7:1–6 answer the question from Romans 6:15: "Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace?"**
 - **In light of these verses, why is "cheap grace" (grace as permission to sin) a distortion of the gospel?**
 - **What misunderstanding about grace is he still trying to correct?**
- **3.) How does "belonging to Christ" reshape your motivation?**
 - **How does the marriage analogy help you understand joyful obedience versus fearful compliance?**
- **4.) Verse 4: "...in order that we may bear fruit for God." What does it look like to "present your members" to righteousness?**
 - **What kind of "fruit for God" does Paul likely have in mind (see also Galatians 5:22–23; Romans 6:22)?**

TAKE AWAY / NOW WHAT

- **1.) When you think about reading Scripture, praying, gathering with the church, or serving: Which of those currently feels like “law” to you (heavy, duty-only)?**
 - **How could you invite the Spirit to turn that specific practice into an act of joyful worship this week?**
- **2.) The sermon talked about habits running 40% of your life. What are some everyday ways a person can begin to notice where their heart, attention, and habits are being formed?**
 - **Name one habit that is “bearing fruit for death” in your life right now (drift, distraction, hidden sin, bitterness, etc.).**
 - **What is one small, specific change you can make this week to disrupt that habit?**
- **3.) If “the new has come and is still coming,” what is one area where you need to stop saying, “That’s just who I am,” and start saying, “Jesus can change this in me”?**
 - **How can we not let this become behavioral modification but rather sanctification?**
 - **What first step of cooperation with the Spirit do you sense He’s prompting there?**
- **4.) When you think about your relationship with God, what needs to shift from “I have to” to “I get to because I belong to Him”?**
 - **How does this combat the trap of viewing our relationship with God as a legalistic, religious, check box?**