

# Abide in Me

**John 15:4**  
*Bible studies for disciples  
who make disciples*



Volume 9 - Number 22

The Week of April 21, 2024

*Dying to Live*  
**The New Way**  
Romans 7:1-13

Welcome to the third installment in our series *Dying to Sin* in Romans 6-8. These three chapters are all about our sanctification or growth towards holiness. As we begin to look at Romans 7 it has a similar feel as Romans 6:15-23. Last week we saw that *our relationship to sin has changed* because every believer has died with Christ and has become a slave to God (we are free to live for righteousness). In Romans 7:1-13, we will see that *our relationship to the law has changed* too and for the same reason—we died to the law’s condemnation when we died with Christ.

In verses 1-6 Paul will compare and contrast being married to the law. When properly understood, the grace of God forges a bond of belonging that leads to a new way to live fruit-filled lives. In verses 7-13, Paul writes about the relationship between the law (given to Moses) and the nature of sin. What was God’s purpose in giving His Law? How should we view it and what role does it play in our lives since we are under grace?

**OBSERVATION** (*What does the passage say?*)

Before meeting with your Growth Group, read through the passage at least twice and perform the following prompts:

- Circle the word *brothers* in verses 1 and 4. Draw a line to the left margin and write *Christians*.
- In the left margin of verses 1-3 write the phrase *An Analogy of Marriage*.
- In the line above each paragraph, write a heading to what Paul is saying in a few words.
- Underline the key phrase in verses 1-3.
- Double underline the word *likewise* (v. 4).
- Draw an arrow from *likewise* to the phrase *have died to the law*.
- In the left margin of verse 4 write *Christ*.
- Circle the two and very different outcomes of bearing fruit in verses 4 and 5.
- Bracket both occurrences of the phrase *seizing an opportunity through the commandment* (vss. 8, 9).
- Circle all forms of the word *sin* in verses 12-13.

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1 Or do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives? 2 For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage. 3 Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.

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4 Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God. 5 For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. 6 But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

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7 What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet." 8 But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetous. For apart from the law, sin lies dead. 9 I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died. 10 The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. 11 For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.

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12 So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.  
13 Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.

**INTERPRETATION** (*What does the passage mean?*)

1. Take a moment and summarize what Paul is teaching in verses 1-13.
2. What is Paul's main point in verses 1-6 and why does he use the analogy of marriage to illustrate it?
3. What does it mean for the Christian to be dead to the law? Why is this important to know?

4. How does the *new way of the Spirit* differ from the old way of the written code?

5. What did you learn about the nature of sin in Romans 7:7-13?

**APPLICATION** (*How does the passage apply to our lives?*)

1. How should it affect the way you live each day to know that in a very real spiritual sense you are married or joined to Christ?
  
2. How might the fact that *you belong to another* give you new strength and perspective this week?
  
3. Have you ever struggled to believe that your life matters to God? How does Paul's statement in verse 4 that we are to *bear fruit for God* affect the way you assess the importance of your purpose and activity in life?
  
4. Apply Paul's words in Romans 7:7-13 to your own experience. Can you give an example from your own life where your ignorance of God's revealed will left you feeling smug and self-righteous? Can you also describe what happened when you suddenly discovered that certain kinds of behavior were sinful and offensive to God?
  
5. Why is it important to know our sin (v. 7)? How does sin deceive us (v. 11)? What might happen if we don't have a robust understanding of sin?

