

The Covenant of Works

(Rom 7:1-4)

- Paul is dealing with the Christian's relationship to the law in this chapter

I. Division

- A) Rom 7:1-6- 1st section deals with our relationship to law, and why the Christian has to be freed from "under the law" in order to be both justified and sanctified
 1. In the next 2 sections (Rom 7:7-14 & 7:15-23) Paul works out this opening statement of doctrine

II. Terms

- A) "Brethren"- Do Paul refer to the Jews only here?
 1. Rom 9:3- When Paul does mean Jews in the flesh he specifically says so
 2. Rom 7:4- Clearly this is a doctrine that applies to every believer
 3. Rom 5:12-21- The overall context of this section is what brought on this parenthesis, and all are in Adam or in Christ
- B) "Law"- Those that go wrong on "brethren" make this to be the Law of Moses only
 1. Rom 3:19- Paul has before proven ALL are guilty of law
 2. Rom 5:12- Death proves sin, and sin proves there was a law in affect
 - i. Gen 2:15-17- Adam (man) placed under a covenant of works
 - a) Blessings depended upon his obedience, and cursings would follow his disobedience
- C) "Dominion"- To rule over, to "lord it over" or to dominate and make subservient
- D) "As long as he lives"- Physical life; the law can have no affect on a dead man
- E) "Know ye not"- This is common knowledge to all: "ye know perfectly well"
 1. Paul's method is often to take a point agreed upon and build from there in his argument
 - i. Rom 6:16- Same principle
 2. Paul moves from the general truth agreed upon in v.1 to further and more detailed truths in v.2-3- The marriage relationship

III. Example of marriage contract

- A) Why choose marriage for his example here?
 1. Because marriage illustrates the permanent nature of every man's "union"
 - i. All are either "in Adam" or "in Christ" by union
 - a) "Under law" (Covt. Of works) or "under grace" (Covt. Of grace)
 2. Because of the binding nature of marriage

- i. Notice the terms used: married, under, bound, dominion vs the terms loosed, free
 - a) Feminist movement had clouded the idea concerning the woman being “under” the husband
 - b) Gen 3:16- Man and woman are different and placed accordingly
 - c) Paul is not a sexist, but a bible believer (Eph 5:22-33)
- ii. This bound under position applies to the gentiles as well as the Jews
 - a) Rom 2:14-15- Law (covt of works) written on hearts
 - b) Rom 5:12-13- Proves this, as well as 3:19
- 3. Because marriage contract is ended by death
 - i. “Loosed”- same as “destroyed” in 6:6- “”made void”, “bring to nought”, “put away”
- 4. Because the death of one under marriage sets free the other
 - i. Mt 5:16-17- Union with Christ is not the “death” of the law, it is the fulfilling of it
- 5. Because main object of marriage is “fruit”
 - i. Gen 1:28- Command to “be fruitful and multiply”
 - a) Eph 2:10- Saved in order to perform His works (fruit)
 - b) Tit 2:11-14- Saved unto good works (fruit)
 - 1) This will be the point Paul focuses on: our barrenness under the law (Rom 6:21-22)
 - 2) This is the issue in the Galatian epistle
 - 3) We must be delivered from the law in order to bring forth fruit unto God
 - (a) Anything that could be produced “under the law” would be man’s produce and not God’s
- 6. Because if the marriage union isn’t broken by death, it will not be a legal break (Rom 3:26- “that God might be just....”)
 - i. Any fruit brought forth under an adulterous relationship would not be recognized legally, and all profit thereof belongs to 1st husband

IV. Application

A) Rom 7:4- This verse is a monumental one, and describes the very core of Christianity

- 1. But notice how the example seems to change or break down here
 - i. Death is reversed, and now it’s not the husband that died but us
 - ii. Notice word “also”- just as death of husband voids marriage, death (ours) also voids the covt. of works
 - a) We died in Christ’s death, and yet we are resurrected in Him to be joined unto Him resurrected

- iii. As far as law is concerned, it matters not which party dies, and death fulfills contract
 - 2. Paul must change the example here, for the law can never “die”
 - i. Mt 5:16-17- Law perfect statement of God’s righteousness, that can never change
- B) “Dead to the law by the body of Christ”- this doesn’t mean forget the law, or reckon it a bad thing
 - 1. Rom ch 6 has really addressed this already
 - i. We aren’t redeemed to wander aimless, but we are redeemed to serve our new Master, and His requirement is righteousness
 - 2. “Law”- Covenant of Works here
 - i. The natural position of trying to save ourselves or then to sanctify ourselves
 - a) Neither is possible
 - ii. Adam could never produce fruit unto God by “works,” but only to his own glory by that method
 - a) Adam had to “die” to produce fruit unto God
 - b) Rom 10:4- “The end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes”
- C) “Dead to the law” does not mean lawlessness
 - 1. We are not saved to reject the law, but to keep it
 - i. Heb 8:10- Law written on the heart
 - a) 1 Pet 1:16-17- “Be ye holy for I am holy”
 - b) Rom 13:8-10- Paul taught the 10 commandments to gentiles at Rome
 - c) James 2:8- The royal law
 - ii. Rom 8:3- The law to be fulfilled in us
 - 2. The 10 Commandments are God’s will for man
 - i. Christ had to die in order for man to be able to truly desire to do and perform God’s will