

KNOWING LEADS TO GROWING

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Romans 7:1-6

1. The front flyleaf of my Bible contains some quotes and some notes that I have written there.
 2. They are written there to remind me of some things that I always want to keep in mind as I live my life before God and men.
 3. One of those notes reads, "The applause of men does not mean the approval of God," which is a constant reminder to me that I must faithfully represent God whether that makes me popular or not.
 4. Another says, "In all my preaching may I be correct, convinced, clear, and concise."
 5. My goal is to handle the Word of God accurately, to be convinced in my own mind and heart that what I am preaching and teaching is accurate, to communicate clearly, and to be concise (not brief, but not overly long because of chasing rabbits and constant repetition).
 6. The chapter before us is one that is interpreted differently by reputable and reliable commentators.
 7. This fact presents a problem for any expositor of God's Word, but it is my belief that God would have His preachers preach with confidence and conviction.
 8. Those who preach God's Word should not be parrots, who simply repeat what they have heard or read, rather they should be personally convicted and convinced that their preaching and teaching is in conformity with the mind and purposes of God.
 9. The passage we are looking at today is a continuation of Romans 6:14.
 10. Romans 6:15-23 is a parenthetical passage inserted by Paul to expand on the things he had written up to that point.
 11. Paul began chapter 7 with a question, "Or do you not know...?"
 12. Everything Paul had written to the Romans up to this point was absolutely true, but Paul knew that truth must be known, understood, believed and applied in order to be effective in our lives.
- NOTE: In Paul's letter to the Corinthians he asked the above question ten times; six times in chapter six alone. Not knowing led to all kinds of problems for that problem-riddled church.
13. In this chapter Paul focuses on a problem that afflicts many believers; that is the tendency to depend on human effort rather than relying on God and His sanctifying power and divine enablement.
 14. Most people view living the Christian life as a series of do's and don'ts, rather than a relationship that is established, lived out, and eventually perfected.
 15. This chapter reveals Paul's struggle before He came to fully understand the implications of the Gospel and God's wonderful provision in and through Jesus Christ.
 16. As a Jew the Law was a deeply engrained part of Paul's person and personality.
 17. Before we get to Paul's personal testimony we must understand these introductory verses.

I. An example given. 1-3

- A. As I stated earlier there are different interpretations of what Paul was trying to say in these verses.
- B. I believe he was simply pointing out that the law, God's Law or man's law, has jurisdiction over a person only as long as he lives.
- C. The laws related to marriage, divorce and remarriage have implications for a couple only as long as they both are alive.
- D. Once one of them dies they are no longer married and free to remain single or to remarry.

II. A principle applied. 4-5

- A. In the case of the Christian it is not the Law that has died, but it is the Christian who has died to the Law.
- B. That is one of the main points Paul makes in chapter six.
- C. Here Paul states, "Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through **the body of Christ**-you were crucified with Christ, when Christ died your old self died as well."
- D. "So that you might be joined to another, **to Him**, the resurrected, ascended, glorified Christ, **who was raised from the dead.**"
- E. This was accomplished by God so that we might bear fruit for God rather than fruit for death.
- F. It is imperative that we understand fully our standing before God in Christ.
 - 1. If we are in Christ we have received the gift of righteousness.
 - 2. If we are in Christ we have been crucified with Christ and raised to newness of life in Christ.
 - 3. If we are in Christ He is in us in the person of the Holy Spirit.
- G. The phrase, "in the flesh," speaks to our former condition when we dead in our trespasses and sins, without the Holy Spirit, and under the control of our old nature.

III. A power manifested. 6

- A. "But now (as opposed to our former condition) we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter."
- B. The moral law of God still applies, but our relationship to it has changed.
- C. It is no longer just an external reality, but it is now an inward reality in that God has impressed it not only on our minds, but He has also written it upon our hearts.
- D. The Christian life is lived from within, but it is expressed outwardly.
- E. Note again Paul's words in Galatian 2:20.
 - "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. 21 "I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."

APPLICATION

1. In preparation for next week I would like to encourage you to read and reread chapter seven a few times.
2. As you do so note how many times Paul uses the personal pronouns “I” and “me” in verses 7-25.
3. Then ask yourself, “Am I an “I” and “me” Christian, or am I an “in Him” Christian?”
4. Once you have honestly answered that question read Romans 8:1 which states, “Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are **in Christ Jesus.**”
5. An “I” and “me” Christian will always feel like a self-condemned failure, because they are trying to live the Christian life in their own strength rather than relying on the Holy Spirit and the abundance of grace (Romans 5:17) that is theirs in Christ Jesus.