

Jan. 26, 2020

Speaker: Eric Naus **Series:** This I Believe – The Book of Romans

Passage: Romans 7:1-6

Community Group Questions: “Belonging to Christ”

Read Romans 7:1-6 aloud as a group. And then work through the following questions:

1. Romans chapter 6 was all about how the gospel frees us from the power of sin. Now, we turn to Romans chapter 7, which is all about how the gospel frees us from the power of “the law.” Several times so far in Romans, Paul has pointed out that all people fail to live up to God’s moral standards. We especially see this when we compare our lives to the commands laid out in the Mosaic Law found in the Old Testament of our Bibles (read Romans 3:19-20). Take time to read the 10 commandments in Exodus 20:1-17, as well as the greatest two commandments according to Jesus in Matthew 22:36-40. In your own life, how many of these commandments have you kept consistently and joyfully? How many have you failed and how often? Would you agree that God’s law is like a mirror which reveals our flaws?
2. In verses 1-3, Paul states a general legal principle: death frees a person from their obligation to the law. He gives an example from marriage: when the marriage vow is severed by death, one is free to remarry. In verse 4, Paul applies these legal principles to the Christian’s relationship with Christ. In what sense have we “died to the law through the body of Christ” as Christians? What difference should it make in our lives to know that we’ve been freed from the law’s condemning power?
3. Paul also says in verse 4 that we, “belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead.” The word “another” is a word referring to the marriage bond (the same word was used in vs. 3 of the woman who “marries” another man). To paraphrase, “we have died to the law, that we might be married to Jesus!” Marriage is frequently used in the New Testament as a metaphor for the relationship between Jesus and his people. Jesus himself called himself the “bridegroom” of his people. Paul says in Ephesians 5:25 that husbands should love their wives “as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.” In 2 Cor. 11:2, Paul tells the Corinthian believers, “I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.” The book of Revelation, chapter 19, presents the return of Christ as a wedding feast; and Revelation 21 describes the church “coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” How does this intense and beautiful metaphor of marriage help us better understand Christ’s commitment to us as believers? How should it motivate our commitment to him?
4. In verses 5-6, Paul contrasts two ways to live: there is the “old way of the written code” in which our sinful passions were aroused by the law and we bore fruit for death. By contrast, for those who have been released from the law by faith in Jesus Christ, there is the “new way of the Spirit” in which God accepts us fully on the basis of Christ, and he fills us with the indwelling power of his Holy Spirit in fulfillment of his promises (See Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Ezekiel 36:25-28), and we now bear fruit for God! According to this teaching, how should a Christian believer interact differently with God’s commands in

the law than an unbeliever does? Would you say that the Holy Spirit has made a difference in your personal relationship with God? How so?

5. How does Romans 7:1-6 challenge me if I struggle with “legalistic thinking” as a Christian? How does this same passage challenge me if I struggle with “antinomian thinking” (the view that freedom from the law means I can live however I want)?