

Unity of Believers; Conflict of Sin and Righteousness

Romans 7

Group ¹	C	V	Description
Believers United to Christ	7	1-3	Bound to the Law while under the Law, as in marriage
		4-6	Believer's are dead to the Law and bound to Christ
		7-12	The Law teaches sin
		13	Sin causes death, not the Law
The Conflict of Two Natures		14-20	The struggle between sin (or evil) and good in man
		21-25	Jesus sets us free

Reflections

Chapters 6 and 7 need to be read together because in them we can get a clearer picture of how it is God who makes it possible for us to receive salvation and then to live for Him. Wiersbe describes it like this.

In Romans 6, Paul told us how to stop doing bad things; in Romans 7 he told us how not to do good things. "You were not justified by keeping the Law," he argued, "and you cannot be sanctified by keeping the Law."²

Paul explains that those under the law are like those who are married—while married, you commit adultery if you stray from the marriage partner or even if divorce takes place. But once one of the marriage partners dies, the covenant of marriage is no longer binding.

People under the Law are thus, in effect, married to God and if they sin in any way, they are committing adultery. This is a common metaphor used throughout the Old Testament for how the Israelites acted toward God. Even those in the church who lead people into false doctrine are said to be committing adultery and causing those who follow to do the same. Consider the following.

Jeremiah 3:6-10 NASB Then the LORD said to me in the days of Josiah the king, "Have you seen what faithless Israel did? She went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and she was a harlot there. **7** "I thought, 'After she has done all these things she will return to Me'; but she did not return, and her treacherous sister Judah saw it. **8** "And I saw that for all the adulteries of faithless Israel, I had sent her away and given her a writ of divorce, yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear; but she went and was a harlot also. **9** "Because of the lightness of her harlotry, she polluted the land and committed adultery with stones and trees. **10** "Yet in spite of all this her treacherous sister Judah did not return to Me with all her heart, but rather in deception," declares the LORD.

Jeremiah 5:4-9 NASB Then I said, "They are only the poor, They are foolish; For they do not know the way of the LORD *Or* the ordinance of their God. **5** "I will go to the great And will speak to them, For they know the way of the LORD *And* the ordinance of their God." But they too, with one accord, have broken the yoke *And* burst the bonds. **6** Therefore a lion from the forest will slay them, A wolf of the deserts will destroy them, A leopard is watching their cities. Everyone who goes out of them will be torn in pieces, Because their transgressions are many, Their apostasies are numerous. **7** "Why

¹ (NASB) "Group" column from the headings in the NASB text.

² (Wiersbe 534)

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should I pardon you? Your sons have forsaken Me And sworn by those who are not gods. When I had fed them to the full, They committed adultery And trooped to the harlot's house. 8 "They were well-fed lusty horses, Each one neighing after his neighbor's wife. 9 "Shall I not punish these *people*," declares the LORD, "And on a nation such as this Shall I not avenge Myself?"

Jeremiah 23:13-14 NASB "Moreover, among the prophets of Samaria I saw an offensive thing: They prophesied by Baal and led My people Israel astray. 14 "Also among the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen a horrible thing: The committing of adultery and walking in falsehood; And they strengthen the hands of evildoers, So that no one has turned back from his wickedness. All of them have become to Me like Sodom, And her inhabitants like Gomorrah.

Ezekiel 23:36-41 NASB Moreover, the LORD said to me, "Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? Then declare to them their abominations. 37 "For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands. Thus they have committed adultery with their idols and even caused their sons, whom they bore to Me, to pass through *the fire* to them as food. 38 "Again, they have done this to Me: they have defiled My sanctuary on the same day and have profaned My sabbaths. 39 "For when they had slaughtered their children for their idols, they entered My sanctuary on the same day to profane it; and lo, thus they did within My house. 40 "Furthermore, they have even sent for men who come from afar, to whom a messenger was sent; and lo, they came—for whom you bathed, painted your eyes and decorated yourselves with ornaments; 41 and you sat on a splendid couch with a table arranged before it on which you had set My incense and My oil.

Hosea 4:11-15 NASB Harlotry, wine and new wine take away the understanding. 12 My people consult their wooden idol, and their *diviner's* wand informs them; For a spirit of harlotry has led *them* astray, And they have played the harlot, *departing* from their God. 13 They offer sacrifices on the tops of the mountains And burn incense on the hills, Under oak, poplar and terebinth, Because their shade is pleasant. Therefore your daughters play the harlot And your brides commit adultery. 14 I will not punish your daughters when they play the harlot Or your brides when they commit adultery, For *the men* themselves go apart with harlots And offer sacrifices with temple prostitutes; So the people without understanding are ruined. 15 Though you, Israel, play the harlot, Do not let Judah become guilty; Also do not go to Gilgal, Or go up to Beth-aven And take the oath: "As the LORD lives!"

Revelation 2:20-22 NASB 20 'But I have *this* against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit *acts of immorality* and eat things sacrificed to idols. 21 'I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her immorality. 22 'Behold, I will throw her on a bed *of sickness*, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds.

But here is where we battle within ourselves. We want to please God and it seems like keeping the law would please God. Which it does to an extent but not when taken to the extreme or the sin of legalism. At the same time, being freed from the law through Christ's death and resurrection, we are no longer under the law. This too can be taken to an extreme, the sin of license. God wants us to live holy lives but also to rest in His mercy, not giving us what we deserve, and grace, giving us what we don't deserve, and to offer them, mercy and grace, to others as well.

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We will forever live with the struggle between the desire to pursue selfish desires and lusts and to live to honor God. How well we learn to forgive ourselves and others is key to understanding God's mercy and grace toward us. We are all going to make mistakes as we go through life, so be quick to forgive and to seek forgiveness. In essence, we need to give ourselves and others a break.

Additionally, since we are united with Christ, we should do all we can to encourage others to grow in their faith and come alongside them when they are struggling. These ideas can be seen in what are called the "one another" passages of the New Testament. If you are interested in what those might be, a study of them can be on the [Downloads](#) page under Topical Studies.³ Below is a word cloud of the one another topics for you to consider.



Key Words: New Testament, Letters, Romans, Unity, Slavery, Sinful, Righteous, Jesus



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3 (Swanson)

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