

Lesson 10 ~ Romans 7

NIV

1 Do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to men who know the law—that the law has authority over a man only as long as he lives? **2** For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage. **3** So then, if she marries another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress, even though she marries another man.

4 So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God. **5** For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death.

6 But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.

7 What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, “Do not covet.” **8** But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead. **9** Once I was alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. **10** I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. **11** For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. **12** So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.

13 Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! But in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it produced death in me through what was good, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.

14 We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. **15** I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. **16** And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. **17** As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. **18** I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. **19** For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. **20** Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

21 So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. **22** For in my inner being I delight in God’s law; **23** but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. **24** What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? **25** Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

NLT

1 Now, dear brothers and sisters—you who are familiar with the law—don’t you know that the law applies only to a person who is still living? **2** Let me illustrate. When a woman marries, the law binds her to her husband as long as he is alive. But if he dies, the laws of marriage no longer apply to her. **3** So while her husband is alive, she would be committing adultery if she married another man. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law and does not commit adultery when she remarries.

4 So this is the point: The law no longer holds you in its power, because you died to its power when you died with Christ on the cross. And now you are united with the one who was raised from the dead. As a result, you can produce good fruit, that is, good deeds for God. **5** When we were controlled by our old nature, sinful desires were at work within us, and the law aroused these evil desires that produced sinful deeds, resulting in death. **6** But now we have been released from the law, for we died with Christ, and we are no longer captive to its power. Now we can really serve God, not in the old way by obeying the letter of the law, but in the new way, by the Spirit.

7 Well then, am I suggesting that the law of God is evil? Of course not! The law is not sinful, but it was the law that showed me my sin. I would never have known that coveting is wrong if the law had not said, “Do not covet.” **8** But sin took advantage of this law and aroused all kinds of forbidden desires within me! If there were no law, sin would not have that power. **9** I felt fine when I did not understand what the law demanded. But when I learned the truth, I realized I had broken the law and was a sinner, doomed to die. **10** So the good law, which was supposed to show me the way of life, instead gave me the death penalty. **11** Sin took advantage of the law and fooled me; it took the good law and used it to make me guilty of death. **12** But still, the law itself is holy and right and good.

13 But how can that be? Did the law, which is good, cause my doom? Of course not! Sin used what was good to bring about my condemnation. So we can see how terrible sin really is. It uses God’s good commandment for its own evil purposes.

14 The law is good, then. The trouble is not with the law but with me, because I am sold into slavery, with sin as my master. **15** I don’t understand myself at all, for I really want to do what is right, but I don’t do it. Instead, I do the very thing I hate. **16** I know perfectly well that what I am doing is wrong, and my bad conscience shows that I agree that the law is good.

17 But I can’t help myself, because it is sin inside me that makes me do these evil things. **18** I know I am rotten through and through so far as my old sinful nature is concerned. No matter which way I turn, I can’t make myself do right. I want to, but I can’t. **19** When I want to do good, I don’t. And when I try not to do wrong, I do it anyway. **20** But if I am doing what I don’t want to do, I am not really the one doing it; the sin within me is doing it. **21** It seems to be a fact of life that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. **22** I love God’s law with all my heart. **23** But there is another law at work within me that is at war with my mind. This law wins the fight and makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. **24** Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin? **25** Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God’s law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin.