

Serve in the New Way
Romans 7:1-13
June 28, 2020

When you are reading through the Bible, did you ever wonder why, especially with Jesus, why He used the examples He used? Today we don't have Jesus but Paul speaking, or in this case writing, using the example of marriage in the text we have before us today.

Paul uses marriage. Think about it. What important words do we have when we get married? Marriage as we know is between a man and a woman as it is there for the procreation of mankind. In that relationship, that commitment, a man and a woman commit to each other their lives, their bodies, and their livelihood. The famous phrase, "Till death do us part," is as plain as those five words can be as in marriage we are made one. That is until for one reason or another, the Lord decides to break that oneness. Paul doesn't talk of the exact words in a marriage vow but no doubt, the marriage vows we use, now, came from texts like this.

Paul says the wife is released from the marriage "Law" when her husband dies. She is free then to marry another man without breaking the law of, thou shall not commit adultery. It takes death, according to the law, for her to be able to get married again.

Why does he bring up this kind of tearing apart of a oneness, the death of a spouse to equate to what he is about to talk about? What death is he trying to describe that could equate to that oneness of a marriage where the two shall become one?

Think about it, what more could be intimate with you than a spouse? In the Sunday morning Bible Study you heard about another oneness in the oneness with those morsels that you put into your mouths each day. Yes that burrito, that hamburger that chef salad all are taken in, hopefully not in the same meal, but taken in to your mouth and it is taken into your stomach and digestive system and broken down to where it is changed into nutrients for every cell in your body to help you to think, to run, to jump, to cry, to speak and many, many other things this God given body is able to do. It becomes a part of you.

The oneness of marriage is no joke. Knowing each other in an intimate way between a man and a woman like God designed can't be imitated. God, as He designed all of His creation, designed marriage to be perfect. Not one thing wrong. It is only when sin entered His creation that the perfection was shattered and even though what He had planned, that perfect plan He put in place had not changed, sin caused it to

change. He created and put into place what would be best, the absolute best for His creation and it especially included man and woman but because of their sin, the perfection of the creation was shattered. In that sinful act, every human from the moment of fertilization, is a sinner, made a sinner like a killer virus spreading to all people.

There is the oneness of marriage, of food and the body but then there is oneness of sin with the flesh. We all know how sin is so much a part of our daily lives. We know we sin and sin much, every day. When the law Paul talks about was given on Mount Sinai and chiseled into those two stones, it was ten commandments that put restrictions on the willful sin of man that sin of the flesh. God wanted there to be some written rules, not to hurt man but to help him to curb that killer sin that dwelt in each and every one. That sin began as man and woman were saying with their eating that forbidden fruit that they weren't satisfied with what God had provided. They in a sense wanted to be their own gods. God being a jealous God is not going to put up with it but being also a loving God didn't just strike them down dead, right then but provided a way out of the law of the flesh, sin, He told of a Son of a woman to come to make things right for the pinnacle of His creation.

That Son did come. He came and went to that hill to suffer and die for that sin of the flesh, and then rose to life, life for Himself and for all humanity. He died to kill that oneness of sin of the flesh to bring His creation life, life through the Spirit that He sent to be the counselor for His creation when He ascended with His righteous body to heaven to rule.

Yes, the written code was given for a reason. It should have been plain to every one who tried to live up to it. It should have been as plain as the nose on your face that no one could live up to those ten, or the 600 or so that the Jews finally came up with or even the two Jesus talked of. It is impossible for anyone to live up to the law, any of those ten and win, that is until that Son born of a woman, took on sin, paid the price required and rose to life for the lives of all.

Paul pointed to importance of the law. He went so far as to say if it weren't for the law, he wouldn't have known what sin is. How would you like to enter a game where you didn't know the rules? The referee will more than likely wear out his flag, flagging you as you move when you aren't supposed to, tackle in the wrong way, move without the ball being dribbled, step on the boundary line or wrap your fingers in that protruding mesh on the front of that helmet.

The thing of it is, the law was not only put on those two stones but it was put on men's hearts. Yes, it is there but it can be covered, pressed down, held back as sin seeks to rule.

If there is no rule, no law then sin reigns, it reigns until a law is provided. Once the law is in place, then there is the contrast. The law side that helps with life bringing about a focus on sin, sin that brings death.

Paul understood that the law that pointed out sin worked so well in him that he saw how he had sinned everywhere. He couldn't go a day or for that matter couldn't probably wake in the morning without thinking of how the law pointed out another example of sin in his life.

When you realize that you can't hardly take a breath without recognizing that you have sinned in thought, word or deed, you realize you are not worth much if you were to be judged on those thoughts, words or deeds. In fact all you are good for is the fires of hell.

You have been burnt before, too close to the fire, a hot cup of coffee, a heated up pot, it isn't fun but to think of eternal fire, who would want such an end? None of us would and yet there is that law pointing out our sin.

Oh, as Paul states, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good for in it's pointing out sin, sin so we know we have done wrong. We then should be looking to the answer to sin and that is found in the Son, born of a woman who paid the redeeming price for sin, His very own blood shed on the cross for us.

That cross, that wondrous, glorious cross on which He died for me. That cross on which He hung, that cross meant for each of us, was the place where sin, so in oneness with us was sin that He took on Himself that day. He took that sin, paid the purchase price with His own suffering and blood so that each of us could live in the Spirit. It brought death to our old Adam, the life lived in sin. It brought death to that sinful self, even though it takes all of this life to finally finish do its thing.

Each time we sin, the Holy Spirit is right there to point us to that cross where all sin was taken care of. Yes, we sin but then there is that forgiveness, forgiveness for us and that sin, by the one who paid the price and the remembers the sin no more. Only God could do that. Only Jesus, God in the flesh has the authority to forgive for He is the one that paid the price for that sin and every sin.

He did all that for us. When someone does something that great for us, what is our response. What do we want to do? We want to somehow show our appreciation

for what He has done. Why not? We were headed to where no one would want to go if they knew where they were headed. No one likes to be burned and have to suffer like that. We know that, so we get to serve not the old way, serving the flesh and all its desires but looking to the cross and who it was that gave us life, not only for the time we have on this earth but forever.

We get to serve, not our sinful flesh, our sinful desires are released from that body of death to serve a life lived for Jesus. He killed that old life. He wants all to know and experience that. He even goes one step further to make us one with Him by providing His very body and blood in His meal for us, taken into us, made one with us to live the new life of the Spirit.

You may be thinking it is now time to hear it again. Hear how there are those out there who don't know of serving the new freeing way. They are still blinded by eyes like Paul who didn't know what sin was until that there was a law he was to live under, pointing out his sin, convicting him of his breaking of the law of God. They don't know of sin and the three fold use of the law. When they look in the mirror, they don't see a sinner but just a human trying to make their way in the world, trying to live better than the next guy or the second use of the law that keeps them from running over a cliff or into a building, where there is a curb to keep a person from wrong. They don't know of the law being a guide as the hand of a friend to a blind man. Yes, he can be guided around pitfalls or kept from stepping in front of a deadly motorized vehicle, large or small that could cause all sorts of damage to a person. They just don't know even if the law is written on their hearts because it has been suppressed for so long.

We know sin. We know the new way of life. We can use it as the opportunity to tell others of how we too were destined to hell but God provided a way out, the way out and that was with Him who was promised, promised so long ago. He came and we all are the beneficiaries of His work for us. If we are going to serve, it will sure be better in the end if we are serving in the new way, not the old.

It will not only be better for us but better for those Jesus brings our way. Yes, He is leading us in a life where the new way of life is a life that is exciting as any He has given us to share, to make all those we meet rich in life, life not death, life with a new husband, one that rose to live forever wanting us to be with Him in eternity.