

## Your Lifeline in the Battle

IDENTITY MATTERS: Stepping into who you are in Christ

November 21, 2021 Romans 7 Pastor Jonathan Schaeffer

*God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it..*

1 CORINTHIANS 10:13

### Because you asked...

Paul is still responding to this **question**: *Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace?* (ROMANS 6:15).

Paul says, “No! That’s unthinkable!”

- **REASON #1** (6:16-23): **We’re either slaves to sin or to Christ.** He’s entirely different and entirely better!
- **REASON #2** (7:1-6): **We’re either married to the law or married to Christ.** By sharing in the death of Jesus, we part ways with the power of the law and enter into a personal and eternal relationship with Jesus. We no longer live however we choose; we live to **honor Jesus**. If we keep on sinning, we’re “trampling on the Son of God.” HEB. 10:26-29

### Identity Transformation

The gospel is the **power** of God to save us and change us **from the inside out** (ROMANS 1:16). This is the central feature of what it means to be a Christian. It’s not self-improvement, but a **new me**.

#### Old “me”

Married to the Law  
Sins pile up  
Obey to earn my way  
Performance-based  
Leads to brokenness  
Failure—we can’t win  
I can’t do it

#### New “me”

Married to Christ  
Good deeds pile up  
Obey out of love for Jesus  
Grace-based  
New way to live  
**Battle**—old vs. new  
I can’t, but **Jesus can**

## Understanding Your New Identity

→ You now have a **close** relationship with Christ.

*You died to the law...that you might **belong** to another.* (7:4)  
We are called to “love him with all our heart” in light of who he is and what he’s done for us. We profess our allegiance to Christ and allow him to shape us, and how we live.

→ **Obedience is the goal; it’s just not why you’re accepted.**

*We have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit...* ROMANS 7:6

Jesus’ perfect life and sacrifice accomplished what our own attempts could never achieve: full acceptance with God. We can now obey Jesus, not out of fear, but gratitude and love.

→ **God’s law isn’t the problem; it’s just not able to save you.**

*I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the law...the law is holy, righteous, and good.* ROMANS 7:7,12  
The law **reveals** how broken we are. Sin uses the law to stir up new desires in us, but the law isn’t the problem. It simply shows us our great need for grace.

→ **Followers of Jesus don’t change overnight; we struggle.**

*I want to do what is right, but I can’t. I want to do what is good, but I don’t. I don’t want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway.* ROMANS 7:18-19 NLT

Every Christian has conflicting desires: we want to follow the way of Jesus, but sin is a powerful force. Temptation will be a daily reality for us until the day we arrive in heaven.

→ **The One who died for you is here to help you overcome.**

*Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? Thank God! The answer is in **Jesus** Christ.* 7:24-25 NLT  
The One who never sinned now lives in us! HEBREWS 2:18; 4:15

### MAKE IT PERSONAL

- What aspects of the *new you* make you most grateful for what Jesus did for you?
- Read ROMANS 7:21-25 again. How does Paul’s own struggle encourage you in your daily journey as a follower of Jesus?