



8/18/25

Okay... when Tim talked about how we shouldn't define justified as "just as if I'd never sinned," I knew... I've been guilty of using that term many many times!!! And I've found as we've been going through Romans this summer, when I looked up the meaning of justified in the original Greek, it DIDN'T mean what I had said it meant! It means, "acquitted of guilt." Well... you can't be acquitted of something unless you're guilty. What Tim said is so true... "I've HORRIBLY sinned against God! And the blood of Jesus has paid for that sin in full." That's even better!!! I'm treated just as if I'd never sinned, EVEN THOUGH I have horribly sinned!!! Our God is so good.

Also, as Tim preached about how God works all things together for our good, I thought, "Every time I feel overwhelmed by my circumstances, I need to ask myself, 'Is this situation more important than my eternal destiny?'" Truly, there's no circumstance you and I can go through, no matter how big or small, that has deeper impact than our eternal destiny... and God has that covered. That's huge! I pray that you and I will take great comfort and assurance in knowing that He has promised us eternal life with Him.

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Romans 7:1-6

It's really important that I don't just jump into this passage since the first word of verse 1 is "Or..." Or what??? Going back to Romans 6, I see that Paul was talking

about who I serve. As a believer, I have a choice in who I serve... even though the choice is obvious... I can serve sin and make myself a voluntary slave... but doing that only leads to a snowball effect of both choosing sin and getting caught in the traps of its consequences. Or I can serve the Lord and experience righteousness, peace, sanctification, and life. The payment for sin is death. The free gift of God is eternal life. Seems like an obvious choice, and yet I know it's not so easy.

Sometimes I feel like I'm living in the culture and condemnation of the law. But as I'm about to see... not only have I been set free from sin, I've also been set free from the law... through the death of Jesus and through being baptized into His death and resurrection.

Vs. 1~ "Or do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives?" No matter what law I am ruled by, when I die, that law no longer holds authority over me. If someone is in debt, when they die, there's no way to hold them accountable to pay that debt. This is a known understanding by everyone.

The Greek transliteration says, "Or are you ignorant, you who know the law...?" The fact is, I am NOT ignorant. I logically know that if I am under any kind of contract before I die, I am no longer held accountable to that contract once I die. The fact is... as I am about to see... I have died to the law... I no longer have to live under its rule, and I no longer face condemnation for failing to obey it perfectly. So why is it so hard for me to live like that? I so easily act as though I'm still being judged by the law. I'm not! Not by God. O Lord, please help me to stop living that way!

Well... I'm a visual learner. What example can I look to for understanding this hope I have? The example of marriage ~

Vs. 2-4 ~ This is a passage that some people use to explain marriage and how the covenant is only broken by death... While the covenant of marriage is so important to understand, in context, that's not the point of this passage. The point is about our unions with Christ and our freedom from the law for our righteousness... Here's the visual illustration... When a woman marries a man, her covenant with him is legally binding as long as they are both alive. If her husband dies, though she may still be emotionally attached to the memory of her husband, she is no longer legally

bound to her husband. This is an example Paul gives to help me understand how I was legally bound to the law until I died with Christ. Now I am legally bound to Jesus... in an unbreakable covenant.

Because Jesus died to the law for me, and so I died with Him, I am not an adulteress of the law by being with Him. I have died to the law, and so I am free from living under the law, and now I am free to be the bride of Christ... as believers are called. Oh wow. James 4:4 calls believers who choose the world over God "adulterers." In the same way, to go back to the law is to cheat on God! Mind blown!!! How many times have I treated God as though I'm still under the law!!! Forgive me, Lord!!!

By dying with Christ and being raised with Him, I was set free from the law. I am not married to the law or the consequences of breaking it anymore. But now that I'm free from the law, I'm not just living in limbo... I went from one "marriage" to another. I belong to Jesus who has been raised from the dead. So... my legal position has changed AND my purpose has changed.

My purpose WAS to live according to the law in perfect obedience. The law was not a kind husband. It had no grace, no mercy. I was under a curse because I couldn't obey it without fail. But now in Jesus, my purpose IS to bear fruit for God. This could also be misunderstood as constricting. But I'm not expected to MAKE fruit for Him. I BEAR fruit for Him. He does the work in me. I belong to Him. He raised me to life. And now He works His fruit in me so that I can bear it FOR Him.

In this new covenant, I bear fruit for the Lord and not me... but this is not something to be anxious, frustrated, or fearful about. God works in me and through me to help me bear fruit that brings life and peace and joy. This is a wonderful oneness with Him. O Lord, please help me to understand how being united with You is so much more peaceful and hopeful than being under the law.

Vs. 5-6. ~ "For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death." Before I knew Jesus, when I was still under the confines of the law, my selfish desires used the law for all the wrong reasons. Whether I tried to frantically obey the law out of fear, which is all about trying to be good in and of myself... therefore making it all about

me trying to get the credit for myself... Or if I looked at the law and said, "rules are meant to be broken"... still making it all about me... Either way, I was living in the flesh for SELF, and all the fruit that came from me only led to death. Romans 6:21 explains that fruit as this "the things of which you are now ashamed... For the end of those things is death." Nothing but misery came from living in the flesh. Even the things that seemed good in the moment still didn't have any lasting satisfaction. It was like living on a hamster wheel... always striving, never arriving.

"BUT NOW..." Sweet relief... "But now we are released from the law." The law no longer has the right to judge me or condemn me. I am released from its authority. I have died to the law and I am released from its trap. My purpose is still new... to live for God. But I don't have to live for Him in fear. I serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

The new way of the Spirit... already loved, sealed, given the free gift of righteousness, being transformed by the Spirit, walking in freedom.

The old way of the written code... no help, only expectation, impossible to appease because I can't do it perfectly, walking in death.

So now... as a believer in Christ, to try and live under the fear of the law is to become an adulterer to God. Why would I do that? My old husband had such impossible expectations that I could never satisfy him. My new husband, Jesus Christ, loved me sacrificially, He nourishes and cherishes me, and He's given me His Spirit to help me do anything He wants me to do. O Lord, please help me to see this complete death to sin and law, and this wonderful, beautiful life I have in Christ. Help me to live in the joy of that freedom... bearing fruit for You that never brings shame, but only joy.