

# The Person of Romans 7



Collegiate Quarterly

## Teacher's Guide

### Surveying the Source

Romans 7.

### Plotting the Course

**The students will:**

▶ Investigate their relationship to God's law.

▶ Discover the purpose of God's law.

▶ Learn about the sometimes difficult consequences of knowing God's law.

### Preparing to Lead

God's law was written in stone and handed to Moses on Mount Sinai. But it also must be written in the hearts of those who choose Christ as their Lord.

The law is not simply rules and regulations by which we should live, and once achieved we don't have to worry about

them. Rather, they form the very fabric by which we conduct our daily lives, because we actually have a relationship with God's law. Our understanding of the law, its role in our lives, and our response to it is determined by who we believe Jesus is.

### Getting Started

**A.** Divide your class into groups of 3 to 5 people. Have each group discuss the following questions. Have each group appoint a scribe to keep track of the discussion. Allow 5 to 10 minutes for this exercise. Then have each group share their answers with the entire class. ●Have you ever told someone about their faults? How did they take it? ●Have you ever had a friend challenge you on your areas of weakness? If so, how did they point them out to you? Were they gentle and constructively critical, or did they overwhelm you with details and leave you feeling completely discouraged? How did either make you feel? ●Can it be good to have someone point out your weaknesses to you? What would it take for you to listen to such difficult feedback on your personal choices, behaviors, or thought

patterns?

**B.** Divide your class into groups of 3 to 5 people. Have each group discuss the following questions. Have each group appoint a scribe to keep track of the discussion. Allow 5 to 10 minutes for this exercise. Then have each group share their answers with the entire class. ●What resolutions, New Year's or otherwise, seem to be the easiest to make and break? Why is that? ●What other areas of resolution do we struggle with? ●What types of things do you try *not* to do, but find yourself doing over and over again? ●Describe the thought processes someone might go through in this struggle. What are the feelings during the struggle and then after—whether they succeeded or gave in? How does this type of struggle play out in your life?

### Materials

copies of the questions in the Getting Started feature; questions from either section of the Delving Into the Word feature written on a flipchart, chalkboard, or whiteboard

## Delving Into the Word

A. Have the class read through Romans 7, answering the following sets of questions as you go: •*Verse 1*—How long does the law have jurisdiction over a person? What, therefore, is the only thing that can end the law’s jurisdiction? •*Verse 4*—Who dies? What do we die to? Why should there be death? Why should we be joined to another? •*Verses 5, 6*—What was life like when joined to the law, and then after dying to the law and being joined to Christ? •*Verse 7*—What purpose does the law have in this process? •*Verses 14, 15*—What does death to the law and marriage to Christ bring about in our lives? •*Verse 21*—What does Paul say this conflict proves? •What would it mean, then, if someone didn’t have this inner conflict? •Does this mean that this conflict is a good thing, because it reveals the law? Should we be thankful for this inner conflict?

B. Have the class read Romans 7:2, 3; 9–12; and 14–25, answering the follow-

ing sets of questions as you go: •In this marriage analogy, who does the woman represent? Who does her husband represent? Who is the “other man”? •Why does Paul use a marriage analogy to describe our relationship with the law? What does this say about the seriousness of our relationship to the law? •How was Paul once alive apart from the law? •How did the commandments make sin alive in him? Does this mean the commandment causes us to sin? •How was the commandment originally supposed to result in life? How did it then, instead, result in death? •After all that, how does Paul come to conclude that the law is “holy, righteous, and good” (NIV)? •What does this conflict reveal about the law? •How does doing the things I don’t want to do, and vice versa, reveal the law to be good? •What are the two different laws Paul sees? Where are they manifest? •Why is Paul wretched? Who will set him free from this body of this death?

## Discussing the Ideas

1. Why is it important to study our relationship to God’s law? How does it help our spiritual growth to understand our relationship to His law?

2. Romans 7:8 says that sin took opportunity through the commandment. How does sin take opportunity through the law? Isn’t the law a statement that cannot be changed?

3. How can we tell if the decrease of

the inner conflict is a reflection of spiritual maturity and better discipline or a turning away from God’s law?

4. Is living without God like living without a law? How have you seen this in society? How does this explain nonbelievers who are good, law-abiding citizens?

5. How is sin shown to be “utterly sinful” through the law? (Rom. 7:13, NIV).

## Closing the Activity

Conclude by giving each class member a copy of the “My Relationship to God’s Law” worksheet (p. 38). Explain to the class that God’s law has been likened to many things: •It’s like a road sign that declares our sin. •It’s like a mirror that reveals our flaws. •It’s like a friend who points out our weaknesses.

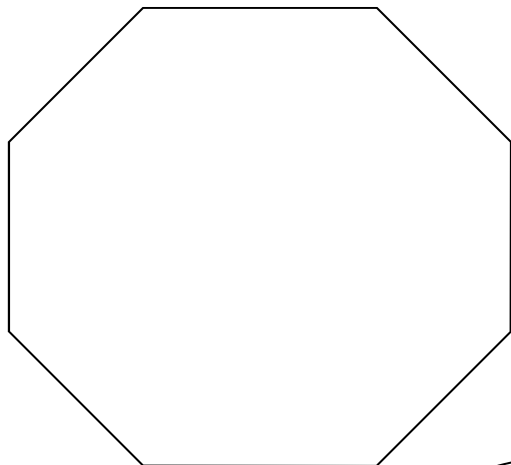
Ask each member to personally consider which item on the worksheet most closely reflects how they see God’s law. Have them write inside their chosen picture what they hear God’s law telling them, and remind them to bring these issues to God in personal prayer.

**Candice Jaques, Seven Hills, New South Wales, Australia**

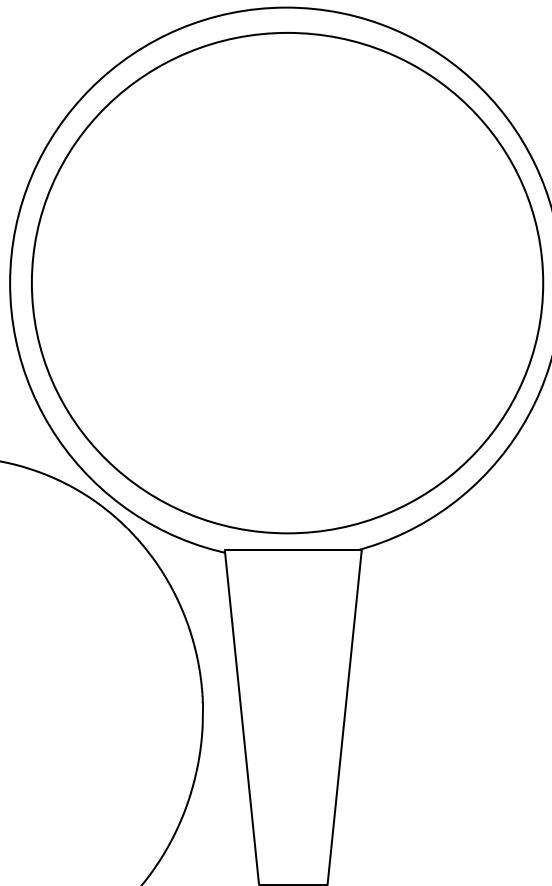
## My Relationship to God's Law

Consider the pictures below, and decide which one most closely fits your perspective of God's law. Write inside the picture what you believe God's law is personally telling you. Take these issues to Him in prayer.

God's law is like  
a road sign.



God's law is  
like a mirror.



God's law is  
like a friend.