

The Believers Struggle

Sermon 19 in the Romans Series

Rom. 7:7-25

I. Saul before he was Paul 7:7-13

v. 9-12 – He thought he was alive, before killing conviction came. The problem was never with the law, but in Saul’s self-righteousness thinking he was keeping the law.

Verse 9 goes with v. 13 -- work of the law in bringing to Paul to the end of self-righteousness. .
Stephen Charnock -“The law is a hammer to break us, the gospel is God’s oil to cure us.”

Spurgeon – If men do not understand the law, they will not feel they are sinners. And if they are not consciously sinners, they will never value the sin offering. There is no healing a man till the law has wounded him, no making him alive till the law has slain him.”

II. The Law and the Christian Experience 7:14-24

Matthew Henry –“...honest believers acknowledge that although sin no longer reigns in them it still remains.”

A. Proof of remaining sin, even as a new Creature – I still Sin -- v. 14

In no way does Paul want us to despise the law (10 Commandments).

He is already perfect before God, and forgiven through Jesus Christ, but he has remaining sin, needs to repent of the sin he commits, and cannot reach perfection in this life.

B. Proof of true Christianity – a new Motive – v. 15

What I am doing I do not understand.

I hate (strong word – detest, despise) – what I do.

Spurgeon – “This (i.e. v.15) is the believers riddle. To say that this is not a believer’s experience is to prove that the man who says it does not know much about how believers feel. We hate sin, and yet, alas! alas! we fall into it. we would like perfect lives if we could, we that are renewed. We make no justification for our sin: it is evil and abominable; yet we do find these two things warring and fighting within.”

RC Sproul – “When we have been born again and the Spirit has been shed abroad in our hearts, we have new natures, new desires, new inclinations, new attitudes, new love for the things of God. But that love is not perfect, it is not pure, it is not yet completely realized in our lives. There is a constant daily struggle and warfare with the old self whose desires are battling the new self. It is precisely this battle with which every Christian has struggled, that Paul is setting forth here”

C. Proof of true Christianity – a new Battle – v. 16-24

1. The Christian is free, but not free to break the law – 16, 22

16 -- The law stands as the standard of what is good.

There is no fault in the law – but there is also no redemption in the law.

v. 22 – Regeneration is a new life and now we love the law – because it is God’s law.

2. The Christian is a strange new creature -- 17-21

v. 17-18 -- He is contrasting the new man in Christ with his old man.

v. 19 – Even our best works – while we are here on earth in this present condition are mixed with sin (our motives, our desires, etc.)

v. 20 -- Notice – Paul says almost the same thing he said in **v. 16-17**

v. 21 – These verbs from v. 19-21 in the passage are Present Active
This denotes continuous action -- something that is now and on-going.

v. 22 - He delights in the law of God – as a renewed man.

3. We battle with this principle of remaining sin – v. 23-24

v. 23 – **another law** – another spiritual power or principle that is of a different kind than the law of his mind – which is as the apostle says, in 1 Cor. 2:16 “We have the mind of Christ.”

v. 24 -- “Oh, wretched man that I am!” He realizes the battle is real and he is powerless to ultimately deliver himself.

III. The Christians Encouragement -- v. 25

James Edwards “The chapter closes with a reminder that the Christian life is one of tension and struggle...to be righteous with God is not to be fully free from the effects of sin. Believers must run the race with perseverance, and though there is progress, sin and sorrow and death do not in this life fade away. These remain enemies, death the greatest of them. Through all this the Christian learns to walk ‘by faith and not by sight’ (2 Cor 5:7). Our one anchor is the promise and presence of the resurrected Lord who gives grace for the present struggle and eternal life in the world to come.”