

Romans 7:13–20

A New Nature, from the Spirit, to See Our Sin

Monday, June 19, 2023 • Read Romans 7:13–20

Questions from the Scripture text: What does v13 ask about the law? What actually produced the death? What did this show? Where did the law come from (v14a)? But what are we like, apart from the Spirit (v14b)? When the flesh expresses itself, how does the believer feel about it (v15)? What doesn't he practice? But what does he do? So, then, what is the believer agreeing with (v16)? And what does he think of the law? What does this new, spiritual person no longer do (v17)? What part of him is doing it? What is still in the believer (v18)? How much good dwells in it? What is present with the believer? What doesn't he find yet? What does he will (v19)? What does he will not to do? But which does he practice? What does he conclude about himself (v20)? What does he conclude about sin?

What does a believer's experience of remaining sin show him about himself? Romans 7:13–20 looks forward to the sermon in the upcoming midweek meeting. In these eight verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **when a believer experiences his remaining sin, he realizes what he was apart from the Spirit, and he realizes that the sinfulness of his former nature still dwells in him.**

The believer used to be in the flesh, v13–14. Our sinfulness is so bad that, before we died in Christ, our sinfulness took advantage even of the good law to produce desire to sin (cf. v8). So, God's commandment showed that sin is exceedingly sinful (v13). So at first, the law was from the Spirit, but we were not in the Spirit or in Christ. At the first, we were in the flesh ("carnal," v14), slaves of sin that could not disobey it in order to obey the law.

The believer is now in the Spirit, v15–16. What's confusing to the believer (v15a) is that he now has desires for good and hatred for evil (v15b–c), *even though he still does it.* In an important sense, this is very good news, because it's an indication of life in him that is from the Spirit. He now agrees with the law, not only that it is holy and righteous, but that it is good and has done him good! He recognizes that he no longer agrees with the sort of thinking at the beginnings of vv7, 13. If you hate your sin, and delight in God's law from the heart (cf. v22), then praise God that you are in the Spirit!

But sin is still in the believer, v17, 19–20. Sadly, although the believer is now "in the Spirit" instead of being "in the flesh," the flesh is still in the believer. Sinfulness dwells in the believer (v17). So to summarize, if the v15 experience is true, as v19 states, then we have a new nature (praise God! v20a, cf. v16), but there is sinfulness that still dwells in us and which belongs to us (v20b).

So that the believer has an ongoing need of grace, v18. Praise God that as a believer we have come to taste and love the goodness of God to us in His law. And praise God that we have come to love righteousness and hate sin. But there is still the issue of how to do the good that we love. The performing of it is not in us. When we see what our indwelling sin produces in our lives, it drives us back to Christ for more grace. After all, He not only works in us to will to do according to His good pleasure, but He also works in us to work according to His good pleasure.

What good, that you desire to do, do you keep failing to do? But where did that desire come from? What evil, that you hate to do, do you keep doing? But where did that hate come from? If you don't have the desire for good and the hatred for sin, then what condition are you still in? But if you do have it, where will you get the doing?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for getting us out of our flesh and into the Lord Jesus Christ by Your Spirit. Please help us, we pray, for there is a wretched sinfulness that remains in us. Grow us, by Your grace, in walking in the righteous requirements of Your law, by Your Spirit, we ask in Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, AMEN!!

Suggested songs: ARP32AB "What Blessedness" or TPH193 "Baptized into Your Name Most Holy"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Roman 7 verses 13 through 20. These are god's words. Has then, what is good become death to me, certainly not but sin. That it might appear sin was producing death in me. Through what is good? So that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly, simple. For, we know that the law is spiritual, but i And carnal sold under sin.

For what i am doing. I do not understand for what i will to do that. I do not practice, but what i hate that i do if then i do, what i will not to do. I agree with the law that it is good. But now it is no longer i who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

For, i know that in me, that is in my flesh, nothing good dwells For to will is present with me. But how to perform, what is good. I do not find For the good that i will to do. I do not do. But the evil i will not to do.

That at practice. Now, if i do what i will not to do, there's no longer i Who do it? But sin. That dwells in me. So far the reading of gods inspired and And errant worked.

Well, we had A very high opinion of ourselves apart from the law. Remember back. The the midweek sermon from this week. Uh, we said Apart, from the law sin was dead. I was alive once, without the law, we had this idea of ourselves it. We were able to do some good things and Uh, we didn't have to sin, we could Now, we could see.

A good thing that we desire to do and just do it. But then god's good commandment came, and our response to God's good commandment was to sin even more. And then try to blame God's law for our own sitting. And southern commandment. Uh, burst to the bubble of our ability.

Of our goodness. And now he's, he's saying, The believer can now see. That he used to be in the flesh. He can now see. That his sinfulness was entirely sinful. In other words, Despite the A heretical view of the Armenians, one of the purposes of the commandments. Was to prove total depravity to us.

So god's commandment came and said, see how exceedingly sinful your sinfulness is That you would respond to even to god's good law by wanting to send more. And by blaming god's law for your sinning. Did what is good? Become death to meet? No, i was already dead. I was just so ignorant in my death.

That i didn't see that. I was dead. And so he says sin was producing the death enemy. And, Even through what is good even through the commandment, so that sin through the commandment he says, Verse 13. Might become exceedingly, sinful. So now he can look back at the laws origin and say, the law isn't bad.

To lock him from the holy spirit. The law's spiritual. But he looks back at his own origin and he said, ah, that's what was bad. That's what he's saying. In verse 14, when he says for, we know that the law is spiritual, but i am carnal sold understand. He's actually not like that anymore.

But he needed to be regenerated. To agree with the law and love the law. In order to understand what he had been like before, He was regenerated. In order to look back at himself apart from christ, apart from the spirit and say, I was exceedingly sinful, there wasn't a single part of me that was good.

I was entirely fleshly as opposed to the holy spirit. Spiritual Not like physical over against. Um, having spirit But i was entirely flush. I was entirely carnal. I was sold as a slave, understand. And so, he says, Um, now verse 14, we know We know the laws, origin. It's from the holy spirit.

It's good and we know our own origin. We begin in the flesh.

Sometime. We begin in the flesh. We begin as slaves, understand, but we are now no longer. In the flesh.

Okay. So, he says, Um, It is now no longer i Who do it before when he sinned, it was he who did it? Because he was in the flesh, he was in his sin, he wasn't in the spirit, he wasn't in christ, he didn't have union. With the the lord jesus.

And so although he wanted to blame the law for his infamous, he said that was all me. Now, who he is? Is no longer identified with the sin. Who you are? If you trust in jesus, Is not identified with your sin. There's sin remaining in you and he says that here.

But you. Are not in your sin. You are in christ. So, the believer used to be in the flash, but now the believers in the spirit, And how does he know he's in the spirit? It's because of this battle that is going on in him. Verse 15 and 16 for what i am doing.

I do not understand. For what i will to do that. I do not practice. So, here he has, he has been given a new nature. He loves god, he loves god's law, if you love god, and you love his law and you know it's good and you want to keep it because it's good and because he's good.

Not because necessarily it makes you feel good, although it should not because it reduces good results for you a little will. But because the law itself is good and god who's lord is as good and you love him. If you feel that way and think that way about his law.

And you will to do it for those reasons that came from god. And so he's puzzling. How can someone who has these desires? That could not have come from my flesh because i was my sinfulness was exceedingly, simple. I was totally depraved. So where did this love for god?

Come from and where did the slope? Well, it came from him. Well, if it came from him then why aren't i doing it all the time? So it's it's the frustration. The confusion of the internal battle. That actually shows him that he's not in the flesh anymore. But he's actually in christ, now that he's actually in the spirit.

Now, Jesus, for what i'm doing. I do not understand. Here comes the confusion. Here comes the battle. For what i will to do that. I do not practice. But what i hate that i do. If then i do, What i will not do. And here's the clincher. This is what shows you that he's in the spirit.

I agree with the law. That it is good. A wonderful. The law was spiritual, but i was carnal. But now, I agree with the law, that it is good. What does that mean? That means i am now spiritual If you. Belong to christ. You have the same origin. Your current nature your life now.

That is going to be forever. Has the same origin as the bible. God, the holy spirit who has given the laws of god on the pages of scripture. Has also formed the new life in you. By which you had faith in the lord jesus. And that you now live in union with him and dependence upon him.

That is marvelously, encouraging. And he actually takes his misery in the spiritual battle. As evidence of this marvelously, encouraging thing. He says, if then i do what i will not to do, there's the misery the spiritual battle. I, Agree with the law that it is good. There's the evidence.

That this willing, this agreeing, This love for god's law. That has come from god, the holy spirit. So verses 13 through 14, the believer used to be in the flesh. Is to be totally depraved. But now versus 15 and 16. The believer is in the spirit. And yet. Versus 17 to 20.

Even though the believers in the spirit sin, Is still in the believer. And that's what he leads with in verse 17 says. Now it is no longer i you do it. Because i'm not my son, but sin. That dwells in me. Now we're still the ones who do it.

We're still guilty of it. But it is not our identity. It is not our nature. It is part of us that remains. From a former nature. So, it's not like we could say, well, I didn't do that sin, that was dwelling in me did that, so i could do whatever i want.

Well, i hope the eye is the new nature there because the The new nature, whatever it wants is to please God. But that's usually not what people mean when they start thinking like that, or talking like that. So, he sees that there are sin still in in him. And he's got the, what is from him?

That is in him. And he's got the, what is from the spirit and what is from christ by the work of the spirit. And these are the things that battle But what is from the spirit and what is from christ for the believer? That is your identity. That is the core that is the defination of who you are.

And what is left in you, that is from you. That was your identity. And now you are to be. Killing it here to be putting it. To death. As we will hear in verse 13 of the next chapter. If, by the spirit you put to death, the deeds of the body, You will live, but if you live, according to the flesh.

You will die. So there's this flesh that remains in you. That you're supposed to be killing. And that's what he's talking about when he says for. I know that in me, that is in my flesh. In the part of me that comes from totally depraved me, apart from the spirit.

For, i know that in me, that is in my flesh, nothing good. Dwells he's talking again about his old exceedingly, sinful self, he had been talking about in verse 13. Now, he talks about in verse 18 I know that in me, that is in my flesh, nothing good dwells For to will is present with me.

But how to perform, what is good? I do not find in other words. Because we still have remaining sin to battle. It keeps us depending upon grace. Meaning depending upon christ's strengthen us. Not. Having ideas of our own strength. Depending upon christ's goodness for us.

Depending upon christ's goodness for us. And in us, Not having ideas of our own goodness and so verse 18 at the end when he says how to perform, what is good. I do not find. I do not find it where, well i do not find it in me. I didn't find it in my flesh.

I only find it by,

I only find it by my spirit.

I only find it in the spirit, i only find it in christ, it's not in me. And so that's the implied thing. Uh, in verse 18 and he repeats the battle. And comes to the same conclusion about his new nature. For the good that i will to do. I do not do.

But the evil i will not to do that i practice. Now, if i do what i will not to do and here's a parallel. Now, Um, For to verse 16 and verse 16. He concluded. I agree with the law that it is good. And now he's making the same conclusion here.

At the end of verse 20, it is no longer i to do it. In other words, i am that spirit produced person who agrees with the spirit produced law. And yet. Even though the believer is renewed, in the spirit sin still, Dwells in him verse 20. There's no longer i who do it but sin that dwells in me and that's what we call indwelling sin.

Or remaining sin. Those aspects of me in my sinfulness. From my original nature that remain with me. And that i am to be doing battle. With. And not allowed to live according to those impulses desires pleasures. Uh, that belong to my former sinful nature. No, if i live according to the flesh, i will die.

Someone who is in the spirit, doesn't live according to the flesh. He lives. In. Uh, conflict with the flesh. The flesh is there. But he's doing battle against it, if you live, according to the flesh, you will die. But if, by the spirit, in other words, do not living, according, to the flesh, you're living.

According to the spirit, even though the flesh is still there. But the primary principle. Core nature, your identity. Your reality is that you are by the spirit in christ, if by the spirit you put to death. The deeds of the body you will live. So what did the law do and showed us that we were totally depraved.

But the fact that we can see that we were totally depraved and agree with the law that it is. Good shows us that we are no longer. In the flesh, we're we're no longer. Totally depraved. The believer is in the spirit. And yet, even though the believer, Is not in his sin.

There is still sin in the believer, which means He lives a life of constant battle.

So, i hope my children. That you are living life. Battling your sin. That whenever you see yourself responding to god's good commandments with desires to break them, you say, That is a wicked desire. God's law is good and what is from me and in me is bad. But i hope also that as you think this way you're encouraged.

Because that kind of inner thought, life, that hates the sin and loves god's law and says that it's good and wants to obey it. For the fact of its goodness. That only comes from the spirit of god. And don't be. I don't have false expectations. Having the spirit in, you does not mean or being in the spirit does not mean you will not have any sin in you It just means that you'll be battling it for the rest of your life.

Spray. Our father in heaven. We thank you and praise you for your good law, that has exposed. The exceeding sinfulness of our sinfulness. When we thank you that when your spirit gives us life to understand ourselves better and your law better, We agree with your law and Take up arms against our sin, help us so god to take up those arms.

To be. Um, Hostile. Against the sin, as As our enemy. And help us. O lord. To be encouraged that it's your spirit who has done this. Don't let us have false expectations. Lord. But give us the commitment and endurance that believers have. For walking with you, we ask in jesus name, Amen.