

The Christian's war with the flesh

Romans 7:14-25

Introduction

1. The purpose in God's revealing of the law (10 Commandments) was to reveal His own character and will
2. This means that the law is, "holy, righteous and good" (Rom.7:12)
But,
3. There is a problem with how humanity responds to God's law
And to explain the problem,
4. Paul recounts his own pre-Christian experience in Rom.7:7-13, which is true of all humanity
And,
5. The essence of Paul's experience was that:
 1. His own innate sinfulness barred him from recognizing his own wretchedness. Instead of seeing himself as utterly and exceedingly sinful (Rom.7:13); Paul was deceived (Rom.7:11), and saw himself as, righteous and "faultless" in terms of the law (Phil.3:6). Paul believed that he was meriting salvation; when in reality, he was bringing increased judgment upon himself (Rom.7:10)
Biblically, no one is acceptable to God based on their own good works (Rom.3:9-20)

But mercifully,

 2. God intervened in Paul's life. Through a true understanding of the law, God revealed to him, the enormity of his sin, and his critical need of a Saviour

1. Introduction to Romans 7:14-25

1. To whom do these verses refer?
2. Do these verses refer to Paul the believer, or Paul the unbeliever?
3. The structure of these verses ("But" 7:14,15,17,18,19,20,23,25. Implied in 21)
4. Romans 7:14-25 fall into the section on sanctification

2. Paul's Christian life and convictions, with regard to the 10 Commandments (7:14,15,16,18,19,20,21,22,24,25)

1. The nature of the law: It is "spiritual" (7:14); "it is good" (7:16,18)
2. The law, when applied by the Spirit, brings deep conviction of sin (7:24; Phil.3:6)
 1. Paul's pre-conversion position (Phil.3:6)
 2. Paul's post-conversion position (1Tim.^{1:16}~~4:20~~; Rom.7:24)
 1. Note the dramatic change in his self-evaluation
 2. Note that in the light of the realization of his own wretchedness, he knew he could not save himself

3. The Spirit gives the believer a new desire to obey the law (Rom.7:15,16,18b,19,20,21; 8:5)

4. The Spirit binds the believer to the law (7:25b)

5. The Spirit reveals the wonder of the law to the believer: The law reflects God (7:22; 2Cor.4:16; Eph.3:16)

6. God;the Magnificent Redeemer from the curse of the law (7:25a)

3. Paul's heartache in his Christian walk

1. The "principle" at work in the life of the Christian (7:21,23)

2. Negative aspects of the "principle" (7:21,23)

1. The 1st negative aspect (7:21,23,25c)

2. The 2nd negative aspect

1. The evil "principle" has permeated all of Paul's being (7:23) (ESV and NASB)

2. The evil "principle" is ever present in Paul (7:17b,20b,21b,25a)

3. The evil "principle" is immensely powerful (7:14b,23,25c)

4. The evil "principle" is ever engaged in war against the Holy Spirit (7:23; 2Cor.1:21-22)

Conclusion

1. Paul's experience is our experience

2. The effects of sin are not neutralized when we become Christians

3. The power of the **Spirit** in our lives; and the power of sin in our lives; are in constant conflict

4. The power of the **Spirit** in our lives and the power of sin effect every part of our being (Mind, heart, will, emotions and physical body)

5. It is essential then that we are realistic about what **God** requires from us

6. What does God require from His children?

1. That we love him with all our heart soul mind and strength

2. That we are quick to ask for forgiveness and offer forgiveness to others (fruit of the Spirit)

3. That we take communion seriously and seek to ensure that we are right with God and right with our fellows

4. That we are involved in the ministry God gave to each individual to perform

5. That we grow in the faith (mature)

6. Always keep the cross of Christ before us

7. One example of how sin affects our minds