

## The Believer's Struggle with Sin

### *Romans 7:13~25, part 2*

There was a young man who had just heard a preacher preach on the tremendous weight and guilt that Sin brings to one's life. Sarcastically, the young man said, I don't know what you mean by that; I do not adhere to the things you teach, yet I feel no "weight" or no such "guilt." If what you are saying is true, then how do you explain me? To which the preacher thought for a moment, and replied... How much weight would it take, when placed upon a corpse, for the corpse to feel the weight? 400lbs, 600lbs, 1000lbs? The young man with a "smirk" on his face answered... A dead man wouldn't feel the weight no matter how much was placed on him! To which the preacher replied...correct! Thus is true for he who is "DEAD IN HIS SINS..."

One of the most surest and convincing evidences of "spiritual regeneration" in an individual's life, is his/her sensitivity and struggle with Sin! An unregenerate, unspiritual man has no real comprehension of his sin. Reason being, he is "Dead in his Sin..." Over all, he *sees himself as a pretty good old boy*, tries to do what is right...

Well, that's not quite the perception that we see of the man here in this passage... He has a much different view of himself. He sees himself not as "Spiritual," but as **Carnal** (vs. 14). Rather than seeing himself as a pretty good old boy, he sees himself as "incapable" as producing anything Good! (**Vs 18**) It describes a man who has come face to face with his Sin, and understands what righteous is...something he sees himself as being completely "void" of, and totally *incapable of producing*...

The Holy & Righteous Law of God has fulfilled its ministry and purpose in this man's life... The "Light" of God's Law had shown in his heart, and helped him to see things more clearly. The Holy Law of God helped this man see the depraved, sinful nature that was in him! It had revealed Sin in him... Listen to how he describes himself in light of God's Law...

<sup>14</sup>*For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.*

...the law is spiritual: but I am carnal... It is a "Comparison" ...

A comparison given to illustrate the VAST DIFFERENCE between the Law and Man... Paul says, "the Law is Spiritual, and I am Carnal..." suggesting that the difference between the two are "Worlds apart!"

The Law is from the "Spirit World" and I am of the "Physical World."

The Law is "Spiritual" which speaks of what we "cannot see with human eyes..."

I am "Carnal" which speaks of what we "can see with human eyes..."

Two totally different worlds, two totally different things, complete opposites!

And it is "extremely important" to understand this principle...because it becomes the basis of understanding our struggles in living out the Christian life!

Another way to say verse 14... "The Law is spiritual...and **I'm not!**"

I am Carnal...or "Fleshly..." and being *fleshly*, I am "subject to the desires of the Flesh!"

That is the very essence of what Paul is saying in verse 21...

<sup>21</sup>*I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.*

I find, that when I seek to serve God, when I seek to pursue “*spiritual things*”, that I am hindered by the “*desires of my flesh*,” which is in me, the desires that are contrary to the spiritual, and the desires that naturally oppose the spiritual!

Far from “*Seeing*” himself as “*Righteous*” by his adherence to the Law... He sees himself as “*utterly sinful*” when placed in the same sphere as God’s Holy Law! He realizes, that his flesh is utterly incapable of producing anything good!

*<sup>18</sup>For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. <sup>19</sup>For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.*

*<sup>18</sup>For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing...* I would that God would write this truth upon the tables of our heart... The “*picture*” that is portrayed here, is that of a man, trapped inside a body of Sin... That is the way Paul saw himself! Now not that he saw himself as evil...but that he was trapped in evil! And there was nothing he could do, it had him held captive...

*<sup>18</sup>For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing...* It’s obvious by this statement, that the Law had done a good work in Paul’s heart... The Law had manifested the utter depravity of his heart! Depravity means complete lacking or inability to produce righteousness...goodness...

Chapter 3:9~12... There is none Righteousness...no not one! Total Depravity! And in that passage, Paul is comparing the Jew and the Gentile, those who had the Law and those who didn’t! Paul’s point there was that submitting to the Law makes no difference! He says as much in 3:22b~23! All are under Sin!

The Jew submission to the Law only resulted in a “*Self-Righteousness*” that caused them to think they were better than the Gentiles! And outwardly, that might even appear to be true!

Paul had been deceived into believing he was righteous a by his conformity to the Law! Philippians 3 he gives a testimony of his righteousness found in the Law. Righteousness he goes on to call...**DUNG**.

## Why would he say such a thing?

*<sup>18</sup>For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing...*

To have this truth implemented into your life opens the floodgates of God’s Holy Ghost Power to flow through your life! For the person who walks in this truth...must walk in the Holy Spirit’s Power...They will no longer try to “live good”... They will no longer seek to do “good things” for God... Because they realize, the flesh can produce “*no good thing!*”

*<sup>18</sup>For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. <sup>19</sup>For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.*

I want to do good...but to actually do it...its not its not in me! I don’t have the power to do it!

*<sup>20</sup>Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me.*  
Once again, Paul repeats the same thing he said back in verse 17...

*<sup>17</sup>Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me.*  
And there’s an incredible truth in there... It serves as a good definition of what it means to be “*Born from above*,” of being a “*new creature*”...

Now listen, it's very important to understand what Paul is saying here...  
When Paul says, "...it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me."

In no way is Paul trying to "escape" personal responsibility...or "excuse" his sin...  
I guess as long as I live, I'll never forget the time my uncle and I had been playing out in the garden, and had come into the house, and began jumping on Mom's & Dad's bed...with our shoes on... Needless to say, dirt was everywhere! When mom got home, when she saw it, she grabbed us both... I'll never forget my answer to her... "*The devil made me do it...*"

Look closely... Far from making "Excuse" for his sin... Paul declares sin as his "Enemy!"

<sup>20</sup>*Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, **but sin that dwells in me.***

Paul says... **It's not the "Real me..." doing it!**  
It's this *Fleshy, Carnal*, nature that I am bound to that does it!

*If I had it my way, I would serve God with everything that is within me!* I long to fulfill all the commands of my God, I love him and have a deep desire to please him in everything I do... But this SIN that is in my FLESH...it is constantly rearing its ugly head! I hate it! I would to God that he would destroy this thing, and set me free of its power so I could serve Him like I so greatly desire to do!

He "Longs" to fulfill the righteous in the Law, he longs to do God's will...but the problem is, he is greatly hindered by Sin in his flesh! A sin that he "loathes" and despises with all of his heart! It grieves him *to the core of his being*, when he doesn't live up to the desires of his heart for God.

Paul came to learn something that each one of us needs to learn...  
<sup>21</sup>*I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.* <sup>22</sup>*For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:* <sup>23</sup>*But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*

He loves God's Law... He longs to fulfill it with all his heart... But the problem is, he is FLESHLY!  
Every time he tries to *live to the Law*, he has to do battle with the desires of the flesh! Which is contrary to "Spirituality", He has to deal with his carnality...which is the complete opposite of Holiness!

What's he going to do? Or as Paul says it in verse 24...  
<sup>24</sup>*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

<sup>25</sup>*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*  
*So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*