

WHAT THE LAW ACCOMPLISHED | ROMANS 7:7-13

This section is printed from session 19, with minor modifications for the sake of continuity

- Verse 12 - Note that there is no verb in the original, so the insertion of *is* is interpretive, and *was* could be just as easily employed. Furthermore, make note that a **holy, and just, and good** commandment does not make it directly applicable to believers today.
- Paul has made a contrast with the law. in v. 7 he asks **is the law sin?** Then in v. 12 he says the law is **holy**. He goes from a negative argument to a positive argument, attacking any attack of the law from both directions.
- Verse 13 – **working death in me** - This is such a clear concept of what sin does and how it operates.

THE BELIEVER'S BATTLE | ROMANS 7:14-24

- Verse 14 –
 - **the law is spiritual...I am carnal** - The contrast is made between the **spiritual** and the *fleshly*.
 - πνευματικός [pneumatikos] (spiritual) and σαρκικός [sarkikos] (fleshly).
 - The word **carnal** is grammatically accurate, since the word is based on *flesh* (compare the Spanish *carne* is "meat"). However, modern usage has made **carnal** to be *sinful* rather than *fleshly*.
 - The believer strives to **walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit** (Rom. 8:1).
 - **sold under sin** - The entire human race was **sold under sin** in the sin of Adam and Eve. Being then cast from the Garden, we were sentenced to a fleshly life without the ability of the **spiritual** relationship until we were redeemed by the blood of Jesus.
- Verse 15 – **I allow not** - This is somewhat difficult to translate because it is used metaphorically.
 - The word **allow** is γινώσκω [ginosko] (to know).
 - KJV says **allow**, NASB "I do not understand" and Darby "I do not own."
 - It would perhaps be equivalent to our saying, "I didn't know what I was doing," a phrase which doesn't refer to lack of knowledge but lack of moral clarity and conviction. We might follow it up saying, "I was out of my mind." Both of these phrases are tied in with *knowledge*, thus the Greek *ginosko*.
- Verses 16-17 –
 - How does doing **that which I would not** somehow **consent unto the law** (agree with the law?)
 - It acknowledges, with the law, that **sin dwelleth in me**.
 - The law would have no purpose if sin was not a reality.
 - Is this an excuse such as *the devil made me do it?* See note on v. 20, where this verse is repeated.
 - **consent** - That is, agree or concur. σύμφημι [sympheimi] from *sym* (together) and *phemi* (to say).
- Verse 18 –
 - **for I know** –
 - Paul is *not* saying that there is *nothing good in me*. Rather, he is saying that **in my flesh** there **dwelleth no good thing**. Many theologians tend to make this verse say *more* than it actually says, and in doing so make a contradiction with the very next phrase concerning the will. The **sin that dwelleth in me** (v. 17) takes residence in the **flesh**.
 - **for to will...** - The **will** to do good is there, but the performance of that good is not there. This echoes the words of Jesus to Peter, "the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak." The *will* is a thing of the spirit, while the *doing* is a thing of the flesh.
- Verse 19 - These words illustrate the truth of vv. 17-18 and the battle of the will versus the flesh.

- Verse 20 - Having made a contrast between the will and the action, Paul says that the will is the essence of our identity, not the activity. This phrase is not, therefore, an excuse *for* our sin but an explanation *of* our sin.
- Verse 21 - Literally Paul calls this "the law upon me" (Darby). That is, this is not found in the Torah but has been unbreakable in Paul's life.
- Verses 22-23 - As in previous verses (see note on v. 20), Paul contrasts again the *spirit* and the *flesh*, here using the term **inward man** (or **mind**) and **members**. The members represent the flesh and the inward man / mind represent the spirit.
- Verse 24 - The one who does not recognize the human frailty and seek deliverance from the evil of indwelling sin will celebrate the flesh (hedonism) rather than recognizing it as **wretched**.
 - The Greek word for **wretched** is ταλαίπωρος [talaiporos], coming from *talanton* (that which weighs a *talent*) and *peira* (to be pierced through, or put on trial by proving the integrity).
 - So, **wretched** is *my body has been tested through being put on the scales in the worst of circumstances, and I failed to measure up.*

THE BELIEVER'S VICTORY | ROMANS 7:25-8:1

- Verse 25 –
 - **I thank God –**
 - Paul answers his own question of v. 24 - Jesus is the only answer. Jesus was *pierced through for our transgressions* and, unlike us, found worthy. Our trust must be in Him, not in our own goodness.
 - *Note:* Through history, Christians have addressed the struggle of the sin of the flesh in various unbiblical means. Rather than trusting in the completed work of Jesus Christ, they turned to gnosticism (which denied the flesh as a reality), monasticism (which attempted to overcome the flesh by removing it from society), penitential movements (which attempted to punish the flesh) or asceticism (which sought to refocus the flesh in its own strength. This cousin of monasticism seeks to deny the flesh of any indulgence).
 - **So then, with the mind...**
 - Paul gives his final review of the unharmonious dichotomy of **mind** and **flesh**.
 - Note that Paul nowhere says this reality is okay, but rather it is a reality. He will carry the idea further in chapter 8, working to find freedom from the struggle.