

The Christian's Struggle  
(Romans 7: 14 - 25)

Introduction.

- A. Paul has forcefully addressed the issue of the Xn's relationship with sin.
1. Dead to sin (6:1-14).
    - a. A response to both legalism and antinomianism.
    - b. The Xn was united with X in his crucifixion.
    - c. The Xn is united with X in his life.
    - d. Therefore, the Xn need not sin.
      - i. The two-nature concept is erroneous.
      - ii. What we choose to do, we can choose not to do.
  2. A slave to righteousness (6:15-23).
    - a. We were formerly slaves to unrighteousness.
    - b. We are now slaves to righteousness.
    - c. We are all slaves to one or the other but not both.
    - d. The ultimate contrast -- 6:23.
  3. An illustration from marriage (7:1-6).
    - a. The woman who marries another while her husband still lives is an adulteress.
    - b. The woman who marries another after her husband has died is not an adulteress.
    - c. The difference is that there has been a death.
    - d. We were once united to sin through the law. We have died to the law and are now united with X.
- B. Why does the Xn sin?
1. It is painfully obvious that I do sin.
  2. That the Xn sins does not require the presence of the old nature.
    - a. Lucifer sinned without the sinful nature.
    - b. Adam and Eve sinned without the old nature.
    - c. Motivation to sin aside from the sinful nature is found in 1 Jn.2:16.
      - i. Lust of the eyes.
      - ii. Lust of the flesh.
      - iii. Pride of life.
    - d. Illustration of "c" is found in Gen.3:6.
      - i. Good for food = lust of the flesh.
      - ii. Pleasing to the eye = lust of the eyes.
      - iii. Desirable for gaining wisdom = pride of life.
  3. Flesh and body distinction.
    - a. Body isn't sinful.
      - i. It is good as part of creation.
      - ii. It will be raised to immortality.
    - b. The flesh (used ethically) defines the impulse to sin and the outworking of sin regardless of the motivation.
    - c. The Xn who obeys fleshly desires is called "sarkikos," carnal, fleshly, unspiritual.
      - i. Does not mean unregenerate (cf. 1 Cor.3:1).
      - ii. Would have to mean unregenerate if "sarkikos" means old nature.
- C. Paul here describes the Xn's struggle with sin.

I. The contrast (14-20).

A. The law is spiritual (cf. 12).

- 1. The law shows God's righteousness.
- 2. The law does not make me sin.
- 3. The law reveals how utterly sinful I am.
  - a. Before salvation.
  - b. Even after salvation.

B. I am unspiritual.

- 1. I hate to sin -- my deepest desire is to do God's will.
- 2. Yet I love to sin -- there is superficial gratification in sin.

Shows in our list of excuses on why what we've done isn't wrong.

II. The struggle (21-24).

A. There is delight in God's law (showing this is a believer).

B. There is the warfare of evil against God's law.

C. The cry for deliverance.

- 1. Illustrates our helplessness.
- 2. We need a deliverer.

III. Deliverance -- through Jesus Christ (25).