

What's Your Problem?

Romans 7:14-25

Introduction

I The Investigation Of The Problem

- A. Paul describes the law as **spiritual** - Rom 7:12; Heb 4:12
- B. Paul describes himself as **unspiritual** - 1 Cor 1:1-3
 - 1. Sold as a slave to sin - Jn 8:34
 - 2. Enigmatic
 - a. He didn't understand his own **behavior**
 - b. He didn't do what we wanted to do - Gal 5:17-18
 - c. He did the very things he **hated** - Prov 8:13; Rom 12:9

II The Interrogations Of The Potential Suspects

- A. The law is **good** in that it fulfilled its purpose
 - 1. It made Paul **conscious** of sin - Rom 3:20
 - 2. It made Paul accountable to God - Rom 3:19
- B. The inner man is **good** in that it's been transformed by faith
 - 1. Paul concluded that his continued struggle with sin was:
 - a. Not the result of his new inner man - Rom 2:28-29
 - b. But the result of **sin** living in him - Gal 2:20
- C. The sinful flesh is the **culprit**
 - 1. **Nothing** good lived in Paul's sinful flesh
 - 2. He couldn't do the good he wanted to do - Phil 3:12-14
 - 3. The evil he wanted to **avoid** he kept on doing - Ps 19:13
 - 4. Again, Paul concluded that his struggle with sin was:
 - a. Not the result of his new inner man
 - b. But the result of sin living in him - Ps 40:12

III The Verdict

- A. Paul's description of the "law" that was at work
 - 1. When he wanted to do good, evil was right there - Gen 4:7
 - 2. His inner being **delighted** in God's law - Ps 119:47, 49
 - a. But he saw another law at work in his physical body
 - 1. Waging **war** against the law of his mind - Gal 5:17
 - 2. Making him a **prisoner** of the law of sin - Rom 6:6-7, 12-14

- B. Paul's cry for **deliverance**
 - 1. "What a wretched man that I am!" - Is 6:5
 - 2. "Who will rescue me from this body of death?" - Rom 8:23; 2 Cor 1:8-9; 2 Cor 5:4
- C. Paul's exuberant answer
 - 1. "Thanks be to **God** through Jesus Christ our Lord!" - Ps 107:15-16; Zech 5:6; 1 Cor 15:51-58; Phil 3:21
- D. Paul's conclusion
 - 1. In his **mind** he was a slave to God's law
 - 2. In his sinful **flesh** he was a slave to the law of sin

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Take some time this week to consider the following:

1. In what ways is your "spirit willing" but your "flesh weak"? Exercise? Dieting? Spiritual disciplines? Finishing projects around the house? Being a better spouse or parent?
2. In light of your own struggles with sin, what impact does it have on you to read of Paul's inner conflict? Does it help you?
3. What is the paradox that Paul describes in this passage? [Hint: Read Galatians 5:17] Which force does he find stronger in his life? Which do you find stronger in yours?
4. What are some of the "popular" explanations for the fact that believers still struggle with sin? What is Paul's explanation?
5. What events can you look back on in your past and recognize as God's "gift" to bring you to the end of your own self-effort in becoming like Jesus? What events are happening now that He may be orchestrating for that same purpose? How are you responding? How should you respond? [Read 2 Cor 1:8-9]
6. Take a moment to thank God for the events and circumstances of your life and for His promise to complete the work He has begun in you.

BOB HALLMAN - THE EPIC LIFE

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