**The Law of My Mind**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Romans 7:20-25**

**Wednesday Evening**

**July 24, 2024**

**Romans 7:20-25**

20 Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. 21 I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. 22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.

23 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. 24 O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

25 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.

**20 Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.**

Saints, in our sinful nature, there is nothing good. Paul sees this as part of being human.

Although we belong to Christ and have died to sin, we still live in a sinful world and have a sinful nature that is rotten through and through.

The tension continues—trying to do good and not being able to do it.

Paul describes the person who knows what is good and might even desire to do it, but this person lacks the power.

**Philippians 4:13**

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”

Believers still have a sinful nature that pulls them to do what they don’t want to do.

The seeming contradiction of “I do—I don’t do” emphasizes how difficult it is to identify the sources of our sinful behaviors.

Without the Holy Spirit’s help, the person is dominated by the power of sin and continues to do evil when he actually desires to do good.

**1 Peter 1:3-6**

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

**21 I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.**

Saints, the fact of life at work here is the reality that evil is within us, even when we want to do what is right.

**Psalm 14:2-3**

2 The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, To see if there are any who understand, who seek God. 3 They have all turned aside, They have together become corrupt; There is none who does good, No, not one.

In fact, it is when we most want to do good that we become most acutely aware of our propensity not to do so.

A swimmer has no idea how strong the current is until she tries to swim upstream.

When she faces the current, she finds this law at work: the current is against her.

**Romans 3:10-18**

10 As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; 11 There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. 12 They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one."

13 "Their throat is an open tomb; With their tongues they have practiced deceit"; "The poison of asps is under their lips"; 14 "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." 15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood; 16 Destruction and misery are in their ways;

17 And the way of peace they have not known." 18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

**22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.**

Saints, Believers love God’s law (referring to the path of obedience to God that the entire Old Testament presents) because they long to know it and do it and thus to please God.

This is one of the marks of wisdom.

**Psalm 1:2**

But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.

The problem is that there is another law at work within. That other law is the law of sin.

**Romans 8:2**

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death”

Sin is constantly at war because it will not give up the control over us that it lost when we came to faith in Christ.

Sin fights against our mind because our mind is where we make our decisions and our moral judgments.

We cannot resist our sin nature in our own power. When we try, we will be defeated.

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4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

**23 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.**

Saints, Paul does not say that these powers are equal, but he knows they are both there. We must realize the same.

One power must be resisted while relying on the other. When we fail to rely on Christ’s strength for our daily strength, we in essence provide sin with more power over us.

**1 Corinthians 15:56-58**

56 The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Sin’s power will not have grown, but our relative weakness will make it seem that way.

Sin’s power is not an excuse for us to drift spiritually, or openly give in to temptation.

Believers must not forget that they have already won because the Spirit within is greater than the spirit in the world (1 John 4:4).

**1 John 4:4**

You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

**24 O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?**

Saints, our bodies are mortal; they are bodies of death. As long as we live on this earth in our human bodies, we will face this conflict with sin.

Our place of residence is our place of least resistance.

And, as seen above, as long as we are confined to this world, we will experience a measure of struggle and defeat.

But, we are not left in miserable defeat, dominated by sin—rescue will come!

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**25 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.**

Saints, the triumph is sweeter because the struggle is real.

In the last few verses, we have glimpsed the struggle of a genuine believer.

Now the answer is shouted in exclamation.

Many who claim to know Christ never see themselves well enough to appreciate as deeply as Paul did what they actually have in Christ.

Because of Jesus Christ, we are assured of a great future. We will one day join him in eternity with a new body that is free from sin.

**Romans 6:22-23**

22 But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Saints, in the meantime, however, we must realize that we remain in the sinful nature as slaves to sin.

But the answer to who will set us free is in Jesus Christ our Lord. The battle ends with a shout of victory.

The winners know who really won. The winners also know the war isn’t over.

But in the meantime, there are more lessons to learn, and there is more freedom to experience.

**John 8:34-36**

34 Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. 35 And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. 36 Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

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53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.”**