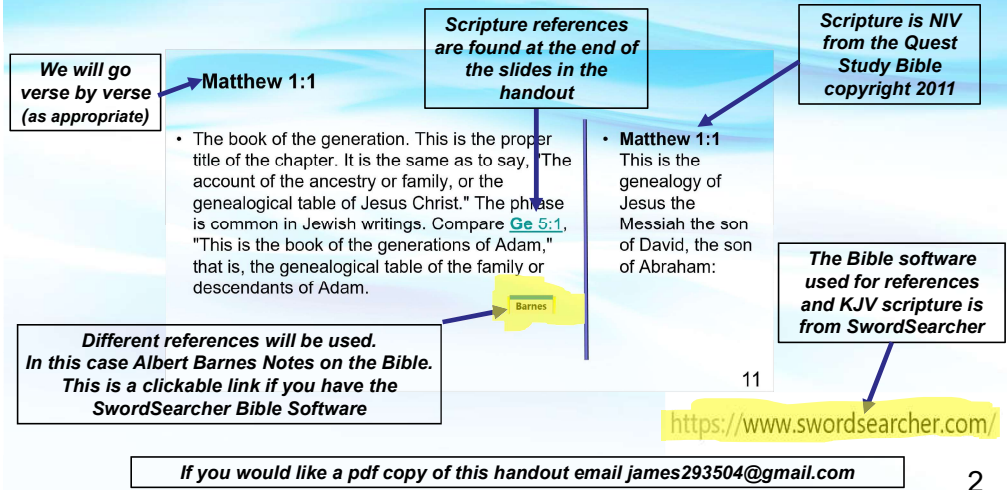


Romans

Chapter 7

4

How this study handout is structured



Zoom Info – Bible Study Meeting Information 8:30 am Wednesday

Click on the link below

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4497575748?pwd=iKMcs9qbngU-vcQo2zCt7lgy9QjRZW8X>

Or Go to <https://zoom.us/join> and enter Meeting ID → 449 757 5748, Passcode 04092006

Or Dial in at 312-626-6799 or 929-205-6099
Enter meeting ID 449 757 5748#
Enter Password 04092006

3

Romans Background and Introduction

I. DOCTRINAL. THE SALVATION OF GOD. Chapters 1-8.

1. Introduction. Chapter 1:1-17.
2. The Need of Salvation Demonstrated. The Whole World Guilty and Lost. Chapter 1:18-3:20.
3. The Righteousness of God Revealed. Justification, What it is and What it Includes. Chapter 3:21-5:11.
4. **In Christ. The Sanctification of the Believer; his Deliverance from Sin and the Law. Children and Heirs.** Chapter **5:12-8:39.**

Gaebelein

4

Chapter 7 Background and Introduction

Few chapters in the Bible have been the subject of more decidedly different interpretations than this. And after all that has been written on it by the learned, it is still made a matter of discussion, whether the apostle has reference, in the main scope of the chapter, to his own experience *before* he became a Christian, or to the conflicts in the mind of a man who is renewed.

Barnes

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Chapter 7 Background and Introduction

The apostle having, in the preceding chapter, shown the converted Gentiles the obligations they were under to live a holy life, addresses himself here to the Jews who might hesitate to embrace the Gospel; lest, by this means, they should renounce the law, which might appear to them as a renunciation of their allegiance to God. As they rested in the law, as sufficient for justification and sanctification, it was necessary to convince them of their mistake. That the law was insufficient for their justification the apostle had proved, in chapters 3, 4., and 5.; that it is insufficient for their sanctification he shows in this chapter; and introduces his discourse by showing that a believing Jew is discharged from his obligations to the law, and is at liberty to come under another and much happier constitution, that of the Gospel of Christ,

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Chapter 7 Background and Introduction

- To set the context for this chapter we will read the summary at the beginning and again at the end.

7

Romans Chapter 7 Background and Introduction

1. The Law and its Dominion. (verses 1-3)
2. Dead to the Law and Married to Another. (verses 4-6)
3. Concerning the Law; its Activities and Purpose. (verses 7-13)
4. The Experience of a Believer in Bondage to the Law. (verses 14-24)
5. The Triumphant Note of Deliverance. (verse 25)

Gaebelein

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Contextual Reading Romans 7:1-3

The Law and Its Dominion

- ¹Do you not know, brothers and sisters—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law has authority over someone only as long as that person lives? ²For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law that binds her to him. ³So then, if she has sexual relations with another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress if she marries another man.

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Romans 7:1

- The apostle continues the comparison between the former and the present state of a believer, and at the same time endeavors to wean the Jewish believers from their fondness for the Mosaic law. I speak to them that know the law - To the Jews chiefly here.

Wesley

- **Romans 7:1** Do you not know, brothers and sisters—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law has authority over someone only as long as that person lives? 10

Romans 7:2-3

The point of analogy in this comparison seems to be this,—that the connection of the accountable agent with the claims and penalties of law, is like that of husband and wife—one which only death can sever. The death, however, which frees the believer from his terrible responsibility, is that spiritual change which takes place when he is united to Christ,—when he dies to sin, and begins to live unto righteousness

Abbott

- **Romans 7:2-3** For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law that binds her to him. So then, if she has sexual relations with another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress if she marries another man.

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Contextual Reading Romans 7:4-6

Dead to the Law and Married to Another

- ⁴So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. ⁵For when we were in the realm of the flesh, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in us, so that we bore fruit for death. ⁶But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.

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Romans 7:4

- To the Jewish believer, then, the announcement is now directly made that he was made dead to the Law through the body of Christ, in order to be to Another, to the risen Christ, thus to bring forth fruit to God; and that he has been [verse 6] discharged from the Law [literally, annulled with respect to the Law], thus bringing him out into service in newness of spirit.(1) This was the startling announcement made to those who, for 1500 years had known nothing but the Law: they had died to it all; the Law knew them no more.
- **Romans 7:4** So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. 13

Romans

Romans 7:5

- *In the flesh*, to which might be opposed *in the Spirit*, denotes our state when under the power of sin, before we had risen to a new life in Christ; it is virtually the same as what is meant by being under the Law, as is shown by the opposed expression in verse 6.
- **Romans 7:5** For when we were in the realm of the flesh, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in us, so that we bore fruit for death.

Pulpit

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Romans 7:6

- As if the apostle had said, "When we lived under the dispensation of the law, and were married to the law, we brought forth fruit suitable to that state and condition. But now being freed from the law, and married unto Christ, it is right, equal and fit, that we should bring forth fruit answerable to our more excellent state and condition. That now we serve God with new hearts and lives by the Spirit of Christ, according to the law of grace, and not carnally in the bondage and terror of the old law, called here **the old way of the written code.**" →
- **Romans 7:6** But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code. 15

Burkitt

Romans 7:6

- Learn, 1. That all sincere and serious Christians, who are dead to the law, and espoused unto Christ, ought to bring forth fruit unto God, suitable to their noble estate, and most honorable condition. Freedom and deliverance from the rigor and curse of the law ought to bind us more strongly to God, to love and serve him, to glorify and obey him.
- Learn, 2. That all true believers, who are freed from the rigor and curse of the law, ought to serve the Lord in true holiness both of heart and life, and to yield a new and universal obedience to him.
- This the apostle here calls **the newness of the Spirit**, to indicate to us, that new obedience is the work of the Holy Spirit in us, as the author of all grace and sanctification. →

Burkitt

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Romans 7:6

- And whereas the **newness of the Spirit** is opposed to the **old way of the written code**; that is, the ministry of the law, which is itself a dead letter, discovering sin, but not discovered how sin may be either pardoned or subdued; we may gather, That the law of God, and indeed the whole word of God, without the Spirit, is but a dead letter, unable to work grace and holiness in us, or to excite and quicken us unto newness of life.

Burkitt

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Contextual Reading Romans 7:7-13 Concerning the Law; its Activities and Purpose

- ⁷What shall we say, then? Is the law sinful? Certainly not! Nevertheless, I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "You shall not covet." ⁸But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of coveting. For apart from the law, sin was dead. ⁹Once I was alive apart from the law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. ¹⁰I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. ¹¹For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. →

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Contextual Reading Romans 7:7-13 Concerning the Law; its Activities and Purpose

- ¹²So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good. ¹³Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! Nevertheless, in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it used what is good to bring about my death, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.

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Romans 7:7-25

Does this passage refer to a justified man or a man still unforgiven?

- It has been much discussed by bible scholars whether this section describes a justified man (regenerate state), or a man still unforgiven (unregenerate state).
- The next two slides, summarize the case for the man still unforgiven (unregenerate state).
- Most scholars believe the section deals with the justified man (regenerate state). This is what is presented in this study and the case will be made for the justified man (regenerate state) as the scriptures are reviewed.

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Romans 7:7

The case for the unregenerate state

- From Romans 7:7 Commentary - In what follows the Apostle speaks throughout in the first person. He is really making a general statement which applies to all mankind; but this statement is based upon his own personal experience. Self-analysis is at the bottom of most profound psychology. The Apostle goes back in thought to the time before he had embraced Christianity, and treats his own case as typical. There can be little question that the description which follows to the end of [Ro 7:24](#) is a description of the *unregenerate* state of man. It is one prolonged crisis and conflict, which at last finds its solution in Christ.

Ellicott

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Romans 7:7

The case for the unregenerate state

- It is difficult to conceive how the opinion could have crept into the Church, or prevailed there, that "the apostle speaks here of his regenerate state; and that what was, in such a state, true of himself, must be true of all others in the same state." This opinion has, most pitifully and most shamefully, not only lowered the standard of Christianity, but destroyed its influence and disgraced its character. It requires but little knowledge of the spirit of the Gospel, and of the scope of this epistle, to see that the apostle is, here, either personating a Jew under the law and without the Gospel, or showing what his own state was when he was deeply convinced that by the deeds of the law no man could be justified, and had not as yet heard those blessed words: Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way, hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost, [Ac 9:17](#).

Clarke

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Romans 7:7

"If so, say some, then the law may seem to be the cause of sin;" **God forbid:** says the apostle. The thought of such a conclusion ought to be detested. Learn, **1.** That the holiest doctrines and truths of God are subject to be perverted and abused, and to have absurd inferences and conclusions drawn from them. **2.** That the ministers of Christ must be able and careful, not only to advocate the truth soundly, but to defend it solidly, against all complaints, and wicked objections, and to declare their utter detestation and utmost disgust of any such opinion as reflects dishonor upon the holy law of God.

Burkitt

- **Romans 7:7** What shall we say, then? Is the law sinful? Certainly not! Nevertheless, I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "You shall not covet." 23

True or False: There is something I am coveting right now.

1. True
2. False

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Romans 7:8

- Every impulse of the flesh, the old natural life, is sin. Take desire, or coveting: who is to know that this inward, universal, natural desire is sin, till the Law says to the conscience, "Thou shalt not covet"? This command not to covet does not remove the covetousness, but rather calls attention to it. And in forbidding it, immediately puts into conflict the renewed human will with the power of indwelling sin,—in this case with covetousness.
- Now, however quickened or renewed the human will may be, strength, power against sin, does not reside in the human will. Furthermore, human strength is not God's way to overcome indwelling sin. That power resides always and only in the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Romans

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- **Romans 7:8**
But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of coveting. For apart from the law, sin was dead.

Romans 7:9-10

- **but when the commandment came**; not to Adam in the garden of Eden; nor to the Israelites on Mount Sinai; but into the heart and conscience of the apostle, with power and light from above:
- **sin revived**; it lift up its monstrous head, and appeared in its ugly shape, exceeding sinful indeed; it grew strong and exerted itself; its struggling's and opposition, its rebellion and corruption were seen and felt, which show that it was not dead before, only seemed to be so; it was in being, and it lived and acted before as now; →

Gill

- **Romans 7:9-10**
Once I was alive apart from the law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death.

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Romans 7:9-10

the difference was not in that, but in the apostle's sense and apprehension of it, who upon sight of it died away:

- **and I died**; he now saw himself a dead man, dead in sin, dead in law, under a sentence of death which he now had within himself; he saw he was deserving of eternal death, and all his hopes of eternal life by his obedience to the law of works died at once; he now experimentally learned that doctrine he so much insisted afterwards in his ministry, and to the last maintained, that there can be no justification of a sinner by the deeds of the law, since by it is the knowledge of sin.

Gill

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Romans 7:9-10

- The words alive apart from law once—to what stage of his life does this refer? We have noted that the Law had not come as a spiritual thing, as commandment, to him in his unregenerate state. Now let us mark that it was not "the Commandment" that came to save him: it was Jesus of Nazareth, in absolute grace, who appeared to him on the Damascus road. Surely if absolute grace ever met a man, it met Saul of Tarsus that day! And the questions that came out of his mouth, "Who art thou, Lord?" "What shall I do, Lord?" have nothing whatever to do with law. He has met a Person, not a code! And when Ananias comes to Saul as he prays, in Judas' house in Straight Street, he speaks nothing to Saul of law: but, "The Lord, even Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou earnest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit." →

Romans

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Romans 7:9-10

- Then Saul immediately begins his joyful, triumphant testimony in the synagogues in Damascus that "Jesus is the Son of God." That was no time for the Commandment to come. God is not speaking to him yet of indwelling sin, but of full and free pardon and justification, through the shed blood of a Redeemer. This fills his soul during the first stage of his Christian life.
- Then he goes away into Arabia, and God begins to exercise him, evidently--as we have shown--no longer concerning sins, for they are pardoned; but concerning indwelling sin.
- It is to that happy, first stage of his Christian life, we believe, that Paul refers when he says, "I was alive apart from law once." He says, "I was alive." Paul would not affirm that a man dead in trespasses and sins was "alive"! →

Romans

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Romans 7:9-10

But let us go over the ground very carefully. Apart from law--these words "apart from law" (Greek, *χωρις νομου*) are exactly the same as in Chapter concerning justification! They indicate therefore, a state of no connection with law. Justification was on grounds where law did not come; and Paul's first condition after salvation was also thus, as we shall see.

- Paul connects with this word "once" the Law's becoming quickened to his soul: When the Commandment came. No: this could not have been during the Tarsus, or Gamaliel, or persecuting days: for Paul says of those very days, "I verily thought I ought to do many things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth." There was no hint there, surely, of a conflict with indwelling sin! But only a steady certainty that he was right. →

Romans

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Romans 7:9-10

Those who would make the struggle of Romans Seven in any sense that of an unregenerate Jew under the Law should remember that for a Jew there was no such struggle! An unregenerate Jew was occupied with outward things, and rested there! If he were ceremonially "clean," and kept the "feasts, new moons, and Sabbath days," there was no "struggle" in his heart. Why should there be? Was he not of the chosen people? and walked he not "according to the ordinances"? Paul was a Pharisee--"a Pharisee of Pharisees"-- being "more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of the fathers." Let him alone at that! There was no "struggle." He was satisfied, serene, apart from any spiritual knowledge of the Law! The Law was a terrible thing. It was a "fiery Law." When Israel heard it, at Sinai, they stood afar off, in terror, and said to Moses, "Let not Jehovah speak with us any more, lest we die"! →

Romans

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Romans 7:9-10

- The Jews, in Paul's day, (as today) held it in the letter. They knew nothing of its holy, "spiritual" character. They were occupied with the length of a "Sabbath day's journey"; or the question of how many nails a man could have in his sandals without "bearing a burden on the Sabbath"; and of "washing their hands to the elbows" before eating ([Mr 7:3](#)). There is not the slightest reason for differing Saul of Tarsus from those other Pharisees who would let the sick, palsied and demon-possessed remain under Satan's bondage-- if only their Sabbath were observed their way! (There is nothing so merciless as self-righteous religion: witness all History!) See Saul holding the clothes of Stephen's murderers! See him "breathing out threatening and slaughter"--mark it--slaughter, wholesale murder, toward "any that were of the Name" of Jesus. →

Romans

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Romans 7:9-10

- What perfect theological folly to conceive that the struggle of Romans Seven had been all along in Saul's heart! That such a monster of murder was at the same time "delighting in the Law of God after the inward man" I No, no! That was before the holy Law, with its "Commandment" for an inner personal holiness,--free, even, from unlawful desire had been quickened to him!
- Paul certainly distinguishes here between his early Christian life of rejoicing in the new-found Redeemer, and that later experience in which God exercises him about indwelling sin and deliverance there from.
- But upon the coming of the Commandment [to my conscience] sin sprang into life, and I died. →

Romans 7:9-10

- Here is seen that crisis described by so many godly saints. it is what some people call "coming under conviction for holiness." "Ye are yet carnal," Paul wrote to the Corinthians. Here he is discovering that state in himself. To Paul, converted, but still thinking himself under law, God uses "the Commandment." He discovers to Paul the spirituality of the Law and lets it command him to be and do. This Paul undertakes, not knowing of the sin dwelling in his members. So, Sin sprang into life, with the result that,--I died, as the following verses describe: it is the death of all hopes in himself, in his flesh.

Romans 7:11

- Sin is personified all through this passage: Let Paul, says Sin, undertake to fulfil this Commandment! Let him keep on trying it!
- How wonderful the consistency of Scripture! Paul was not under Law, being in Christ. God was not "beguiling" Paul in commanding what He knew Paul could not fulfil. But God permitted Sin to "beguile" him, by leading him to rely on his own power to obey, that Paul might find his utter powerlessness, and finally despair of delivering himself. →

- **Romans 7:11**
For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death.

Romans 7:11

- And through it slew me--That is, killed off all his hopes in himself, his "flesh." We all know how endlessly "resolutions" are formed by earnest Christians--honest resolutions to be "better" Christians, to "quit" this or that sin or bad habit: and what failure and despair is the result of relying on our own wills!
- But to Paul, failure was terrible: for there was the Law, the Law of Moses, given by God, under which he had been born and brought up, and constantly instructed. The Law was his hope. And now it helps him? Not at all! Indeed, it becomes the very means by which Sin attacks him. And Sin slays him--that is, all hopes in himself lie vanquished dead! ...

Romans 7:12

- As if he had said, to soothe his countrymen, to whom he had been showing the absolute insufficiency of the law either to justify or save from sin: I do not intimate that there is any thing improper or imperfect in the law as a rule of life: it prescribes what is holy, just, and good; for it comes from a holy, just, and good God.
- The Law, which is to regulate the whole of the outward conduct, is holy; and the Commandment, Thou shalt not covet, which is to regulate the heart, is not less so. All is excellent and pure; but it neither pardons sin nor purifies the heart; and it is because it is holy, just, and good, that it condemns transgressors to death.

Clarke

- **Romans 7:12**
So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.

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Romans 7:13

- St. Paul was once a Pharisee, ignorant of the spirituality of the law, having some correctness of character, without knowing his inward depravity. When the commandment came to his conscience by the convictions of the Holy Spirit, and he saw what it demanded, he found his sinful mind rise against it. He felt at the same time the evil of sin, his own sinful state, that he was unable to fulfil the law, and was like a criminal when condemned.

MHCC

- **Romans 7:13** Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! Nevertheless, in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it used what is good to bring about my death, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful. 38

Contextual Reading Romans 7:14-24 The Experience of a Believer in Bondage to the Law

- ¹⁴We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. ¹⁵I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. ¹⁶And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. ²¹So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²²For in my inner being I delight in God's law; →

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Contextual Reading Romans 7:14-24 The Experience of a Believer in Bondage to the Law

- ²³but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. ²⁴What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?

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Introduction - Romans 7:14-24

The Experience of a Believer in Bondage to the Law

- In general, we may say that in verses 14 to 17, the emphasis is upon the practicing what is hated,—that is, the inability to overcome evil in the flesh; while in verses 18 to 21, the emphasis is upon the failure to do the desired good,—the inability, on account of the flesh, to do right. Thus the double failure of a quickened man either to overcome evil or to accomplish good—is set forth. There must come in help from outside, beyond himself! This, of course, is the indwelling Spirit, as the eighth chapter so vividly portrays.
- In narrating in particular the account of his great struggle in verses 14 to 23, we find the apostle arriving at three definite conclusions.
→

Romans

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Introduction - Romans 7:14-24

The Experience of a Believer in Bondage to the Law

- First, In doing what he is not wishing, but practicing what he is hating, his conclusion is: "If what I am not wishing, that I am doing, I am consenting unto the Law that it is right." Verses 14 to 16.
- Second, It is indwelling sin, and not his real self, that is working out this evil: "But if what I am not wishing, this I am practicing, no longer is it I that am working it out, but on the contrary, sin which dwelleth in me." Verses 17 to 20.
- Third, There is the terrible revelation of a positive settled principle, of sin in his members, defeating him despite his inward delight in the Law of God:—"bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members." Verse 23.

Romans

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Introduction - Romans 7:14-24

The Experience of a Believer in Bondage to the Law

- *Two men in one man.*—The two men in the one man are the carnal man and the inward man. As we read the history of these two men we wonder at St. Paul's power of mental analysis. He skillfully uses the pen and the discriminating power of the metaphysician. He has accurately read and studied the workings of human nature; and this result could only have been reached by the intense observation of the workings of his own nature. "Know thyself" is the old precept. Self-knowledge prepares the way for other-self knowledge. These verses, then, contain a record of the workings of St. Paul's nature. He finds in himself two men, one low and the other noble; and he mourns that the lower man so often gains the mastery over the noble man. Let us look at:— →

PHC

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Introduction - Romans 7:14-24

The Experience of a Believer in Bondage to the Law

- **I. The two men.**—The one man is carnal, sold under sin. This carnal man serves the law of sin. Thus he is base in the extreme. He is of the earth earthy, and does not strive upward towards the true and the good. The other man is spiritual—at least he is so far spiritual that he loves the law which is spiritual; for this inward man delights in the law of God, and consents unto the law that is good. How opposite the characters! How striking the contrast between the two men that dwell together in the one man! There is no need for us to ask the question whether St. Paul here speaks of the regenerate or the unregenerate man. This much may be safely affirmed, that every man who is candid to himself and his fellows →

PHC

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Introduction - Romans 7:14-24

The Experience of a Believer in Bondage to the Law

- must confess that oftentimes he sinks so low as to be compelled to ask, Is there in me any spiritual life? I profess Christianity, but what would my uncharitable neighbors say of my religion if all the secret workings and downfalls of my lower nature were proclaimed on the housetops? How often have we lamented the beastly which has shown itself?

PHC

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Introduction - Romans 7:14-24

The Experience of a Believer in Bondage to the Law

- Does sin ever quit? (7:14–25) Sin will not quit until the final coming of God's kingdom; at that time the fallen world will no longer exist, for there will be a new heaven and a new earth (Rev 21:1), and our mortal bodies will be changed to immortal bodies (1Co 15:53–54). Sin will keep knocking at our door as long as we live in this broken, rebellious, twisted world. Paul said we have died to sin (Ro 6:2), that is, sin's claim on our lives has been broken. We do not have to give in to it any longer. As Christians, we have the Holy Spirit within us (8:9–11), giving us the power to resist sin's advances and live a strong, new life (Gal 5:13–25). But we must choose to resist sin. Every day. Every moment of every day. →

Quest
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BIBLE

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Introduction - Romans 7:14-24

The Experience of a Believer in Bondage to the Law

- What level of victory over sin can we expect before the day when Christ returns? Less important than the degree of victory is the direction we're going. We can expect that as we learn to consistently yield more of our will to the Holy Spirit, we will move progressively in the direction of obedience. When we fail and do not choose to trust the Spirit to empower us, we can confess our sins, receive forgiveness and keep moving forward. And one day, when Christ returns, we will be completely free from sin's influence.

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Romans 7:14

Romans 7:14 (KJV) For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, **sold under sin.**

- **Sold under sin:** This is slave-market talk: and it describes all of us by nature. Instead of being spiritual and therefore able to hearken to, delight in and obey God's holy spiritual Law, we are turned back, since Adam sinned, to a fleshly condition, our spirits by nature dead to God, and our soul-faculties under the domination of the still unredeemed body. Now Paul, though his spirit was quickened; and his inward desires, therefore, were toward God's Law; found to his horror his state by nature "carnal," fleshly, "sold under sin." →
- **Romans 7:14** We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin.

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Romans 7:14

Romans 7:14 (KJV) For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, **sold under sin**.

How little humanity realizes this awful, universal fact about man-- "sold under sin" !

- "Sold under sin" is exactly what the new convert does not know! Forgiven, justified, he knows himself to be: and he has the joy of it! But now to find an evil nature, of which he had never become really conscious, and of which he thought himself fully rid, when he first believed, is a "second lesson" which is often more bitter than the first--of guilt!

Romans

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Romans 7:14

Romans 7:14 (KJV) For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, **sold under sin**.

- We must constantly remember throughout this struggle that it is not a description by the apostle Paul of an experience he was having when he wrote this Epistle! but an experience of a regenerate man before he knows either about indwelling sin or that he died to sin and to the Law which gives sin its power; and who also does not know the Holy Spirit, as an indwelling presence and power against sin. God let Paul have this experience. And he now writes about it that we may read and know all the facts of our salvation: not merely of the awful guilt of our sins, and our forgiveness through the blood of Christ; but also of the moral hideousness of our old selves; and our powerlessness, though regenerate, to deliver ourselves, from "the law of sin" in our members.

Romans

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Romans 7:14

Romans 7:14 (KJV) For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, **sold under sin**.

- *The law is spiritual (Ro 7:14)*, not only in regard to the effect of it, as it is a means of making us spiritual, but in regard to the extent of it; it reaches our spirits, it lays a restraint upon, and gives a direction to, the motions of the inward man; *it is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, Heb 4:12*. It forbids spiritual wickedness, heart-murder, and heart-adultery. It commands spiritual service, requires the heart, obliges us to worship God in the spirit. It is a spiritual law, for it is given by God, who is a Spirit and the Father of spirits; it is given to man, whose principal part is spiritual; the soul is the best part, and the leading part of the man, and therefore the law to the man must needs be a law to the soul. Herein the law of God is above all other laws, that it is a spiritual law.

MHWBC

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Romans 7:14

Romans 7:14 (KJV) For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, **sold under sin**.

So may, 1. every unregenerate man truly say, **I am carnal**, having not only flesh in me, but prevailing in me, sin having a regency and dominion over me: he fights under the banner of corrupt nature, acting in a willing, ready, and full subjection to sin, and compliance with it; he is carnal, being under the power and unbroken strength of carnal lusts, and sensual propensions, and following them in the daily course of his life.

2. **I am carnal**, may a regenerate person truly say,

1. With respect to that exact purity and spirituality both of heart and life; which the holy law of God requires; the law is spiritual, but I, alas! compared with the spiritual law, am but a lump of corruption, →

Burkitt

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Romans 7:14

Romans 7:14 (KJV) For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, **sold under sin**.

coming infinitely short, God knows, of that uprightness and spirituality which the law of God requires.

2. A regenerate person may truly say he is carnal, that is, in part, in part so, having much, too much carnality in his carnal affections found with him, and carnal infirmities cleaving to him:

Such as are truly acquainted with the spirituality of the word and law of God, and also well acquainted with their own hearts, do see sufficient cause to complain of carnal corruption abiding in them and cleaving to them. **I am carnal**, have said, and may say, the holiest of saints, with respect to the perfect measure and degrees of holiness.

Burkitt

53

I can live so sin free through the power of the Holy Spirit that _____

1. Most days I do not even have to ask for forgiveness of sins when I pray.
2. Some days I do not even have to ask for forgiveness of sins when I pray.
3. Although empowered with the Holy Spirit, I have to ask for forgiveness everyday because I know I have sinned.

54

Romans 7:15

- ...we must observe, that this conflict, of which the Apostle speaks, does not exist in man before he is renewed by the Spirit of God: for man, left to his own nature, is wholly borne along by his lusts without any resistance; for though the ungodly are tormented by the stings of conscience, and cannot take such delight in their vices, but that they have some taste of bitterness; yet you cannot hence conclude, either that evil is hated, or that good is loved by them; only the Lord permits them to be thus tormented, in order to show to them in a measure his judgment; →

Calvin

- **Romans 7:15** I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.

55

Romans 7:15

but not to instill them either with the love of righteousness or with the hatred of sin.

- There is then this difference between them and the faithful — that they are never so blinded and hardened, but that when they are reminded of their crimes, they condemn them in their own conscience; for knowledge is not so utterly extinguished in them, but that they still retain the difference between right and wrong; and sometimes they are shaken with such dread under a sense of their sin, that they bear a kind of condemnation even in this life: nevertheless they approve of sin with all their heart, and hence give themselves up to it without any feeling of genuine repugnance; for those stings of conscience, by which they are harassed, →

Calvin

56

Romans 7:15

Galatians 5:17 (KJV) For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

proceed from opposition in the judgment, rather than from any contrary inclination in the will. The godly, on the other hand, in whom the regeneration of God is begun, are so divided, that with the chief desire of the heart they aspire to God, seek celestial righteousness, hate sin, and yet they are drawn down to the earth by the relics of their flesh: and thus, while pulled in two ways, they fight against their own nature, and nature fights against them; and they condemn their sins, not only as being constrained by the judgment of reason, but because they really in their hearts abominate them, and on their account loathe themselves. This is the Christian conflict between the flesh and the spirit of which Paul speaks in Galatians 5:17.

Calvin 57

Romans 7:15

- ...it is in fact the experience of all Christians. The habitual, fixed inclination and desire of their minds is to serve God. They have a fixed abhorrence of sin; and yet they are conscious of imperfection, and error, and sin, that is the source of uneasiness and trouble. The strength of natural passion may in an unguarded moment overcome them. The power of long habits of previous thoughts may annoy them. A man who was an infidel before his conversion, and whose mind was filled with skepticism, and complaints, and blasphemy, will find the effect of his former habits of thinking lingering in his mind, and annoying his peace for years. These thoughts will start up with the rapidity of the lightning. Thus, it is with every vice and every opinion. →

Barnes 58

Romans 7:15

It is one of the effects of *habit*. "The very passage of an impure thought through the mind leaves pollution behind it;" and where sin has been long indulged, it leaves its withering, desolating effect on the soul long after conversion, and produces that state of conflict with which every Christian is familiar.

Barnes 59

Romans 7:16

- The very struggle with evil shows that it is not loved, or approved, but that the law which condemns it is really loved. Christians may here find a test of their piety. The fact of struggling against evil--the desire to be free from it, and to overcome it, the anxiety and grief which it causes--is an evidence that we do not love it, and that therefore we are the friends of God. Perhaps nothing can be a more decisive test of piety than a long-continued and painful struggle against evil passions and desires in every form, and a panting of the soul to be delivered from the power and dominion of sin.
- **Romans 7:16**
And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good.

Barnes

60

Romans 7:17

- *It is no more I that do it.* This is evidently figurative language, for it is really the man that sins when evil is committed. But the apostle makes a distinction between *sin* and that which he intends by the pronoun *I*. By the former he evidently means his corrupt nature; by the latter he refers to his renewed nature, his Christian principles. He means to say that he does not approve or love it in his present state, but that it is the result of his native propensities and passions. In his heart, and conscience, and habitual feeling, he did not choose to commit sin, but detested it. Thus every Christian can say that he does not choose to do evil, but would wish to be perfect; that he hates sin, and yet that his corrupt passions lead him astray.

Barnes

61

- **Romans 7:17** As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me.

Romans 7:17

1 John 3:9 (KJV) Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

- **Now then, it is no more I that do it,** This is another inference, deduced from what is before said, that since he did not approve, but hated what he did, and willed the contrary, it was not he as spiritual, as born again, as a new man, a new creature, that did it; see [1Jo 3:9](#). He says,
- **But sin that dwelleth in me;** the old man, the carnal I, the evil present with him, the law in his members; which not only existed in him, and wrought in him, and that at times very strongly, but dwelt in him, had its abode in him, as it has in all regenerate persons, and will have, as long as they are in the body.

Gill

62

Romans 7:18

- *For I know.* This is designed as an illustration of what he had just said, that sin dwelt in him. *That is, in my flesh.* In my unrenewed nature; in my propensities and inclinations before conversion. Does not this qualifying expression show that in this discussion he was speaking of himself as a renewed man? Hence, he is careful to imply that there was at that time in him something that was right or acceptable with God, but that that did not pertain to him by nature.
- *I find not;* he found he had no strength of himself to do what he willed; and that he could do nothing without Christ; and that what he did by the strength and grace of Christ, he did not do perfectly. ...

Barnes

Gill

63

- **Romans 7:18** For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.

Romans 7:19

- Now this verse must not be for one moment misapplied, that is, it must not be made to describe Paul's "manner of life in Christ Jesus," which was, as we know, victorious, and fruitful and always rejoicing. But verse 19 does indeed express concerning Paul, and all of us, all the time, our utter powerlessness in ourselves (though Christians) against the evil of the flesh: whether we are consciously under Moses' Law, as was Paul, or convicted by the power of an awakened conscience that we ought to have deliverance from our sinful, selfish selves, and walk in victory in Christ. Verse 19 is not normal Christian experience, certainly. **But it may describe our very case, if we have not learned God's way of faith.**

Romans

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- **Romans 7:19** For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing.

Romans 7:19

- This is substantially a repetition of what is said in [Ro 7:15](#). The repetition shows how full the mind of the apostle was of the subject; and how much inclined he was to dwell upon it, and to place it in every variety of form. It is not uncommon for Paul thus to express his intense interest in a subject, by placing it in a great variety of aspects, even at the hazard of much repetition. Barnes
- These two verses are a repetition of what he had said, [Ro 7:15,17](#). Every new man is two men; there is in him an I and an I. The apostle in his unregenerate state, could make no such distinction as now he doth. Poole

65

Romans 7:20

- **Now if I do that I would not,**..The same conclusion is formed here, as in [Ro 7:17](#), not with any view to excuse himself from blame in sinning, but to trace the lusts of his heart, and the sins of his life, to the source and fountain of them, the corruption of his nature; and to ascribe them to the proper cause of them, which was not the law of God, nor the new man, but sin that dwelt in him. Gill
- **Romans 7:20**
Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

66

Romans 7:21

- He now states as a settled conclusion, what he has experimentally discovered. And we all need to consent to the fact--even if we have found God's way of deliverance, that evil is present. It is the denial of this fact that has wrecked thousands of lives! For evil will be present until the Lord comes, bringing in the redemption of our bodies. Romans
- **Romans 7:21**
So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me.

67

Romans 7:21

As if the apostle had said, "I verily find sin, having an impelling power and impulsive virtue in it, like a law in my members, thwarting and contradicting the inclinations of my mind, and the resolutions of my will, that **when I would do good, evil is present with me** to oppose and hinder me from the doing of it." Note here, A double burden which the apostle complained of;

1. Of presence of sin at all times, **Evil is present with me**. It follows me, as if he had said, and is as inseparable from me as my shadow. This he calls a law, because of its mighty power and efficacy, and because of its constant residence in his nature. →

Burkitt

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Romans 7:21

2. Of the operation of it, especially at some particular and special times and seasons. **When I would do good, then evil is present with me.** As if he had said, "When I address myself to any holy duty, and heavenly employment, when I desire and design to draw near to God, and would hope for the sweetest fellowship and communion with him, then, alas! then to my great sorrow, is **evil present with me.**"

Ah, when I promise myself most comfort and communion in the enjoyment of my God, how do I then find a bad heart in the best season, a dead and drowsy spirit when I would be most spiritual in the duties I perform!" →

Burkitt

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Romans 7:21

From this we learn, That the holiest and best of saints in this their imperfect state, do sensibly feel, and sadly lament, the working of sin and corruption in them,; and that in the very seasons and opportunities of their communion with God; **When I would do good, then evil is present with me.**

Burkitt

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Romans 7:22

- Verse 22. *For I delight.* The word used here (συνηδομαι) occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It properly means, to rejoice with anyone; and expresses not only *approval* of the understanding, as the expression, "I *consent* unto the law," in [Ro 7:16](#), but, more than that, it denotes sensible pleasure in the heart. It indicates not only *intellectual* assent, but *emotion*--an emotion of pleasure in the contemplation of the law. And this shows that the apostle is not speaking of an unrenewed man. Of such a man it might be said that his conscience approved the law; that his understanding was convinced that the law was good; but never yet did it occur that an unrepentant sinner found emotions of pleasure in the contemplation of the pure and spiritual law of God.

Barnes

71

- **Romans 7:22** For in my inner being I delight in God's law;

Romans 7:23

- The law of the mind in this place is not to be understood as referring to the mind as it is naturally, and as our mind is from our birth, but of the mind which is renewed by the Spirit of God.
- **Law of sin at work within me;** propensities to evil which, notwithstanding all that grace has done, are not entirely removed. Christians of the greatest experience and highest attainments in the divine life, are not what they ought to be; not what they desire to be; not what they hope to be; not what God has promised that they shall be; and not what through grace, in fulfilment of his promise, they for ever will be--perfect even as their Father in heaven is perfect.

Geneva

FBN

72

- **Romans 7:23** but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me.

Romans 7:24

O wretched man that I am! The feeling implied by this lamentation is the result of this painful conflict; and this frequent subjection to sinful propensities. The effect of this conflict is **(1.) to produce pain and distress**, it is often an agonizing struggle between good and evil; a struggle which annoys the peace and renders life wretched. **(2.) It tends to produce humility**. It is humbling to man to be thus under the influence of evil passions. It is degrading to his nature; a stain on his glory; and it tends to bring him into the dust, that he is under the control of such propensities, and so often gives indulgence to them. →

Barnes

- **Romans 7:24**
What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?

73

Romans 7:24

In such circumstances, the mind is overwhelmed with wretchedness, and instinctively sighs for relief. Can the law aid? Can man aid? Can any native strength of conscience or of reason aid? In vain all these are tried, and the Christian then calmly and thankfully consents in the consolations of the apostle, that aid can be obtained only through Jesus Christ.

Who shall deliver me. Who shall rescue me; the condition of a mind in deep distress, and conscious of its own weakness, and looking for aid.

This body that is subject to death. The word body here is probably used as equivalent to flesh, denoting the corrupt and evil propensities on the soul. →

Barnes

74

Romans 7:24

It is thus used to denote the law of sin in the members, as being that with which the apostle was struggling, and from which he desired to be delivered. The expression "body of this death" is a trait or characteristic of the Hebrew language, denoting a body deadly in its tendency; and the whole expression may mean the corrupt principles of man; the carnal, evil affections that lead to death or to condemnation. The expression is one of vast strength, and strongly characteristic of the apostle Paul. It indicates,

(1.) that it was near him, attending him, and was distressing in its nature. →

Barnes

75

Romans 7:24

(2.) An earnest wish to be delivered from it. ... No strength of words could express deeper feeling; none more feelingly indicate the necessity of the grace of God to accomplish that to which the unaided human powers are incompetent.

Barnes

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Romans 7:25

The Triumphant Note of Deliverance

- *I thank God.* That is, I thank God for effecting a deliverance to which I am myself incompetent. There is a way of I of rescue and trace it altogether to his mercy in the Lord Jesus Christ. **What conscience could not do, what the law could not do, what unaided human strength could not do, has been accomplished by the plan the gospel; and complete deliverance can be expected there, and there alone.** This is the point to which all his reasoning had tended; and having thus shown that the law was insufficient to effect this deliverance,
→

Barnes

- **Romans 7:25**
Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!
So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

77

Romans 7:25

he is now prepared to utter the language of Christian thankfulness that it can be effected by the gospel. The superiority of the gospel to the law, in overcoming all the evils under which man labors, is thus triumphantly established. Compare. [1Co 15:57](#)

Barnes

- **1 Corinthians 15:57 (KJV)** But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

78

Romans 7:25

Summary

- It is of the utmost importance clearly to see that the great struggle of the latter part of Romans 7 is neither a purely Jewish one, nor a normal Christian walk, nor a necessary Christian experience....
- Neither is this struggle a normal Christian experience. For (1) there is no mention of Christ until the legal struggle is ended in self-despair,--and (2) There is no mention whatever of the Holy Spirit--whose recognized presence and power make possible proper Christian experience: which is "walking by the Spirit."
- That it is not a normal Christian walk, we have also shown from Paul's own triumphant life. And that it is not a necessary Christian experience, is seen from the fact that Paul is, in this struggle, →

Romans 79

Romans 7:25

Summary

occupied with the Law,--under which God says believers are not! The complete Gospel believed, makes such a struggle unnecessary and indeed impossible. For the gospel reveals (as in Romans and , and all Chapter [Ro 8](#)) (1) that we died with Christ and are now alive unto God in Christ Risen; (2) that those under Law were made dead to and discharged from the legal economy; (3) that the Holy Spirit indwelling the believer has taken over the conflict with the flesh; and is the whole power of a triumphant walk; (4) that therefore there is no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus, and no separation from God's love to those in Him! →

Romans

80

Romans 7:25 Summary

- Doubtless we often see other Christians having a Seventh-of-Romans struggle and shall easily find ourselves falling into such a struggle. But as the gospel concerning our death with Christ both to sin and to the legal principle becomes clear to us, and our faith therein becomes strong; and our reliance upon the Holy Spirit becomes more constant, we shall walk as Paul did:--"Thanks be unto God who always leadeth us in triumph in Christ."
- The path of faith is the most hateful path possible for the flesh. Faith gives the flesh no place--leaves no "part" for man's will and energy. The flesh will go to any degree of religious self-denial, or self-inflicted sufferings--anything but death! →

Romans

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Romans 7:25 Summary

- But faith begins right there: we died with Christ, we live in Him! We have no righteousness, no strength,--and desire none: Christ is our righteousness, and "when we are weak, we are strong."
- Thus the walk of simple-hearted faith is indeed in another realm from the struggle of Romans Seven. God give us to have faith "as a little child," a cloudless, unmixed vision, as had Paul at last!
- When the demand, however, arises in our hearts that we be what we find written in the Epistles, the effect is the same exactly as in Paul's case as regards the discovery of powerlessness. ... The conscience becomes suddenly awakened. We see that we have been content with a righteous standing, without a really holy walk. →

Romans

82

Romans 7:25 Summary

If we have seen that we died with Christ; and are properly instructed, we shall, upon such awakening,

- (1) Know that there is deliverance in Christ for us, whether we are yet able, or not, in living faith to reckon that we are dead unto sin and alive unto God.
- (2) We shall be, or become, willing to have God show us how, or wherein, we are still holding fast to any sin, or any indulgence of the flesh.
- (3) We shall be brought, by God's grace, to agree to the sentence of death that has already been pronounced on this particular thing, when our old man,--all our old self, was crucified with Christ. →

Romans

83

Romans 7:25 Summary

- (4) Then we shall enter into the place of reckoning our- selves dead to sin, and to this darling sin, and to all sin,--as God commands His saints who have died with Christ.
- (5) We may have, if necessary, a struggle here: as James shows: "Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? . . . God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. Be subject therefore to God; but resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you!" →

Romans

84

Romans 7:25 Summary

- And now see his following words:
- "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners"--those saints indulging known sin. "And purify your hearts, ye doubleminded"-- those believers who have been half for the world, while half for heaven. "Be afflicted, and mourn and weep." (Not that God is unwilling, but that we are!) "Let your laughter" (which has been the fool's laughter of this condemned world!) "be turned to mourning, and your joy" (which has been the joy of worldlings, not of heaven-bound saints) "to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall exalt you!" →

Romans

85

Romans 7:25 Summary

- This is the path for worldly Christians. Not that the grace of God is insufficient: but they have been rejoicing with a condemned world! And they must come out of that, though in bitterness.
- However, the bitterness need not be,--if we are willing! "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the fruit of the land." And nothing will persuade our hearts like the goodness of God, in the gift of His Son, and the work of the cross, already accomplished on our behalf.
- Whether, then, it be a soul under law, or one in greater light: there will be the discovery of our own utter powerlessness, and of deliverance--from sin and self, in our Lord Jesus Christ! →

Romans

86

Romans 7:25 Summary

- And this is the object of the revelation of Paul's great struggle,--not mere information, but application of these lessons to ourselves. For if we go through Chapters Six and Seven unexercised of soul, how shall we learn the blessed walk in the Spirit of Chapter Eight?
- For "the flesh" is there--in Chapter Eight--all unchanged! And unless we practically learn,--learn for and regarding our own selves--the great lesson that in ourselves, in "the whole natural man," there is no good; that even when we will to do good, evil is yet present, and dominant! and that help for us, for our very selves, must come from without: unless we learn this holy self-despair; we will not enter into actual spiritual deliverance in Christ: but will only be "puffed up" by our study. →

Romans 87

Romans 7:25 Summary

- For mere knowledge "puffeth up." But we all know that Paul was not puffed up when he cried, "O wretched man that I am!" And if Paul found a body of death to be delivered from, you and I have that same body of death! And we too must be brought to say, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Romans

88

Reference Scriptures

- **Acts 9:17 (KJV)** And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.
- **Galatians 5:17 (KJV)** For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.
- **Hebrews 4:12 (KJV)** For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.