

Wednesday Word

February 28, 2024

Romans 7:15-17 For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. ¹⁷ So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

When I was a kid, my church would send us on day trips and overnight camps to Camp Seymour out in Gig Harbor. It was a great camp with great hiking trails, canoeing, basketball courts, archery, swimming in the summer and huge wooded areas to run around and play capture the flag at night with my friends. It was the best place to be a young boy and have adventures.

One year I was about 10 or 11 years old, and I stayed out at the camp for a Royal Ranger event for three days. The entire troop divided up into three cabins and we would all sleep on bunks beds at night and do activities during the day. If there is one thing I know, is that when you get a group of 20 or 30 young boys together, mischief is bound to happen.

The very first day we arrived this particular year, my cabin was right next to the septic tank system. Naturally, we went out and tried to dig it up and almost got one of the lids off. It was a bit heavy for us, so we just left the lid ajar and went on to our next adventure. As we were getting ready for campfire that evening, I, and a few other boys were messing around the septic tank again. The lid was still ajar and one of the boys dared me to stand on it. I of course rejected the dare but then he double-dog dared me, and I had to prove myself. I went up to the slightly wobbling lid not thinking anything would happen. I put one foot on the concrete lid and when I shifted my weight to bring the other foot on as well, the lid slipped, and my entire leg went straight into the tank.

I will never forget this as long as I live. The smell, the oozing discomfort that swarmed my leg, the heckling laughter of all my friends that turned very quickly into severe disgust and the stench of the tank reached them. I had to pull myself out and hold back the retching. I began to make my way to the cabin, but my “friends” had locked the door and refused to let me in. I had to take off my shoes and my pants and my shoes before they would agree to let

me in to change. While I had plenty of clothes to change into, I had only one pair of shoes. Needless to say, it was an uncomfortable next few days in that shoe.

While it makes for a funny childhood story, there is some spiritual lesson behind it. We can find ourselves falling into sin if we are not careful. We can even fall into sin if we think we are strong and don't recognize the trap of the enemy to bring us down.

We can get very comfortable in our spiritual walks with Jesus; we can put our guard down and become unaware of temptations that are right at our doorstep. If we are not vigilant; if we are not prayed up and filled with the Holy Spirit and God's Word, we can fall into the trap of sin and our lives will smell like an unholy mess.

Sin is meant to ensnare us, to entangle us once it's got its evil hooks in us and keep us bound up. We can never be so foolish as to think we are strong enough alone to withstand temptation. When Jesus was tempted in the desert, he spoke the Word of God to Satan to defuse the temptations. He was able to speak to them because he had them hidden in his heart and mind. The best defense against sin is God's Word. If we are in it daily, we will be ready. If we neglect this discipline, we could very easily fall into sin's trap.

Let's commit to staying strong in God's Word!

I Love you and God Loves you!

Pastor Eric