

10/31/2021

The Struggle

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Romans 7:1-25 ¹Do you not know, brothers (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law has authority over a man only as long as he lives? ²For instance, a married woman is bound by law to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage. ³So then, if she is joined to another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law and is not an adulteress, even if she marries another man. ⁴Therefore, my brothers, 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 to God. ⁵For when we lived according to the flesh, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, bearing fruit for death. ⁶But now, having died to what 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. ⁷What then shall we say? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed, I would not have been mindful of sin if not for the law. For I would not have been aware of coveting if the law had not said, "Do not covet." ⁸But sin, seizing its opportunity through the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from the law, sin is dead. ⁹Once I was alive apart from the law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. ¹⁰So I discovered that the very commandment that was meant to bring life actually brought death. ¹¹For sin, seizing its opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through the commandment put me to death. ¹²So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous, and good. ¹³Did that which is good, then, become death to me? Certainly not! But in order that sin might be exposed as sin, it produced death in me through what was good, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful. 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 admit that the law is good. ¹⁷In that case, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. ¹⁸I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my flesh; 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. Instead, I keep on doing the evil I do not want to do. ²⁰And if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. ²¹So this is the principle I have discovered: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²²For in my inner being I delight in God's law. ²³But I see another law at work in my body, warring against the law of my mind and holding me captive to the law of sin that dwells within me. ²⁴What a wretched man I am!

Who will rescue me from this body of death? ²⁵Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with my mind I serve the law of God, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin. (BSB)

I. What can we learn from this passage?

- A. Paul uses an illustration from marriage to show the relationship that we have with the law. V.1
- B. We are bound by the law until we die to what binds us. V. 2-6
- C. A covenant cannot be broken easily. V. 3 Biblically only the death of one or both members of the covenant and a certificate of divorce breaks the covenant.
- D. The law is good in that it shows us that we are in need for a drastic change. V. 7-13
- E. Paul is transparent and admits that even he cannot be totally free from sinning. V. 14-24
- F. Paul is clear that there are two laws at work in our lives. V. 25

II. How can we apply these truths?

- A. We must die to trying to save ourselves by being good! We cannot earn it and we cannot keep it. It is a gift that we must put our trust in His ability to save and keep us!
- B. Moral Therapeutic Deism is an evil system that has deceived so many Americans. We must learn to spot it and replace it with a saving relationship to our Lord Jesus Christ.
- C. Our other covenants must be honored as strongly as God honors our covenant with Him.
- D. Scripture shows us where we need to change but real change only happens when our old nature is crucified and our new nature rules.
- E. We must practice godly transparency.
- F. We must submit to the Holy Spirit to guide us.

Romans 8:2-4 For in Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful man, as an offering for sin. He thus condemned sin in the flesh, so that the righteous standard of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (BSB)