

Dueling Laws and Desperation

Romans 7:21-25

²¹ I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

²² For I delight in the law of God after 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 shall deliver me from the body of this 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.

Conflicted by Nature

Just as fire and water naturally conflict, so our regenerated hearts and our sin nature clash. Paul mourns this conflict in these verses: he points out our desire to produce goodness by obedience to God's law is always overruled by our sinful tendencies and the inability of our flesh to overpower them.

But, we do have a Deliverer: Jesus!

THE BIG IDEA

What is the main truth The Lord showed you in this passage?

Part 1—The Principle of Sin

Read Romans 7:21; Psalm 40:11-13

- 1) What is constantly present in the Christian's life? Do you think it is possible to escape that presence? Why?
- 2) According to Psalm 40 how did David think of himself? How do you think of David? How do you think God thinks of David?
- 3) How and why might Christians struggle to admit/recognize the constant presence of sin in their lives?

Part 2—The Law of God

Read Romans 7:22; Ezekiel 11:19-20

- 1) According to verse 22, in what does the true believer truly delight? Why do you think this is?
- 2) According to Ezekiel 11 what is the relationship of a believer's heart to God's laws?
- 3) In what ways can Christians display an inner-man delight for God's law?

Part 3—Members vs. Mind

Read Romans 7:23; 7:14

- 1) What is the tendency (law) in the members?
- 2) What is the tendency (law) in the mind?
- 3) Which tendency (law) always conquers the other?
- 4) Why do you think this is?
- 5) What strategies might Christians attempt to overrule the sinful nature apart from God's Holy Spirit? Why are these doomed to failure?

Part 4—A Desire for Deliverance

Read Romans 7:24-25; Matthew 5:3-6

- 1) Why do you think Paul wrote verse 24? Was he just complaining?
- 2) How does Matthew 5 relate to these verses in Romans 7?
- 3) How could self-confidence actually hinder a Christian from progressing in sanctification?