

“THE CONFLICT WITH SIN”

Romans 7:15-25

Message 1869

I believe everyone knows something about the conflict between right and wrong. It makes little difference where you live you have some concept, some idea, of what is right and what is wrong. And you experience some of this conflict between good and evil.

There is a desire in your heart, I believe, to do right and there is always the opposite pull to do wrong. Sometimes you really struggle with this, don't you? We all know what it is like to do wrong and then regret it. We all have had that experience. We know also how good it feels when good wins. Often our most serious problem comes when we desire to do right. The conflict tests control.

We may wonder, “Why do I do wrong when I really am wanting to do right?” When Paul wrote to the Romans he was guided by the Holy Spirit to describe THE CONFLICT WITH SIN. The text is Romans 7:15-25.

15. *For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.*
16. *If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.*
17. *Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.*
18. *For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.*
19. *For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.*
20. *Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.*
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.*

Let me point out from Paul's words the answer to that question, “Why do I do wrong when I desire to do right?” Paul shows us several deep INSIGHTS into the conflict we have with sin.

THE ROOTS OF SIN gives us insight into the conflict. Those roots lie within us. The roots are the very fabric of our nature. They grow in our very nature. That's the way we are. We were born that way and there is nothing we can really do to change that until we come to Jesus Christ. The roots of sin lie within us. They are unrealized longings.

I would like to do good, the Apostle says, but I can't. What I hate is what I do. At the same time I find that the law condemns me. I consent unto the law that it is good because it tells me what is right and what is wrong.

The roots of sin lie very deep in our nature and spirit. Those roots defy the will. Paul confesses that in his flesh dwells no good thing. Yet, he says, that he performs that which the flesh tells him to do. He says the will is present but he cannot perform. How to do what he wants and wishes to do he finds difficult. "How to perform that which is good I find not." It seems like the will is paralyzed to perform by the roots of sin. They defy the will.

Now, friend, no one can escape the roots of sin. They are part of our human nature. That is why we need help outside of ourselves.

THE RESULTS OF SIN gives us insight into the conflict. The results of sin are unwanted acts. What I wish to do I do not do. If I do that I do not want to do, if I act the way I do not want to act then the Apostle says, it is no longer "I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me." Evil is done so readily. He said, I find it is a law that when I would do good, evil is present with me. It seems that evil dominates, evil over omes me. Sin takes me the way I desire not to go. These are the unwanted acts that I find myself performing and doing.

The results of sin have unwanted outcomes. The inner man has delight in the things of God. Yes, look at verse 22: "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man." This is really what I want to do. This is really where my longings are. "But I see another law in my members" the Apostle says, "warring against the law of my mind." There is that inner conflict that war of the flesh against the spirit, the war of the flesh against the mind. What I delight to do and what I long to do is overcome by the law that wars in the members of my body "bringing me into captivity." The Apostle says, captured by sin. That is the sad result of sin.

Now, friend, no one can escape the results of sin. They come as surely as the harvest comes when you plant seed. From the roots of sin the results of sin must come. They do come. That's part of our conflict. But there is hope for deliverance. Praise God, we don't stop there.

THE RESCUE FROM SIN gives us insight to the escape from the conflict. The Apostle comes to the place of dismal despair. Listen to his question in verse 24: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Wretched, miserable is what the word wretched means. Miserable, no hope, caught in this awful situation. Who will rescue me? That word deliver has in it the idea of rescue like you would rescue a drowning man from a lake or rescue somebody from the path of an automobile or from some vicious animal. Rescue, who shall rescue me? Who shall set me free? I am in a situation where I can't help myself. I must have someone to rescue me. Who will do it?

There is joyful deliverance, O yes, in verse 25: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." My friend, there is only one, only one who can deliver you. Only one who can rescue you from sin and that is Jesus Christ our Lord.

Yes, He is able to do it. He came in the flesh. He lived a sinless life so that He might be able to deliver us from this awful, wretched, hopeless state which is the result of sin. 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." Though the flesh is capable of sin, the mind of Jesus Christ can triumph. Yes, praise God! Believers experience the rescue from the binding of sin. God has made it possible for us through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Like everyone else you have the conflict with sin, I know you do. The roots are a part of your nature. The results are as sure as any harvest. The rescue is possible only in Jesus Christ. Your conflict with sin can end in triumph through Jesus.