

In step with Jesus 173

October 12, 2025

Key Text: “⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

Introduction

Last week we attempted to begin to understand the Law and its relationship to our lives. It is through this understanding that we come to a knowledge of sin. Without the Law there can be no sin, but as we do have the Law, we have knowledge of sin. The Law however is Holy, and it is our relationship with it that is the issue. As we read further into the chapter, starting by re-reading verses 11 and 12, we discover that obedience, and overcoming our own natural tendencies is not always easy. Paul, who we often consider an example of a “good” Christian experienced the same internal conflicts that we also experience. Let us read on.

Romans 7:11-25 (from the Living Bible)

¹¹ Sin fooled me by taking the good laws of God and using them to make me guilty of death. ¹² But still, you see, the law itself was wholly right and good.

¹³ But how can that be? Didn't the law cause my doom? How then can it be good? No, it was sin, devilish stuff that it is, that used what was good to bring about my condemnation. So you can see how cunning and deadly and damnable it is. For it uses God's good laws for its own evil purposes. ¹⁴ The law is good, then, and the trouble is not there but with *me* because I am sold into slavery with Sin as my owner. ¹⁵ I don't understand myself at all, for I really want to do what is right, but I can't. I do what I don't want to—what I hate. ¹⁶ I know perfectly well that what I am doing is wrong, and my bad conscience proves that I agree with these laws I am breaking. ¹⁷ But I can't help myself because I'm no longer doing it. It is sin inside me that is stronger than I am that makes me do these evil things. ¹⁸ I know I am rotten through and through so far as my old sinful nature is concerned. No matter which way I turn I can't make myself do right. I want to but I can't. ¹⁹ When I want to do good, I don't; and when I try not to do wrong, I do it anyway. ²⁰ Now if I am doing what I don't want to, it is plain where the trouble is: sin still has me in its evil grasp. ²¹ It seems to be a fact of life that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. ²² I love to do God's will so far as my new nature is concerned; ²³⁻²⁵ but there is something else deep within me, in my lower nature, that is at war with my mind and wins the fight and

makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. In my mind I want to be God's willing servant, but instead I find myself still enslaved to sin. So you see how it is: my new life tells me to do right, but the old nature that is still inside me loves to sin. Oh, what a terrible predicament I'm in!

Who will free me from my slavery to this deadly lower nature? Thank God! It has been done by Jesus Christ our Lord. He has set me. (Living Bible)

Reflection

Paul struggled to keep the law. His heart knew what he should do, but the body had other ideas. As he states, he served "the law of sin" becoming a slave to sin. But serving sin and obeying the law means death. His body, functioning in obedience to sin, could be described the body of this death. "This deadly lower nature". But he also stated that the law is good. The law of the mind is God's law, God's revelation of His will. The trouble is not with the law. It is with us. Paul was a real man, with real problems, the same as us. We too have inherited "this deadly nature". We are born with sin affected bodies and minds and find ourselves in the same situations today. We understand what we should be doing, but life /sin gets in the way. Our problem is not with the law. We know the love of God and want to share it, but human nature so often prevents us from acting in the loving way we know we should. Anger rears its head, we snap, we argue, we shake our fists at the "other driver". Then we regret our actions, promise ourselves that we won't do it again, but then we do it again.

Pauls cry is the same one uttered by any Christian who is struggling against sin or trying to keep Gods Law without the help of the Holy Spirit. We can never fight in our own strength. Satan is the tempter and the accuser, and will try to bring you down on every opportunity. Remember we do not stand alone. Jesus Christ won the victory on our behalf at the cross. He alone can set us free. By placing our lives, our hearts in His keeping, we are able to overcome our sinful nature through His power, and truly represent the One who loved us unto death.