

## BRENTWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

ROMANS

THE CRIPPLING POWER OF SIN (ROMANS 7:14-25)

SEPTEMBER 22, 2013



**Brentwood Baptist**  
MAKING THE CONNECTION

### ROMANS 7:14-25 (HCSB)

<sup>14</sup>For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am made out of flesh, sold into sin's power. <sup>15</sup>For I do not understand what I am doing, because I do not practice what I want to do, but I do what I hate. <sup>16</sup>And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree with the law that it is good. <sup>17</sup>So now I am no longer the one doing it, but it is sin living in me. <sup>18</sup>For I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my flesh. For the desire to do what is good is with me, but there is no ability to do it. <sup>19</sup>For I do not do the good that I want to do, but I practice the evil that I do not want to do. <sup>20</sup>Now if I do what I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but it is the sin that lives in me. <sup>21</sup>So I discover this principle: When I want to do what is good, evil is with me. <sup>22</sup>For in my inner self I joyfully agree with God's law. <sup>23</sup>But I see a different law in the parts of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and taking me prisoner to the law of sin in the parts of my body. <sup>24</sup>What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this dying body? <sup>25</sup>I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with my mind I myself am a slave to the law of God, but with my flesh, to the law of sin.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- > **BIBLICAL EMPHASIS:** Paul admitted he still struggled with sin. He discovered that even as a believer his inward sinful nature continued to influence his desires and behavior. In fact, the struggles he now faced were even greater because he also desired to follow God's law. Thus he felt he was at war within himself.
- > **TEACHING AIM:** As a result of today's study, you will learn from Paul's approach to his ongoing struggle with sin:
  1. Admit the desires (Rom. 7:14-16)
  2. Acknowledge the difficulty (Rom. 7:17-23)
  3. Affirm the Deliverer (Rom. 7:24-25)

### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

#### > READ ROMANS 7:14-16.

This passage is a mouthful from Paul and arguably one of the most challenging sections of Romans for us to wrap our heads around. But in these verses we read a vulnerable confession from Paul about his struggle with sin. After more than 20 years of being a Christian, Paul had come to the realization that neither knowledge (see 7:9), personal effort (v. 15), or salvation (vv. 22-25) were enough to remove his struggle with sin. Paul's story in these verses is the story of every Christian who ever lived.

**What does Paul's inner battle tell us about ourselves?**

**When is the last time you could relate to Paul's statement: I do not understand what I do? How do you usually respond to that feeling?**

**What do we communicate to God when we try to battle sin on our own?**

**Why isn't it realistic for us as believers to think we can live the Christian life without struggling against sin?**

**How is our struggle with sin actually an indication of spiritual growth?**

#### > READ ROMANS 7:17-23.

**How can Christians have sin living in them?**

Why wasn't sin eradicated when we were saved?

Does Paul's testimony build up or tear down your confidence about your own victory over sin? Why?

What two laws does Paul reference in verses 21-23? What are the key differences between these two laws?

What is the battle between these two laws like for you?

The struggle to align the body and spirit is a lifelong battle. Sometimes Paul felt as if he had lost this battle completely, feeling he had been taken prisoner to the law of sin. He felt powerless to challenge the strength with which sin assaulted him. He felt he was without hope. But as we shall see, this wasn't his final conclusion.

> READ ROMANS 7:24-25.

What was Paul's frame of mind in verse 24? Have you ever been there?

In the midst of Paul's frustrating struggle, what was Paul's hope?

How can this hope become more than just words we say?

How can you best echo the heart of Paul in verse 25?

### APPLICATION

A weak Christian is the one who tries very hard to obey God's law by natural strength. Frustration and defeat are guaranteed for the weak Christian. Although we are saved, we frequently attempt to live the Christian life by our own power. We fail in our attempts because we are trying to live up to God's standard, while all we have is the crippling power of sin which resides in our fallen nature. In this text from Romans 7, Paul tells us that we need to see clearly the crippling power of sin and deal with it with the power of the gospel; thereafter, we live under God's grace with triumph.

What's our part in fighting the battle described in Romans 6-7? What's God's part?

In the battle with sin, what roles do Scripture, prayer, and close relationships with other believers play?

As believers, how can we help each other fight this battle?

How does your struggle with sin make you feel? How do you think God wants you to feel?

Why do we need to take such a severe attitude toward our sin? What are some practical ways we can fight the temptations we face?