

Testing Our Salvation

(Rom 7:4)

- Remember that Paul is still in the middle of the parenthesis he has inserted between Rom 5:21-8:1

- I. Rom 7:4- Great summary verse of the Christian life
 - A) This verse directly addresses the application of the doctrine taught in Rom 5:12-21 (union with Christ)
 - 1. This union is designed to produce fruit unto God
 - 2. This fruit was impossible “in Adam”
 - i. Rom 6:11- Same principle taught here, transferred from barren condition unto fruitfulness in Christ
- II. Rom 7:4- Defines the Christian life
 - A) A Christian is someone who:
 - 1. Has new life in Christ
 - i. A Christian is someone who has had something done in them
 - ii. Christianity is not simply stopping some things and starting others
 - iii. Salvation begins to bring about the greatest possible change between the believer and the lost world
 - iv. This new life comes by way of death
 - a) Generation- Physical life granted
 - b) Regeneration- Spiritual life granted
 - 1) Christianity is the difference between life and death in every way
 - 2) Can you even think of going back as you were?
 - 2. Has a new relationship to God
 - i. Transferred from life outside Christ to a life in both Christ and His Kingdom
 - ii. God no longer dreaded as only my Judge, but now seen as Father
 - a) This is due to the change of relationship from one “under law” to God to that of “under grace” in Christ
 - 3. Has a new purpose in life
 - i. Regenerated to “bring forth fruit unto God”
 - a) A lost person can only bring forth fruit unto self, and God doesn’t factor into His true purposes
 - 4. Has new ability
 - i. No longer barren, but now enabled to produce fruit by power of the Holy Spirit
 - a) Eph 1:19-21- Power of Spirit of resurrection

III. Testing our profession of faith-These “new” things are a good way by which a Christian can examine themselves (2 Cor 13:5)

A) If I possess these “new” things in any degree, then I am not the person I once was, and something has been done to me (2 Cor 5:17)

B) These “new” things are the evidences of regeneration

C) Testing for the presence of “new life”:

1. 1 Pet 2:2- Truly desiring the milk of the Word

i. Do I enjoy bible study, bible reading, listening to preaching?

a) Or do I find it all boring and myself wanting to be anywhere else?

ii. Can I say honestly that I desire God and to serve Him?

a) Even though imperfect and immature, am I sincere in my desire for His righteousness?

1) Remember even a “babe” has life

2) Beware of the person that wants to judge a Christian by a “full grown adult”

3) Beware of judging our regeneration based upon reading about the great saints of church history

(a) 1 Cor 2:14- The natural man doesn’t truly desire God or His word

(b) I may be leading an imperfect life, stumbling and falling as a toddler, but even the toddler possesses life

(1) Matt 14:31- “Oh ye of little faith”

2. 1 John 3:14- Evidence of passing from death to life” love of brethren

i. Fellowship- Do I enjoy being with brethren, or am I more comfortable with world?

a) Do I look forward to fellowship, or dread it and find excuses not to assemble?

b) Am I refreshed by time with the saints?

c) Do I prefer the conversation of Christians over that of my worldly friends?

3. Rom 8:15- The Spirit of adoption

i. Is my slavish fear of God gone, or lessened?

a) Am I conscious that God is my Father and loves me?

b) Has my relationship to God been changed from what it was before?

c) Can I go to God in prayer, no longer as a condemned criminal, but now as His child, even though I may be aware I have offended Him?

d) If I no longer am in the relationship to God that I previously was, this is evidence of a change

4. 2 Cor 5:14-15- The love of Christ constraineth us

i. Can I really say I have a new purpose in life?

- a) Although I may be carrying out this purpose in an unworthy manner at many times, am I aware of my new duties?
 - b) Am I condemned in a new way, no longer under the law and fearing Hell, but instead disappointed with myself in my failings in His service?
5. 2 Tim 1:7- Not given the spirit of fear, but of power
- i. Do I have a sense of new power and ability?
 - a) Is there something there, no matter how small, that wasn't there before?
 - b) Is there something gone, that was always present before?
- D) 1 Cor 3:1- Babes in Christ
- 1. We must be very careful to look at these tests in the lowest levels
 - 2. Beware of the person who wants to compare "babes" with adults
 - 3. Remember we are talking about a change of relationship, new life in Christ
 - i. That life may be faint and weak, but if there is life, there is regeneration
 - 4. Never discourage a "babe" in Christ
 - i. The N/T doctrine concerning babes is always to encourage and help, to use great caution in dealing with them

IV. Rom 7:4- How does all of this take place?

A) "By the body of Christ"- without which there is no Christian life

- 1. Ask a person about their Christianity, and then listen for "the Lord Jesus Christ" and His work and glory
 - i. John 15:26 & 16:13- This is the Holy Spirit in that person that you hear glorifying Christ and His sacrificial work
 - ii. Do they speak of their relationship to Christ made possible by Him and His work, or do they speak about the life they live?

B) By Christ's doctrine concerning His body of work

- 1. Rom 10:17- Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word
 - i. We must know how we are saved, and the truth of the gospel must be received, understood and believed
 - a) 2 Cor 4:3- But the lost are blind to the truth of the gospel
- 2. Heb 10:5-9- A body Thou hast prepared me
 - i. Christ's deity, His incarnation, His life under the law, His sacrificial death, His resurrection, His ascension

C) "Dead to the law"

- i. What was taking place at Calvary? Christ was fulfilling the demands of the law
 - a) Atonement- Payment had to be made, justice had to be satisfied
 - b) Propitiation- The wrath I deserve had to be handed out
 - c) Rom 3:24-26- Just and justice

- 1) Christ died because of the nature of God shown forth in the law
 - d) Acts 2:23- The Predeterminate counsel of God
 - 1) Christ's death was no accident, neither was it just the work of evil men
 - (a) Gal 4:4- He came in the flesh to fulfill the demands of God's holy law and nature
 - (b) 1 Pet 2:24- "In His Own body on a tree"
2. "Raised from the dead"
- i. Rom 4:24-25- Delivered for our offences, and raised for our justification
 - a) Christ places Himself "under the law" and stood in the place of the condemned sinner
 - b) This is why He submitted to baptism, joining the sinner in the condemned position under the law
 - ii. His resurrection is proof of the sufficiency of the payment, and that the law has no legal claim against the believer "in Christ"
 - iii. His resurrection is proof of His victory over sin, in that he was victorious over death itself, the fruit of sin