

## Summary of Romans Ch 7

(Rom 7:14-25)

### I. Difficult passage

A) Great minds down through church history have been on every side of this debate

1. We must not let the difficulty prevents us from trying to understand it
2. The very fact that we struggle with it is a proof we are considering it correctly

i. Those that glibly claim to fully understand prove they actually do not

B) Rom 7:14- The most difficult verse in the passage

1. "Sold under sin"- This is the phrase that creates the most difficulty

i. Paul doesn't explain how he got to be in this state in ch 7

a) But in ch 5 he explained the state of natural man in sin, or all those "In Adam"

1) Rom 6:17- "Were the servants of sin"

2) Rom 6:18- "Made free and made servants of righteousness"

3) Rom 6:20- "Were the servants of sin"

(a) So can Paul possibly be referring to a regenerate man?

(b) Yet, Does unregenerate say "law is good, I'm bad?"

(c) Does unregenerate say "nothing good in my flesh?"

(d) Does unregenerate say "sin dwelleth in me?"

(e) Can unregenerate say "I delight in the law?"

(f) Does unregenerate admit he is a slave to sin? (John 8:30-44)

b) Rom 6:12- Paul tells Romans not to "let sin reign", so it's possible

1) Rom 6:16- "Whom ye yield to, ye are slaves.."

2) Compare Rom 7:4-6, 8:2-4 with Rom 7:14, can 7:14 be a regenerate man?

C) Rom 7:15- This describes the type of life lived by the man in v.14

1. Can't this be true of both the man under conviction of sin prior to justification, as well as the justified Christian undergoing sanctification?

i. But, can the man under conviction "delight in the law?"

a) Consider Luther's experience, and how he hated the law and at times even God

2. Rom 8:1-4- Caps off the delivery of the man in Rom 7:14-25

i. So then ch 8 must be related to the answer of v.24-25

3. In Rom 7:15- Paul is not saying that everything he does is wrong and never any good at all

- i. But he also doesn't use the word "occasionally" or "sometimes" as some commentators suggest
  - ii. "I do"- This is an action, not just a thought or desire as some say
  - iii. If Rom 7:14-15 make it impossible to be referring to Paul at the time of the writing, then what about 1 Tim 1:15, Eph 3:8?
    - a) Or what about Job 42:8 (Job already righteous)
- II. Paul's deductions from Rom 7:14-15 stated in 7:16-17
  - A) 1st- I consent unto the law that it is good, I'm bad
    - 1. Consent- *symphimein*- "To speak with" or "to testify with"
      - i. Remember Paul is answering the objection that he is defaming the law, and is showing that the law is not sin, but is truly good
        - a) And not only stating it is good, but proving how it is good in its work on the child of God (v.7-12)
        - b) Preaching justification by faith doesn't make the law bad, it proves us bad
  - B) 2nd- It's not simply "I" (whole man) that does it, but sin that dwells in me (part)
    - 1. Here Paul introduces the duality of the man in the passage
      - i. But it is only the spiritual man that can see the law as spiritual
        - a) Paul, as a Pharisee, did not see law spiritually and thus refers to when the "law came" unto him
    - 2. Paul shows that sin is a power, not just an absence of something, and that this power "dwells in us"
      - i. The power of sin is greater than my "will power"
        - a) \*\*\*In many ways, this is the key thought of the passage\*\*\*
          - 1) Just as I cannot work my own salvation through the will of my flesh, neither can I sanctify myself by the power of my will
          - 2) As a sinner must call on the Lord to save them, so a saved man must call on the Lord in sanctification (ch 8)
            - (a) It is not simply knowledge and understanding we lack, we lack the power (Thus ch 8)
  - III. Rom 7:18-20 Explains 7:17
    - A) Notice Paul feels the need to clarify by the statement in brackets, "in my flesh"
      - 1. This is again the idea of duality
      - 2. The 1<sup>st</sup> "me" can't be the 2<sup>nd</sup> "me" with the will to do good, because no good dwells in the 1<sup>st</sup> me"
        - i. "In my flesh"- This is not the same as "In the flesh" other verses in Romans (as in 8:9)
          - a) "My flesh"- my remaining mortal flesh, my unregenerate body
            - 1) That "body" which must be "beat into subjection" (1 Cor 9:27)

- 2) 1 Cor 15:50-52- The “mortal” and “corruptible” part of the saved man
  - (a) But we must beware of the heresy of “Dualism” which states that its only flesh that sins, and the body is itself sin
  - (b) There is an overall “I” talking in this passage that has discovered to “sub- I’s”
    - (1) Paul is saying the will is present with the one “I”, but the power isn’t in the 2<sup>nd</sup> “I”
    - (2) Therefore we must rely upon the power of God through the Holy Spirit (as in Eph 6:10-18)
- B) Rom 7:19 is amplified statement of 7:15, or it is the theory of v.15 proven by the reality of v.19
- C) We must beware of heresy of antinomianism as well as others that arise die to a misunderstanding of this passage
  - 1. Paul is not saying “all is hopeless” or “it can’t be done”
    - i. He is instead calling on the Lord for help (V.24)
  - 2. Paul is not excusing himself, nor his actions, he has accepted full responsibility
    - i. Not “Dualism” (I’m not sinning, only my body) which John wrote against in 1 John
      - a) But there is an “overall I” in v.18 which knows both his “me’s”
    - ii. Neither is Paul content in this, thus the plea of v.24
      - a) “Oh wretched man that I am, Who will deliver (save) me?”
        - 1) Remember there is salvation from sin’s guilt (justification) and then salvation from sin’s ongoing power (sanctification)
          - (a) This seems to me what Paul is referring to in the passage, the saved man that is now attempting to sanctify himself by his own will power
          - (b) This is also in line with his context of showing the terrible power of sin to misuse the law (v.7-13)
  - 3. Remember the context of ch 7 is the place of the law in the life of the Christian
    - i. Paul is showing how sin has rendered the law incapable of doing anything “In” man except condemning him, for sin has robbed man of the ability to work righteousness for salvation, or after it
      - a) Rom 7:1-4- Thus we must become dead to the law for sanctification just as much as for justification
      - b) Any fruit produced is produced by God the Holy Spirit in us
    - ii. The law’s current “weakness” is not meant to degrade the law, but to show the mighty power of sin

IV. Rom 7:21- “I find then...”- This is a summary or conclusion

A) Rom 7:18-20- Why I perform sinful acts that I do not want to do

B) Rom 7:21-23- Why I fail to do the good that I do want to do

1. 7:21- Two laws in verse: Law of God and this newly discovered law

i. The “new law” is his conclusion: “evil is ever present with me”

a) The moment my mind decrees to do good, sin jumps into action

b) Sin is always present to object, prevent, corrupt (“by any means”)

ii. Rom 7:22-23- Explanation of v.21

a) Notice Paul’s progression: I “know” and “I consent” and “I delight”

1) Psa 1- The Godly man delights in the law

b) Rom 7:22- “Inward man” doesn’t necessarily refer to the “new man”

1) Rom 7:23- “Inward man” = “mind”

(a) Rom 8:5-6- The “mind” of the lost man cannot be seen here

(b) Paul is referring to the “mind” that has been enlightened by the Holy Spirit regarding the truth of God’s law

(1) The manner in which He does this in sanctification seems to follow the same pattern as in justification

(c) “Members”- Mortal body of ch 6 with all its propensities

(1) “Law in my members”- the controlling power (thus slavery)

(2) Flesh is still enslaved to sin, otherwise it would not die

(d) “Inward”- Soul, spirit, heart, affections, reins, etc.

(1) 2 Cor 4:6- The mind illuminated by the Spirit of God

(2) “The law came....”

(e) “Warring against”- *antistratēmai*- “Strategizing” and

countering punching, taking the field at first site of opponent

(1) The power of the will in the mind brings out the opposition of sin in the flesh

(2) It “brings me into captivity” (of v.14)

(3) Paul is describing an ongoing captivity that takes place after justification

(4) “Bring me into captivity”- Not the captivity of Adam’s doing (5:12)

(5) The “me” that is brought into captivity is the whole “me” of v.18, not just some portion as dualism teaches

(6) Paul is referring to the presence and power of indwelling sin that constantly wars against his mind and renders him helpless in self-sanctification

I. But this captivity is not an overall conquering like that of ch 6

- II. Thus Phil 1:6- God will do His work
- III. Phil 2:12-13- And God will make us willing
- (7) Compare the outcome of the fight in Rom 7:23 with the victory of 2 Cor 10:3-5
- (8) “Wretched”- Exhausted as a result of a hard battle or heavy labor
  - I. In this condition we cry out to God in sanctification just as we do in justification (Matt 11:28-29)
- 2) Rom 7:24- Proves the complete defeat of v.23 (of “me”)
  - (a) Rom 7:25- Proves the complete victory of Christ
    - (1) 1 Cor 1:30- He is our sanctification
    - (2) Thus Rom 8:1-4
  - (b) “This body of death”- this proves the total defeat and captivity
  - (c) Yet Paul is delivered in Rom 8:1-4
    - (1) The law working now in his heart = sanctification
    - (2) This is not a one-time event as some teach, it is a daily and hourly battle
      - I. The battle is to trust the Lord and rely on His power, yet actively working with all our own power
      - II. This is the “sanctification” of the N/T epistles; it is never some “2<sup>nd</sup> work’ or “let go and let God”