

The Problem of Mistaken Identity – Part 4

Romans 7:14-25; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 4-16-23

¹⁴ *For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin.*

- The *Law* of God is not just about external actions, but about inward attitudes and desires and motivations.
- Though I am free from the reign of sin over my heart and life, there is still something in me that is entirely enslaved to sin that is a part of me.

¹⁵ *For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate.*

- Our actions aren't simply the result of what we want or will to do, but are the result of the winner of a battle between two wants and two wills.

¹⁶ *But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good.* ¹⁷ *So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.* ¹⁸ *For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.*

- The Holy Spirit and the new man dwell in the believer, which are good, but there is nothing good in the part of me that is still enslaved to sin (the *flesh*).
- The new man of the believer desires to obey God's Law and is willing to do so, but having a heart to do God's will is not sufficient alone.

¹⁹ *For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want.* ²⁰ *But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.* ²¹ *I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good.*

- Believers in Jesus *do evil* and *have evil* in them, but they *are not evil* any longer as the fundamental disposition of their hearts.

²² *For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man,* ²³ *but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.*

- The *law in the members of my body* highlights the rule of life that argues that life is found in the outward, external, temporal realities of the material world and physical pleasures and pursuits.
- The *law of my mind* highlights the rule of life that argues that life is found in inward, internal, spiritual realities of God and His kingdom (the mind of Christ).

²⁴ *Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?* ²⁵ *Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin. – Romans 7:14-25*

- There is a tension between *two laws or rules or principles* for life.
- The *law of sin* is the rule for finding love and happiness in distrust and disobedience to God.
- The *law of God* is the rule for finding love and happiness in trust and obedience to God.

1. The foundation for ‘what to do’ is ‘who you are’.

In the Flesh or In the Spirit – Romans 8:5-9
Good Trees and Bad Trees – Matthew 7:17-19
 Before I ask, *What should I do?*, I need to ask, *Who am I?*

2. Your sin does not define you.

Defining a Messed Up Church - 1 Corinthians 1:2
Am I prone to define myself by my past or by my sin?

3. Your suffering does not define you.

Slaughtered and Loved and Victorious – Romans 8:31-39
The Antichrist and the Saints – Revelation 13:7-10
Am I ruled by a victim mentality rather than a victor mentality?

4. You have a fight and so do those around you.

The Common Conflict – Galatians 5:16-24
Do I give others the right and opportunity to fight their flesh without condemnation and love them as I love myself?

5. You must grow down in order to grow up.

Groaning but Hopeful – Romans 8:19-25
Humility and Exaltation – Proverbs 18:12; Luke 14:11; James 4:10
Does the revelation of your sinfulness cause you to weep and worship or to doubt and fear?

Conclusion

Humility is saying what God says is true of you (whether good or bad, in the face of your sin and suffering). – Isaiah 66:2

Who you are is determined by who you trust (in other words, it’s fundamentally a heart issue). – John 3:18

Who Christians Are: You are a saint who is a yet to be revealed son that sins and suffers but, one day will no longer sin or suffer and will be revealed, to the glory of the grace of God in Christ.