

**Romans 7: 22; “I Delight in the Law of God”, Prepared for the Adult
Sunday. School Class on June 10th, 2012,
by Pastor Paul Rendall.**

I want us to think about how two verses inter-relate with each other this morning; verses which will show us how we will make progress in holiness. The first is “I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.” And the second is verse 2 of Chapter 8: “For the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.”

The 1st verse makes it very plain that this whole passage from verse 14 to verse 25 is speaking about a true believer. For an unbeliever cannot delight in the law of God; the very thing that condemns him and which causes him to see how painfully short he falls of the perfect obedience which God requires. And further, Paul says here, that the believer is delighting in God “in the inward man”. An unbeliever may see his outward duty to God’s law, but he does not understand the spirituality of the law. He may think that he has “kept all of God’s commandments from his youth”, but truly he has not understood either himself or the righteous requirements of God’s holy law. The person coming to Christ, or who has come to Christ does understand themselves to be a sinner in many ways; he feels guilty over the many sins he has committed over however many years that it has been that he has been alive. And so, when he hears the gospel and is convinced that he must have Christ to be saved from these many sins, he receives the good news. And in receiving Christ, he receives the Holy Spirit. He has escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust, and he now has a new power, a new principle at work in his heart. The believer now has a renewed will, present with him, to do the will of God. But as verse 18 says, “how to perform what is good he does not find”. So what we want to examine now is this. How does the Christian come to perform what is good? At many points, because of your flesh, you may not know how to perform what is good. But by the power of Christ you shall come to know. It is by your delighting in God’s law in the inward man. It is by your serving the law of God by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is by realizing that you have been set free from the Law’s condemning power, because of what Christ has done for you. Delighting in God’s law comes through delighting what Christ has done for you, dear believer, in relation to it.

The person who has come to faith in Jesus Christ, as we have seen in verse 4 of Chapter 7, has been made to “die to the law through the body of Christ”. Therefore, he is the very one who can delight in it. Since Christ has fulfilled the law, He has satisfied every single aspect of God’s holy justice in relation to the one believing in Him. By faith the believer receives Christ and His atonement. The question then comes, “Do we then make void the law through faith?” Romans 3: 31 says, “Certainly not!” “On the contrary, we establish the law.” What this

means is that the believer, out of thankfulness for all that Christ has done to fulfill the law and satisfy the justice of God, now wants to understand how he may glorify God while he lives here upon the earth. He does so, first of all, by delighting in God and His law, even though he finds that this law of his flesh is still at work in him, and it lusts against the motions of the Holy Spirit who is working with the thoughts of his renewed mind. The true believer thanks God through Jesus Christ that he has been born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, by the living and abiding word of God. (1 Peter 1: 23) He has believed in the word of the gospel, the good news of Christ's fulfillment of the law on his behalf, and Christ's perfect righteousness imputed to him. As Paul says in Chapter 8, verse 1, the believer knows that because he is "in Christ" he shall not be condemned, when goes about to do and keep all the commandments of God's word. When he falls short of the perfection which God requires, and regularly is confessing his sins of heart and actions, he is continually being forgiven and cleansed in his heart and conscience. And so, even though the remnants of the flesh still exist in his being, which cause him great anguish at times, yet he is also always being encouraged and continually thankful to God, for His grace, through Jesus Christ his Lord.

The 2nd Verse – Romans 8: 2 - We have seen in our study that the Spirit of God has regenerated the believer's heart. He has placed the seed of righteousness in his heart, the inclination and desire to do all that God commands. So the believer wants to do God's will in every particular. And yet, we have also seen in verse 23, that these two principles, or laws, are at work in his life. The first principle is the flesh, the principle which exclusively dominates the unbeliever. The unbeliever has no power to be able to effectually resist his selfish and sinful impulses, and so he is led through life by his sinful fleshly lusts. This does not at all mean, that necessarily, his carnality manifests itself in gross outward sins. In the moral and refined person it manifests itself in the more subtle sins of pride, covetousness, self-righteousness, and worldliness; especially the sins related to having something more important to him than worshiping God and serving Him through His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. A person like this will deny that they need to be converted to Jesus Christ at all. Therefore we should note and understand that a person cannot love God with all of His heart, which is the first and greatest commandment, in any sense of that term, without having a different principle implanted into his heart and soul. "The carnal mind, as it says in Romans 8: 7 is enmity against God. Therefore the Lord Jesus taught Nicodemus, a very religious, but unsaved man, in John 3: 5 – "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." That, in man's nature, which comes from carnal sinful nature of Adam, the nature which we all inherit from him, is flesh. It is sinful lusts and desires for everything which God forbids. It manifests itself in a total neglect of what He wants us to be doing,

according to His word the Bible. This principle rules in the unbeliever, but in the regeneration of the believer and his conversion to Jesus Christ, its dominion has been taken away. “The flesh”, when used in reference to the believer, is the principle of remaining indwelling corruption in his nature.

2nd – The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made you free from the law of sin and death. The Holy Spirit implants this new “law of life” in the believer’s heart. This is the same as God’s giving a sinner a new heart. Ezekiel 36: 26 – “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.” To be given a heart of flesh means that you have been given a tender heart, as a person who has believed in Jesus Christ your Lord. You are now sensitive to what God has commanded in His word; God’s law has been placed in your mind and written upon your heart. (Jeremiah 31: 33) The basis of this work is the New Covenant in Christ. (Romans 8: 3 and 4) “For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”

Question – How do we Delight ourselves in the law of God in the inward man?

Answer: By learning to Pray in relation to the word of God which is His law (in its entirety).

Psalm 119: 9-16 – “I will delight myself in your statutes; I will not forget your word.” Will you remember to commit portions of God’s word to memory?

Psalm 119: 23 and 24 – “Your testimonies also are my delight and my counselors.” Do you get needed wisdom directly from the Scriptures? Or are you blindly led by the opinions of others?

Psalm 119: 33-40 – “Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, for I delight in it.” Do you see God’s commandments as being the path for you to walk in? Do you delight to walk on the path of righteousness?

Psalm 119: 41-48 – “And I will delight myself in Your commandments, which I love.” “My hands also I will lift up to Your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on Your statutes.” Even as you praise God for His greatness and goodness, do you praise Him for giving you His commandments?

Other Pertinent Verses –

Psalm 18: 20-27 – Verses 23 and 24 say, “I was also blameless before Him, and I kept myself from my iniquity.” “Therefore the Lord has recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in His sight.” All of David’s being blameless before God and keeping himself from his iniquity; all of his being rewarded and recompensed according to his righteousness and cleanness of hands must definitely have come from His faith in the coming

Messiah, Christ Jesus, and not from himself. In himself he was imperfect in many ways. Christ was His righteousness.

Philippians 3: 7-9 – “But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.” “Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if by any means I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.”

We see here that Paul counted every fleshly privilege and attainment as loss in comparison to being “in Christ”. This was something that he strove to “win” or to “gain”. He already had Christ; He was now striving to win Him by running the race of obedience by faith in Jesus Christ. He was jettisoning his own righteousness, which was from the law, from trying to do and keep God’s commandments in his own strength and determination. Rather, he strove to be found “in Christ” while he did all of his good works. All of our best works must be seen by ourselves as being done “in Christ”, and not proceeding from our own wisdom and strength. Good works that last are done by grace. The law is only kept in Christ. We strive to be found in Him.