

Romans 7:14–25

- ¹⁴ For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.
¹⁵ For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do.
¹⁶ If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good.
¹⁷ But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.
¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.
¹⁹ For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice.
²⁰ Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.
²¹ I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.
²² For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.
²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.
²⁴ O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?
²⁵ I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Inwelling Sin **Romans 7:13-25**

INTRO:

We must keep in mind what the rest of the Bible says about the believer's inner conflict as we study this passage. These are just a sample of these texts. First, in **Galatians 5:16-19** we read, ***"I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law."*** Here the picture of an inner conflict is clear. **Hebrews 12:4** ***"You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin."*** How much do we resist sin? We read John's statement in **1 John 1:8-10** ***"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us."*** Finally, consider Paul's biographical statement in his great declaration in **1 Timothy 1:15** ***"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."***

This paragraph describes why the Law is good and the ultimate reality we face.

I. Why the Law Is Good (v. 14-23)

II. The Ultimate Reality (v. 24-25)

I. Why the Law Is Good (v. 14-23)

Romans 7:13 *“Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not! But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good, so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful.”*

A. **Verse 13** is a transitional verse. It sums up the paragraph before and leads into this paragraph we will explore today. Does this something good make Paul die? Is the Law evil? That is impossible! The Law showed sin as incredibly sinful. Sin was and is the culprit. In this first part of our text Paul demonstrated that the Law is good.

B. The law is good, but I am sinful. The law is good because it is spiritual.

v.14 *“For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal [fleshy], sold under sin.”*

From this point on in this text all the verbs are present tense which indicates something that is ongoing. Paul contrasts himself and his experience with the character of the law and his own sinful self. This verse has two parts. **(1)** The law is spiritual. This looks at the origin and nature of the Law. It was Spirit inspired. It was spiritually given by the hand and voice of the eternal God. **(2)** On the other hand, he, Paul, was sinful. The word here is *“fleshly”* the word used in **1 Corinthians 3:1**. He describes himself sold under sin. This is the language of appearance like in **1 Timothy 1:15**.

C. Second, the Law is good because it does not cause me to struggle with sin. Sin itself which lives in me does that.

vs.15-17 *“For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the Law that it is good. But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.”*

Paul describes his conflict vividly. It is a conflict between what Paul loves and what Paul hates. Although he wants to do right, he does what he hates. The power is his indwelling sin. Unbelievers do not hate sin. In **Romans 1:32** on the heels of Paul's list of the evil of unbelievers he said:

“Who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.”

His struggle with sin shows that the Law is good.

D. The Law is good and I am not good

vs.18-21 *“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.”*

This is a struggle that is in our lives every day. Some say, surly Paul did not fight with sin like this. I respectfully differ. Over the years I have counseled many who have struggled with ***“the sins which so easily beset us”*** (Hebrews 12:1) I too have fought these battles and have lost and have won some. You have also. In dwelling sin is a law that demands our obedience, even though it does not have a right to compel us to sin.

E. Finally, the Law is good and I love it in my ***“inner man.”***
vs.22-23 ***“For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.”***

This is a statement I am sure an unsaved person can never really make. He delighted in the Law of God. The word means to take great pleasure in something. No one who is an unbeliever ever genuinely takes pleasure in the Law. Paul took pleasure in the Law in the ***“inner man.”*** The phrase ***“inner man”*** speaks of the realm of the real us.

2 Corinthians 4:16 ***“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day”***

II. The Ultimate Reality (v. 24-25)

A. Paul ends with the reality we live in until the Lord returns.

v.24 ***“O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?”***

We are still moment by moment struggling with sin. The true believer does not live in absolute victory over sin. Rather when he falls, he picks himself up and with the Lord's help he goes back to the battle.

B. ***“I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.”*** (v.25)

This statement is the hope of final deliverance from sin. This is in the future tense specifically because this victory will be complete when He shall appear and we will see Christ as He is (**1 John 3:2**).

Do you fight sin in your life? If you don't, you had better check your salvation.

If you do fight this battle, remember what we learned. We need to count ourselves dead to sin and alive to God because of our union with Jesus Christ. We need to remind ourselves and sin that it is no longer boss of us. We need to put on the Lord Jesus and make no provision for our flesh to fulfill its desires.

Hymn# 448 ***A Charge to Keep, I Have***