

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Sin cycle: Romans 7 - Christian or "Almost Christian"

Sin cycle: Romans 7 - Christian or "Almost Christian" - posted by KenobGerudo, on: 2008/3/18 17:27

I have been reading the first few chapters of Romans almost every week for the past 2 years. It is amazing how much God is using this book to teach me.

However, I have been stuck now in Romans 7. Some say it is a Christian experience, while other say it is not.

I have been reading it very closely the past few weeks and have not been getting very far. What do you all think?

Romans 7:5 says "while we were in the flesh," implying that it is something of the past. Then 7:14 says "I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin" which seems to contradict much of what was already said about the freedom in Christ.

However, I wondered if "in the flesh" and "of flesh" were different things.

But then Paul writes in Gal 5:24 "Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."

Do you see? With its passions and desires!

When I look at the difference between Rom 7 and Rom 8 I realize that one is a reality in my life and the other is not. I am a Rom 7 man. I do not know the Rom 8 life. Yet when I look through Rom 3-6 I can also relate. I know I am justified because of the work He has done in my life.

So I am stuck between two possibilities.

1. Rom 7 is not a justified Christian. He is an "almost Christian" with "the faith of a servant." I am just confused in a fake walk and do not know Christ. This I have a hard time believing.

OR

2. Rom 7 is a justified Christian. But there is another outpouring of the Holy Spirit in which one can finally "belong" to Christ. They are led by the Spirit and are considered sons of God in a way a normal justified Christian is not. This, I want to believe . . . yet also have a hard time believing.

Are there any other explanations or Scriptures related to this?

Re: Sin cycle: Romans 7 - Christian or "Almost Christian" - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2008/3/18 17:51

Quote:

-----However, I have been stuck now in Romans 7. Some say it is a Christian experience, while other say it is not.

In Romans chapter 7 Paul said "I am carnal." It's hard for me to believe he was carnal when he wrote the Bible.

Re: Sin cycle: Romans 7 - Christian or "Almost Christian" - posted by jgraves11 (), on: 2008/3/18 18:00

Brother, It seems to me that you need some encouragement from the likes of the apostle Peter. Peter fell down many times but he got back up, he was a complete failure but Christ used him. You can say that was before Christ went to the Cross but it wasn't Peter fell into legalism later on just look at Galatians 2 and while you are in Galatians read the first part of Galatians 5 where it says that the flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. Also look at 1 John where it says that if we say we have no sin then we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. In other words those who believe themselves to be perfect are lost but those who realize that they are sinners in need of God's Grace and Forgiveness on a Daily basis can rest assured of their salvation. This is not to say that we can continue on in sin and still have assurance because the very same letter tells us that if we are truly in Christ then we will not have the practice of sin in our lives. The same thing is true in Galatians 5 which is what you alluded to in your original post. The difference is practice, is your lifestyle a practice of sin or godliness? Are you being conformed to the image of Christ? Not are you perfect, the apostle Paul was not even perfect look at Philippians 3:12 not that I have already attained or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. In closing let just say that you have all you need to live for Christ today, don't waste your time looking for any kind of second blessing, if the Holy Spirit has regenerated your heart and made you alive to God He will continue on in this good work that he has began in you. You will never be perfect until you see Christ. Romans 8 is about our standing with God not about being perfect in of ourselves rather that God has set us free from the condemnation that we deserved on account of what Christ has done, not what we have done.

Re:, on: 2008/3/18 18:11

Here's a good article that might help shed some light.

Watchman Nee:
OUR LIFE

Scripture Reading: Col. 3:4; Phil. 1:21; Gal. 2:20

I. CHRIST OUR LIFE

Many Christians have a wrong concept about the Lord Jesus. They think that the Lord set up a good pattern for us while He was on earth and that we should imitate this pattern. It is true that the Bible charges us to imitate the Lord (Rom. 15:5; 1 Cor. 11:1; etc.). But the Bible does not tell us to do this by ourselves. There is something we must see before we can imitate Him. Many people want to imitate the Lord, but they repeatedly fail. They regard the Lord like they regard good Chinese calligraphy, something to be copied stroke by stroke. They do not realize how frail man is and that no fleshly energy could give man enough strength to imitate Him.

Some Christians think that they can ask the Lord to empower them simply because the Bible says, "I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me" (Phil. 4:13). They feel that there are many things that need to be done, many biblical precepts that need to be obeyed, and many examples of the Lord that need to be imitated. They also feel that none of this can be done unless they have more power. Therefore, they ask the Lord for power. They think that if the Lord would only give them the power, they would be able to do all things. Many people just wait and hope daily for the Lord to give them the power to conduct their activities.

It is true that we need to look to the Lord for power. But in addition to asking for power, we need to see something further. Without seeing this one thing, we will not always have the power, even though we may be looking to the Lord. We can pray to the Lord every day for power. But sometimes the Lord answers such prayer, and sometimes He does not. To some people this means that they can do all things when He empowers them and that they can do nothing when He does not empower them. This is precisely the reason so many Christians fail again and again. We have to ask the Lord to empower us. But if we take this as an isolated commandment or as the only way, we will fail.

The fundamental relationship between Christ and us is conveyed in the words Christ our life. We can imitate the Lord only because He has become our life. We can ask Him for strength only because He has become our life. There is no way to imitate Him or be empowered by Him unless we understand the meaning of Christ our life. Hence we must first understand, see, and grasp the secret of Christ our life before we can imitate Him or ask Him for strength.

Colossians 3:4 says, "Christ our life." Philippians 1:21 says, "For to me, to live is Christ." This shows us that the way to victory is for Christ to be our life. Victory is, "For to me, to live is Christ." If a Christian does not know what is meant by Christ

st our life, and what is meant by for to me, to live is Christ, he will not experience the Lord's life on earth; he will not be able to follow the Lord, to experience victory in Him, or to proceed on the course before him.

II. FOR TO ME, TO LIVE IS CHRIST

There are many Christians who have greatly misunderstood Philippians 1:21. When Paul said, "For to me, to live is Christ," he was stating a fact. They think for to me, to live is Christ is a goal or a hope. But Paul did not say that his goal was to live Christ. Paul was saying, "I live because I have Christ; I cannot live without Him." This was a fact in him, not a goal he was seeking. It was the secret to his living, not the hope he was cherishing. His living was Christ. For him to live was for Christ to live.

Galatians 2:20 is a very familiar verse to many Christians. But many misunderstand it more than they misunderstand Philippians 1:21. They have made Galatians 2:20 their goal, praying with aspiration and hoping they will reach the state when "it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me." Each time this verse is read, they are full of aspiration. Many people pray, fast, and hope that one day they will be crucified with Christ and reach the state when "it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me." Galatians 2:20 has become their goal and their hope.

According to our experience, no one with such a hope ever reaches his goal. If you make it your goal and hope to attain such a state, if you aspire to be crucified, that is, to no longer be the one who lives but instead to have Christ living in you, you will wait forever before seeing your aspiration fulfilled, because you are hoping for something that is impossible to achieve.

God has given us a wonderful gift of grace. There is a way. Those who fail can overcome; those who are unclean can be clean; those who are worldly can be holy; those who are earthly can be heavenly; and those who are carnal can be spiritual. This is not a goal, but a way. This way lies in the life of substitution. Just as we found a vicarious death in the Lord's grace, we also can find a vicarious living in Him. On the cross the Lord bore our sins. Through His death we were spared death. Our sins were forgiven, and we were spared judgment. Similarly, Paul tells us that we are spared of our living through the Lord living in us. The implication is simple: Since He lives in us, we no longer need to live. Just as He died once for us on the cross, today He is living for us and in us. Paul did not say, "I hope that I will not live. I hope that I will allow Him to live." Instead, he was saying, "I no longer live anymore. He is the One who is living." "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me." This is the secret to victory. This is the way to be victorious.

The day we heard that we did not need to die, we embraced that word as the gospel. Similarly, it should also be a day of the gospel to us when we hear that we do not need to live. I hope that the new believers will pray much for God's enlightenment and will see that Christ lives in us and that we no longer need to live by ourselves.

Unless we see this, maintaining a testimony or living the Christian life is a great burden. It is a great burden to fight temptation, to bear the cross, or to obey God's will. Many believers feel that it is very hard to maintain the Christian life. Daily they try, yet daily they sigh. Daily they struggle, yet daily they fail. Every day they try to maintain their testimony, yet every day they bring shame to the Lord. Many people do not have the strength to reject sin, yet they feel guilty when they do not reject it. They feel condemned when they lose their temper, yet they cannot be patient. They feel sorry for hating others, yet they have no strength to love. Many people are exhausted from trying to live the Christian life. They feel that the Christian life is like climbing a hill with a heavy burden on their back; they can never reach the top. Before they were saved, they had the burden of sin on their back. Now that they have believed in the Lord, they have the burden of holiness on their back. They exchange one burden for another, and the new one is just as tiresome and burdensome as the old one.

This experience clearly shows that they are practicing the Christian life in a wrong way. Paul said, "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me." This is the secret of Christian living. It is the Lord in you who is living the Christian life, not you living it by yourself. If you live the Christian life by yourself, endurance will be a suffering to you, as will love, humility, and bearing the cross. But if Christ lives in you, endurance will be a joy; so will love, humility, and bearing the cross.

Brothers and sisters, you may be tired of trying to live the Christian life. You may feel that the Christian life is consuming you and binding you. But if you see that you no longer need to live, you will agree that this is a great gospel to you. Every Christian can be spared such a wearisome living. This is a great gospel! You no longer have to exert so much effort trying to be a Christian. You no longer have to bear such a heavy burden for your Christian life! You can say, "In the past I heard the gospel which told me that I could be spared death. Thank God, I no longer need to die. Today I am tired and weary of living. God says that I can be spared living. Thank God, I no longer need to struggle to live."

It is, of course, a suffering for us to die. But it is equally a suffering for us to live before God. We have no idea what God's holiness is all about. We do not know what love is and what the cross is. For men like us to try to live unto God is indeed an unbearable burden. The more we try to live, the more we sigh and suffer. It is a big struggle to labor and strive to live the Christian life. In fact, it is altogether impossible for us to do it. We could never satisfy God's demands. Some people always have a bad temper. Others can never be humble; they are always proud. For a proud person to try to live in God's presence and act humbly every day is a very wearisome and tiring task. Paul was a weary and worn-out Christian in Romans 7. He said, "For to will is present with me, but to work out the good is not" (v. 18). Every day he willed, but every day he failed. This is why he could only sigh, "Wretched man that I am!" (v. 24). Actually, being a Christian is not an exercise akin to putting a carnal man in heaven and subjecting him to slavery there. Fortunately, no carnal man can enter heaven. Otherwise, as soon as he entered it, he would run away quickly; he would not be able to stand even one day there. His temperament would be too different from God's temperament, and his thought too far from God's thought. His ways would be too different from God's ways, and his views too different from God's view. How would he ever be able to meet God's demands? There would be nothing he could do before God except run away.

But this is a gospel for you. God does not want you to do good. He does not want you to make up your mind to do good. God only wants Christ to live in you. God does not care about good or bad; He cares about who is doing the good. God is not satisfied with good alone; He wants to know who is doing the good.

Hence, God's way is not for us to imitate Christ or to walk like Christ. Neither is it to plead on our knees for strength to walk like Christ. God's way is for us to experience that it is "no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me." Do we see the difference here? This is not a matter of imitating Christ's life, nor of being empowered to live this life, but a matter of no longer being the ones living at all. God does not allow us to live according to ourselves. We do not come to God by ourselves; we come to God through Christ living in us. It is not a matter of imitating Christ or of receiving some power from Christ, but of Christ living in us.

This is the living of a believer. The living of a believer is one in which it is no longer him who lives, but it is Christ living in him. In the past I was the one who lived, not Christ. But today, it is not I who live, but Christ. Another One has come to live in my place. If a person cannot say, "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me," this person does not know what Christianity is; he does not know the life of Christ, nor the life of a believer. He is merely aspiring to be "not I but Christ." But Paul did not say that he was striving to be this way. He told us that this was how he lived. His way was to stop living by himself and to let Christ live instead.

III. I HAVE BEEN CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST

Perhaps some will ask, "How can we experience it is no longer I who live? How can 'I' be eliminated?" The answer to this question lies in the first part of Galatians 2:20: "I am crucified with Christ." If I am not crucified with Christ, I cannot be eliminated. If I am not crucified with Christ, I am still I. How can I say, "It is no longer I"? Only those who are "crucified with Christ" can say, "It is no longer I."

In order for our crucifixion with Christ to become experiential, there is the need of cooperation from two sides. It is impossible to experience this crucifixion if there is cooperation on only one side; cooperation on both sides is essential.

Our inner eyes have to be opened. When Christ was crucified on the cross, God put our sins on Christ and crucified them on the cross. This is God's side of the work. Christ died for us and took our sins away. This occurred more than nineteen hundred years ago, and we believe it. Similarly, when Christ was crucified, God put us into Christ. Just as our sins were settled more than nineteen hundred years ago, our person was also dealt with at the same time. When God laid our sins on Christ, He also put our person in Christ. On the cross our sins were removed. On the cross our person was also dealt with. We must remember Romans 6:6: "Knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with Him." We do not have to hope to be crucified with Christ. We have been crucified with Him, forever and unchangeably crucified with Him. God has put us into Christ. When Christ died on the cross, we died on the cross as well.

If you take a piece of paper, write a few letters on it, and then tear the paper apart, you tear the letters apart as well. You are tearing the paper, but as the paper is torn, the letters are torn. The Bible tells us that the veil of the temple was embroidered with cherubim (Exo. 26:1). When the Lord died, the veil was split (Matt. 27:51), and therefore the cherubim were split as well. The veil refers to the body of Christ (Heb. 10:20). The cherubim had the face of a man, the face of a lion, the face of an ox, and the face of an eagle (Ezek. 1:10; 10:20). This signifies all created beings. When the body of the Lord Jesus was split, all the creation in Him was split as well. He died that He might "taste death on behalf of everything" (Heb. 2:9). The whole old creation passed away with Him. You have been trying in vain to do good and to be a successful

Christian for years. Now God has crucified you with Christ. When Christ was crucified, the whole old creation was split, and you were split as well.

You have to believe in this truth. Your eyes need to be open to see that your sins were upon Christ and your person was also upon Christ. Your sins were on the cross, and your person was also on the cross. Your sins were taken away, and your person was also crucified. All this has been accomplished by Christ. Many people fail because they keep looking at themselves. Those who have faith should look at the cross and see what Christ has accomplished. God placed me in Christ. When Christ died, I also died!

But why is this "person" still living today? Since you have been crucified, why are you still living? To solve this problem you must believe and exercise your will to identify yourself with God. If you are looking at your own "self" every day, hoping that it will improve, this self will become more alive; it will not die by itself. What is death? When a person is so weak that he cannot be weakened any further, he has died. Many people do not admit their own weakness. They are still demanding so much from themselves. This means that they are not yet dead.

Romans 6 says that God has crucified us with Christ. But Romans 7 tells us of one person who is still trying to will. Even though God has crucified him, he still wills to do good. He cannot die, yet he cannot do good either. If he would say, "Lord, I cannot make it, and I do not believe I will make it. I cannot do good, and I will not will to do good," everything would be fine. But Romans 7 tells us that man is not willing to die. God has already crucified our old man, but we are unwilling to die; we still exercise our will to do good. Today many Christians are still trying when they know very well that they cannot make it. Nothing can be done about these Christians. Suppose there is a person who cannot be patient. What can he do? He may try his best to be patient by himself. Whenever he prays he asks for patience. Even while he is working he thinks about patience. But the more he tries to be patient, the less patient he becomes. Instead of trying to be patient, he should say, "Lord, You have already crucified this impatient person. I am impatient. I do not want to be patient and do not intend to be patient." This is the way to victory.

The Lord has crucified you. You should say simply, "Amen." He has crucified you, and it is futile for you to try to be patient by yourself. God knows you cannot make it. This is why He crucified you. Even though you still try to be patient, God considers you hopeless. He has even crucified you. It is a great mistake to think you can make it. It is also a great mistake to try to live the Christian life. God already knows that you cannot make it; the only way He has for you is crucifixion. Even though you think that you can make it, God says that you cannot make it and that you should die. How foolish it is to still make resolutions and to struggle! God knows that you cannot make it, and it would be well with you if you agreed with Him. God knows that you deserve to die. If you would say, "Amen, I will die," everything would be well. The cross is God's assessment of us. In God's view we cannot make it. If we could make it, God would not have crucified us. He knows that the only way for us is death. This is why He crucified us. If we saw things the same way God sees them, everything would be settled. Brothers and sisters, God must bring us to the point where we accept His verdict.

Here we see two aspects: First, Christ died, and we were crucified. This is something God has done. Second, we have to acknowledge this fact; we need to say, "Amen." These two sides must work together before God's work can take effect on us. If we constantly frustrate Him by trying to do good and be patient and humble, the work of Christ will have no effect on us. Our resolution to be humble or to be patient only makes things worse. Instead, we should bow down our head and say, "Lord, You have said that I am crucified, and I will say the same thing; You have said that I am useless, and I will say the same thing; You have said that I cannot be patient, and I will no longer try to be patient; You have said that I cannot be humble, and I will no longer try to be humble. This is what I am. It is useless for me to try to make any further resolutions. I am only fit to remain on the cross." If we did this, Christ would live Himself out of us!

We should not think that this is a difficult thing to do. Every brother and sister should learn this lesson after he or she is saved. From the beginning we must learn not to live. Instead, we should let the Lord live. The basic problem is that many Christians have not given up on themselves. They still try to solve their problems themselves. The Lord Jesus has already given up on them, but they are still struggling and trying to come up with ways to live. They stumble again and again, only to rise up to try again and again. They sin again and again, only to make more and more resolutions. They have not given up on themselves. The day will come when God grants mercy to them and opens their eyes. On that day they will see that as God considered them hopeless, they should consider themselves hopeless as well. Since God has pronounced death to be the only way, they also should pronounce death as the only way. Only then will they come to God and confess, "You have crucified me, and I do not want to live anymore. I have been crucified with Christ. From now on, it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me."

For years we have been so wrong. We have committed so many sins and have been bound by so much weakness, pride

e, and temper. It is about time that we give up on ourselves. We should come to the Lord and say, "I have done enough; nothing has worked. I give up. You take over! I have been crucified on the cross. From now on live in my place!" This is the meaning of "it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me."

IV. LIVING BY THE FAITH OF THE SON OF GOD

The other part of Galatians 2:20 is also very important: "And the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God." Christ lives in us. From this point forward, we live by faith in the Son of God. We believe daily that the Son of God lives in us. We say to the Lord, "I believe that You are living for me. You are my life; I believe that You are living in me." When we believe this way, we live this way. No matter what happens, we will no longer make any move. The fundamental lesson of Romans 7 is that we should not make any resolutions. The basic teaching is that it is better that we not will to do anything, because such a willing is useless. Since it is useless to do anything by ourselves, we should simply stop all our moves.

The purpose of Satan's temptation is not only for us to sin but also for the old man within us to move. When temptation comes, we must learn to refuse to move and to say to the Lord, "This is not my business. This is Your business. I look to You to live in my place." Always learn to look to Him. Never try to move on your own. We are saved through faith, not through works. In the same way our life is based on faith, not on works. We were saved through looking to the Lord alone. Today we live through looking to Him as well. Just as salvation is accomplished by the Lord, without the involvement of any of our work, so also our living on earth today is a living of the Lord Himself, without the need for any involvement of ourselves. We must look up to the Lord who saves us and say, "It is You alone, not I."

After we say this, if we still move on our own, we are saying this in vain. We must stop our own activity before these words can be meaningful in any way. Brothers and sisters, we must remember that failure comes not because we do too little, but because we do too much. As long as man keeps on working, God's grace will not operate and man's sins will not be forgiven. In the same way, as long as man is occupied with his own work, trying to do everything by himself, Christ's life will not be manifested. This is a rule. The cross will not produce any effect on those who trust in their own work. When we insist on our own goodness, we will not be saved. But when we turn away from ourselves to the Lord, we will be saved. The same is true today. If we are working and operating, instead of the cross working in us and the life of Christ operating in us, this speaking will be in vain. We must learn to condemn ourselves. We must confess that we will never overcome by ourselves. Do not will and do not try to do anything. Simply look to the Lord and say, "I look to You as the One who is living in me! Live on my behalf. I look to You for victory! I look to You to express Your life through me." If we say this, the Lord will accomplish it for us. But if we frustrate our faith by our own work, the Lord can do nothing. We have to settle this question once and for all. We have to believe daily and speak to the Lord daily in a definite way: "Lord, I am useless! I take Your cross. Lord, keep me from moving. Lord, be my Master and live out of me." If we can believe, hope, and trust in this way, we will be able to testify daily, "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives."

Re: - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2008/3/18 20:18

Quote:
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There is some tremendous, efficacious truth here that can revolutionize everything we know about living the Christian life.

Brother, thank you for this Nee post. It is most excellent.

Re: Sin cycle: Romans 7 - Christian or "Almost Christian" - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2008/3/18 21:26

Quote:

-----However, I have been stuck now in Romans 7. Some say it is a Christian experience, while other say it is not.

Please consider the following from Poul Madsen's commentary on Romans...

Endless discussion have taken place as to whether Paul is thinking of his condition before or after his conversion. Some (including Augustine and Luther) affirm that Paul is here describing the Christian, pointing out that he uses the present tense and places his statements in the context of the Christian life. Others (including Evangelicals from the 18th as well as our own century) insist that the apostle is describing the unconverted person. They feel that such expressions as: "I am carnal, sold under sin" (v.14) and: "O wretched man that I am" cannot apply to a Christian. For them the difference between the atmosphere of defeat in chapter 7 and the enjoyment of victory in chapter 8 simply expresses the difference between a non-Christian and a Christian.

In fact, however, the question of Christian or non-Christian hardly enters into the apostle's line of argument. His problem is the relationship of law and man, whether that man is a Christian or not. A Christian is certainly not under the law, but should he turn back to it instead of remaining totally dependent upon the grace of God in Christ Jesus, then he will find himself just as helpless as a non-Christian and, like him, having nothing more to rely upon than his own strength of character. So the tragedy repeats itself: sin finds occasion through the commandment.

I have already pointed out that the Danish translation reads: "When we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which are awakened through the law, wrought in our members ..." (v.5). If a Christian falls back on to legal ground -- which we are all in danger of doing -- then even an apostle finds that in himself he has no defence or resistance against sinful passions. These are always awakened by the law.

By his use of the first person (the I-form), Paul gives the greatest possible emphasis to what he is saying. He means it very seriously. He wishes to stress that in himself an apostle has no other resource than the grace of God alone to keep him from the dominion of sin. His presentation is passionate, for Paul feels very deeply about trying to use the law as a way of salvation or sanctification. Everyone who treads that path is bound to come under the power of sin, as Paul knows from his own experience. Hence his hot words in his letter to the Galatians and his frank self-disclosure here. He will shrink from nothing, however humiliating it may be for himself, in his effort to insist that no one -- not even the chief apostle -- can so attain as to be able to manage without the grace of God. Expressed in another way, this means that however much spiritual experience we have, in ourselves we are just as weak and prone to sin as ever we were. No one, then, can have any grounds for self-confidence. If ever we regard grace as something elementary which we have left behind, then our experience will correspond with what Paul says of himself in this universal autobiography. It is sometimes asserted that in this section Paul is describing the Christian life when the "I" is governing, whereas chapter 8 describes that life when the Spirit is governing. It is pointed out that the words "I", "me" and "my" appear frequently here with no mention of the Holy Spirit, while it is just the opposite in chapter 8. If, however, we think in terms of graduating out of chapter 7 into chapter 8, we miss the apostle's real line of thought which is that as he is in himself (v.25) he will always remain a wretched man, totally dependent upon the grace of God, since in his flesh dwells no good thing. If, therefore, he departs from his dependent relationship to the grace of God in Christ Jesus, he finds that he is still what he was when he was first saved by grace -- a slave of sin.

In Christ,

Ron

Re:, on: 2008/3/18 21:32

From: The Normal Christian Life

Walking In the Spirit

"Not only am I in Christ, but Christ is in me. And just as physically a man cannot live and work in water but only in air, so spiritually Christ dwells and manifests Himself not in 'flesh' but in 'spirit'. Therefore if I live "after the flesh" I find that what is mine in Christ is, so to say, held in suspense in me. Though in fact I am in Christ, yet if I live in the flesh -- that is, in my own strength and under my own direction -- then in experience I find to my dismay that it is what is in Adam that manifests itself in me. If I would know in experience all that is in Christ, then I must learn to live in the Spirit.

Living in the Spirit means that I trust the Holy Spirit to do in me what I cannot do myself. This life is completely different from the life I would naturally live of myself. Each time I am faced with a new demand from the Lord, I look to Him to do in me what He requires of me. It is not a case of trying but of trusting; not of struggling but of resting in Him. If I have a hasty temper, impure thoughts, a quick tongue or a critical spirit, I shall not set out with a determined effort to change myself, but, reckoning myself dead in Christ to these things, I shall look to the Spirit of God to produce in me the needed purity or humility or meekness. **This is what it means to "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will work for you" (Exod. 14:13).**

Re: - posted by KenobGerudo, on: 2008/3/19 0:36

Quote:

-----read the first part of Galatians 5 where it says that the flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh

I used to read this text in the same manner. But in my thinking on Rom 7 I do not know if I can quite interpret this in such a manner. Perhaps it would make more sense in this chapter if he is saying that one is either in the Spirit or in the flesh . . . not both.

Quote:

-----the apostle Paul was not even perfect look at Philipians 3:12 not that i have already attained or am already perfected; but I press on , that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me

Yes, but read further! "Let u therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you."

Quote:

-----Romans 8 is about our standing with God not about being perfect in of ourselves rather that God has set us free from the condemnation that we deserved on account of what Christ has done

I do not get quite the same understanding when I read Rom 8. I admitt, I am not seeing perfectionism, but I AM seeing a n experience which is much more than being "free from the condemnation" which I think Rom 3-6 is about.

Your understanding of Rom 7 is the same I used to have. But by simply careful reading of this chapter, I don't think I can make sense of it anymore with that understanding.

Re: Sin cycle: Romans 7 - Christian or "Almost Christian" - posted by Zionshield (), on: 2008/3/19 2:14

KenobGerudo,

Hello brother :-D . Only a saved man can love God's law and be heartbroken over his plight...it is this man that is described in the sermon on the mount as he begins the hard road of the cross for it is he that mourns over sin and hungers and thirst for righteousness. God must put us in hard places to bring the strength of self to an end. The places must oft be dark so our minds won't see and grab control again. He will put you in situations that bring up forms of your self that are detestable and sicken you, but don't be discouraged...He is freeing you from that hideous monster... self. You must consent to death, agree that self should be on the cross. Make sense? Keep following Him. There was an ancient tribe that lived where Taurus was. They would sentence a murderer to be chained to his victim until he himself died from the rot. This is the picture of the body of death we cry out for deliverance from. If you are in earnest, stay in the Word and as Madame Guyon instructed go into the quiet place and offer your heart to Him. Just sit for hours as needed and offer your very heart...don't let it stray after lust, whim or duty...these are idols..lovers. He will come to you. Oh how he loves you, KenobGerudo!

Re: - posted by Ruach34 (), on: 2008/3/19 9:32

Hey All,

Paul stated a fact, a once and for all time statement, that, "Nothing good in my flesh dwells."
This is a true statement and must be regarded.

Here is another true statement, of which we get our eternal hope, salvation and Love. "In Christ dwells everything good."

He is the way, the truth and the life!

To look away from our flesh, the sinful nature, considering it done away through the death of Christ, is the only way. To look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith...who for the joy...

Paul concludes chapter 7. "O, wretched man that I am, who will save me from this body of death?
Thanks be to God through Christ Jesus."

That is, my friends, the full proclamation of the Gospel!

This chapter has been a source of comfort for me recently, because the Lord has been showing me how vile and wretched I am, that in the little things of an attitude or thought, I am most vile.

O Blessed be God, that through Christ Jesus, I have victory over these hinderances and weights and can run with Him, as He runs with me...abiding, working, striving against sin even to the point of shedding blood (As Peter quotes) if He sees fit for it. Look unto Him!

By Life or by death may Christ have the Glory!

Re:, on: 2008/3/19 10:41

Brothers and sisters, i can only reply off of what i have concluded of my life and scripture,

Trust, trust, trust in Jesus to fill in the gaps of all our theology and uncertainties.

Trust Christ, that is the ultimate heart of all of the epistles

Trust, trust , trust

We absolutely cannot, but God in Christ can.

We have within us the inability carry out God's will without the spirit's help. Even we try our hardest, it falls to the ground.

...

Trust in Christ for Salvation here on earth and off course in eternity!