

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Am I a wretched man ... still?

Am I a wretched man ... still? - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/12/25 12:51

Reluctantly almost, thought it better to start something along this line due to it's inroads elsewhere ...

Just as paradoxical on the heels of a very good article

([https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?viewmodeflat&order0&topic\\_id21394&forum36&post\\_id&refreshGo](https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?viewmodeflat&order0&topic_id21394&forum36&post_id&refreshGo)) A Breif Exhortation Concerning Theology and Division that might perhaps serve as a primer to how we might go about this. That is, might we truly lay aside whatever our holdings are by preconceived notion and take a fresh look at it? It will be difficult if not impossible I full well recognize to scrap everything, I can tell by my own reluctance lingering in the backdrop ...

But if I may as a last suggestion add something redundant. Zac Poonen's challenge to approach the scriptures everyday as if it was the first time we ever read them. Charity and edification, I would want to learn through this rather than become further entrenched into debate or debacle. The tense and motivation is one of "Have you considered?" Not as a point of hostility and likewise would like to hear the same question brought back into my hearing; "Have I considered?"

*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Rom 7:24*

~~~~~

Left this sitting up for awhile while we went and opened Christmas presents and came back thinking I would save it for another day, another time.

But apparently it is far enough in motion elsewhere to warrant it. Please, let's keep it charitable.

Throw it out there as a question by the heading.

Re: Am I a wretched man ... still?, on: 2007/12/25 14:32

Brother, for whatever it is worth, the Lord laid on my heart last week, that whatever can be shaken, is.

We were taught that Romans 7 still applies to us. That the battle remains with our decision to "walk in the spirit" or in the flesh, on a minute to minute basis.

But that is not the point I'm looking to make.

I felt that among us, who are not off unto the really wacky doctrine websites, etc., that our shaking will come in the form of debates on Calvinism and it's counter-doctrines.

I'm not a Calvinist, but I am a member of a Reformed Theology Church. They accept me - as I am and I don't try to change their minds.

We have Christ in common and I believe it will stay that way, unless they bring in something of the emergent or worse.

I believe we need to draw a line in the sand, whether we'll split over this difference between us and the Authors featured here or not.

That is our decision and we must make it soon.

I pray the Lord's Peace between us all here and an acceptance in our Beloved between us all on this particular issue.

I know there is a middle ground where we can all agree.

The Elect are eternally secure but only God knows who they are - and their heart will prove out who they are, as we continue unto the end.

His Peace, I pray.

Annie

**Re: The Bottomline ~, on: 2007/12/25 15:11**

The Real Presence by A. W. Tozer ~

Whatever else it embraces, true Christian experience must always include a genuine encounter with God. Without this, religion is but a shadow, a reflection of reality, a cheap copy of an original once enjoyed by someone else of whom we have heard. It cannot but be a major tragedy in the life of any man to live in a church from childhood to old age and know nothing more real than some synthetic god compounded of theology and logic, but having no eyes to see, no ears to hear, and no heart to love.

The spiritual giants of old were men who at some time became acutely conscious of the real Presence of God and maintained that consciousness for the rest of their lives.

The first encounter may have been one of terror, as when a "horror of great darkness" fell upon Abram, or as when Moses at the bush hid his face because he was afraid to look upon God. Usually this fear soon lost its content of terror and changed after a while to delightful awe, to level off finally into a reverent sense of complete nearness to God.

The essential point is, they experienced God. How otherwise can the saints and prophets be explained? How otherwise can we account for the amazing power for good they have exercised over countless generations?

Is it not that they walked in conscious communion with the real Presence and addressed their prayers to God with the artless conviction that they were addressing Someone actually There?

**Re: - posted by myfirstLove (), on: 2007/12/25 15:29**

Quote:

-----O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Rom 7:24  
-----

Go on to Rom. 8 and you'll see who can deliver you from your old man.

Quote:

-----The Elect are eternally secure but only God knows who they are - and their heart will prove out who they are, as we continue unto the end.  
-----

Yes the Elect are secure, but God uses His word, His warnings, His people to get them moving. Just like Paul was used to rebuke the corinthians for backsliding and thru Paul's warnings the corinthians repented.

There are still many who do not understand being DEAD to sin because they have not forsaken ALL for Christ. There are many Christians who think its impossible to be dead to the affections of this world, thinking they will always lust after it and struggle. Why? because they are not obeying the word and take up their cross and DIE. When God delivered me from drug addiction and lust of the world its not like I had to try and quit, God took away the desires completely. That is the power of His Salvation! All I have to do is obey the first commandment, to make Him above all and He does the rest in me, without me TRYING so hard. That is called rest. Ceasing from your works and where God is working in you because you truly have surrendered your life to Him. But, the power of the cross is foolish to those who are perishing who do not believe. They do not understand this new life in Him because they are still in unbelief living in the old man when Christ say that you are a new creation and have given you a new heart.

I would encourage all s.i. people to put away mans articles and audios about God and seek the Lord yourself. People are not getting revelation of His truth from Him, but from man. This kind of seeking will only make you depend on man and not God. man can encourage you toward Him, but they cannot break you free from sin or give you peace and rest, and f

faith and confidence in His word. Only God can do that!

Do you really want revival for yourself? Because it will cost you your life! and those who want revival in their life can have it! But, the reason why you are not revived is because you are depending on man to bring about revival instead of you placing yourself on the altar and DIE.

Christians make things so hard when it is really simple. If, only they would believe His word.

Whom the Lord sets free is free indeed! The truth will set you free, but it seems that many aren't set free because they don't believe the truth or else they would be FREE.

**A wretched man ... - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/12/25 16:24**

Quote:

-----Go on to Rom. 8 and you'll see who can deliver you from your old man.  
-----

Unfortunate chapter divisions it is true. But are we still not in the realm of positing a doctrine it seems if we are going to put a wedge in between at that very point. Is it not a continuum of thought? Sister, the effort is to only try and take a fresh look at this.

Quote:

-----When God delivered me from drug addiction and lust of the world it's not like I had to try and quit, God took away the desires completely. That is the power of His Salvation!  
-----

Sister, for me, it was just the opposite, a long, protracted, drawn out process and battle. Why did He not do the same in my case? It is not necessarily a question ... I recognize now why it was handled in the manner that it was, but do you see that this may not always be a correct way of interpreting our experience against that which we might want to hold to?

We can end up basing our experience as the 'norm' for everyone else and use scripture to back it up.

Quote:

-----I would encourage all s.i. people to put away man's articles and audios about God and seek the Lord yourself.  
-----

I would encourage this as well only perhaps do both if necessary, read and absorb from those who have gone on and before ... but indeed seek the Lord for yourself. He may, as suggested, have you leave off this just as well.

**Re:, on: 2007/12/25 17:20**

Hia Sis Lisa. Praying that you and Josef are well.

Sis, I don't see where you disagree with my two posts, but I'll stretch what you've said out a bit further.

We are not to only choose to "walk in the spirit", but by doing so, we are "IN His Image", while we are doing so and just "us" when we're not.

The "flesh" is not just blatant sin, but our 'wills' in all things and decisions.  
Can even be our 'good deeds'.

It is so much more than just not "following after the flesh" in the sense of "sins".  
It is the being transformed into His Likeness or Image.

You've mentioned the one main "how" --- to seek Him until you Love Him with all of your heart, soul, mind and strength and others as yourself.

To seek until you find Him.

Tozer put it across rather well I believe.

Sis, "salt" makes people thirsty for HIM.

We must watch our words in order to make anyone thirsty for that actual "personal relationship with Him and a reality of 'experiencing' having been in His Presence."

Just capitalizing "DIE" won't help Sis. But to draw us to The Lovely One, so that we want to be with Him in the closest way and in that way, we will desire nothing less but to be in His Presence and transformed into His Image. One cannot "die" until we fully Love Him more than ourselves and not until we've sought Him with all of our might.

Since Deut. 6, our relationship with Him has all hinged upon our Love for Him.

And walking in the spirit is just that stopping and waiting to ask His will, moment by moment or minute by minute. It's not just the cessation of what most call "sins". The goal is to be like Him, in the Holy Spirit's power. Without Him, we can do nothing.

Well, "The Lord knows them that are His."

By His Foreknowledge, He knew who would seek Him until they love Him and be faithful unto the end, because of that love.

He knows all of our hearts and how we each individually feel about Him or how much we *experientially* Know Him.

His Sheep that "**hear** His Voice and Follow and will not follow another."

I don't believe He is nervous at all.

He knows already who are His and who will follow Him until their death or the resurrection.

He said, "If you Love Me, you'll keep my commandments." How much more simpler could He have said it? But He is also the Author and finisher of our faith and He who began this good work, will finish it, in those whom He did foreknow, He did predestine to come into the Image of The Son and who would have a heart that seeks Him out until they truly 'find' Him.

Heb 5:11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.

Heb 5:12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be *the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*

Heb 5:13 For every one that useth milk is unskillfull in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

Heb 5:14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Heb 6:1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

Heb 6:2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

Heb 6:3 And this will we do, if God permit.

It's time we moved into the deeper things I pray.

Of being salt, that makes all people thirsty for more of JESUS-Himself.

If we're still struggling, we just need to ask ourselves if we've sought Him hard enough to find Him, because if we have, we'd Love Him with a passion and desire to be more and more like Him. The beatitudes speak of this process. That's the/His Goal - to be like Him and not just some sort of moral code only.

If it's done in the flesh alone - who gains?

Being careful not to throw out His Word, that He *will* have a people and how He works to keep them His own and His plan to transform them into His Image.

He already knows 'who' will be faithful unto the end, by love/spirit and not by the flesh. Gal 3.

Sis, I prefer we not use those words "they", as if any of us have "attained", but I prefer "we" in discussing anything remotely resembling "perfection" - As Paul -

Php 3:8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

Php 3:9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

Php 3:10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

Php 3:11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

Php 3:12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

Php 3:13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

Php 3:14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Php 3:15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

HE is worthy!

#### Re: Am I a wretched man ... still? - posted by Isaiah64, on: 2007/12/25 18:26

I have struggled for a long time with the Romans 7:14-25 question. There are good points for both sides of the argument, and men of God whom I greatly respect on both sides as well. But, as it has been mentioned here, we need to look to Scripture first, and be willing to lay aside our preconceived ideas and just take the text for what it says. A good guideline to remember is to judge and examine Scripture in the light of its *context*, and not by our own experiences.

And having done just that with Romans 7, I have become utterly convinced that Paul is NOT speaking of himself as a regenerate, born again believer. Now please...it's not my intention to cause any strife or more locked threads. Before you disagree with me at least take the time to hear me out.

I challenge everyone reading this to please look at Romans 7:14-25 in its proper context, and if possible, it would be very helpful to have a Greek dictionary/Strong's numbers (E-Sword really helps). I believe that if you take an honest look, you will be convinced as well.

But just to clear something up before I continue--I am NOT an advocate of what's commonly called "sinless perfection." So I'm not coming from that biased viewpoint. I stand more with Wesley's view of Christian perfection which is different (ONLY because I can see it in Scripture), but that's a whole other issue.

Am I a wretched man still? I'm going to recommend an article and 3 sermons that will explain it way better than I can. They hold to the same viewpoint as myself, that Paul is speaking as an unregenerate man in Romans 7:14-25. **BUT** the weird thing about these is that they were not preached or written by men of the Wesleyan/holiness persuasion...but by Calvinists, and very staunch ones at that!

And I must say, it is probably the most honest and balanced look on Romans 7 I have ever come across.

Please take the time to read and listen to these. Even if you disagree, it might broaden your view a bit more on this highly controversial topic.

The article is actually a chapter from the book *Justification and Regeneration* by Charles Leiter. Heartcry Missionary Society (Paul Washer's ministry) sells this book on their website. The sermons are by Tim Conway, a preacher from a Baptist church in Texas.

I had posted these threads earlier this year:

([https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic\\_id19065&forum36](https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id19065&forum36)) Understanding Romans 7

([https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic\\_id19698&forum36](https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id19698&forum36)) Romans 7 Sermons

May you be blessed and edified...

**Re: - posted by myfirstLove (), on: 2007/12/25 19:47**

Quote:

-----Hia Sis Lisa. Praying that you and Josef are well.  
-----

Hi HE\_Reigns,

Actually my husband is "sscott". Your confusing me with Josef and Lina.

I won't be responding anytime soon again on S.I. unless I am led too. I was moved to respond on the last thread. But, regret responding to this.

As you will noticed I did mention that we MUST put God above ALL. That is loving God. I mention first and greatest commandment.

You cannot be salt unless you die to yourselves, and many are not willing too, but still expect much from God.

I don't need to share this again. The message of the cross is all over S.I. in articles and sermons, but many are not willing to come to Him. It is all head knowledge to most. Not many live it.

Ezekiel describes what the children of God are like. This is what most of the children of God are like today. They love to hear good preaching from holy men, but do not take heed to their words. These holy men are like entertainment to them and they deceive themselves thinking they are holy because they know a lot of stuff about holiness and they listen to a lot of stuff about it, but their hearts are still wicked and in bondage to sin!

This is what God shared with Ezekiel and today the same words are being shared to those who hear, they will see this too.

Ezekiel 33:30-33

Hearing and Not Doing

30 "As for you, son of man, the children of your people are talking about you beside the walls and in the doors of the houses; and they speak to one another, everyone saying to his brother, 'Please come and hear what the word is that comes from the LORD.' 31 So they come to you as people do, they sit before you as My people, and they hear your words, but they do not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their hearts pursue their own gain. 32 Indeed you are to them as a very lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument; for they hear your words, but they do not do them. 33 And when this comes to pass—surely it will come—then they will know that a prophet has been among them."

Lisa

**Re: A wretched man ..., on: 2007/12/25 19:53**

Quote:

-----crrschk wrote:

Unfortunate chapter divisions it is true. But are we still not in the realm of positing a doctrine it seems if we are going to put a wedge in between at that very point. Is it not a continuum of thought?

And there's the point. And to bring that point out all the more, is the Greek, the grammar and that Romans is normally always taught "with Galatians" in Bible Colleges. Just as it was always, "Daniel & Revelation" that were taught as one class.

Context is the whole of the book, and not just verses and chpts and then also, bringing Galatians in, especially chpt. 3.

Paul is trying to teach the Gentiles in Rome, what he also had to teach the Gentiles in Galatia --- that we are not and can not be saved or walk in obedience to God by the flesh.  
Both Rom. 8 and Gal 3 insist that we must "walk in the spirit".

Because the church does not understand what that means, they insist on doing exactly what Paul warned against in Romans and Galatians.

Very disheartening.

People read all the "thou shall nots" that are in the N.T. and try to fulfill these in their own strength and fail miserably. That is the struggle that Paul was discussing in Romans 7 and Galatians 3.

The solution, Romans 8.

If anyone denies that there is not a battle within them - that's fights their ability to "resemble Christ", in word, thought, or deed - then I'd like to meet such a human.

To 'battle' is not to "excuse sin" in one's life.

Paul shows the battle of trying to fulfill this law in the flesh in Rom 7. You'll fall flat on your face or become the worst of them in self-righteousness. Have seen both.

Well, the rest of whatever our part is I posted earlier.

I won't get into Author-Wars, by pulling up Sermons for what I was taught.

Again, I pray that HE be magnified and only Him through-out.

GOD Bless!

**Re:, on: 2007/12/25 19:59**

That last reply wasn't to you sis. Your post wasn't there when I hit reply. :-)

I got you confused with Lina because of the prayer thread of when they were in England.  
We prayed a lot.

I still don't see where we disagree and why I wrote how I did before - not seeing where you disagree.

I felt as though the "way out" was all that I wanted to expound more on.

Lord Bless and don't be a stranger.

His Love.  
Annie

**Re: Am I a wretched man ... still? - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2007/12/25 22:36**

Mike, if I read you right, you are feeling a dryness in your soul and wonder what you can do to repair it?

Brother, I am not sure that anyone can speak for God in this matter except to say it is not anything unusual. Apparently, Paul experienced it, did you consider that? And he was a great man of God....

Have you considered Elijah, that great man of God who after experiencing a mighty victory over the prophets of Baal was depressed.

You say you have struggled with ....after you came to the LORD. Why some experience miraculous deliverance and others are left to struggle is one of the mysteries that appear to defy any explanation, unless it is a form of chastisement.

As long as I consider myself to have achieved and that it settled once and for all, I am opening myself to failure. "Him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

It is essential for us to know our weaknesses so we can throw ourselves at the feet of him who can and will lift us up. It is in our nature to want to achieve and then think we can do it all by ourself. Sounds like we do not enjoy being yoked up to Jesus, don't you think? Now what is wrong: we chafe at his yoke?

In my walk with God I am a lot like Peter: when Jesus invited Peter to join him on his walk on the water, I can do it until I take my eyes off of Him. The principle, as I understand, is universal, common to all who believe. God wants us to remain dependant on Him and if we are His, He will do whatever it takes to keep us that way. And humans are slow learners. Me included.

The bottom line is to go to Him for your answers, he will answer if you keep knocking.

(BTW, have you ever read "Pilgrim's Progress, Part 2"? I am almost done reading this book, reading The New Amplified version by Jim Pappas, Jr. Some do not like it, but I love it. [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) sells it. You might identify with some characters in this analogy.)

Blessings to you, brother,

ginnyrose

**Re: Wretched man I am - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/12/26 0:45**

Quote:  
-----Ezekiel describes what the children of God are like. This is what most of the children of God are like today. They love to hear good preaching from holy men, but do not take heed to their words. These holy men are like entertainment to them and they deceive themselves thinking they are holy because they know a lot of stuff about holiness and they listen to a lot of stuff about it, but their hearts are still wicked and in bondage to sin!  
-----

Kind of a loaded set of statements there, hard to tell where the aim is ... This is ratcheting up the rhetoric but it is not really helpful to explaining anything as it pertains here.

Quote:  
-----Mike, if I read you right, you are feeling a dryness in your soul and wonder what you can do to repair it?

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consider that? And he was a great man of God....

Have you considered Elijah, that great man of God who after experiencing a mighty victory over the prophets of Baal was depressed.

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-----

Hi sister. Perhaps I gave off a wrong impression here. Maybe I should have framed my words a bit differently. I recognize all these things and was actually trying to make the point that there is often a great difference in how the Lord will take us through matters. There is no boasting whether the Lord might deliver instantaneously or protracted, it is glorious in the former as in the latter and even if a season of suffering is what it takes to accomplish the purpose He has in mind I do not know that it is a higher respecter of persons over the one delivered spontaneously. I certainly wasn't questioning the means by any stretch.

The question "Am I a wretched man ... still?" isn't one I am really questioning from a point of doubting it, I am pretty well convinced it is the case but am attempting to allow a re-thinking of it openly. I might make things more difficult because of this penchant to hold opposing views in tension and not try and argue out from underneath them. It's tricky business but I am not attempting to be crafty about it either.

Rom 7:21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

Something I have been taking a greater deal of notice is how the scriptures explain our experience as much if not more so than also teach us how to live, what to expect and so forth. What I mean is that I keep finding that the "Me too" is finding the experiences not as much lived up to but lived out and then reflected back upon; "Yes, me too!" Hope that makes some sort of sense.

For instance the verse above, "I find a law" ...

Well, I find a law as well, *when ... evil is present with me*. Not past tense, but current tense, presently.

Gal 5:17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Recognize Annie's correlations here as well, but I am not starting from a construct, honestly. The word 'contrary' stands out. Not making a statement with this, just opening it up.

Is it so? Is it true to experience? *Still?*

P.S. Ginny, isn't the second part of Pilgrims Progress ... I went and looked it up, recall that it continued on about his wife (the narrative) but thanks for the reminder, I do not recall why I never continued on and finished the whole of it. Will have to do that. Thanks!

**Re: Am I a wretched man ... still?, on: 2007/12/26 2:02**

Hi Mike,

I began writing this before ginnyrose's post, and your latest one.

In your leading post you said

Quote:  
----- might we truly lay aside whatever our holdings are by preconceived notion and take a fresh look at it? It will be difficult if not impossible I fully well recognize to scrap everything, I can tell by my own reluctance lingering in the backdrop ...

But if I may as a last suggestion add something redundant. Zac Poonen's challenge to approach the scriptures everyday as if it was the first time we ever read them. Charity and edification, I would want to learn through this rather than become further entrenched into debate or debacle. The tense and motivation is one of "Have you considered?" Not as a point of hostility and likewise would like to hear the same question brought back into my hearing; "Have I considered?"

-----

I'd like to take you up on this invitation :- ) to ask what you make of these verses from Romans 8, (which you must know by now are among my favourite for explaining this part of the gospel)?

11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

I would draw your attention to three words in particular: v 11 'quicken' and 'mortal' and v 13 'through'.

Here's another verse with 'through' in it:

1 John 4:9

In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.

Here's Tyndale on those three verses from Romans 8, beginning in 10:

*Wherefore if the spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from death, dwell in you: even He that raised up Christ from death, shall all quicken your mortal bodies, because that this spirit dwelleth in you.*

*Therefore brethren we are now debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh ye must die. But if ye mortify the deeds of the body, by the help of the spirit, ye shall live.*

Here's one last verse with 'through' in it:

Romans 7

24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this 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.

Here's Tyndale to the first verse of Rom 8:

*O wretched man that I am: who shall deliver me from this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then I myself in my mind serve the law of God, and in my flesh the law of sin. There is then no damnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, which walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.*

Quote:

-----For instance the verse above, "I find a law" ...

Well, I find a law as well, *when ... evil is present with me*. Not past tense, but current tense, presently.

-----  
I am assuming you are referring (only) to flesh and not to other kinds of 'evil'.

Quote:

-----Am I a wretched man ... still?  
-----

Honestly, I believe Paul described this situation as 'wretched' only when he knew no way out. It is impossible to argue that he was unconverted when he wrote to the Roman church, and I do believe his use of the present tense is a fair literary device for the sake of emphasis, as well as to recreate in his own mind - for the sake of writing about it accurately - that sense of unresolvable bondage which existed before the cross. He had stopped living like this a *long* time ago, and yet he was intimately acquainted with the issues Jews would be facing as they tried to live without the law.

Also, as with the poor, the flesh we have always with us, always demanding from us a regular commitment to the cross. If it is not possible to break through this barrier eventually, Peter could not write:

1 Peter 4

1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

2 That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

There may be great struggles, and many repetitive choices to be made to deepen the first decision to be dead to the world in Christ Jesus, but His death is that *great news* that there is a way through.

Quote:

-----for me, it was just the opposite, a long, protracted, drawn out process and battle.

I think this happens more when one has chosen ways to survive which in turn produce a backlash of side-effects which also require survival strategies. By the time one comes to one's spiritual senses and understands all the answers are in Christ and Him crucified, the way back is not a simple *about turn*. Many other lifestyle choices and decisions may arise for reconsideration, and some of these may be irreversible and burdensome. However, surely one must abide in His death over these also?

**Re: Am I a wretched man ... still? - posted by rowdy2 (), on: 2007/12/26 8:03**

Reply to crsschk

The Biblical answer that I find as plausible is found by example in the O.T. in the children of Israel when they entered the ir promised destination, the land of Canaan. They were instructed to drive out all the peoples off the land.

Zephaniah 1-2-3 by O. T. examples I find fuller understanding in the N. T. that contain our instruction to drive out all sin when we have entered our resting place and the example is still a reality today in the land of Canaan were the children of Israel and the inhabitants of the land are still locked in mortal combat as we are with sins that we have allowed to remain and have not bound on earth and consequently are not bound in heaven (our rest) . Their conflict is different than ours in respect to the fact they were resisting flesh and bones and we are resisting the devilish spirit of the flesh.

Zechariah 3

1. And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.
2. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?
3. Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel.
4. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.
5. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by.
6. And the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua, saying,
7. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.
8. Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the Branch.
9. For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.
10. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree.

In my flesh dwelleth ... - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/12/26 10:20

Quote:

-----I would draw your attention to three words in particular: v 11 'quicken' and 'mortal' and v 13 'through'.  
-----

Love this, drawing out words to derive their meaning and intention. "Through", that may be the hinge perhaps of all of this? Interesting to put *quicken*, well, actually just as you have it here, in this order ... seems to be speaking of progression. In just going through this process already the verses keep cropping up, lately, this one;

1Co 9:27 but I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage: lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected.

Just to draw off what I am musing on, Matthew Henry here;

*They were not only temperate, but inured themselves to hardships. Those who fought with one another in these exercises prepared themselves by beating the air, as the apostle calls it, or by throwing out their arms, and thereby inuring themselves, beforehand, to deal about their blows in close combat, or brandish them by way of flourish. There is no room for any such exercise in the Christian warfare. Christians are ever in close combat. Their enemies make fierce and hearty opposition, and are ever at hand; and for this reason they must lay about them in earnest, and never drop the contest, nor flag and faint in it. They must fight, not as those that beat the air, but must strive against their enemies with all their might. One enemy the apostle here mentions, namely, the body; this must be kept under, beaten black and blue, as the combatants were in these Grecian games, and thereby brought into subjection. By the body we are to understand fleshly appetites and inclinations. These the apostle set himself to curb and conquer, and in this the Corinthians were bound to imitate him. Note, Those who would aright pursue the interests of their souls must beat down their bodies, and keep them under. They must combat hard with fleshly lusts, and not indulge a wanton appetite, and long for heathenish sacrifices, nor eat them, to please their flesh, at the hazard of their brethren's souls. The body must be made to serve the mind, not suffered to lord over it.*

Again, finding these things true to experience.

Quote:

-----Honestly, I believe Paul described this situation as 'wretched' only when he knew no way out. It is impossible to argue that he was unconverted when he wrote to the Roman church, and I do believe his use of the present tense is a fair literary device for the sake of emphasis, as well as to recreate in his own mind - for the sake of writing about it accurately - that sense of unresolvable bondage which existed before the cross. He had stopped living like this a long time ago, and yet he was intimately acquainted with the issues Jews would be facing as they tried to live without the law.  
-----

Somewhat, tracking with you here on the emphasis but still am uncertain that this emphasis is all in the past tense. It can get muddled right here at this very part and perhaps this is the great area of so much controversy. Will give it a shot as just ongoing musing ... It is as if I want to say, *largely* these things are in the 'past' due to and *through* (that great hinge word) the Lord, (thanks be to God!). Yet, there is still this 'resident evil' and I do not know that this is still not the same wretched ...

Rom 7:18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: ...

"I know". Perhaps what I continue to take note of is the present tense aspects, they seem to me to be statements of fact and of experience. Have been hedging a bit on where I know this all may want to leap forward to, namely 'victory' and there is this and there ought to be and there will be if there is continuity and continuance and ... endurance. But there is something of jumping over the cliff it seems that wants to make this all a clean and distinct division when there is still to be found ... this 'law'. Maybe I am thinking of eradication when experience seems to be dictating otherwise, a boxing match, a race, a warfare. In a sense you could still be reigning heavy weight champ, yet all of a sudden a Buster Douglas come s along and knocks you back on to your keester. (1Co 10:12)

"for me, it was just the opposite, a long, protracted, drawn out process and battle."

Quote:  
-----I think this happens more when one has chosen ways to survive which in turn produce a backlash of side-effects which also require survival strategies. By the time one comes to one's spiritual senses and understands all the answers are in Christ and Him crucified, the way back is not a simple about turn. Many other lifestyle choices and decisions may arise for reconsideration, and some of these may be irreversible and burdensome to me. However, surely one must abide in His death over these also?  
-----

Speaking as a veteran of that battle ... Certainly there are aspects of that survival mode (in the flesh) it's ... long conditioning and development. But *I find a law* and the battle was intense, spiritually a bloody and painful experience, it has stayed with me all these years now due to its intensity. I should add however there was something of a more remarkable 'deliverance' at one point, with one substance, which it would seem contrary as the withdrawal symptoms can be excruciating (speaking of meth\crank\speed). It was comparatively 'easy' compared with the other green herb. What I am trying to say here is this was a truly *spiritual battle* as much but definitely more than a physical one. It was a crisis and pinnacle of allegiance, *contrary* indeed! It was a fight to the death, not merely rolling over and dying. I also mean to say and perhaps am glimpsing off Paul here that ... it was beyond me. It was a suffering and a proclivity to conquer, it was too late to turn back. When it got to a point of 'one or the other' must go, then I was in a heart wrenching crisis ... the will to do and yet .. . It was exhausting day after day, but I am still not speaking of sheer 'will power' if it was that at all. *Having tasted that the Lord is good ....* Trust this is but the Readers Digest version here and it may well be why I hedge at hearing how simplistic this might be for someone else. It may well be protracted and indeed spiritual bloody.

12 rounds and beaten, bloodied, counted out, TKO'd, but one solid right and it was all over ;-)

**Re: - posted by davyman, on: 2007/12/26 19:06**

I am just dropping by to say that this has been a very edifying discussion. I still fall on the side of being sinner and just at the same time. I believe I am in the good company of Edwards and Luther in saying this. God bless everyone in this discussion. We are all defeated and victorious, praise God!

SDG,

Dave

**Re: Am I a wretched man ... still?, on: 2007/12/26 22:10**

Hi Mike,

Quote:  
----- It was a crisis and pinnacle of allegiance, contrary indeed! It was a fight to the death, not merely rolling over and dying.  
-----

Without doubt, mortification is something we do (to our flesh) with the help of the Spirit. But the only reason we can hope of succeeding, is in that 'our old man' was crucified so long ago.

In another thread someone said 'Sin is not a person', but in Paul's terminology I'm noticing he captures a truth in the phrase 'body of sin' (Rom 6:6) and 'body of the sins of the flesh, (Col 2:11) and Rom 7:24 'this body of death'.

Since death passed upon all men 'through' Adam's sin (Rom 5:12), these seem reasonable descriptions. Also, we have in Heb 2:14, Jesus taking part in 'flesh and blood ... that *through death* He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil'.

What you said about 'rolling over and dying' sounds like the action of a seasoned veteran, who knows from the pain of previous extensive battling, that a short, sharp death-blow through the Spirit, has become (perhaps not *infinitely*, but definitely) *preferable*. ;-)

Then, Romans 5:10

For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Perhaps easy-believism tried to make 'I am crucified with Christ' sound attractively easy? I do think there are some pain barriers which would be very hard to break without practice. Rather than thinking of these as *failures*, perhaps we should think of them as legitimate training for the (much) more serious warfare ahead...

Interesting to think of 'through' as a 'hinge' word .... something to do with the Door, perhaps? ... whereas I think of it more as being an action or a corridor, or an aperture.

**Re: Am I a wretched man ... still? - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2007/12/26 23:19**

Hi everyone. Hope all of you had a blessed time on Tuesday.

I don't know if this will be helpful to the discussion or not, but I thought it was worth sharing.

I got my wife this huge book called *Cosmos* for Christmas. It is really big, I mean maybe like 2 feet long by 2 feet wide. And it has all these pictures from outer-space.

In part of the introduction, there is a photo of outer-space that spreads across two pages, and in the text in the bottom half it says, speaking about the vastness of space

"But this nocturnal display is just an infinitesimal fraction of the riches to be found in a cosmos that, while not infinite in extent, so dwarfs human experience that it might as well be. If we could perceive the full extent of the cosmos at a glance, our skies would blaze with the light of approximately a billion trillion stars in a view that stretched for 13.7 billion light years. But the human eye is a poor detector of light..."

David said the heavens declare the glory of God and that God has set His glory above them.

Paul said we have all sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God.

Chris

**Re: Am I a wretched man ... still?, on: 2007/12/26 23:42**

Quote:

----- I mean maybe like 2 feet long by 2 feet wide. And it has all these pictures from outer-space.

'... an infinitesimal fraction of the riches to be found in a cosmos that, while not infinite in extent, so dwarfs human experience that it might as well be...'

Chris, you might enjoy a talk called 'Father of Lights' by Percy Gutteridge. His definition of the cross comes quite near the end, but I've never heard anyone couch it in terms of light before... ;-) This is the only one of his teachings I've listened to all through, but you'll see there is quite a lot around 'the heavens declare the glory of God'. The link is on this page.

([http://parbarwestward.org/Percy\\_Gutteridge/Percy\\_Gutteridge\\_Intro.php](http://parbarwestward.org/Percy_Gutteridge/Percy_Gutteridge_Intro.php)) [http://parbarwestward.org/Percy\\_Gutteridge/Percy\\_Gutteridge\\_Intro.php](http://parbarwestward.org/Percy_Gutteridge/Percy_Gutteridge_Intro.php)

**Re: A Wretched Man...Still! - posted by UniqueWebRev (), on: 2007/12/27 1:08**

Quote:

-----  
myfirstLove wrote:

Quote:

-----O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Rom 7:24  
-----

Go on to Rom. 8 and you'll see who can deliver you from your old man.

...There are still many who do not understand being DEAD to sin because they have not forsaken ALL for Christ. There are many christians who think its impossible to be dead to the affections of this world, thinking they will always lust after it and struggle. Why? because they are not obeying the word and take up their cross and DIE...Christians make things so hard when it is really simple. If, only they would believe His word.

Whom the Lord sets free is free indeed! The truth will set you free, but it seems that many aren't set free because they don't believe the truth or else they would be FREE.  
-----

Ah, but I do believe Him, and take Him at His Word. My Spirit is free because of what Jesus did, and my heart is clean because I reconcile it daily, sometimes hourly, with Him.

And this body of death? I will not claim perfection over sin, and no one should even suggest that it is capable of being completely done, when only Jesus could do it.

Dying to sin is a process, a shedding of the old life for the new, and the only one who can do it is not us, but the Holy Spirit. We cooperate, we struggle, and if we think we are done, we fool ourselves, for temptation will be knocking at the door unto death, and falling to the sins of the body is only a prerequisite for falling on your knees before God, and asking for His promised mercy.

Else Christ is come in vain.

Blessings,

Forrest

**Re: A wretched man ... - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/12/27 10:03**

Quote:

-----Dying to sin is a process, a shedding of the old life for the new, and the only one who can do it is not us, but the Holy Spirit. We cooperate, we struggle, and if we think we are done, we fool ourselves, for temptation will be knocking at the door unto death, and falling to the sins of the body is only a prerequisite for falling on your knees before God, and asking for His promised mercy.

Else Christ is come in vain.  
-----

Well said, if I may;

We cooperate  
we struggle  
we fool ourselves

This is where I am somewhat going with all this. Trying to not exert so much a one sided argument as to just get down to

the heart and honesty of the matter.

One of the great things about SI is how it, unintentionally I might add, tends to break up the camps by other considerations. Be that as it may, will come along side what I perceive of an 'opposing view' for lack of a better term. I think there is a great and very understandable fear that makes this all the more difficult to divest due to this day and age's absolute abuse of license. Many churches ought to have a large banner hanging over the entrance in big, bold letters;

**What then?  
Shall we sin?**

**Because we are not under the law,  
But under grace?**

**God forbid!**

It is applicable to so much teaching and preaching, that launch off to what so often a new babe might not full well understand. One way or another it comes out something along the lines of; *"How far can I go with this before I am 'sinning'?"*

Much more could and should be said towards that.

Some of the things still churning about as I am thinking this all through again.

The back slider. "Where" did he go?

**Re: - posted by tjservant (), on: 2007/12/27 10:32**

Quote:  
-----Ah, but I do believe Him, and take Him at His Word. My Spirit is free because of what Jesus did, and my heart is clean because I reconcile it daily, sometimes hourly, with Him.

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Is this to say...yes...to the original question? That we will always(to some level) be wretched? That we may enjoy victory for a time...but will ultimately always fall(fail)...never to attain complete victory in this earthly body?

This thread is of great interest to me. I was delivered from so much, but I still struggle greatly in others...and it hurts.

The closer I get to God the more I see just how utterly despicable my natural self is. I know that apart from His grace I would make the worst we can imagine look absolutely innocent.

Am I a wretched man...still?

At times I fear this is the truth. When I fall short I cry out to be delivered from this cursed state. I fight...and it truly is war. I get tired and just want to be instantaneously delivered from my struggles...but it doesn't happen. I know I must continue to fight.

Other times...when I am face down on the floor(fetal position)...completely broken...crying out to Him...I feel an overwhelming peace come over me. A peace that comes from Jesus. A peace that transcends all understanding. A peace that comes from standing beside Jesus as He tells His father he died for me.

Will I ever be victorious while in this body of death? (not talking about blatant sin)

Are we to always have an understanding of our true state of wretchedness, but be secure in knowing that victory was achieved on our behalf by Christ...nothing to boast about on our own, for it is through Christ that we have victory?

Thanks Forrest for your post.

And to Mike for such an interesting thread.

**Re: - posted by Lowly, on: 2007/12/27 10:36**

Is not this part of the hope of receiving our inheritance?

Oh that on that day we will receive the incorruptible body! Now we must recognize that we dwell in the corruptible one, but praise God He has not left us helpless but has furnished us with everything we need for life and godliness.

But it is by His divine power. He has made all things available to us. His grace gives us continual access, as we walk, and stumble, struggle, fail.....we recognize our corruptibility, and seek diligently the weapons of warfare, the armor of God, being filled with the Spirit.....all that the Lord has given to us as His adopted children.

I used to fail and agonize over this wretched man that I am, and I would struggle in shame before my Heavenly Father, bitterly.....Oh how He has shown to me mercy and grace.....He has led me into that rest.....and because of Him I am having victory over this flesh.

Please know that I am speaking of a present action, not a completed work as in the now. What the Lord has done is finished.

In His amazing love,  
Lowly

**Re: Pilgrim's Progress, Part 2 - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2007/12/27 10:37**

Quote:  
-----Ginny, isn't the second part of Pilgrims Progress ... I went and looked it up, recall that it continued on about his wife (the narrative)  
-----

You are right: part 2 is the story of Christian's wife and their children as they embark on their journey to the Celestial City. Part 1 needs to be read and understood before Part 2 can be appreciated. Actually part 2 has more drama, if that is possible, than part 1. (Of course, I am reading the "The New Amplified" version so my evaluation may not be accurate.)

Perhaps one reason you laid it aside is because initially it deals with the journey of a mother and her children? If you can overcome that block, you will find other males joining them on their pilgrimage and the assistance they rendered to this family. The roles these males played in the story appealed to the boys in my SS class.

The reason I am using this in Sunday School is that the quarterlies we were given to use are geared for older children. A junior-aged child needs a story to carry the doctrine and these books were about doctrine only. Tell a child a story and then teach him/her about how the story illustrates the doctrine and they will get it and remember it. Otherwise, you will see symptoms of boredom. So, to keep the class' attention, engage their imagination, I acquired "Pilgrim's Progress, (Part 1)" in flannel board and told them this story. They loved it. After finishing this, I went to Part 2. Now the quarterlies have stories and I will focus on it shortly. Now this will become another challenge because I have a child who is afflicted with a severe case of dyslexia. If I use traditional methods, he hides behind the book and is out of it. If I tell the story, using gestures, drama, etc., he sits up and listens. So, my entire presentation is geared to reaching this boy and the others do not mind and are loving it - yes, I have to think outside the box and be unconventional, hence my use of "Pilgrim's Progress" in Sunday School.

Happy reading!

ginnyrose

**Re: Am I a wretched man ... still?, on: 2007/12/27 13:46**

Haven't had time to read this whole thread yet, but just wrote a few things on the "How is everyone doing spiritually?" thread (general topics, that are relevant. Have said similar things before from time to time, but the "Alice Through the Looking Glass" illustration was a new one!

Here are some bits from that thread:

.....  
We don't have to do it, we don't have to "measure up", that way lies futile striving and despair. What we need is to increasingly trust HIM, instead of ourselves!

Â... It's like learning to float on water. If you try to sit up and see where you're going, and how you're doing, you sink; if you abandon yourself to the water you float.

But it's an active abandonment, not passive: activity in maintaining that abandonment by His grace, instead of trusting in our own success or failure.

Â...The Lord told me recently that I need to be in a closer relationship to Him, and that I was afraid of that closeness. But He also said that, of myself, I can't get there, can't get rid of that fear of spiritual intimacy with Him. Therefore I'm to trust Him to deal with the fear and all that goes with it.

I know He will do it!

Having to wait and long for, and fail, is part of the process of coming into that place of trust.

REST! We don't get there if we strive, we do get there if we rest (Hebrews 4)!

Struggled with it for many years - the best I could manage on my own was striving to *stop* striving. Which doesn't work either!

A bit like Alice Through the Looking Glass, if anyone's read the book. She was trying to get into the garden from the house, but the more she tried to get away from the house by taking paths that seemed to lead in the right direction the more she kept getting back there. Because everything in the looking-glass world was the opposite from what she was used to. Just as spiritual principles are opposite from what we do naturally. Like striving and working our guts out (excuse the vulgar expression but can't think of a better offhand!) to achieve success.

Story of my life too, until recently! **For us, as Christians, the question is how to get from the end of Romans 7 to the beginning of Romans 8!**

In "Alice" the answer came when, in despair of ever getting there, she started walking back *towards* the house - and suddenly found herself in the garden with no problem!

And what better way to end than part of the song about a garden!

Songs 4:

12 A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.

13 Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard,

14 Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices:

15 A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.

16 Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.

chapter 5:1 I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.

Linked with John 7:

37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and

d drink.

**38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.**

Can He not unlock those rivers of living water, that abundant fruitfulness, that He has put within all of us who are truly His?

in Him

Jeannette

**Wretch - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/12/27 15:32**

Quote:

-----Perhaps one reason you laid it aside is because initially it deals with the journey of a mother and her children?  
-----

Good question ... I don't recall exactly sister but that very well may have been a possibility. Interesting to think back on the time I first read it and where my head is now. Looking forward to it frankly and wondering just why didn't it finish it in the first place ...

Very, very cool what you are doing there with all this. Very precious...

**Re: A Wretched Man...Still! - posted by UniqueWebRev (), on: 2007/12/27 21:20**

UniqueWebRev wrote:

Quote:  
-----Dying to sin is a process, a shedding of the old life for the new, and the only one who can do it is not us, but the Holy Spirit. We cooperate, we struggle, and if we think we are done, we fool ourselves, for temptation will be knocking at the door unto death, and falling to the sins of the body is only a prerequisite for falling on your knees before God, and asking for His promised mercy.

Else Christ is come in vain.  
-----

crsschk said:

Quote:  
-----Well said, if I may;

We cooperate  
we struggle  
we fool ourselves

This is where I am somewhat going with all this. Trying to not exert so much a one sided argument as to just get down to the heart and honesty of the matter....

I think there is a great and very understandable fear that makes this all the more difficult to divest due to this day and age's absolute abuse of license. Many churches ought to have a large banner hanging over the entrance in big, bold letters;

**What then?  
Shall we sin?**

**Because we are not under the law,  
But under grace?**

**God forbid!**  
-----

AMEN! Grace is not about license to sin, but to cover us from judgement because we cannot be perfect (mature and complete) until we are in a glorified body.

And with the Holy Spirit watching over us, speaking to us, convicting us each time we fall short, we struggle all the harder to REFRAIN from sin. Alas, that this body of death is literally fallen, and thus programmed toward pride, rebellion and selfishness.

But as we press on (fight towards) to the prize Paul speaks of, we, with the help of the Holy Spirit do make progress, and sin less habitual sins, those actions born of our hurts and pains and human desires. But we must always press on.

We can not let up in the struggle to become more like Christ. The Holy Spirit, in His mercy, shows us from time to time that we are succeeding in this small way and that, and for a moment, an hour, a day, we have perfect peace, Victory in the flesh as well as in spirit.

crsschk wrote:

Quote:  
-----It is applicable to so much teaching and preaching, that launch off to what so often a new babe might not fully understand. One way or another it comes out something along the lines of; *"How far can I go with this before I am 'sinning'?"*  
-----

We cannot go far WITHOUT sinning, alas. Our human natures are so ready to take the lead over our minds and hearts. Until we can watch each word, and cultivate our behavior to closely resemble Christ's walk on the earth, in love and compassion for others, and an awed reverence for the Father, striving to show our love by our obedience, we will not even have those short blessed times of victory in the body.

crsschk said:

Quote:  
-----Much more could and should be said towards that.

Some of the things still churning about as I am thinking this all through again.

The back slider. "Where" did he go?  
-----

Ah, the ones that have chosen to fall, in rebellion against the Lord's grace? They have a sad lot, and cause much suffering to themselves and others, as they struggle to make sense of our insane world, and the desire to do what THEY want to do, instead of what GOD wants them to do.

But even so, Christ died for their sins too, and knew every mistake they would make. And like the prodigal son, God gives grace for them to come to their senses, for it is not necessarily a matter of unbelief in God, but a rebellion against submission to God, a childish tantrum thrown, the 'terrible twos', as when a child of God is saying, "I will do it MY way!".

We all rebel...it's just sometimes more evident in others. And for those that we know who have seemingly turned away from God, we can pray, and ask earnestly that the Holy Spirit will intervene, and set them going forward on the straight and narrow path again.

Jesus has the patience to wait until circumstance make it possible for a renewal of the heart towards Christ, using His rod and staff to chastise and teach the rebellious or foolish lambs in His flock. And because it is only God who change man through the Holy Spirit, we all need to turn over the straying lambs to the Shepherd, pray for them, and know that God will move in His own timing.

Blessings,

Forrest

**Re: A Wretched Man...Still! - posted by UniqueWebRev (), on: 2007/12/27 22:17**

UniqueWebRev wrote:

Quote:

Quote:

.....Dying to sin is a process, a shedding of the old life for the new, and the only one who can do it is not us, but the Holy Spirit. We cooperate, we struggle, and if we think we are done, we fool ourselves, for temptation will be knocking at the door unto death, and falling to the sins of the body is only a prerequisite for falling on your knees before God, and asking for His promised mercy.

tjservant wrote:

Quote:

.....Is this to sayÂ...yesÂ...to the original question? That we will always(to some level) be wretched? That we may enjoy victory for a timeÂ...but will ultimately always fall(fail)Â...never to attain complete victory in this earthly body?...Will I ever be victorious while in this body of death? (not talking about blatant sin)

Are we to always have an understanding of our true state of wretchedness, but be secure in knowing that victory was achieved on our behalf by Christ Â...nothing to boast about on our own, for it is through Christ that we have victory?

Thanks Forrest for your post.

And to Mike for such an interesting thread.

TJ,

The farther we go towards God, the narrower the path becomes. The more we succeed in conquering our imperfections, and dying to the desires of the flesh, the more fierce and diabolical the attacks of the enemy.

We are stronger in Christ, and the times of victory in this life and rest from struggle are more evident, but they do not last long.

God allows this that we might be tried and tested in the fire of tribulation of this life.

Our struggle to obey Christ's commandments to love God, and love one another is the one thing that WE can do for Jesus, for it is by obedience that we show our love. We will get better at it day by day, a little here, and a little there, because the Holy Spirit indwells us to enable us to succeed more and more.

It is written, we are not to 'be weary in well doing'. This is not to say that we will not tire, and need to rest, and lick our wounds, and recover to fight another day. Yet the farther we go into Christ, the more we are wrapped in His love, given favor and blessing to continue the fight.

Within the daily fighting, struggling, and pressing onwards IS our victory, and we sin less frequently in our habitual sins, yet we become more aware of being still not yet perfect.

The struggle to get yet more mature and complete in obedience to Christ becomes not falling in obvious ways as when we were babes in Christ, but in the finer points of love, patience, kindness, graciousness, charity and humility during each step of our walk.

We do not always win every day, but we know we are conquering our Self, with the help of the Holy Spirit. Our true Rest awaits us in the Kingdom of God, in glorified bodies that are delivered from the pressures of being human, and fallen, and protected from the Tempter forever, for we are Christ's own.

Blessings,

Forrest

Re: - posted by tjservant (), on: 2007/12/27 22:44

Quote:  
-----We do not always win every day, but we know we are conquering our Self, with the help of the Holy Spirit. Our true Rest awaits us in the Kingdom of God, in glorified bodies that are delivered from the pressures of being human, and fallen, and protected from the Tempter forever, for we are Christ's own.  
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Amen.

Thanks for your thoughtful reply sister.

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2007/12/29 1:00

We know that Christ was predestinated to be our conformity. No predestination to salvation or not to salvation, but to be conformity to Christ the first born.

Eph 1:5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

Eph 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

The C&S gang is in God's hands and we are being conformed by these circumstances and situations, learning to be conformed to the Christ that is in us.

Rom 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Rom 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Thank you Forest for such great truth, revealed by the Holy Spirit to those that are in His Plan of Christ in us the Hope of Glory.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: Am I a wretched man ..... still?, on: 2007/12/29 15:18

In another thread I wrote

Quote:  
-----We have the impression that the wilderness is a desperate place to be, but it's where the Hebrews saw miracles day after day for forty years as God fed and provided for them. **After they got out of the desert, they were, effectively at war, much diminished, and yet united in purpose behind men of true faith.**  
-----

When I wrote this yesterday, I realised it is only since I came to SI that I found brethren pointing out that the conflict arises *because* we are born again by the Holy Spirit.

I was already familiar with the picture that Jesus comes into the temple of our body, and starts to clear out those that are trying to make merchandise of our souls - the bargainers trying to persuade us we still can sin and bring a sacrifice later - as much as He has come to restore the soul, heal the wounded spirit and mind. In fact, I noticed long time after this, in Matthew where it says 'and the blind and lame came to Him and He healed them there'. Perhaps because of all this, I cut myself some slack and stopped being so self-critical :-o - which had the effect of calming the roller-coaster I used to ride.

So, being in the 'promised land' - still a picture of the dwelling place of God's people - still *dust* - and still fraught with unwanted residents - gives us a picture of finally bringing 'flesh' under God's domination.

Katy-did said

Quote:  
-----The Children of Israel who didn't go into the Promise land.. Why? Didn't they taste of the Holy Spirit? Manna..was a miracle...teh Sh  
ekinah Glory over the Camp. The Serpent lifted and anyone looking would be healed of Leprosy. Moses struck a rock and water came out....the Red S  
ea parted ...all of this...they certainly did taste of the Holy Spirit....yet God did not let them go into the Promise land. Read Chapters 3 & 4 again and g  
o back to Exodus too. Was not the Holy Spirit there as well????

These verses do not say indwelt with the Holy Spirit and that is where we need to understand this is connected to all of what the Author of Hebrews is t  
eaching.

To us today....  
The Jordan represents the Cross, and the Promise land Jesus Christ Himself in the Church age..it is parallel to Ephesians, our Heavenly Promise Lan  
d is Jesus Christ.

Many can be drawn to the Lord and just flat out refuse to cross that Jordan...they come right to the cross, and just gaze up at it, and never identify with  
it. or say like they did,,oh we can't go over, there are giants in the land. They didn't have faith in God that what He promised them...this Promise Land.  
..He was going to see it through.

But read verse 9 of Hebrews 6....see the word **\*\*Better\*\*** there...something that **\*better accompanies salvation\***....that is the New Covenant of the indw  
elling Holy Spirit..."I will put my Spirit in you and cause you to walk in my statutes etc".

Chapter 10 goes even deeper....our identification with Jesus Christ in death and resurrection life....teh New and Living way, through the veil, that is to s  
ay His flesh...I am Crucified WITH Christ. This is the Gospel!

-----  
I noticed this in the 'New Calvinistic song' thread (p7) and wanted to comment on it there, but here is better, as this analy  
sis is completely relevant to the discussion in this thread.

I praise God for the way He has laid out so many pictures in the Old Testament, to help us - to understand what Paul wa  
s receiving in the Spirit, and expounding, but with **Christ** as his focus.

**Re: A wretched man ... - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2007/12/29 19:00**

bro Mike

Greetings in Jesus' Name by Whose Blood we are Saved.AMEN.

you said:

Quote:  
-----Sister, for me, it was just the opposite, a long, protracted, drawn out process and battle. Why did He not do the same in my case? It  
is not necessarily a question ... I recognize now why it was handled in the manner that it was, but do you see that this may not always be a correct wa  
y of interpreting our experience against that which we might want to hold to?  
-----

i have found (as i'm sure you have) that at times our being loosed from certain sins may be a long and drawn out ordeal  
and sometimes it's not so drawn out...instantaneous even. it was mentioned somewhere else on this thread that either w  
ay it is a Miracle. perhaps this is so to remind us that it all rests on Him and as a Father, He deals with each of His childr  
en in a way best suited to him/her lest we impose things on one another that we ought not to. i find sometimes if i think o  
f a brother or sister struggling with something i have overcome, if i think "why don't they just get with the program?" then  
it is out of a false sense of "i loosed myself" and i'm not showing the Mercy shown me. a fall of some sort usually follows  
soon after. at any rate i believe in the long travails with Him as we contend with sin, we see something of a HOly Determ  
ination on His Part which will not relent until the work is done. This is of no more nor less significance than when the deli  
very is instant for that reminds us i believe of a Mighty Power which is able to loose any bond. i believe the display of the  
Manifold Wisdom of God through the Church to the principalities and powers is also shown in how He deals with us conc  
erning our sin, not only that but in all things. Seeing as we are all unique, it stands to reason that His workings in us are  
Manifold on a personal level and also on a corporate one.

of my wretchedness apart from Christ there is no question. sometimes i hear His Voice through the word or another brother in one moment and then slip back into the mire of my old man...i believe in this way God reminds me continually of how it is by Grace that i am Saved lest i should boast. Paul at the beginning of his calling considered himself not less than the most imminent of the apostles, then later he said he was the least of them, toward the end of his life when he wrote to timothy he said he was the chief of sinners. i suppose as we grow in God we see more clearly how hopelessly wretched we are apart from Him, or at least we ought to. in that, for me anyway the scripture in which Paul says that God who has begun this work in us, this Good work, is determined to see it through till the day of Christ comes Alive. there is something about God knowing better than we our condition and being so determined, that while we were yet sinners Jesus died for us.

if ever i forget that i am a wretch, i am reminded by some outflow of the wickedness which is yet in me which God is working so hard to purge...God is Good...

Grace and Peace are ours in Jesus.AMEN.

**Re:, on: 2008/1/1 14:43**

Quote:

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ChrisJD wrote:

Hi everyone. Hope all of you had a blessed time on Tuesday.

I don't know if this will be helpful to the discussion or not, but I thought it was worth sharing.

I got my wife this huge book called Cosmos for Christmas. It is really big, I mean maybe like 2 feet long by 2 feet wide. And it has all these pictures from outer-space.

In part of the introduction, there is a photo of outer-space that spreads across two pages, and in the text in the bottom half it says, speaking about the vastness of space

"But this nocturnal display is just an infinitesimal fraction of the riches to be found in a cosmos that, while not infinite in extent, so dwarfs human experience that it might as well be. If we could perceive the full extent of the cosmos at a glance, our skies would blaze with the light of approximately a billion trillion stars in a view that stretched for 13.7 billion light years. But the human eye is a poor detector of light..."

David said the heavens declare the glory of God and that God has set His glory above them.

Paul said we have all sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God.

Chris

-----

Brother Chris, I wanted to comment on your post last week, but things were a bit hairy for me.

Brother this does touch me in a very personal way.

Whenever I'm feeling overwhelmed or confused, I've always found it exceptionally helpful to step outside and look straight up.

I see this horizon to horizon as merely His Hallway to Heaven.

The size alone reminds me how small my problems are compared to Him Who is far more vast than what the Hubble Telescope, etc., can see - not even considering my bare eye.

Thank you for this and yes, it is pertinent & helpful. :-)

**Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2008/1/1 15:08**

Dear He\_Reigns,

Thank you for sharing that also :-)

I am going to try to remember to do that also.

Thanks.