

August 25

Scriptures: Read Romans 7

Key Verse: "... So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." (Romans 7:25)

Overview

Paul speaks for all of us when he cries, "What a wretched man I am!" His wretchedness springs out of what the Law of God exposes in his nature. Until the Law came along, man didn't even know he was a sinner. In fact, without the Law there's no sin, "For apart from law, sin is dead" (v.8b). But as soon as the Law entered the stage, the actor recognized his spiritual and moral nakedness (v.7b). What's more, the Law gave no hope for man in his wretchedness—none of us can fulfill all the Law, and so it hammers us into the pit of hell.

Compounding our wretchedness is a moral instinct within us that affirms the rightness of the Law. The Law constrains us to do what our sinful nature doesn't want to do, and in so doing we "agree that the Law is good" (v.16). But, nine times out of ten, even though we're mentally "a slave to God's law" we, nevertheless, find our performance betraying us as "a slave of the law of sin" (v.25b). Little wonder we sometimes wish we could have lived and died without ever knowing how far we were from "God's glory". There's something to be said for being "blissfully ignorant".

But there's hope for the wretched. Even while we are caught in the vicious cycle of knowing what's right and failing to do it, "there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (8:1). We can cast ourselves on God's mercy by accepting the "sin offering" of His Son's sacrifice on Calvary. We can claim Him as our Savior, our Mediator, our Friend. In so doing, the vicious cycle will be broken, and in its place will be obedient living, and "a peace that passes understanding". Wretchedness will give way to blessedness.

Prayer

O lord, all our heart, soul mind and body praise You that is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus—Hallelujah! Grant us Your daily grace to decide, without compromise, to walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. Amen.