

No More Excuses – The Dark Side in Us All

September 26 & 27, 2009

So the trouble is not with the law (the Bible), for it is spiritual and good. The trouble is with me, for I am all too human, a slave to sin. I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate. So I am not the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. But if I do what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. I have discovered this principle of life -- that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love God's law with all my heart. But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death?

Romans chapter 7 verses 14 – 24 (862)

Jesus said, "The spirit is willing, but the body is weak!" Matthew chapter 26 verse 41 (758)

- Good intentions are NEVER good enough
- Lasting change requires MUCH MORE than desire

The results of this "civil war" going on inside of us...

1. Confusion - *I don't really understand myself...* Romans chapter 7 verse 15 (862)
2. Frustration - *I want to do what is right, but I can't.* Romans chapter 7 verse 18 (862)
3. Discouragement - *I've tried everything and nothing helps. I'm at the end of my rope.*
Is there no one who can do anything for me? Romans chapter 7 verse 24 (862)

To all of us who have ever felt this way before, there's great news. There's hope! The secret to true life-change...is NOT willpower, is NOT a pill, is NOT a resolution, is NOT something you say, is NOT something you do!

In these verses...

- "I" is used 27 times
- When you add "me", "my", & "myself", the number approaches 40
- "God" & "Jesus" are only used 4 times

(over)

These verses compare & contrast

God is

- is God
- is spirit
- is supernatural
- is boundless
- is all-powerful

Me

- I'm not!
- I'm not! I'm flesh
- I'm not! I'm natural
- I'm not! I'm a slave (*bound*)
- I'm not! I'm powerless

1. On my own, I am incapable of living a life that honors God

- Since I'm flesh & God is spirit, I can do NOTHING on my own to please Him!
- Since I'm sinful & God is sinless, I can do NOTHING on my own to please Him!
- On my own, I can't even worship God! (*see John chapter 4 verse 23*)

2. Left to myself, I am a slave to sin

- I am powerless against the sin in my life
 - *“The trouble is with me, for I am...a slave to sin.”* verse 14
 - *“I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate.”* verse 15
 - *“I want to do what is right, but I can't.”* verse 18
 - *“This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me.”* verse 23
- I am incapable of figuring myself out
 - *“I don't really understand myself...”* verse 15

3. Left to myself, I can't stop myself

- I love God's law with all my heart.
- But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me.
- ***Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? Romans chapter 7 verses 22 - 24 (862)***

Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans chapter 7 verse 25 (862)

Next Week: Our Hope...The Holy Spirit Conquers our Darkness - Romans 8:1-17