

Romans: The Crown Jewel of Salvation

29 - It's an Inside Job

Romans 7:14-25

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / March 30, 2014

Note: much of this content is expanded information from Kris Lundgaard's excellent book The Enemy Within – Straight Talk About the Power and Defeat of Sin.

Three Facts about the Fight you're in as a Christian

Fact #1 - This Battle You're Facing is Inescapable

You can't run away from it or avoid it. You can't declare yourself neutral and just sit this one out. You're in it by virtue of being a sinful human being descended from our ancestor, Adam.

Paul says that sin is still living in us.

v. 17 “But now, it is no longer I who do it, but *sin that dwells in me.*”

v. 20 “Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but *sin that dwells in me.*”

v. 21 “So I find this *law* at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me.”

v. 23 “But I see *another law in my members*, warring against the law of my mind...”

Paul's using the word 'law' here as a METAPHOR to express the power and control that sin still wields in our lives. He's using this word like we do when we talk about the law of gravity. It's just something normative and universal.

The death of Christ on the cross has OVERTHROWN the rule of sin, WEAKENED its power, and even KILLED its root so that it can't bear the fruit of eternal death in our lives now as believers; but it's not gone.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 “But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.”

We're living in a period of time you might call “The Already” and the “Not Yet.” We have a foot in two different worlds, and it's painful sometimes.

Fact #2 - This Battle You're Facing is an Inside Job

v. 17 he calls it “...sin *living in* me.”

v. 21 he calls it the evil that is “*right there* with me”

v. 23 he says, “But I see another law *in my members*, warring against the law of my mind...”

Christians are the only ones who ever begin to see this law of sin at work in them.

People and circumstances are only AN OCCASION for the law of sin that's inside us to MANIFEST itself. Other people are not your biggest problem.

"If a rhinoceros were to enter this restaurant right now, there's no denying he would have great power here. But I would be the first to rise and assure him that he had no authority in this place whatsoever." - G.K. Chesterton

That's our condition now as believers.

The only MORAL and AUTHORITATIVE rule in our lives now is the kingdom and reign of God, but that rhino still SNORTS and PAWS the ground in heart and CHARGES at us with his horn lowered because indwelling sin is like that rhino that still tries to force himself onto us.

Heb. 12:1 "... the sin which so easily ensnares us" or "entangles us"

There's rarely a time that you make up your mind to obey God's command that you don't feel the WIND of sin's RESISTANCE in your face, because the rhino lives and that law of sin is stationed right there inside of you!

The more you recognize the 'Rhino' of indwelling sin, the less you can be taken advantage of and pushed around.

"... the better you know this rhino, the more you'll hate it; and to the length that you hate it – and no farther – you'll grasp for grace against it. But if you don't find yourself dodging the rhino's horn day and night in a struggle against sin, it may be that you've made peace with the rhino. You are willingly, happily under its power and rule. In that case, you should doubt that you are born of God. No one who is born of God can live at peace with sin... so run to Christ! Only He can slay the rhino in your heart." Kris Lundgaard, *The Enemy Within*, p. 33-34

Fact #3 - This Battle We're In Never Stops in this Life

This "law of sin and death" is in a constant TUG OF WAR against our overall desire to know and please God. It attacks RIGHT AT THE POINT of our good intentions.

Those times that seem the CALMEST and the EASIEST in your life are not always the BEST because it might just mean that you've stopped fighting.

If you're NOT meeting sin head-on on a regular basis in your life, you're probably headed in all the wrong directions and just don't know it.

Paul wants to help us fight. And without a proper understanding of Rom. 7:14-25 you can start to lose heart and fall into horrible guilt wondering why you still struggle the way you do.

Don't give up the fight... and don't fall into despair.

2 Timothy 4:7-8 "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that day, and not to me only, but also to all who have loved His appearing."