

Blessed Hope Bible-Presbyterian Church
Adult Sunday School
28 July 2019
Romans 7:19-22 (KJV)

The War Within

¹⁹ For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. ²⁰ Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. ²¹ I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. ²² For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: (Rom. 7:19-22 KJV)

(1) Romans 7:19-20, The War Within

Romans 7:19-20 *For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. 20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.*

The Apostle Paul describes the war within him that is waged between the Spirit and the flesh. It is a very real battle. He saw the rottenness of the flesh. It is corrupt and evil. He calls this the sin that dwells in him. He saw also the Spirit prompting him not yield to sin. He could differentiate well between good and evil and he realizes the pull toward evil is such a contending force within him. This acknowledgment leads him to endeavour by prayer and supplication to keep close to God and not yield to sin.

Hear the psalmist's plea for the divine presence of God to undergird him, "*Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.* (Psalm 61:1-4) This can be applied here as a prayer of sanctification that God may enable him to overcome the flesh and live victoriously. The psalmist acknowledges his need for God who is higher than him. By his own strength, he knows he will fail. But in the Lord, he shall have victory. God is described as a rock, providing shelter and protection from the enemy.

The injunction of Jesus to His disciples just prior to His betrayal and arrest in Gethsemane was that they watch and pray lest they fall into temptation (Matt. 26). The disciples were not vigilant. When the test came, Peter, not yielded to the Spirit, took up the sword and cut off the ear of the high priest's servant. Our Lord had to chide him to refrain from using violence, a carnal means, to solve a spiritual problem. In the believer's daily life, there are many decision points where two opposing natures compete for his favour. When he keeps close to God, he finds the strength to choose

wisely, walk in the path of righteousness. May God grant you His help to walk this day with Him to the honour and glory of His name.

(2) Romans 7:21, Contrary Motion

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

Contrary motion is motion in opposite directions. In music, it describes the melodic progression of two voices moving in opposite directions. That is, when one of the lines moves up, the other line moves down (that is, in inversion). If the voices always move by the same intervals (in opposite directions) they are said to be in strict contrary motion. This may be used to illustrate the movements of the heart toward doing the will of God and contrary to His will. In the contrary motion, the melody sound distorted. When we are not yielded to the Spirit's voice, we can yield to sin.

The Apostle Paul sees in his heart both the propensity for good and for evil. He has to actively choose to do good whilst he sees an evil tendency seeking to pull him down. He sought the Lord to help him do good and finds in the Lord a present help. James Smith echos the Christian's victory over sin as he waits upon God, "What a mercy that evil does not reign in you, and over you. It did reign once, and would reign but for free and sovereign grace."

The Apostle Paul is saying to the Roman Christians that they have the wherewithal to do the will of God in their lives. This will certainly bring joy and peace to their hearts. Because of this stark awareness of the enticement to sin within him, he lives his life with care, observing that he would not displease his Lord.

Indeed, we need to be reminded to keep close to the Lord daily. May the Lord grant you His grace this day to walk with Him!

(3) Romans 7:22, Delighting in the Law of God

Romans 7:22 *For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:*

The Apostle Paul praises God for giving him His Word and is resolved to allow the law of God to guide his life. He loves God's Word because it brings God's blessing to his life. He rejoices in embracing God's Word. What about you? How much is God's Word an integral part of your life? In psalm 119, the psalmist speaks of the blessedness of embracing God's Word. It benefits him.

God's Word has cleansing power over the filth of sin (v9-16), counselling power to provide him needful wisdom (v17-24), strengthening power to build up his faith (v25-

32) and establishing power so that he choose to fear God thus walk the godly way as opposed to the vain and covetous way (v33-40).

He experienced the blessedness of walking with God. He experienced how God delivers (v41-48), comforts (49-56), loves (v57-64), chastens (v65-72), moulds (v73-80), helps (v81-88), upholds (v89-96) him through life.

He experienced the blessedness of growing in the Lord. Growing to love His Word (v97-104), growing to rejoice in His Word (v103-112). Growing to hope in His Word (v113-120), growing to highly esteem His Word (v129-136). Growing to order his steps in His Word (v129-136) and growing to delight in His Word (v137-144).

He experienced the blessedness of trusting in the Lord, the fruitfulness of a life with God. Though endless troubles befell him, he was able to testify that out of them all the Lord has delivered him. His life is filled with unfeigned hope (v145-152), renewed love (v153-160, abiding peace (v161-168) and unceasing praise (v169-176).

May we taste to know that the Lord is good.