

Scripture Reference: Romans 7:14-25

July 1, 2012

"Are You Free?"

Focus: The unrecognized hold of sin.

Competing Desires; vv. 14-16

*"The Law is spiritual..."* - What does Paul mean?

When talking about The Law, Paul is referring to God's ordinances and commands, not the edicts of man.

Being "*spiritual*," The Law reflects the heart of God.

It shapes the desire of those who love God.

However, The Law was meant to identify sin. It is directed at actions. It is not meant to shape a person's soul.

*"I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin."* - What does Paul mean by this?

In his *natural* state, unredeemed & fallen, he is driven by his appetites, desires, values, and opinions.

He did what he wanted, when he wanted, how he wanted, or so he thought.

Most of us see no problem with attitudes and actions that arise from our desires, values, and opinions.

Like Paul, we fail to understand the influence sin has on life.

Sin made Paul a Prisoner – vv. 17-23;

Listen to what he said, *"No longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwell in me."* (v. 17)

Sin is not an action, it is a state of being.

Some take this as an excuse. "It's not me, it's the sin."

What Paul is telling the Romans is that by The Law, God revealed to him a principle at work in his life:

He wasn't really motivated by his wants, desires, or values. Instead, his actions were the result of the presence of sin in his life. (v. 18)

He was not free to do what he wanted. Instead, *"the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want."* (v. 19).

He was a prisoner.

He was caught between his *desire* to please God and his *appetite* to do what was pleasing to it. (v. 23)

*"Who will set me free from the body of this death."* – v. 24-25

Paul needed to be freed from this bondage, this enslavement.

Only one who was free of this entanglement could liberate him.

It is Jesus who bore the penalty for sin, removing it as an issue between God and man.

It is Jesus who makes possible what humanity could not accomplish themselves, to be right before God.