

Unpacking the Preach

Date: 1st August 2021
Sermon Title: The Disciples Battle Against Sin: the law
Bible Passage: Romans 7: 7 - 25

Recapping the Preach

In order to explore the passage Stu broke it down into three sections with each section answering a question in the text or that arises from the text. The first question was, 'is the law sinful?' (vs.7) to which Paul's answer is 'by no means!'.

- Read Romans 7:7-13 - what's stands out to you from this passage? What is the main point Paul is making?
- How would you answer a non-christian who claims that Christianity is all about obeying rules or rejects Christianity as too stifling?
- What passages would you turn to to show that the law (God's commands and statutes) are good?
- Stu used the illustration from Augustine stealing pears as a teenager. When reflecting back on the incident Augustine concluded, 'The reason for stealing the pears he said was not because he wanted the pears but rather the excitement of stealing and doing what was wrong. He concludes 'was it possible to take pleasure in what was illicit for no other reason than that it was not allowed?' Do you agree with Augustine?
- In what ways can you see that the law (which is good) reveals sin, provokes sin and condemns sin?

In question 2 Stu asked, 'Where does that leave us'. Read Romans 7:14-23.

- Whats stands out to you in this section? What is the main point Paul is making?
- There are a lot of personal pronouns in the passage (I and me). Do you think Paul is talking about his own personal experience or speaking of Christians in general in the first person?
- Contrast 6:22 and 7:14 - how do would you reconcile these two verses?
- Paul describes a contrast, 'I do not do what I want to do - what I hate I do; I have the good desire but I cant carry it out; I want to do what is good but evil is right there with me'. Can you identify this experience?
- Discuss the following two statements: 'those who fixate on commands do not achieve greater success in keeping them' and by contrast, 'those who live under the goodness of God's grace do not keep the law less, but more and from the heart'.
- How does not focusing on rule keeping help us grow?
- Stu hinted that Romans 7 is supposed to prepare us and point us towards Romans 8. Do you agree / disagree? Why?

The third question is in 7:24-25 (Read Romans 7:24-25) 'who will rescue us?' and the answer is Christ.

- Read the following quote from John Stott on 7:24-25, 'Two cries - the former is not so much a 'heart rending cry from the depths of despair' as a cry of longing, which ends in a question mark, while the latter is a cry of confidence and thanksgiving, which ends in an exclamation mark. Yet both are the cries of the same person, who is a regenerate believer, who laments his corruption, who yearns for final deliverance at the resurrection, who knows the impotence of the law to rescue him and who exults in God through Christ as the only Saviour'. What stands out to you from this quote?

Stu concluded that the Christian's experience of discipleship will be a process of setbacks and progressive progress.

- How would you encourage someone in their faith who feels as if they are always failing?
- What practical things can you do this week to spur one another on to love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24)?

Response

- Is there anything from the preach and passage that you will be taking away to reflect on or work on?

Prayer pointers

- Take time to share prayer requests and pray for one another.
- Pray that we would persevere in the battle against sin.

Additional resources:

If you need some additional resources the below websites are useful:

- <https://www.gotquestions.org>
- <https://enduringword.com>
- <https://www.biblica.com>
- <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/>