

THE WRETCHED MAN: IS THERE ANY HOPE?

Rom 7:24,25

INTRODUCTION:

- A. The wretched (miserable, deeply afflicted) man is inside each of us.
 - 1. He's sometimes blind and arrogant and unwilling to face the truth about himself.
 - 2. He's sometimes just weak and vulnerable and fully disappointed in himself when he knows he's done the wrong thing AGAIN.
- B. He's the man that Paul found inside himself.
 - 1. Yes, he even thinks he is doing right when he is really doing wrong.
 - 2. But, most of the time he knows there are things he should do, things he wants to do, but the flesh offers him numerous excuses NOT to do it.
 - 3. He knows there are things he should NOT do, and he wants to be strong enough to resist the temptation, but the flesh wins the battle of the mind at times.
 - 4. Either way, he comes out a sinner, and the wages of sin is death. (Rom 6:23) He can be better than another sinner, but he will still stand before God a guilty sinner.

DISCUSSION:

I. GOD WILL NOT JUDGE US BY THE WORST MAN IN HISTORY, BUT BY THE BEST.

- A. If we are counting on the law to save, we will be condemned by it. Gal 3:10-12;21
- B. The law can expose our sins, and bring us before the judgment as guilty, but law alone is not in our favor. Rom 3:20,21
- C. The law can convince us of our wretched and sinful state, but it will not do the pardoning. Gal 2:16; Heb 10:4
- D. The best man in history is Jesus. How do you stand next to HIM? Jhn 12:48

II. GREAT MEN WERE MEN WHO HAD AN AWARENESS OF THEIR FAILURES BEFORE GOD.

- A. Aside from Jesus, how do great men like Abraham and David and Paul Look?
 - 1. Abraham - lied Gen 12:18,19
 - 2. David lusted, committed adultery, and murder 2Sam 11:2-27
 - 3. Paul blasphemed Jesus and persecuted His church. 1Tim 1:12,13; Acts 26:9-11
- B. What made these men great?

- 1. Was it not a tender conscience? Acts 23:1; 24:16
- 2. Was it not the faith to try again and again? Acts 26:18
- 3. Was it not the humility to cry out for mercy? 1Tim 1:15,16
- 4. Was it not their sense of "wretchedness"? Rom 7:24 Lk 18:9-14 (Pharisee & Publican)

III. UNTIL WE SEE THE WRETCHED MAN IN US, WE WILL NEVER SENSE OUR NEED FOR JESUS.

- A. Until we know how deadly our spiritual disease is, we will not sense the urgency for Great Physician. Rom 6:23; Lk 5:30-32
- B. Hear the desperation: "O wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of DEATH?"
- C. Sense The Relief: "Thank God, Through Jesus Christ".

IV. HOW WILL WE ESCAPE THE WRATH OF GOD?

- A. A perfect record on your own? Eph 2:8,9
- B. Or, will It be on the basis of mercy and forgiveness? Tit 3:5
- C. But, what if you neglect the salvation God offers in Jesus? Heb 2:1-3 What then? Heb 10:26; 6:4-6

CONCLUSION:

- A. Until we own up to our share in the ugliness of sin, even the sin that so brutally nailed Jesus to the cross, you will never be able to benefit from God's reasons for letting Him go there.
- B. Until we see the disease on our soul, we will not cry out for the merciful healing hand of the Great Physician.
- C. We are the same as Paul, a wretched man. The difference may be that he knew it and we have not known or will not admit it, but we all are exactly the same in wretchedness and sinfulness. Rom 3:23
- D. We can play the Pharisee and thank God that we are not like other sinners, but that will only reinforce the point, for who is more wretched than self-righteous, arrogant, religious people who are aware of the sins of others but unaware of their own sins? Matt 7:1-6 (Judge not)
- E. Our only hope is in Jesus. We all need Him desperately. Have you come to Him for pardon?

(thoughts from outline by Terry W. Benton; revisions by JLH)