

ROMANS: RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH FROM START TO FINISH

VI. God's Righteousness Transferred: Practical Sanctification, Romans 6:1-8:39

D. Victory Over Our Sin Nature

(Romans 7:15-8:4)

I. Introduction

- A. The theme of the epistle to the Romans is that God's righteousness is available to man by faith from start to finish (Romans 1:16-17; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 441).
- B. This belief is often not accepted in Christendom: Some claim that one must have faith plus works to be justified, and others say that though we are justified by faith, we cannot righteously live a godly life by faith.
- C. After Paul had taught that the problem of sin that leads to death is the sinful nature that still resides in the believer, he proceeded to describe the tremendous battle believers face in themselves with that sin nature.
- D. The battle and victory over our sin nature is taught in Romans 7:15-8:4, and we study it for our edification:

II. Victory Over Our Sin Nature, Romans 7:15-8:4.

- A. Paul described the great spiritual battle we believers face in ourselves due to our sin nature, Romans 7:15-24:
 1. In relating his experience in [Romans] 7:14-25 Paul consistently use the present tense whereas he had used the imperfect and aorist tenses. Obviously he was describing his present conflict as a Christian with indwelling sin and its continuing efforts to control his daily life," Ibid., p. 467.
 2. Thus, Paul noted that from the human perspective, he did not understand his own actions, for he confessed that in his sin nature, he did not do what he wanted to do, but what he hated to do, Romans 7:15.
 3. He thus acknowledged that God's Law that directed what was right to do was good, but that the sin nature that was in him was evil, Romans 7:16-20.
 4. Consequently, Paul realized that a war occurred within himself between his new nature that delighted in the righteousness of God and his old sinful nature that delighted in sin, Romans 7:21-23.
 5. The Apostle Paul then stated he was a wretched man, and rhetorically asked who would deliver him from the body of death that plagued him, the sin nature, Romans 7:24.
 6. Paul hinted at the solution by thanking God through Jesus Christ, and summed that he served God's Law with his mind, but with his "flesh," figurative for his sin nature, he served the law of sin, Romans 7:25b.
- B. However, Paul then presented the spiritual victory we have in Christ over our sin nature, Romans 8:1-4:
 1. First, we have **permanent positional** victory over our sin nature by our salvation in Christ, Romans 8:1-3a:
 - a. The best manuscripts end Romans 8:1 at the word "Jesus" where the phrase "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" appears in manuscripts of lesser quality and was evidently borrowed from Romans 8:4 by later scribes. (Bruce M. Metzger, A Textual Commentary On The Greek New Testament, 1971, p. 515)
 - b. This observation of the Greek manuscripts is a critically important issue, for if the verse were to read as the KJV has it, one's salvation would be said to depend on the work of walking by means of the Holy Spirit and not by faith alone in Christ alone as Ephesians 2:8-9 claims!
 - c. Thus, Romans 8:1 noted that **positionally** in Christ, we believers do not stand eternally condemned to hell before God simply because we still have a sinful nature as Romans 7:14-25 reveals. Indeed, the law of the Holy Spirit of life has **positionally** set us free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death, for what the Law could not accomplish because its effect was weakened by the sin nature, God accomplished by sending His Son "in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering," Romans 8:2-3a NIV.
 2. Second, we **can** have **experiential** victory over our sin nature by relying on the Holy Spirit, Rom. 8:3b-4:
 - a. God thus "condemned sin in sinful man in order that the righteous requirements of the Law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit," Romans 8:3b-4.
 - b. Therefore, we believers are to **experience** victory over the sin nature's control over us by relying on the Holy Spirit effectively to boycott its function by the Holy Spirit's own supernatural power, Romans 8:4.

Lesson: *We believers in Christ still have a sin nature within us, but victory over it was POSITIONALLY achieved when we trusted in Christ for salvation, being forever released from God's eternal condemnation. Yet, we can now also EXPERIENTIALLY enjoy victory over a life lived by the sin nature if we rely on the Holy Spirit in living.*

Application: *(1) May we rejoice in our POSITION in Christ that forever frees us from the law of sin and death and eternal damnation in the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:11-15) (2) May we then EXPERIENCE righteous living in accord with our position by relying on the Holy Spirit by means of a moment-by-moment act of faith.*