**Romans 7:13-25**

***The Battle with Sin***

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**Introduction**

How is it possible to be more holy, to grow in Christ-likeness and produce the ‘fruit’ that God desires?

**1. Death through the law**

* Paul’s question in v. 13 arises from the preceding argument
* Death in the Garden of Eden (Gen 2:16-17)
* Death at Sinai (Exodus 20-24, 32)
* Paul’s purpose is to defend the goodness of God’s law while explaining the sinfulness of sin (vv. 11-13)

**2. The power of sin**

* The law is spiritual, but ‘I’ am fleshly, sold into sin’s power (v. 14)
* Before conversion: we were completely ‘in the flesh’ (7:5) with ‘the mind of the flesh’ (8:7-8)
* After conversion: sin and the flesh are locked in a battle with the renewed mind (7:15-20; cf. Gal 5:16-26)

There is no explicit mention of God’s Spirit here, but there are indications of the Spirit’s renewing work when Paul talks about delighting in God’s law “in my inner self” (v. 22; cf. 2 Cor 4:16; Eph 3:16) and being a slave to the law of God “with my mind” (v. 25; cf. 8:5b [‘the mind of the Spirit’]; 12:2)

**3. The divided self**

* ‘Another law’ = ‘the law of sin at work within me’ (vv. 21-22)
* I delight in God’s law ‘in my inner being’, but experience a conflict with ‘the law of sin’ which sometimes takes me captive
* I long for the rescue to come (vv. 24-25a; cf. 8:23; 1 Cor 15:54-57)
* But I am caught in the overlap of the ages (v. 25b) and am still vulnerable to sin’s power

**Conclusions**

* Not by trying to keep God’s law, but by serving God in the Spirit (7:6)
* Be realistic about the ongoing power of sin and the flesh
* Live by the Spirit, which involves putting to death ‘the misdeeds of the body’ (8:13)

‘Christian have a two-sided experience: the uplifting of the Spirit and the downdrag of sin both operate, and bewilderment results. Christians know themselves as people who, living as new creatures in Christ and under grace, have yet failed to do what they wanted to do and done instead things they wanted to avoid.’ (James Packer)