

Scripture : Romans 7:13-20

01/28/2024 Pastor David K Park

Title : Some being that dwells in me

The movie Rain Man stars Dustin Hoffman and Tom Cruise. The movie is about the coexistence of one personality with another personality.

It's scary to think that another is inside of me, or that there could be more than one in me. But that being is the one who controls me. Unless I become a person who belongs to the Holy Spirit, I am subject to that being.

Verse 15, "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do." (NIV)

Those who fit the picture in today's text are those who are convinced by the law but not transformed by the gospel.

Verse 16,

The law is the highest good (summum bonum) that cannot be reached by the human will.

The Apostle Paul's understanding of humanity is that three kinds of laws govern us.

- 1) God's law - righteous, good, holy, and divine. It is outside of us or above us.
- 2) The law of the heart - the law that is within us. We try to keep God's law.
- 3) The law of sin and death - in the members of our fallen body, the flesh.

In this sense, the philosopher Kierkegaard's description of human beings as a "constantly disappointing existence" is significant.

I encourage you to read and meditate on this text several times.

"In the flesh" and "sold to sin" are complicated phrases. "Sold to sin" means "sold into slavery" or "given over to". It means that I am a slave to sin. Sin is my master and I am his slave.

Verses 16-17,

[16] "And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good." (NIV)

[17] "As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me." (NIV)

Is the "I" in verse 16 the same person as the "I" in verse 17? No, they are not. Paul attempts to separate the personality of this person he is describing in verse 16. This personality is dualistic.

The Calvinist Confessions also say that the souls of the regenerate transgress.

The Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 13, Article 2, The Theory of Sanctification, states, "This sanctification is throughout, in the whole man; yet imperfect in this life, there abiding still some remnants of corruption in every part; hence arises a continual and irreconcilable war, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." This means that each part of the person is only partially sanctified.

Those who have not experienced rebirth are only one person spiritually. They have only one thought and one action.

Let's look at Johari's window on the screen.

- 1) Public area (the area that you know and others know)
- 2) Private area (the area that only you know and no one else knows)
- 3) Blind area (I don't know, but others do)
- 4) Unknown area (I don't know and others don't know)

But this unknown area is the subconscious, which makes up 70% of our consciousness. It doesn't matter how you are known or seen by others. How you manage this area is your personality and growth.

In the ancient world, the first-person "I" (ego) was used as a rhetorical term to express something that could be applied to others. Rabbis today sometimes use the first person "I" in that sense as well. Paul uses that same Jewish usage in this section, using the pronoun "I" to refer to himself as one of the saved saints and to all the other saints struggling with sin.

Freud's humanism is based on the idea that the more we recognize our unconscious and instincts, the more accessible we become. Paul, however, presupposes human weakness and absolute inability to sin, and makes it clear that only the life-giving law of the Spirit in Jesus Christ overcomes the law of sin.

The dualism of the early church held that "sin belongs only to the body," meaning that it is my body that commits sins, not me. There is no telling how many people were legitimately led astray because of this. Eventually, dualism was banished from the early church.

Plant the personality of Jesus in your personality through your encounters with Jesus Christ. Be filled with the love of Christ. Be able to participate in worship without missing a beat. Be diligent in attending worship. Revitalize worship. Be transformed by Jesus Christ.

Amen.