Northwest Bible Church – 11/2/03 Worship Service – A. Conner

**Rom. 7:21-23**

Lament #3 - The Two Minds of the Believer

**INTRO**

**I. CONDITION: EVIL IS PRESENT IN THE BELIEVER (Rom. 7:21a).**

The word “evil” (*kakos* ) refers to what is evil in character. It is a general word which can include evil in the following forms: 1) what is morally or ethically evil; 2) what is injurious, destructive, harmful. Moral evil is prominent in Rom. 7:21.

Paul is not easy on himself here. He is not trying to sugar-coat his struggle to save face with the Christians at Rome.

Remember that no Christian is mastered by sin (6:14), but no Christian is free of sin either.

**II. CONFIRMATION AND CAUSE: THE STRUGGLE (Rom. 7:21b-23).**

A. The evidence of grace in the heart of a believer.

1) He wants to do good (21b).

2) This desire to do good is confirmed by his joyful agreement with the law of God in the inner man (22). Paul delights in the law of God in the inner man.

Could this be an unbeliever?

The “inner man” is only used in two other places by Paul (Eph. 3:16; 2 Cor. 4:16) and both refer to the inner man of a Christian.

Every Christian should have this delight in the law of God.

B. The evidence of sin in the heart of a believer (23).

1) The description of this sin. “I see a different law in the members of my body,” “the law of sin which is in my members” both refer to the same thing.

2) The deeds of this sin. “Wages war,” “makes me a prisoner.”

There is enough success from this “law of sin” that Paul says that he is taken prisoner. This does not mean that he is **totally defeated by sin**, but that he is **not totally delivered from sin.**

**III. THE BATTLE BETWEEN TWO MINDS.**

A. The mind of the new man (7:23, 25).

B. The mind of the flesh. The “law of sin” is not just our physical nature, but our old nature which has its own mind. Actually Christians suffer from having **two minds**: one that is associated with the new nature and one with the old nature.

Notice **Rom. 8:5-7. Col. 2:18** “fleshly mind.”

C. The mind of the flesh uses many tricks to subvert the mind of the new nature in us:

EXCESS –

DISTORTION –

POLLUTION -

**IV. HELP FOR THE BATTLE.**

1) Pray for sensitivity to the mind of the flesh. We must “take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ” ( 2 Cor. 10:5).

2) Renew the mind in the Word of God. Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 4:22-24.