

God's Grace In Our Brokenness Pt. 1

May 2, 2021

The Apostle Paul saw himself as:

- the very least of all saints (Ephesians 3:8)
- the chief, or foremost, of all sinners (1 Timothy 1:15-16)
- the least of all the apostles (1 Corinthians 15:7-10)
- as one born-again by an "untimely" or "abortive" birth (1 Corinthians 15:7-10)

Romans 7:21-24 ESV

21 So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand.

22 For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being,

23 but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.

24 Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

The Christian's Brokenness:

- The results from this internal warfare of spirit vs. flesh "so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."
- For the Christian, this brokenness often does not manifest in overt sins, but sins of motive and attitude, which have the same root of pride and selfishness that the overt sins have.
- Those who are regenerated and communing with God are convicted of the inward sins just as much if they were the blatant, overt sins.
- There is certain victory over the flesh by abiding in Christ and walking in the Spirit!

Isaiah 6:1 ESV

1 In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple.

Isaiah 6:4-8 ESV

4 And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke.

5 And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"

6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar.

7 And he touched my mouth and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for."

8 And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me."

Ephesians 3:7-10 ESV

7 Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power.

8 To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,

9 and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things,

10 so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

- *The greatest mysteries of God were given to a man who clearly understood his own sinfulness and depravity.*
- *If Paul ever saw himself as anything more than the least, he would have disqualified himself to receive such a great revelation into the unsearchable riches of Christ.*
- *Jesus wants to use me, even in my brokenness.*
- *The unsearchable riches of Christ shine the brightest in my spiritual poverty.*
- *Most professing Christians will never experience the turmoil of what Paul describes in Romans 7, because they have no desire for holiness, they are only using God for their own selfish ambitions.*
- *Those who have been truly touched by the power of regeneration desire holiness and righteousness before their God more than life itself.*

Matthew 5:4 ESV

4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

2 Corinthians 4:7 ESV

7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.

"Strange, though I am saved from sin, I am not saved from sinning." — Martin Luther

"You are not mature if you have a high esteem of yourself. He who boasts in himself is but a babe in Christ, if indeed he be in Christ at all. Young Christians may think much of themselves. Growing Christians think themselves nothing. Mature Christians know that they are less than nothing. The more holy we are, the more we mourn our infirmities, and the humbler is our estimate of ourselves."

—Charles Spurgeon

"When a man is getting better he understands more and more clearly the evil that is still left in him. When a man is getting worse he understands his own badness less and less." —C.S. Lewis

"A spiritual experience which is thoroughly flavoured with a deep and bitter sense of sin is of great value to him that hath it. It is terrible in the drinking, but it is most wholesome in the bowels, and in the whole of the afterlife."

—Charles Spurgeon, 1890, Autobiography

"After conversion, a man begins to do his best, and he fails...God allows that failure that the regenerate man should be taught his own utter impotence. It is in the course of this struggle that there comes to us this sense of our utter sinfulness. It is God's way of dealing with us. He allows that man to strive to fulfill the law that, as he strives and wrestles, he may be brought to this: 'I am a regenerate child of God, but I am utterly helpless to obey His law.'"

—Andrew Murray, *Absolute Surrender, O Wretched Man that I am!*

"Living as we do in a product-oriented culture, we like to package our faith too. We prefer to sell a slick, shrink-wrapped version of salvation that includes prosperity and peace, endless happiness here and now, and heaven by and by. While there is nothing wrong with teaching principles that can result in genuine, God-given success, there is something wrong if we neglect to mention the process, which must inevitably include times of defeat and failure."

— Charles R. Swindoll, *Shrink-Wrapped Salvation*

"The man who has struggled to purify himself and has had nothing but repeated failures will experience real relief when he stops tinkering with his soul and looks away to the perfect One. While he looks at Christ the very things he has so long been trying to do will be getting done within him. It will be God working in him to will and to do."

— A.W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God*

"Let us beware of tinkering with our inner life. God must do everything for us. Our part is to yield and trust."

— A.W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God*, "Removing the Self-Life Veil"

"The paradox is that God must destroy in us all illusions of righteousness before he can make us righteous."

— Martin Luther

"So, dear soul, cursed with the sin which thou hast taken into thy heart, God hates the sin, but He loves thee! He knew all about it before He chose thee. He will never be surprised. He will never be disappointed. He will never love you less. But the more sinful you are, the weaker you are, the more often you have a relapse and go back, the more often you fall, God, who has a parent's heart towards you and who has come into your heart, will fight sin step by step with you. Your weakness will command His strongest love."

"He sits down beside you. The fever is on your head and body. He knows it will take long vigil, long care, long patience. He has counted the cost; He is prepared for a long sickness. He has taken you in hand, your passions, your impurity, your garrulous gossip, your sulkiness, your jealousy, your vainglory, your love of money, your love of sin; God knows it all. If you will let Him, He will make short work. If you resist Him, you will make the work longer. But He will never leave you, He will never give you up, and however often you fall, go back to Him again."

"O soul, thou hast thought ill of thy God! Thou hast thought because thou didst so often fall that God was tired of thee. Ah! Thou knowest not that His tender mercy is infinite, and He will never let you go, never, until in heaven He kisses your face, out of which the fever and the brand of sin have gone forever. O, my God, thou wilt kiss my soul into health!"

"Remember further that His purpose is to deliver from the power of sin. The guilt is gone, but the power remains, and He can only deliver from this gradually...stage after stage He will carry on His work within me, weaning me, saving me from the love and the power of sin, deeper, deeper, deeper down into my heart."
—F.B. Meyer, *Fit for the Master's Use, Deliverance from the Power of Sin*

"We need not despair even in our worst, for our failures are forgiven. The only fatal thing is to sit down content with anything less than perfection."
— C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

"Failures will be forgiven; it is acquiescence that is fatal, the permitted, regularized presence of an area in ourselves which we still claim for our own."
—C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*

"God understands our human limitations. What He desires is that when we do fail, we remain firm in our resolve to trust Him. To get back up and keep moving — not with a tentative, halting attitude, but with a strength and courage that flow from our confidence in Him."
—Chuck Swindoll, *Facing Failures, Insight For Today*

"You must ask for God's help. Even when you have done so, it may seem to you for a long time that no help, or less help than you need, is being given. Never mind. After each failure, ask forgiveness, pick yourself up, and try again. Very often what God first helps us towards is not the virtue itself but just this power of always trying again."
—C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

Proverbs 24:16 ESV

16 for the righteous falls seven times and rises again...

Hebrews 10:38-39 ESV

38 but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him."

39 But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.