

Loft Underground

Crave - Weed Two

Conflict

To get into the spirit of this week's theme, make a list below of a few things that you hate to do and write why you hate to do it.

- How do you feel when you do what you hate to do?

Now let's look at that same feeling in Christian terms. In Romans 7:15-19 Paul makes a confession of sorts. Read it carefully and underline it when you find it.

"I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing.

Write in your own words what it is "to do what you hate"?

Paul writes that when he "does what I hate" it is not Paul, but sin living in Paul. Do you think this is true or a cop out? Why?

Make a list of a few things that you do now, that you wish you did not do at all. Is this sin living in you?

Paul and his problem with life according to the rules alone.

For Paul, "the law" was only good for pointing out where we fail, and offered us no suggestion as to how to move beyond our failure. Look at Paul's final question in Romans 7:24. Re-write it below in your own words:

What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

Let's take a look at the law. Below are a few laws from the Book of Leviticus. Beside each one write how well you are following this 'law'.

Leviticus 13:47-49 - "If any clothing is contaminated with mildew—any woolen or linen clothing, any woven or knitted material of linen or wool, any leather or anything made of leather— and if the contamination in the clothing, or leather, or woven or knitted material, or any leather article, is greenish or reddish, it is a spreading mildew and must be shown to the priest.

(can you imagine showing your pastor your laundry?)

Leviticus 19:3 - " 'Each of you must respect his mother and father, and you must observe my Sabbaths. I am the Lord your God.'"

Leviticus 19: 18 - 'Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.'

(Read Matthew 22:39-40 and see Jesus quote Leviticus 19:18.)

Having tasted the law – what would you imagine life would be like if it was lived only by a list of do's and don'ts?

Wrapping it up: For Paul, the laws God gave in the Old Testament were not bad – the laws were useful in pointing out right and wrong. What law lacks, however, is a way to conquer sinful desire within us. Look at what he writes:

What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "Do not covet.

For Paul, the answer was being completely made new in Jesus Christ. When we crave Jesus we are healed. Go back to the front of the page and look at what you do that you hate.

- What is it that really drives you to behave that way?

- Is there a way to find that craving met in Jesus Christ (this is next week's theme)? What do you think?