



Broken and beloved cycle

Romans 7:21 So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me.

²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

²⁴ What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

²⁵ Thanks be to God--through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Romans 8:1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

Paul's last days

2 Timothy 4:6 For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

⁸ Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

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THE STORY

FINDING YOUR STORY IN GOD'S STORY

The Christian Life in the Epistles

The Story, part 30

Apostles and Epistles, part 3

May 7, 2017

Paul's difficult life

2 Corinthians 11:23 Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again.

²⁴ Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one.

²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, ²⁶ I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. ²⁷ I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. ²⁸ Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches. ²⁹ Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn? ³⁰ If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness.

Sanctification



The new life... loving God, loving people

John 10:10 "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

John 17:26 I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

1 Timothy 1:5 ...whereas the aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith.

By grace

Colossians 2:6 As therefore you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so live in him,⁷ rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

Becoming like Christ...

Galatians 4:19 My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you,

Colossians 1:9 And so, from the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,¹⁰ to lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing



fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

¹¹ May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy,¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

Three enemies: world, flesh, and Satan,

1 John 2:15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him.¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world.¹⁷ And the world passes away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.⁹ Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experience of suffering is required of your brotherhood throughout the world.

¹⁰ And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, establish, and strengthen you.

What it takes for Christ to be formed in us

James 1:2 Count it all joy, my brethren, when you meet various trials,³ for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.⁴ And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

2 Corinthians 12:9 ...but he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

¹⁰ For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities; for when I am weak, then I am strong.