

GALATIANS 2:19-21 THE OPEN SECRET OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE 2/25/2024

GALATIANS 2:19-21 READ

INTRO: To understand what Paul means in Galatians 2:19-21 we need to look at his life as a religious lost man.

Romans 7 is the personal testimony of Paul, concerning his past life, and his relationship to the Law of God. When he was honest enough to see he failed doing the Law he surrendered to the work that Christ did for him and gained a new life. The Law had heightened his conscience, and made him realize only Christ can deliver him from the crushing guilt that failure to please God had produced.

Romans chapter 6-8 is a unit of thought that all goes together. Without that full context you may draw wrong conclusions, especially when Paul uses the present tense in describing his past condition. If Paul was truly describing his "present" reality then no one should listen to anything Paul says! Paul is using a literary device to communicate vividly how lost he was. Cicero and others have used this device of speaking of a past event as happening in the present to dramatize the powerful feeling of a reality, although the event happened in the past.

It was Cicero who first said, "O wretched man, wretched not just because of what you are, but also because you do not know how wretched you are!" (106-43 B.C.)

(Consult- "Why Paul Wrote In The Present Tense" Alton Danks)

ROMANS 7:14- 8:4

Romans 7:14 "Sold into bondage to sin."

Very clearly Paul is referring to his lost condition before he met Christ. A lost person; the polar opposite of redemption!

REDEMPTION- Apolutroseos- To deliver a slave from the slave market by the payment of a price. We were bought out of the sin by Jesus who pay our debt and then He set us free.

Romans 6:6 – "No longer slaves to sin."

Romans 6:14 – " For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace."

Romans 7 is NOT the passage to describe the struggle of the Christina life! It may feel like it is at times, but this is not the passage that describes it. How cruel it would be if God ask us to live a certain way but provided no power to live it.

TEXT TODAY: GALATIANS 2: 19-21

Galatian 2: 20 One Greek word says this all! **"I have been crucified with Christ"**

SUNESTAURUMAI

1st person (Paul speaking of himself)

Indicative mood (a reality)

Perfect tense (A decisive act done at a point in the past with continued affects in the present)

Passive voice (Paul is receiving this action of being crucified with Christ. He is not the one doing it; it is being done to him.)

Example: I heard a man say, "You cannot nail yourself to a cross! Christ has to do that for you, then you can really live!"

We understand Jesus died for us so that our sin will not eternally condemn us to hell. (Romans 8:1). We know heaven will be our home because of all that Christ has done. But what does it mean? **CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST?**

It happened to us, not at the time that Jesus died for all sin, but when we met Him. We did not just "add on" Jesus to our life. In that moment we died to the world system, and now have a new life in Christ. Two things happened at once. Dying to an old life, and now living to a new life.

EXPOSITOR'S GREEK COMMENTARY- " Paul had striven in vain to obtain life before God by zealous fulfillment of every commandment. He had to acknowledge his utter failure, he surrendered all the pride and ambition of his life, and cast himself in humble trust at the feet of Jesus to receive from Him that precious life which he had sought in vain by his most zealous efforts under the law."

Galatians 2:19-21 " For through the Law I died to the Law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who lived, but Christ lives in me; and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."

Death to world's corruption and emptiness- Then new life- New power.

Why Paul Wrote in the Present Tense in Romans 7

by Alton Danks

In Romans 7 Paul appears to be saying that he was unable to cease from sin. He isn't, but again we have to look at it in the context in which it was written.

In Romans 3:20 Paul states:

In God's sight (according to God's measure of righteousness) no one alive will be considered righteous on the ground of legalistic observance of the commandments of The Law, because through The Law is the knowledge of sin.

Having made this point Paul has to explain it. This is what he is doing in Romans 7. In verse 7 he repeats his point that the function of The Law is to make known what sin is. In verses 14 through 23 he gives his personal testimony of how The Law worked in his life to expose sin working within his being and how The Law does not provide the means to be made free from sin and made righteous.

But, in making his case in verses 14 through 23, Paul uses present tense verbs. This is what makes it appear that he was saying that he was unable to cease from sin.

What are we to make of Paul's use of the present tense verbs in verses 14 through 23?

What happens if we understand his use of the present tense to refer to his present state of being?

It would still demonstrate how The Law worked in his life to expose sin working within his being, but it would also make a case against the Good News Paul was proclaiming as the means God used to free people from sin and make them righteous. If Paul, trusting in the faithfulness and work of Jesus Christ to free him from sin and make him righteous was still under the dominion of sin within him, then he had no case to make with regards to the Good News.

Such an understanding would also be contrary to what Paul wrote in Romans 5, 6, 8, and much of the rest of the New Testament.

Some have suggested a means of reconciling Romans 7 with the rest of what Paul wrote by suggesting that Romans 7 describes Paul's actual condition with respect to sin and the rest of what he wrote describes his "positional" condition. The effort to reconcile what he wrote is commendable, but

"positionally" free from sin, but actually sold under sin is not free indeed and fails to fully reconcile.

So why did Paul use present tense verbs in verses 14 through 23?

Present tense verbs are usually used to describe one's present actions or state of being, but not always. The use of present tense in legal cases is advanced as a more effective way to persuade a judge or jury.

This means of jury persuasion was established in Rome by Cicero and is still taught in law schools today. Cicero was a famed Roman attorney and orator who lived in Rome from 106 BC to 43 BC and was the proconsul of Tarsus (Paul's hometown) from 51 to 50 BC. He established Six Maxims of Persuasion (which are still taught in law schools today), the fourth of which is:

Draw the audience into the story. Tell the story in the present tense as if the jury was watching the events unfold in front of them, rather than hearing a narrative of something that happened in the past.

Paul was attempting to persuade the congregation at Rome that righteousness does not come by The Law. Giving his personal testimony of The Law and sin in the present tense is completely consistent with his effort to persuade the congregation to trust. Paul was using the best practices of persuasion of his day, and ours, to demonstrate that righteousness does not come by The Law.

There is additional evidence that links Paul's writing in Romans 7 and Cicero.

O wretched man that I am! (Romans 7:24)

O wretched man, wretched not just because of what you are, but also because you do not know how wretched you are! (Cicero)