

The Christian Warfare

Rev. C. Harinck – Romans 7:24

Singing: Psalter 128: 1, 3

Reading: Romans 7

Singing: Psalter 151: 1- 6

Singing: Psalter 188: 1 - 4

Singing: Psalter 362: 1 - 3

Congregation, it is very remarkable that Christian's journey in Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress' from the Cross of Calvary to the Celestial City is longer than his journey from the City of Destruction to the Cross of Calvary. It appears that after Christian found forgiveness at the Cross of Calvary, he still had to travel a long and difficult journey. The longest and most difficult part of the journey was from the Cross of Calvary to the Celestial City.

Here we learn that Christian's strife and difficulties were not over once he had found peace in the atonement of Christ. On the contrary! We are taught by Bunyan that then we are only at the beginning of that long and difficult journey through the desert of this life to the Celestial City. We hope to speak about this journey of the true Christian.

You can find our text in the portion of the Word of God we have read, Romans 7 verse 24:

O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

Our text speaks about:

The Christian Warfare

We will consider the following three points:

1. The Christian's *delight*
2. The Christian's *conflict*
3. The Christian's *deliverance*

1. The Christian's Delight

True believers are known by their *peace* with God through Jesus Christ their Lord. True believers are known by their *hope* of eternal bliss. True believers are known by the *joy* they have in God through the Holy Ghost.

If the spiritual life of a child of God is healthy, then unbelieving men and women of the world must feel that he or she has something that they themselves do not; that woman or that man has an inward peace, a heavenly comfort and strength which they do not know. The non-believer must confess, 'This person has a hope for eternal happiness which I do not possess.' Thus, believers are known by their peace, hope, strength, and joy in God. A true Christian has something to be jealous of.

But true believers are also known by their warfare and distress. We must say that they are especially known by their warfare, by the battle they have to fight. We must say that the joy and peace of believers is often of short duration. Their joy and peace are soon disturbed, but their warfare with sin and the devil continues until they arrive at the gates of heaven.

Romans 7 describes the holy war in the soul of a child of God. Did not Luther say of the Psalms, 'In the Psalms we look into the hearts of the saint'? So we can say of Romans 7, 'Here we look into the heart of Paul.'

When we look into the heart of the apostle Paul, we observe that Paul's inner life was a continual struggle between the flesh and the spirit; a strife between the new nature and the remainders of the old nature. In Romans 7 we meet two contrary principles. We read in this well-known chapter about a ceaseless conflict between the spirit and the flesh. Here the apostle portrays with a masterly pen - with himself as the example - the spiritual struggles of a newborn soul, the struggles of a child of God. He illustrates, with reference to his own personal experience, the ceaseless conflict which is in the hearts of true believers. He describes the conflict between the new nature and the remainders of the old nature.

This experience of the apostle Paul is strange to many modern preachers, to those who say of Romans 7, 'What the apostle describes here is the struggle in his heart *before* his conversion. It describes his life before he came to that personal acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior.' They believe that when a person has been converted to God, and has accepted Christ as his personal Savior, that all strife is over, that such a person can always rejoice and praise. They think that he or she can then overcome sin and live in complete holiness of heart and life. They cannot see how such a person can come to such a low frame as Paul when he says: *O wretched man that I am!*

Others say that Romans 7 describes Paul's strife and experience before he came to the full assurance of faith, to the full assurance that Christ was his portion and Savior. They speak of getting out of Romans 7 and into Romans 8. They say: 'Let us forget about sin and strife and go on to joy and rejoicing.'

Oh, what blind leaders of the blind! They do not understand that there is also a Romans 5 where the apostle has said, *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.* In Romans 7 we hear of a justified man, who fully knows that his Redeemer lives. They do not understand that after the greatest spiritual blessings, we always come back to Romans 7, *O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

In Romans 7 we are shown the warfare of a born-again believer. We read of the warfare of an established Christian, of a man who could say that he had peace with God through the blood of Jesus Christ. Therefore Romans 7 describes the conflict that is in the heart of every genuine believer. And when someone says that he does not know of the life which is described in Romans 7, then we have the freedom to say that he knows nothing of true spiritual life, that he is a stranger of the life of grace.

The apostle begins by saying in verse 22, *For I delight in the law of God after the inward man.* The apostle Paul first speaks about his delight. He tells us what his delight is, he tells us what his joy is. We notice that his delight is in the law of God after the inward man. That

is the delight of a newborn believer. It is the delight of that new life of grace - to love God, to cleave to Him, to do His will, to walk in the way of His commandments. That new life desires to crucify the flesh, to crucify the old nature, to deny himself, to take up his cross and to follow Christ. That new life delights in the law of God. That is their delight. The newborn man says with David, O how love I Thy law! It is my meditation all the day.

In these words we are taught that God's children are not forced to serve God, but they do so willingly. They do not serve God because they are afraid of hell or punishment. It is their delight to keep God's commandments, to walk in His ways, to serve Him, to love Him, to cleave unto Him. They desire nothing but to cleave to that one God who has been merciful and gracious unto them. They desire nothing but to follow that precious Savior who has bought them with His precious blood. Every newborn man can say with Paul, *For I delight in the law of God after the inward man.*

By nature man hates God's law. Man hates the law with its demands, 'thou shalt' and 'thou shalt not'. Natural man loves sin and therefore he hates the law, because the law opposes all that he loves. The law opposes sin and uncleanness, and so natural man hates the law with its strictness. But the newborn man can say with Paul, *For I delight in the law of God after the inward man.*

Paul says: *After the inward man.* We could explain this by saying: "from the bottom of my heart". The apostle Paul wants to tell us that he really loves the law of God and that it is his sole desire to walk in the way of God's commandments. When the apostle deals with the keeping of God's commandments, he speaks of a delight. He says, *I delight in the law of God after the inward man.* He does not only speak about a desire, he also speaks about a delight. He calls the service of God his delight.

Who is able to express the inward joy that is to be found in serving God? Who can describe the sweetness that is tasted in cleaving to God, in walking in His ways? Words cannot express what joy is found in the communion with God and in meeting Him in the way of His ordinances. The language of the newborn heart is, *For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.*

When you ask Paul, 'Paul, what is your delight?', his answer would be, 'My delight is in the law of God! From the bottom of my heart; after the inward man. That is my happiness, to serve God, to cleave to Him, to follow Him, and love Him.'

It is the delight of a newborn soul to sit at Jesus' feet as Mary did, to deny himself, to take up his cross and to follow the Savior, to humble himself before God, to keep His commandments, to walk in His ways, to be far from sin and to draw near to God. That is the delight of a Christian. When you ask a Christian, 'What is your delight?', his answer will be with Paul, *I delight in the law of God after the inward man.*

But, when you ask him, 'What is your burden?', then he will also say what Paul says in verse 23: *But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*

Let us speak about this in our second thought, when we hope to look at:

2. The Christian's Conflict

When a sinner, by the grace of God, has been drawn out of the world and his wicked way of life has been changed, then such a person often thinks that he will now bid an eternal farewell to sin and the world. When there has come a breach with all sin, when he has made that blessed choice of Moses, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, he will say, 'Now I will never sin anymore.' He now says to the world and to all sin, 'Get thee hence, get thee hence!' He esteems the reproaches of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. With Joshua, he takes the oath and says, *As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*

The converted sinner hopes and expects to overcome sin and world. He expects to go from strength to strength and at the last to appear with joy in Zion before God. But a little breath of temptation will soon teach him other things. It will uncover what is found in his heart. It will teach him the humble lesson that although he has bid farewell to sin and the world, there is still a world of sin inside him. Then he will cry out with Paul, *But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*

Paul had said that his delight was in the law of God after the inward man. He then continues, *But I see another law in my members.* Paul speaks about 'another' law, another power, another principle - a principle contrary to the law of his mind, and contrary to the desire and delight of the new nature.

It is the evil principle of our fallen nature. It is the corruption that cleaves to us in all that we think, in all that we speak, and in all that we do. It is that deep-stuck foul soul disease which we have inherited from our first parents. And what is this law doing? We read, *Warring against the law of my mind.* The result is a holy war. This causes a holy war in the hearts of God's people. There can never be peace with sin in the bosom of a true believer. There is an ongoing warfare with sin and the old man.

Certainly, at times they enjoy peace with God through Jesus Christ. There is rest when they may rest upon His atonement, but there can never be peace with sin. There is always the conflict, always the warfare, always a constant war within the newborn man - a constant war with the old man of sin.

There are two great armies fighting in the believer's soul. On one side is the devil with all the corruption of our old nature at his command, and the whole world and all its lusts as his allies. On the other side is the Holy Spirit. And at His command is the new creature with that new principle which He Himself planted in the heart of a newborn man. And thus it is fulfilled what the apostle says, *The flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh* (Gal.5:17).

In this conflict, in this battle, God's people do not always triumph. It can be that, under the blessings of the grace of God upon the soul, sin is subdued; especially when we feel the nearness and dearness of the Lord Jesus Christ and have the enjoyment of God's mercy and forgiveness. Then it can be as if there is no longer any sin left in our hearts. The world is under our feet and we are above world and sin. But after that, we always have to experience that our enemies only lay quiet for a while. They were only

waiting for a good opportunity to come again with their temptations. Often the same devil which we threw out of the front door, tries to re-enter our heart through the backdoor.

The remainders of the old man are often like a volcano. Sometimes the volcano is dormant and emits nothing, or maybe just a little wisp of steam that one can hardly see. If we were to look at the volcano then, we would not think it to be dangerous at all. But below the surface, deep down in the bottom of the volcano, the lava is churning and it will soon erupt and destroy everything.

That is how it is with the corruption of our hearts. Under the influence of the grace of God, and especially when we enjoy the nearness and dearness of that precious Saviour Jesus Christ, it can be as if there is no world and no sin. At such a time it is as if we are above sin and are not troubled by the corruption of our hearts. But the corruption of the heart is indeed like that volcano we spoke about. The volcano slumbers and sleeps, but the fire is still there. Our enemies just lie quiet till we lose our watchfulness. God's people have to experience what Paul says here, *I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*

From these words we learn that Paul did not always have the upper hand in this struggle. He could not live, as some would believe, a life of constant victory. He had not completely overcome sin and world.

God's children often suffer defeat against their three headed enemy: the devil, the world and their sinful flesh. It is especially against the remainders of the old nature, the sinful flesh, that they suffer defeat. So often it is their experience with Paul: *When I would do good, evil is present with me.* When we try to be holy, we are led into captivity by ungodliness; when we try to be heavenly minded, we are pulled downward by carnal-mindedness. The strife and the struggle are always there. It is like the apostle says, *Another law is warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.* That makes him cry out what we read in our text, *O wretched man that I am!* In and of themselves, God's children remain wretched.

We should not misunderstand this confession of the true believer. When we speak about the true believer as being a wretched man, this does *not* mean that God's children are wretched people. There is no one in this world as happy as the true believer. There is no one in this world as rich as a person who is born again. God is his portion forever. Christ is his Savior. He has found peace with God through Jesus Christ. In Christ he has the pardon of all his sins. He has the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. He has the hope of an eternal glory stretching out before him. No one is as happy and as rich in this world as the true believer; and yet he often cries, *O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

How is this possible? It is possible because there is a difference between *being* blessed and *feeling* blessed. Noah and his family were completely safe in the ark, yet they did not always feel safe when the storm raged, the beasts roared and the waves pounded against the ark.

The true believer is the happiest and richest person in the whole world and yet he often cries, *O wretched man that I am!* He cries this when he feels the plague of his heart; when he feels that deep-seated foul soul disease of sin. When the true believer is confronted with the remainders of the old man he cries out, *O wretched man that I am!* So often he discovers how corrupt he still is within and that he cannot serve God as he desires to serve Him. When the true believer brings to his remembrance that he has been bought with a price and that therefore he is under such a holy obligation to glorify God in body and soul, he especially feels his shortcomings and cries out, *O wretched man that I am!*

This was the cry and the confession of the apostle Paul - a man delivered by the blood of Christ. A man who could say, *Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Jesus Christ.* A man who had been brought up to the third heaven and who had heard unspeakable things of which he said, 'It is not lawful for a man to utter.' This man, who had so many blessed experiences of the grace and the mercy of God, such a man cries out, *O wretched man that I am!*

That is what is left of man when he is taught in the school of Jesus, for then he feels how far, far short he is from God's standard. When he feels how far below the level of a true Christian he lives, and how he offends in many things, he will cry out, *O wretched man that I am!* No, it is not only the backslidden believer who will confess, *O wretched man that I am!* It is also the person who is truly in communion with God and in communion with Christ. We must even say, the closer a sinner is drawn to God and to Christ, and the more he experiences the love of the Savior, the more he will feel that he falls far, far short from God's standard.

It is the best and not the weakest of the believers who groan, *O wretched man that I am!* When Abraham walked with the Lord, he exclaimed, *Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes.* When Job came face to face with the Lord he said, *I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.* When Isaiah entered into the presence of the Lord, he said, *Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips.* And when John, on the Isle of Patmos, met the exalted Savior, Christ, in His glory, then he fell at His feet as dead. It is the confession of the best of God's people, of the most eminent of the believers, *O wretched man that I am!*

That is something different than the language of the so-called 'victorious life' preachers. It is as if they know only one text of the Bible, namely this one, *Christ came to give us life and He came to give it more abundantly* (John 10:10). According to them the life of a Christian is a life of only joy, victory and happiness. They know nothing about strife, the strife against sin, world and devil. They can always praise and serve God. They call the language of Paul an unhealthy language, and say of the complaints of God's true people, 'That is nothing but false mysticism.' But no, it is a very healthy sign for God's true people.

Can this be true? Can this complaint be a sign of healthy faith? I answer, Yes. A very healthy sign indeed! It is very healthy to be at war with the devil, sin, and world; in contrast, it is very unhealthy to be at peace with the devil, sin, and world. It is a very healthy sign to groan under the remainders of the old man and earnestly long to be delivered from the body of death. The confession of the true Christian is, *O wretched man that I am!*

The truth is, no one complains as much about sin as those who have been delivered from it. The man who has been forgiven much, will love much. When John Bradford, who was martyred during the reign of bloody Queen Mary, wrote a letter to a fellow-prisoner on the day before his execution, he described himself as, 'The sinful John Bradford, the most miserable, hard-hearted and unthankful sinner.' And the next day that man died for Christ with great joy and liberty.

Godly Rutherford wrote, 'This body of sin and corruption embitters and poisons our enjoyment; oh, that I were where I shall sin no more.'

John Newton, when asked about his former life and his Christian life, said, 'I was ashamed of myself when I began to seek for Christ; and now that I have found Christ, I am even more ashamed.'

The conclusion of some modern preachers, who teach that a Christian can reach perfection in this life and has no more struggle with sin, is that Paul's declaration is unhealthy language. But that makes a sort of Christian who is haughty and proud and who does not need the daily washing away of sin in the blood of Jesus.

The Bible teaches us that it is a very healthy sign to groan under the remainders of sin, to groan that we cannot be what we ought to be and cannot serve God in the way that He is worthy. That is the conflict; that is the battle fought by the believers. God's people can agree with such language more than with the language of those who can always praise God, who can always glorify God, who are always full of zeal for Christ and His kingdom, who never have any strife or struggle, and who glory in their own strength.

But on the other hand, congregation, we should not misunderstand the apostle Paul, or draw the wrong conclusion. For when the apostle Paul complains, *O wretched man that I am!*, we also read that he did not rest in this complaint. He did not live at peace with his imperfection. On the contrary, he cried for deliverance, *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Paul sought deliverance and had a yearning desire to be delivered from the remainders of the old man. He is not resigned to it. He is not hiding behind the fact that the best of God's people are imperfect and that therefore is not necessary to live a life of holiness.

Romans chapter 7 has been misused terribly throughout the ages. We misuse Romans 7 when we hide behind the doctrine of man's corruption in order to live a life of sin instead of a life of holiness. No, the apostle desired to be delivered from the old man. That is the true sign of newborn believers. The whole world is under the power of sin, but it does not bother the world and neither is sinful man bothered by the fact that he is under the power of sin. It does not drive them to their knees to cry, *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* But, the renewed heart suffers under the remainders of the old man and cries for deliverance, *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

Who shall deliver me? says Paul. It appears to us that Paul has turned everywhere to be delivered from the remainders of the old man. But he knew from his own bitter experience that there was no deliverance in the law nor in his best intentions. He had no expectation from his own strength. Therefore he says, 'Who? Who shall deliver me from

the body of this death? Where will deliverance come from? Who will deliver me from the remainders of the old man?’

It is the question of God's people. Often they lie on the ground broken in their own strength, knowing that there is no help in the law, no help in their best intentions, no help in their own strength and performances. The question then becomes a living reality, *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

But the apostle found the answer to this question. We read it in verse 25, *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord*. Let us speak about this in our last thought when we look at: The Christian's deliverance: but first we will sing from Psalter 188, verses 1 – 4.

3. The Christian's Deliverance

The apostle had cried, *Who? Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* He had searched for deliverance for such a wretched, hopeless, and miserable sinner. He had searched for deliverance for a sinner who could say, *I delight in the law of God after the inward man*, but who nevertheless had to confess, 'I cannot serve God as He is worthy of being served' for *I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind*. He looked around and he found no deliverance.

Then in a moment he may see Christ, and by faith view Him as the One Who was delivered up for our offenses and raised up again for our justification; the One Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. And then... he says, *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord*.

The apostle saw that in Christ he was more than a conqueror. The apostle saw that even though the strife was still in his heart, Christ had already won the battle when He cried out on the cross, *It is finished!* He saw that even though the strife was still within him, Christ had already become the great Victor and that in Christ he was already more than a conqueror.

In short the apostle understood that he was fighting a winning battle. This made him do what Jehoshaphat did before the battle against the Ammonites and Moabites. Jehoshaphat thanked and praised God for the victory before the battle was even begun (2 Chron.20).

And so Paul thanked God for the triumph over sin before the conflict had ended in his heart. Paul saw that in Christ he was already delivered. Christ had won the victory for him and in Christ he would be more than a conqueror. Paul had to confess, 'The fight is still within me.' But now he is able to say, 'But Christ has overcome the devil, sin, and his whole dominion. In and through Christ I am more than a conqueror.'

The apostle saw that Christ had already overcome sin on the cross where he blotted out the handwriting of the law which was against us. Now sin can depress God's people. It can make them suffer and deprive them of the peace in their hearts, but Christ will have the final word. Sin will never gain the victory, for they are not under sin, but under grace. They are under a safe reign, namely the reign of grace, under the reign of that merciful and gracious High Priest Jesus Christ. In this Christ, Paul was more than a conqueror.

In his struggle the apostle saw One Who had overcome and not only that, but he also saw One with Whom help, deliverance and comfort is to be found for such a miserable creature as he was; for a sinner who had to say, *O wretched man that I am!*

Hence we see that Jesus Christ is the deliverance of a Christian: and not only in justification, also in sanctification. Oh, how blessed is the man who is taught by the Holy Spirit to not only find Christ as the foundation of his justification before God, but also to find that Christ has been given to him for sanctification. It is so blessed to know and to experience that His precious blood has not only atoned for sin on the cross, but that it also daily cleanses from indwelling sin and has the strength to break the power of sin.

Paul saw and found strength and comfort in the fact that the devil could never undo what had happened on the cross of Calvary. There sin and the devil had been defeated. What a blessing to know with Jehoshaphat, that although there is no might in us against this great company that comes against us, nevertheless in Christ we are more than conquerors. Christ has overcome and He is at the right hand of the Father making intercession for us. He has promised, *The gates of hell shall not prevail against thee*. In the end God's children will be more than conquerors.

The warfare continues. Devil and sin will pursue us until the very gates of heaven. And still the apostle could say, *I thank God*. In Christ we are more than conquerors, namely in Him Who loved us and gave Himself for us. In Christ, the apostle saw grace sufficient for him, grace to uphold him to the end and the promise that sin would be rooted out completely. The apostle saw how the conflict with sin would cease at the gates of heaven and then he would always be with the Lord. With his eyes fixed upon that future, the apostle Paul could say in the midst of the conflict with sin, *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord*.

Therefore, lift up your heads, struggling, stumbling believers. Lift up your heads, for your groaning under the remainders of the old man will be turned into songs of praise. In Christ we are more than conquerors. That battle may still be in your hearts but Christ has gained the victory. He has overcome sin, the devil and his whole dominion. He has promised, *Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but ye are under grace*. You are fighting a winning battle, a battle that has been won already by Jesus Christ, your Lord and Savior.

Beloved, now the great question is, "Are you a Christian?" We have spoken a little of the Christian life and now you must give an answer to this question. Are you a Christian? What is your delight? What is your burden? What is your deliverance?

The first question is, "What is your delight?" Paul says, *I delight in the law of God after the inward man*. If the world is your delight, if money is your delight, if sin is your delight, you are not a Christian. Then you miss the first sign of a Christian and that first sign is, *I delight in the law of God after the inward man*. That first sign is to say with Asaph: *It is good for me to draw near unto God*.

The next question is: What is your burden? What is your conflict? Is sin a burden to you and the greatest burden indeed?

And the last question is: What is your deliverance? Is Christ your deliverance? Is Christ your only hope? Or do you have other foundations, and other hopes? Do you know of Paul's complaint and confession, *O wretched man that I am*? The first and the continual lesson taught in the school of Jesus is that we are miserable and wretched sinners. We have to know how great our sins and miseries are. You cannot skip this lesson, for when you do; you would be as someone who wants to learn how to read but who is not willing to learn

the alphabet. We need to be taught that first lesson, *O wretched man that I am*, for only when sin causes sorrow and becomes a burden will we seek for the deliverance from sin.

Do you know of that cry for deliverance, *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* When sin causes sorrow, when sin is our greatest burden, we will seek deliverance; and not just from the consequences of sin, but from sin itself. Can you truthfully say, *I wish that all sins in me were dead?* And what do you know of *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord?*

The Bible speaks about three things, namely, a true knowledge of our sins and misery, a need for deliverance and a seeking of our deliverance in Christ, and thirdly, thankfulness. We should not forget that last part, the part of thankfulness. What do you know of that great Deliverer? What does Christ mean to you? *What think ye of Christ?* Can you say that He is your only hope for justification, your only hope for sanctification, and your only hope for a complete redemption? Can you really say, *To whom else shall I go, Thou hast the words of eternal life?* Can you say with Ambrose, 'I would rather miss the sun in the sky than that I would miss that Sun of righteousness to shine upon me and to find healing under His wings'?

Are you a Christian? What is your delight? What is your conflict and burden? What is your deliverance? What is your thankfulness? These are questions asking for an answer.

The strife will remain. It is a painful lesson to learn what we read here of the apostle Paul, *When I would do good, evil is present with me*. But it is such a necessary lesson. What would become of our humiliation and self-abhorrence if we were not taught that lesson continuously? What would become of seeking deliverance outside of ourselves in the Lord Jesus Christ? We need this lesson to make us lie in the dust and to teach us how we need Christ even after our justification.

How we need Christ always! 'A Christian life', says Calvin, 'is a Christ-centered life.' We read in Colossians that Paul says, *For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell*. It has pleased God that we, with all our emptiness would find fullness in Him. A Christian life is a Christ-centered life. The man exercised most by God will abase himself the deepest. *For I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

This was Paul's complaint and very often it is the complaint of God's people. And still it did not end there with Paul. He ended by saying, *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord*. The battle is won already and therefore:

We'll wear the victor's crown,
No more by foes assaulted,
We'll triumph through our King,
By Israel's God exalted.

Amen