

VII

The Struggle

ROMANS 7:13–25

Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. ¹⁴ For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. ¹⁵ For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. ¹⁷ So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

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? ²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

GALATIANS 5:13–15

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ¹⁴ For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁵ But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

1 CORINTHIANS 10:13

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

READ | ROMANS 7:13-25

THINK ABOUT

This is one of the most disputed passages in Romans! Who is the “I” in the verses? Is it Paul before he came to Christ? Paul after his conversion? Is it a person who is following Christ, but continually defeated by sin?

Notice Paul’s description of this person: “I am of the flesh, sold under sin” (v. 14).

“Nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh” (v. 18).

But he delights in the law of God (v. 22), and thanks God through Jesus Christ our Lord (v. 25).

There is a serious struggle between the desire to do what is right, and on the other hand, doing the evil he does not want to do (vv. 18-23).

APPLY

All of us can identify with the struggle against sin. Did you have this struggle before you came to Christ? Is this struggle that you experience now different from the struggle before coming to Christ?

This week, consider whether your walk with Christ is primarily frustrating or joyful.

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ASK

Who do you think Paul is describing? Does this struggle resonate with you as you follow Jesus Christ? Why does Paul seem so pessimistic and despairing?

Why does Paul not mention the power of the Holy Spirit? He does in chapter eight.

If sin will not have dominion over those who are following Christ (6:14), why does Paul talk about being “of the flesh, sold under sin”? (v. 14). Is this the same struggle as between the flesh and the Spirit in Galatians 5:16–26?

PRAY

Lord, I confess I sometimes do that which I don't want to do and fail to do what I know I should do.

Thank you for the victory that I have through Jesus Christ my Lord.

Help me to walk by the Spirit each day.



“You Alone Can Rescue” — *Redman*

