

“The Struggle With Self”

Part I

Key Scripture

Romans 7:14-25 (NIV)

14 We know that *the law is spiritual*, but *I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin*.

15 *I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.*

16 *And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good.*

17 *As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me.*

18 *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.* 19 *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.* 20 *Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.*

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! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.*

Introduction

Throughout our daily journey, we find ourselves praying about **OUR SITUATION**...

So, God fixes **YOUR SITUATION**, then next week, we are asking God again... Fix **MY SITUATION**...

In order to grow spiritually, we must examine the **INTERNAL STRUGGLE**, not just the **EXTERNAL SITUATION**...

While on this earth, You will have a constant **STRUGGLE WITH SELF**...

You will have a continuous **CONFLICT WITH SELF**

You will experience persistent **INNER WARFARE WITH SELF**...

You Will Struggle with a **Powerful Enemy inside you** ~

Urging you to do **the very opposite** of What God wants you to do...

This is a battle **NO ONE ELSE SEES**...

But most of us are **only concerned** with fixing what everyone around us can see

As You Mature.....The Major struggle is to live up to what **YOU KNOW IS RIGHT**

Introduction

Question: How can we be *free from sin* **AND YET** *continue to do wrong?*
Did not Christ give us Victory Over Sin?

1 Corinthians 15:55-57 (KJV)

55 O death, *where is thy sting?* O grave, *where is thy victory?*

56 The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.

57 **BUT THANKS BE TO GOD, WHICH GIVETH US THE VICTORY THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.**

In Christ, we are free from **THE PENALTY OF SIN** {Judgement}

In Christ, we are free from **THE POWER OF SIN** {Hopelessness}

BUT...While we are in the Flesh

We are not free from **THE PRESENCE OF SIN** {Temptations}

We are not free from **THE POSSIBILITY OF SIN** {Failures}

In Romans 7, Paul shares **THE TRUTH** about the Struggle That Believers Deal With....

Many People See It As **BEING HYPOCRITES**... Paul Calls It **BEING HONEST WITH SELF**

The Reality of Contrast

Romans 7:14 (NLT)

14 So the trouble is not with **THE LAW**, for **IT IS SPIRITUAL AND GOOD**.
THE TROUBLE IS WITH ME, for **I AM ALL TOO HUMAN**, A **SLAVE TO SIN**.

The Law is the Word of God

- *The Law is Spiritual*
- The Law is a **GOOD THING** because it lays down **THE RULES FOR PROPER LIVING**
 - The Law **DOES NOT SAVE OR SANCTIFY**, but it does **CONVICT OF SIN**

The Problem is Not With The Law

The Flesh is the Problem

The Flesh Is Wicked

The Flesh possesses a Worldly Appetite

This is what is called "**THE OLD NATURE**" and it is **STILL ALIVE**

From the Beginning There Is A Contrast

Psalms 51:5-6 (NIV)

5 Surely I was **sinful at birth**, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

6 Surely **you desire truth in the inner parts**; **YOU TEACH ME WISDOM** in the inmost place

The Reality of Contrast

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There is The Pull of the Flesh vs. The Power of the Spirit

Galatians 5:16-17 (ESV)

16 But I say, **WALK BY THE SPIRIT**, and **YOU WILL NOT GRATIFY THE DESIRES OF THE FLESH**.
17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh,
for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU ARE WINNING THE WAR WITH THE FLESH...

Galatians 5:19-21 (NLT)

19 When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, 21 envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these.

When You Are **AWARE** of **THIS CONTRAST** ~ You Prepare For Battle

1 Corinthians 9:27 (NASB)

27 but **I DISCIPLINE MY BODY AND MAKE IT MY SLAVE**, so that, after I have preached to others,
I myself will not be disqualified.

The Reality of Contrast

When You Are **AWARE** of **THIS CONTRAST** ~ *You Prepare For Battle*

Psalms 119:11 (NIV)

11 I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

Matthew 4:1-4 (NKJV)

*1 Then Jesus was **LED UP BY THE SPIRIT** into the wilderness **TO BE TEMPTED BY THE DEVIL**.*

2 And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry.

*3 Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." 4 But He answered and said, "**IT IS WRITTEN**, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.' "*

Hebrews 4:15-16 (NKJV)

*15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize **with our weaknesses**, but was in all points **tempted as we are, yet without sin**. 16 Let us, therefore, come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

*Matthew 26:41 ~ **WATCH AND PRAY** that you may not **enter into temptation**.*

The Reality of Conflict

Romans 7:15-16 (NLT)

15 *I don't really understand myself, FOR I WANT TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT, BUT I DON'T DO IT. Instead, I do what I hate.* 16 *But if I KNOW that what I am doing is wrong, this shows that I agree that the law is good.*

The Desire vs. The Doing

As believers, we have THE DESIRE to do the RIGHT THING

We have the desire to live right

We have the desire to do the right thing

We have the desire to think the right thoughts....

But WE DON'T....

We have THE DESIRE BUT LACK THE DISCIPLINE!!!

We are FRUSTRATED that we do not LIVE UP TO GOD'S STANDARDS

You Can KNOW the right thing to do and still do the wrong thing...

The Reality of Conflict

Romans 7:17, 20 (NLT)

17 So *I am not the one doing wrong*; *IT IS SIN LIVING IN ME THAT DOES IT.*

20 But if I do what I don't want to do, *I am not really the one doing wrong*;
IT IS SIN LIVING IN ME THAT DOES IT.

Identify The Source of the Conflict

INDWELLING SIN

Now..... SIN is a Constant Companion

In the Beginning, we were created in the PERFECT IMAGE OF GOD....

Then Man Fell In The Garden.... CONFLICT Between THE WORD and THEIR DESIRE

Genesis 6:5 (NKJV)

5 Then the Lord saw that *the wickedness of man* was great in the earth and
that *every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil CONTINUALLY.*

The Reality of Confession

Romans 7:18 (NLT)

18 And *I know* that *nothing good lives in me*, that is, *in my sinful nature*.
I want to do what is right, BUT I CAN'T.

There is a **CONFESSION OF OUR CORRUPTION**
There is nothing good in our flesh...

Philippians 3:3 (NIV)

3 For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who **PUT NO CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH--**

I CAN'T DO WHAT IS RIGHT!!!

This does not mean that **WE DON'T TRY....**

It means that we must **CONTINUOUSLY DEPEND ON HIM!!!**

The Reality of the Challenge

Romans 7:18-19 (NLT)

18I want to do what is right, *but I can't*. 19 I want to do what is good, *but I don't*.
I don't want to do what is wrong, *but I do it anyway...*

Every Good Word, Deed, Motive, and Thought IS CHALLENGED BY EVIL...
THERE IS ALWAYS THE TEMPTATION TO DO EVIL

Matthew 26:41 ~ The Spirit is Willing But the Flesh is weak

Paul says that we can have *THE PURPOSE AND PASSION* to do right...
But not have THE POWER to do it...

John 15:5 (NIV)

5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit;
APART FROM ME, YOU CAN DO NOTHING.

Paul has *THE APPETITE FOR HOLINESS*, but *LACKS THE ABILITY TO DO RIGHT...*

The Reality of the Challenge

Romans 7:21 (NIV)

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

Paul never states that these POWERS ARE EQUAL... THEY ARE BOTH PRESENT

We must be aware that evil is ALWAYS PRESENT!!!

James 1:14-15 (NLT)

14 Temptation comes from *our own desires*, which *entice us and drag us away*.

15 *These desires give birth to SINFUL ACTIONS.*

And when sin is *allowed to grow*, it gives *birth to death*.

We place ourselves *in situations* or *fill our minds* with lustful passions, and that *leads us into sin*.

We Must Have *AN ANCHOR* To Keep Us From Drifting.....

THE WORD OF GOD....

The Reality of the Conquering

Romans 7:24-25 (NLT)

24 Oh, *what a miserable person I am!* Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? 25 **THANK GOD! THE ANSWER IS IN JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.** So you see how it is: In my mind, I really want to obey God's law, but *because of my sinful nature*, I am a slave to sin.

It is only when we realize **OUR HELPLESSNESS**, that we will receive God's Help
In our own strength, we are unable to live a victorious life

True Freedom Comes Through Jesus Christ

Philippians 4:13 (NKJV)

13 I can do all things **THROUGH CHRIST** who strengthens me.

We don't need **SOMETHING** to get us through the conflict

We need **SOMEONE** to get us through the conflict

Jude 1:24 (NKJV)

24 Now **TO HIM** who is able to keep you from stumbling,
And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,

In Conclusion

The Reality of Contrast

The Reality of Conflict

The Reality of Confession

The Reality of the Challenge

The Reality of the Conquering