

Grow Somewhere

Failing Forward

Craig Smith • January 14, 2018

The struggle of forbidden fruit: God says “Don’t” but I say “Do” ...

Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, “Do not covet.” But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire...I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. (Rom. 7:7-10)

- **My reality: I keep failing with God** – “I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good.” (Rom. 7:15-16)

🕯 **My identity: this failure doesn’t touch my peace** – I’m not **guilty** – “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.” (Rom. 5:1-2)

- **My reality: the devil didn’t make me do it** – “As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. 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. 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.” (Rom. 7:17-19)

🕯 **My identity: this repeated struggle is a sign of life** – I’m not **stuck** – “In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.” (Rom. 6:11)

- **My reality: every day I’m at war** – “When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God’s law; 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.” (Rom. 7:21-23)

🕯 **My identity: this war will end in victory** – I’m not **defeated** – “What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God – through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Rom. 7:24-25a)

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. (Rom. 7:25b)

Am I growing somewhere?

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.
(2 Cor. 3:17-18)