

CCLEB SERMON NOTES



SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 20, 2026
ROMANS 7:14-25

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THE WAR WITHIN



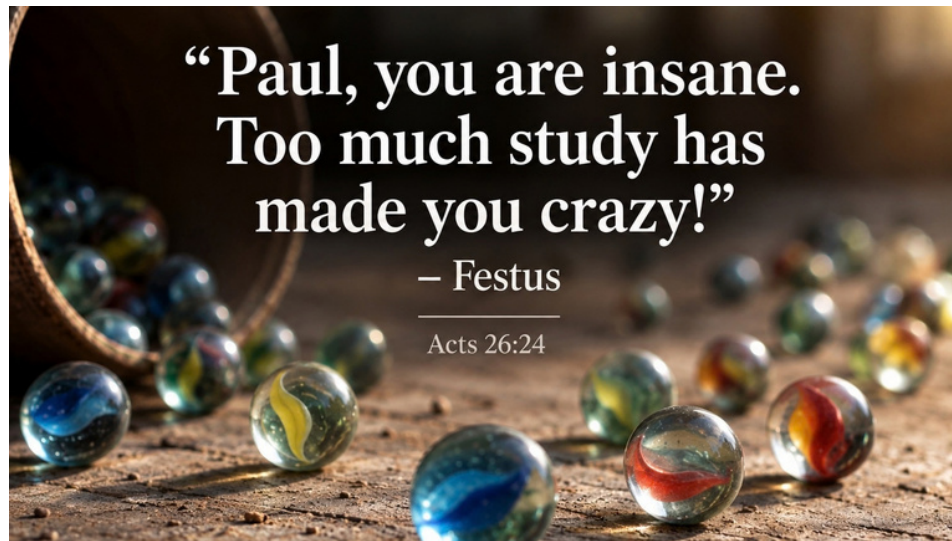
Last week Duane ended his sermon, before the very memorable fruit of the spirit song, by telling us that Paul had a few more things to address about the law and sin after **Romans 7:6** and before he can launch into a full description of life in the Spirit in **chapter 8**. Duane did the law part; this week we look at the sin part.

Romans 7:14-25

We pick up Paul's train of thought mid-argument. He's made the case in **chapter 5** that we are justified by faith, that we have peace with God through Jesus Christ, and that we stand in unmerited grace. In **chapter 6**, he further pointed out that sin no longer has control over us – we have moved our citizenship from the dominion of sin to the rule of the Holy Spirit. All of this is built on the foundation of Jesus Christ and what he accomplished on the cross. **Romans 7:6a** and **Romans 7:11**. In **chapter 7**, Paul turns to the law. First, we died to the power of the law. But before that, while we were under the law, sin used the law to kill us spiritually.

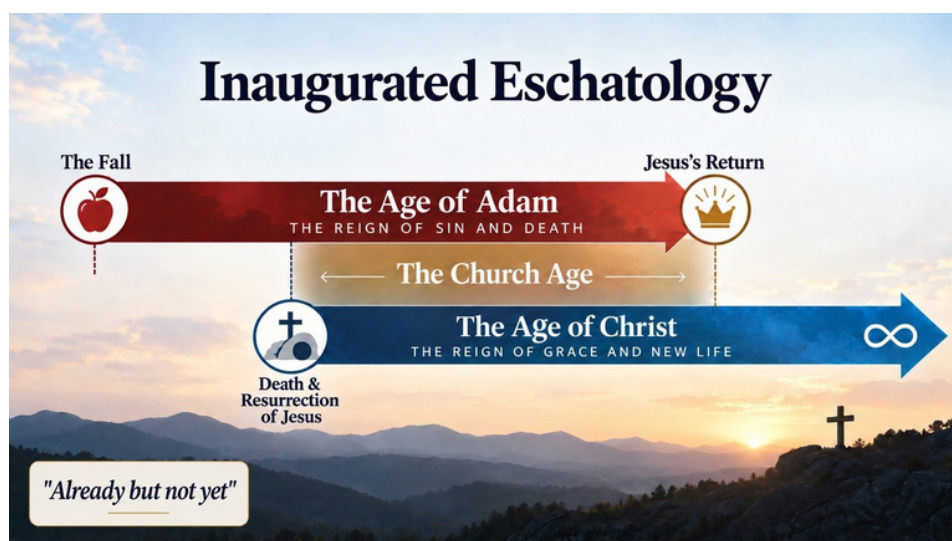
We pick up then, in **verse 14**.

Immediately the skeptical mind (and I have one) finds an objection: A slave to sin? This appears to contradict what Paul just said in **Romans 6:7** and **Romans 6:14**. Indeed, he told me that my old self was crucified, dead, and buried with Jesus and **Romans 6:18**. How then can he go on to say in **verse 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." when he JUST said in the last chapter (**Romans 6:22**) that I am free from the power of sin and have become a slave to God. Now I do those things that lead to holiness and result in eternal life. Why does he say (**verse 15b-16a**) that I do what I hate and I know that what I am doing is wrong??



Has Paul lost his marbles?!? Perhaps Festus was right and Paul is insane – too much study has made him crazy!

I can assure you Paul is not insane. What he is telling us is true and reasonable. Paul is acknowledging the reality of life in a time when the age of Adam overlaps with the age of Christ.



“Inaugurated Eschatology” is a very helpful concept to consider when looking at apparent contradictions in the Bible, especially those after Jesus in the New Testament.

Inaugurated means “begun, launched, or officially started”. We use the word inauguration for someone beginning an office.

Eschatology comes from Greek and is the study about the last things – the resurrection of the dead, judgment, heaven, the new creation, etc.

The idea is that the end times began at the time of Jesus’s resurrection. They are not merely promised to begin soon, as is the case with a politician after election night, but genuinely started, as is the case with a president at his inauguration. Something has genuinely begun, even though everything associated with it has not yet happened.

I want you to have the formal term if you want to research it, but an easier to remember name is “already but not yet”. Let’s take a moment and look at a few scriptural examples of this concept.

The first example is from the next chapter in Romans. Compare **Romans 8:15** “you received God’s Spirit when he adopted you as his own children.” Adopted. Past tense – already happened. Yet **Romans 8:23** “We wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children.” We are waiting... not yet.

Here's another one from Paul: **Ephesians 2:8** "God saved you by his grace when you believed." God saved you. Past tense – you are already saved. But **Ephesians 4:30** "Remember, he has identified you as his own, guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption." That's a coming day... so not yet.

One more? **Ephesians 2:6** "For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus." Already done. But **Colossians. 3:4** "And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory." Not yet. **1 John 3:2** handles the same subject and does "already but not yet" in one verse: "Dear friends, we are already God's children, but he has not yet shown us what we will be like when Christ appears. But we do know that we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is."

I don't have time to go into the implications of what each of these mean, but I wanted you to see that it is a biblical pattern that repeats frequently. Already but not yet.



Note the yellow/orange region in this diagram. This is the age of Christ's church – where you and I live. Yes, we will each go on to live in the eternal life Jesus bought, but before his return the ages of Adam and Christ overlap. Even though we live in the newness of life purchased by his blood on the cross, the age of Adam is still ongoing. Sin, death, and law are still active in our world. We haven't yet physically died. Death is still a reality in our future, and sin is still a reality in our daily lives.

"Already but not yet" is what Paul is doing in **Romans chapters 6 and 7**. My old self is dead and buried (**Romans 6:4**), but I still live with a sinful nature, and sin still tries to pull me back toward the old age. Indeed, I can ALREADY live a new life (**Romans 7:15b**) but NOT YET because keep doing the very thing I don't want to do. Thus I am admonished (**Romans 6:11**) – by faith – to COUNT myself dead to sin, even while sin keeps pressing the claims of the old age in this in-between era.



When I became a Christian at age 6, I died. When I was baptized 5 or 6 years later, it symbolized my death, burial, resurrection, and new life with Christ in public for all to see.

Romans 6:4. At Calvary Chapel Lebanon we recognize baptism as an outward sign of an inward change. That inward change is that the old self died, and I am a changed person by the power of the Holy Spirit. When we go under the water in baptism, we symbolize that the old self is being buried. And when we rise out of the water, we remember we have risen to new life. The old man is dead and buried; the new man has risen to newness of life in Christ.

The moment I trusted Christ, I was set free from sin (**Romans 6:7 and 7:4**) and released from the law's authority. Yet it is important to note who died – my old self, not sin and not the law. Sin is still active in this present age, and God's law is still good, even though I am no longer under its authority.

1 Corinthians 15:50-57. Note particularly the tense of **verse 57** – it's not "he gave" or "he will give" but "he gives." We will come back to this thought at the end of the teaching.



So there is this window of time where both are happening simultaneously. I am dead because I died with Christ, but I am still alive physically because I haven't yet died. Sin is no longer my master, but it's still a very present reality in my life. Already... but not yet.

Think of it like changing jobs. When I was a computer programmer, I worked in e-commerce. Is there anybody here who's worked in retail? (yes, no) What was the busiest season?

The company I worked for was an e-commerce company and made about a quarter of our annual revenue in the 6 weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas. So when that season came, pressure was intense and we were all expected to be at our desks, focused, making sure nothing went wrong. We were on call 24/7. No vacation was approved. I think they would have given us IV caffeine drips and catheters if they thought they could get away with it.

Last April I left that job and came to work for the church. What would have happened if, last Thanksgiving, my old boss had called me up and said, "Tomorrow is Black Friday. Be at your desk by 7 a.m. and make sure you're available for calls 24/7. The company is depending on you!" Imagine my response. What would I say? After years of listening to that voice, might I still find myself reacting to it? I might even find myself saying "Yes, I'll be available" before remembering, "Wait a minute – you're not my boss anymore!"

While the old voice may still be audible, it no longer has any authority. I'm free to say, "No, sir – your company no longer pays my paycheck, and I'm going shopping and Christmas-tree hunting with my family."

That's something like what Paul is describing. Sin is no longer my master.

Romans 6 is absolutely true. But I still live in this overlapping age, and the old master – sin – still shouts orders.

The problem is not that sin still owns me.

The problem is that sometimes I still listen.

My old self died with Christ on the cross. Sin is no longer my master, and I am free to say, “No, sir—you don’t pay my paycheck anymore.” And think about what Paul has already told us that paycheck is: (**Romans 6:23**) “The wages of sin is death.” Jesus took that death for me. I don’t work for the old master anymore. I belong to a new one.

Let’s resume Paul’s argument then in **verse 16**: “if I know that what I am doing is wrong, this shows that I agree that the law is good.” Recall that Paul is writing this letter to the church in Rome which is made up of a mixture of Jews and Gentiles. How would these two groups react when Paul talked about the law – by which he refers to the Torah, the law of Moses – being good?

Romans 7:13-14.

He’s stated this at least twice so far – in the final verse from last week, **verse 13** “the law, which is good” and the first verse from this week “the law is spiritual and good” Imagine with me how a Gentile Christian and a Jewish Christian might react to the statement that the law is good.

First, put yourself in the shoes (sandals?) of a Gentile believer. Your thought process might be something like “This is really weird. Before I found out about Jesus, I cared NOTHING about what the God of the Jews had to say. But now.... now I think his law is a good thing!”

And now picture yourself inside the head of a Jewish believer. Maybe his thought process is... “Before I believed in Jesus, the law always was impossibly harsh. I knew we had to obey it, but I always wanted to do the opposite. But now.... Now I think it is holy and right and good.”

And Paul is saying to both groups – to all of them “If you, as one united church under Jesus, collectively agree that the law is good, you are showing that your minds have been transformed. You no longer enjoy the wrong things you want to do; you hate them. Something has changed inside of you!” (hint – the Holy Spirit lives there)

Since I agree that the law is good, **verse 17**, the righteous demands of the law are what I should be doing and when I don’t do them, it is sin. Note that the sin lives in me. It’s not some outside force, a demon whispering in my ear. Sin lives in me. In me. Paul won’t let himself off the hook, and neither should we.

Romans 7:13b “So we can see how terrible sin really is. It uses God’s good commands for its own evil purposes.”

verse 18. Nothing good lives in me – that is in my sinful nature. Other translations use the more literal “flesh” here. I want to do what is right, but I can’t.

In **verse 19-20** Paul seems to be repeating **verses 15-17** almost word for word, cutting out the idea of agreeing that the law is good. But there is one important difference. In **verse 15** he said “I do what I hate.” But now he says “I don’t want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway.” He takes it a step further. This isn’t just something I hate, like eating cucumbers. Paul is talking about doing what he knows is wrong. God’s law is holy and right and good... and I do the other thing. This isn’t just frustrating anymore – it’s a war between good and evil, and it’s happening inside me.

And sometimes the war shows up in embarrassingly ordinary ways.



Maybe it's the phone. You climb into bed tired and think, "I need to sleep. I want to put the phone down." Five minutes later - still scrolling. Ten minutes. Twenty. And the whole time there's this ridiculous conversation happening in your head: "Put it down." Scroll. "Seriously, go to sleep." Scroll. "Why are you still doing this?" Scroll. I genuinely want one thing—and I watch myself doing the opposite.



For me it is self-discipline. Usually about food; often about exercise. I can genuinely decide before I sit down that it would be wise to cut back. Fork put-downs and plate push-aways – those are the best exercises. And then there's that voice: "Just a little more." And sometimes (lol most times) I listen. And it can sound relatively harmless, certainly less than a war between good and evil until you consider the verses about the body being the temple of the Holy Spirit. Self-control is still part of the life God is calling me to. The problem isn't that I don't know what is good. Knowing is not the same thing as having the power to do it. This begs the question: where will that power come from?

Verse 21 "I have discovered this principle of life" Let me try to demonstrate the idea of a principle of life. Pastor Thom used this example in 2012, so I apologize to any of you for whom this is a repeat. What happens if I drop this? [thud] It happens every time, right? What do we call this power? The law of gravity, yes.

The law of gravity works like the principle of life Paul outlines for us here in verse 21 "when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong." This principle of life happens every time. Just like the law of gravity, what happens when I want to do what is right? [thud] I inevitably do what is wrong. Every time.

And I don't think for Paul this is merely hypothetical. I think the same Paul – who planted churches and wrote half the New Testament – did, in the flesh, the things he didn't want to do. Just like you and me. If you want to understand how I came to that conclusion, I've put a fuller explanation of why I read the passage this way in the sermon notes.

Romans **chapter 7**, as it turns out, is all about the law. Yes, it's about sin, but the law is the main topic. **verse 22-23**. "I love God's law with all my heart. But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me." Another power - which **chapter 8** will go on to name "the power of sin that leads to death" or, if you prefer, "the law of sin and death" - is at war with my mind.

So let's do another experiment with the same bolt. This time, I need everybody to really REALLY WANT the bolt to not fall to the floor. Try to keep the bolt from falling just by wanting it not to fall. Ok? Wake up and put your MIND into it. Are you ready? [thud] If that had worked out differently, I would have to quickly change my sermon! But it didn't. Why? It's a law of nature, a principle of life, it happens that way every time.

Just like the law of gravity, [pick up the bolt] I inevitably do what is wrong - - - every single time. I am a slave to the sin that is still within me.

As Thom taught us two weeks ago, the sin living in us is too strong for us. It will beat us every time we try to defeat it. The key to understanding this section of Romans **chapter 7** is to realize that it's about a person trying to defeat sin in his or her own strength. Saved or unsaved, Jew or Gentile, self-effort is not enough. The law told us what we should or should not do to please God, but it gave no power to do or not do. So if I agree the law is good and I am going to grit my teeth and do the law today, it won't happen. I might have good days and better days, but I'll have bad days. The principle of life holds true for all - when I want to do what is right I inevitably do what is wrong.

Remember, my mind has been changed. Where before the law was harsh, obnoxious, or even meaningless to me, I now want to do the right things. This encompasses my love for the law of God - and really for everything God has revealed of himself, ultimately in Jesus Christ - and even my love for God himself. Not only do I think all of God's law is good, I genuinely WANT to do all the right things. God's Spirit produces that desire within me.

And that desire shows up in ordinary things.

When I wake up in the morning, I sincerely WANT to do the right thing, then go to bed. I want to be patient, I want to listen well.

I love my family, and I want to demonstrate my love by my words and actions and to show kindness.

But then work goes past schedule, traffic backs up, I get home late and trip over the dog - this is Cora... she's just so happy to see me! - and when my child asks me a question that I already answered 30 seconds ago (in my own mind; it's actually been 3 days...) I snap at them and am unkind.



There is a war going on. The power of sin living in me is fighting against what my mind wants and even when I fight for all I am worth [thud]

Verse 24 Oh what a miserable person – oh wretched man I am!

I talked with a young man once who was struggling with a particular sin. He would fight it, fall into it again, repent, fight again—and eventually the struggle itself started making him question everything. He said to me “It’s so bad I wonder if I am even a Christian.”

So I asked him if he still loved God? If he believed what God says is good? If he genuinely wanted to obey him?

And he answered that he did—and that was exactly why the sin bothered him so much.

Remember those Jews and Gentiles we talked about earlier? Something had changed in their minds and hearts. The Gentile who once cared nothing about God's law now said, “This is good.” The Jew who had known the law all his life but resisted it could now delight in it. Their struggle with sin had not disappeared—but their attitude toward God and his will had changed.

And that's what I wanted this young man to see. The fact that the battle was still raging did not mean nothing had happened to him. Part of the reason he was so miserable was that he now genuinely wanted what God wanted—and hated the fact that he wasn't doing it.

And I think there are Christians sitting in churches every Sunday – even here this morning – who quietly wonder the same thing. “If God really changed me, why is this war still happening inside me? Maybe I’m not really saved.”

Listen carefully to Paul’s question: “Who will free me from this life dominated by sin and death?”

By asking who will free me—not How can I be saved? or What do I have to do to escape this life dominated by sin and death?—Paul gives us a hint of what is coming in the next verse.

Verse 25a Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. It’s Jesus. That is all!

To answer the question of exactly HOW he does that is next week’s lesson, but I will give you a sneak preview.

Romans 8:1-2 “So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death.”

A new power is introduced. Let’s go back to the law of gravity. Every time I drop it, it hits the floor, right? But what if I have ... a magnet? [Thank you Phoebe for lending this to me] Suddenly things change. The law of gravity is still in full effect. It’s acting on my bolt in exactly the same way that it used to. But a new power, the force of magnetism, changes what happens to the bolt. It overrides the inevitable effect.

It is the same with you and me, brothers and sisters. On our own, there is no way we can keep from doing wrong when we want to do right. But through the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives, the inevitable changes.

Romans 8:12-13. Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live.

This is how we can truly live out the command of **Romans 6:11** “So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus.”

Through the Holy Spirit I COUNT myself to be dead. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. But I also PUT TO DEATH the deeds of my sinful nature.

There is an active cooperation here – I have the responsibility and I make the choice – but notice which comes first. The Holy Spirit supplies the power; I act in that power. His grace makes the struggle possible, and then I actually struggle. By the Spirit, I put sin to death.

We often have an incorrect interpretation and wrong response to this passage. We might be tempted to say “Failure is inevitable; I won’t worry much about it. In fact, since Paul said it’s always going to happen, I might as well not even try”

New Testament scholar Douglas Moo rejects that failure thinking, saying, “We should never regard the sins we commit with complacency. They are not supposed to be there. God HATES them, and he has given us the power to get rid of them.”



He does not expect us to be sinless; He empowers us to sin less. Let me say that again more clearly: God does not promise that you will be sinless in this life—but by his Spirit, you can sin less, and less, and less.

But there is another wrong response to **Romans 7**. We can hear all this talk about struggle and conclude, “Well, I just have to fight harder.”

That makes the opposite mistake. Both responses assume that I have to do this on my own. One says, “I’m going to fail anyway, so why bother?” The other says, “It all depends on how hard I fight.”

Both forget that there is another power at work.

Remember what Paul says in **1 Corinthians 15:57**: “Thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ.” He gives. Present tense. That victory is not simply parked at the resurrection waiting for you someday. In Christ, God has already acted, and by his Spirit he is at work in you now.

2 Peter 1:3

And Peter says something similar: God’s divine power “has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him.” Given and received. Past tense. It’s already yours.

Do you see the point? God has not saved you and then left you alone to somehow win this battle by sheer determination. There is another power at work.

You still fight. You still put sin to death. But you are no longer fighting alone, and you are no longer fighting with only your own strength.

Homework

Compare Romans 7 and 8

	I, Me, My	Spirit
Chapter 7		
Chapter 8		

Before you come back next week, I have a homework assignment that should make the difference between **chapters 7** and **8** more stark. Sometime at home, count how many times the words I, me, and my appear in **chapter 7**. Write that in the top left box. Then the same words in **chapter 8**. That's the bottom left. In the second column count how many times the spirit appears in each chapter. The answer key is in the sermon notes.

When you are done, take a moment to think about what that tells you about these two chapters.

And that brings us back to the final sentence of our passage.

Romans 7:25b "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."

There is one "me," but there are two forces at war within me. With my renewed mind, I love God and want to obey him. But sin is still at work in my flesh, pulling the other direction.

That is "already, but not yet", happening inside of me.

Sin is no longer my rightful master — remember the old boss? He can still call. He can still bark orders. And sometimes I still listen. But I don't work for him anymore.

That is the already and the not yet. Sin is still here, but it is no longer my master.

Romans 7:6b

And now Paul has shown us a new power that he hinted at: I'm not left to fight that old master in my own strength. God has given me his Spirit.

More on the power of the life giving spirit next week. You'll just have to come back next week.

BONUS

CONTENT:

Who is the “I” in **Romans 7**?

There are several major ways Christians have understood **Romans 7:14-25**.

1. Paul is describing the experience of a believer.

James Dunn argues that **Romans 7** reflects the Christian living in the overlap of the ages: the believer truly belongs to Christ and has been freed from sin’s mastery but still lives in mortal flesh and continues to experience conflict with sin. Dunn describes this as the tension of the “already–not yet.”

This interpretation also has an impressive pedigree in the evangelical church. Augustine, Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Owen, J. I. Packer, John Piper, R. C. Sproul and John MacArthur all taught from this perspective. I do not want to disagree casually with that kind of company. Of course, a long and distinguished pedigree does not by itself prove an interpretation correct, but it does remind us that reading **Romans 7:14-25** as the struggle of a regenerate believer is not an eccentric or novel position. It has been preached and defended by some of the most influential voices in the Western Protestant tradition.

2. Paul is describing himself, or Israel, under the law before Christ.

Douglas Moo argues that the language “sold under sin” and “prisoner of the law of sin” conflicts too strongly with Paul’s statements that believers have been freed from sin and from the law of sin and death. Moo therefore understands the “I” primarily as Paul speaking representatively of the Jew under the law.

3. Paul is portraying humanity “in Adam.”

Ben Witherington argues that Paul is using rhetorical impersonation. In his reading, Adam is especially in view in **Romans 7:7-13**, while **Romans 7:14-25** represents those who remain “in Adam.”

My reading in this sermon follows the first approach. I understand Paul to be describing the very real conflict experienced by a believer who has genuinely entered the new age in Christ but still lives in the overlap of the old and new ages.

In discussions about this issue with Pastor Duane, we both agreed that Paul’s use of the first-person pronouns in the present tense throughout this passage makes it hard to read somebody else or some other time into **Romans 7:14-25**. In ancient Greek the present tense first person meant the same thing it does to us today – that which is happening to me in the current time. Even though there are occasional uses of first person or present tense in rhetoric to mean something else, Paul tells his reader in advance what he is doing when he uses that type of rhetoric.

Romans 7:25b is particularly important to me: after thanking God through Jesus Christ, Paul still speaks in the present tense of serving God’s law with his mind while experiencing the pull of sin in the flesh. He uses an emphatic Greek construct “I, myself” to draw attention to himself. We’ll see another example of this in **Romans 9:3** when Paul wishes that he could take the place of his people.

At the same time, the other interpretations are serious attempts to account for the language of the passage. Even Moo, who does not think **Romans 7:14-25** describes the normal Christian experience, explicitly affirms that Christians continue to struggle with sin, pointing especially to **Galatians 5:17**. “The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions.”

BONUS

CONTENT:

“Flesh,” “sinful nature,” and the old self

Romans 7:18 in the NLT says, “nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature.” Other translations render the underlying Greek word more literally as “flesh.”

It is important not to confuse Paul’s language about the “flesh” with his teaching about the “old self.” In **Romans 6**, the old self is described as crucified with Christ. That old identity under the rule of sin has been decisively dealt with. The Christian should therefore not think of the “old self” as a second person still alive inside him or her.

At the same time, the believer still lives in mortal flesh and remains exposed to sin’s influence. Dunn describes the Christian as genuinely belonging to the new age while still participating, bodily, in the present age where sin and death continue to operate. The believer’s “inner person” may delight in God’s will, while the flesh remains the sphere in which sin exerts its pull.

That is why the sermon distinguishes between the two ideas: the old self has died with Christ, but the believer still lives with the reality of the flesh, or what the NLT calls the “sinful nature.” Sin is no longer the believer’s rightful master, but its influence has not yet disappeared. This is another expression of the “already—not yet” tension that runs through **Romans 6–8**.

The use of nomos (“law”) in Romans 7–8

The Greek word nomos occurs repeatedly in **Romans 7**—Dunn notes that it appears 23 times in that chapter alone. Usually in Romans, nomos refers to the Torah, the law of Moses, and Dunn says that in **Romans 7:7–12** the shifts between nomos and ho nomos do not change the reference: Paul is still speaking of “the holy law” of Moses.

However, Paul can also use nomos in a broader sense of an order, principle, or operative power. Dunn identifies **Romans 7:21**, **7:23**, and **8:2** as places where this broader sense is especially important. In 7:23 Paul speaks of “another nomos” at work in his members, and in **Romans 8:2** he speaks of “the nomos of the Spirit of life” and “the nomos of sin and death.” Here nomos is not simply “the Mosaic law” but something more like a governing principle or power at work.

That makes **Romans 8:2** especially significant for the flow of the argument. The “law” or power of sin and death that dominates **Romans 7** is met by another nomos—“the law of the Spirit of life.” Paul’s point is not that God’s law was bad; in **Romans 7** he repeatedly calls it good, holy, and spiritual. The problem is that sin exploits the law, while the Spirit introduces a new power that frees the believer from the rule of sin and death.

Homework Answer Key		
Compare Romans 7 and 8 (NLT)		
	I, Me, My	Spirit
Chapter 7	54	1
Chapter 8	1	20

Note: If you also count lowercase 'spirit' in Romans 8:15–16, the chapter 8 total becomes 22.

Romans 7 is dominated by 'I, me, my';
Romans 8 is dominated by the Spirit.

BONUS

CONTENT:

Translation check

The contrast remains striking in every translation, but the exact numbers vary:

Translation	Rom 7: I/me/my	Rom 7: Spirit	Rom 8: I/me/my	Rom 8: Spirit
NLT	54	1	1	20
ESV	51	1	2	20
NIV	53	1	2	21
KJV	50	0*	3	19

*The KJV has “newness of spirit” in **Romans 7:6**, lowercase, whereas NLT/ESV/NIV capitalize it as Spirit. So semantically there is still one Spirit reference there.

The **Romans 8** first-person difference is particularly easy to explain. ESV and NIV retain “I consider...” in **Romans 8:18** and “I am...” in **Romans 8:38**, so they have two. NLT changes **Romans 8:18** to “what we suffer now...”, leaving only **verse 38**. KJV additionally has “hath made me free” in **Romans 8:2**, reflecting its textual tradition, giving it three.

The Spirit count differs because English translations sometimes repeat the noun where Greek can use an implied pronoun, and because they differ on whether a particular pneuma is rendered/capitalized as the Holy Spirit. This is why commentators working from Greek normally say πνεῦμα occurs 21 times in **Romans 8**. Moo explicitly gives 21; Cranfield likewise gives 21. English ESV/NLT actually print spirit/Spirit 22 times if capitalization is ignored.

Sources

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