

THE BELIEVER'S BATTLE

ROMANS 7:14-25

Tonight, our internal—and very personal—struggle with our sin nature!

- As we read these 12 verses, we are confronted with 37 personal pronouns: “I” (26), “Me” (7), and “My” (4). Who do you think he is talking about?
- Remember, the guy writing this is the great Apostle Paul—very saved and very committed to Christ.

YOU AND I ARE HIS SPIRITUAL KIN!

CAN WE SAY FOR SURE WHO THIS IS?

For almost 2,000 years, interpreters have disagreed as to whether the person described here is a Christian or a non-Christian.

WHOLE DENOMINATIONS HAVE ARISEN TO PROMOTE ONE OF TWO VIEWS:

- One side maintains that the person is too much in bondage to sin to be a believer.
- The other side maintains that the person has too much love for the things of God and too much hatred of sin to be an unbeliever.

Let's see what the passage actually says. 😊

THIS MUST BE A BELIEVER

- Some interpreters believe that **CHAPTER 7** describes the carnal Christian who is living on a very low level of spirituality.
- Others suggest that this person is a frustrated, legalistic Christian who attempts in his own power to please God by trying to live up to the Mosaic law.
- ***ACTUALLY, PAUL IS DESCRIBING MATURE CHRISTIANS,*** who honestly measure themselves against God's righteousness and realize how much they fall short.

THE MARKS OF MATURITY

The level of spiritual insight, brokenness, contrition, and humility in the person depicted in **ROMANS 7** are of a spiritual and mature believer, who has no trust in his own goodness and achievements.

- It also seems clear from the use of the first person singular pronouns (**WHICH APPEAR FORTY-SIX TIMES IN ROM. 7:7-25**), ***THIS IS PAUL HIMSELF.***
- Only a mature Christian would even be concerned about such deep struggles of heart, mind, and conscience.

THE FIRST BATTLE v. 14-17

OUR GENERAL CONDITION:

- He begins by again affirming that the law is not the problem, because it is spiritual; the issue is our flesh.
- *“I am still earthbound and mortal.”* It is important to note that the apostle does not say he is still **IN** the flesh but that he is still **OF** it.
- Our unredeemed humanness is still sinful and consequently makes warfare against the new and redeemed part of us.

YOU AND I STILL GOT A BIT OF DIRT ON US AND IN US!

THE SECOND BATTLE v. 18-20

This is not to say that we actually have a split personality, ***BECAUSE WE DO NOT***. Salvation makes us whole.

- But we do have a kind of bi-polar spiritual leadership at times; the believer has two serious problems.

The statements here indicate that battle:

1. He cannot do the good he wants to do 100%.
2. He does the evil that he does not want to do at times.

***NO MATTER WHAT HE DID, HIS DEEDS
WERE TAINTED BY SIN.***

THE THIRD BATTLE v. 21-23

The third lament is very much like the first two, both in substance and in order.

- The problem is the internal sin nature that ***IS BEING PUT TO DEATH ON A DAILY BASIS***, but it's not quite dead yet!
- Mentally, we understand what we are supposed to do and be, but the battle rages for the control of our minds so that we actually do what we are supposed to be doing. We need to be doers not just hearers! **JAMES 1:22**

THERE IS A WAR FOR LEADERSHIP EVERY DAY!

THE FOURTH BATTLE v. 24-25

PAUL'S FINAL LAMENT IS THE MOST INTENSE.

He cries out in utter anguish and frustration, *“Wretched man that I am!”*

- How wretched can you get? Pretty wretched. Downright evil occasionally, kind of vile and despicable every once in a blue moon for sure.
- Will you struggle at times? YEP—no doubt about it!

The grace news is: ***ONE DAY, HEAVEN—BATTLE OVER!***