**Romans 7:1-25 – Overcoming The Struggles Within Us**

**\*\* As we begin:**

* We probably have all said or done something that we wish we had not. As believers, we still have sin dwelling in our bodies though we have victory over it through Christ **(Rom. 6)**.
* **Romans 7** is interpreted in various ways. Some believe Paul is speaking about the time before he became a Christian. Some think he is speaking as a Christ follower. See **Rom. 7:14; Rom. 7:22**.
* Still others believe Paul is speaking to Jews who are trying to keep the law to be right with God.
* Another way that some look at this is that Paul is speaking about life before he became a Christian and then when he came to faith in Christ. The conclusions of **Rom. 7** are what matters most.

**Overcoming The Struggles**

**The law shows us our need for God – vss. 1-13**

* The law, or things we try to do, cannot make us right with God. The word “binding” **(vs. 1)** means “to rule over, exercise influence.”
* We belong to Christ **(vs. 4)** and the evidence of that is seen in how we live, how we treat others, and whether we are showing the fruit of the Spirit **(Gal. 5:22-23)**.
* **Vs. 6** tells us we have been “released” (discharged, separated) from the law, or our manmade attempts to please God.
* God’s law can show us our desperate need for God. That is the thinking behind **vss. 7-13**. The law, found in God’s Word, shows us how sinful we are and our need for God to intervene in our life.
* People in the Old Testament became followers of God through faith in Him.
* **Vs. 13** tells us that sin is the issue, not the Word of God.

**How to overcome the struggle within – vss. 14-25**

**A) There is a conflict in every believer – vss. 14-16**

* Note **vs. 14** the word “flesh” is descriptive of the part of us where sin still dwells, even in believers.
* Sin does not leave us when we become saved. We are new in Christ **(2 Cor. 5:17)**. See also **Rom. 6:6**.
* We are fundamentally changed on the inside. We are a new creation in Christ. Our nature is changed.
* The word “nature” (not in the text here but a Biblical concept) describes who we are in our deepest personhood. Our thoughts, conscience, decisions. Our nature was made new when we became a Christ follower but we still have a battle with the “flesh” (the sin within us). See **Gal. 5:16-25**.
* The phrase “sold under sin” **(vs. 14)** may seem to indicate Paul was not a Christian. The word “sold” is in the passive voice. Something else was working on him to lead him to sin. It is called the “flesh.”
* The person who “sells themselves to sin”, we could say, by choice, is not a believer **(1 John 3)**.
* Only a Christian can state what Paul says in **vs. 15**. He “hate” shows the change in his life.
* **Point:** In **vss. 14-25** Paul is talking about his growth as a follower of Jesus.

**B) We must understand the root problem and face it head on. – vss. 17-20**

* We are responsible when we sin and it can be discouraging.
* The use of “I”, for example, in **vs. 17**, is not Paul excusing himself from sinning. **Vs. 17** is tied to **vs. 22**.
* He is a new person as we are also, and our inner person delights in God’s Word as that “inner person.
* He recognizes that there is a battle, but he is not two different people. We are a new creation, but sin still clings to us **(vs. 17)**. As a new creation, we long for God. The conflict between flesh and Spirit is still there.
* We, like Paul, want to do right, but we fail and get frustrated **(vs. 18)**. The word “desire” (resolve, will, determination”) is seen in **vs. 18**. We are pulled in a direction to honor God. See also **vss. 19-20**.

**C) We must accept, believe, and act on what we have in Christ – vss. 21-25**

* **Vss. 21-25** are a breath of fresh air for Paul. In **vs. 21** the idea of “law” is not the OT Law. It describe something we have come to know as a fact because we have seen and experienced it.
* A believer who is growing in Christ will be more sensitive to sin, and will look to God to help them deal with it **(Rom. 6)**.
* **Vs. 22** can only be spoken by a Christian. The idea of “delighting” in God’s Word is something is continuous. It is our inner person, made new in Christ, that desires to know God.
* **Vs. 23** is Paul’s recognition of the spiritual conflict we all go through. We do have a choice regarding whether we sin or not **(Rom. 6:13)**.
* In **vs. 24** Paul asks a question of who will deliver him from the “wretched” (miserable, afflicted, enduring troubles) battle against sin. As long as we are in this body we need Christ.
* **Vs. 25** is Paul’s victory cry. Do not overlook this key verse. It is through Jesus Christ our Lord that we have victory over sin.
* The “myself” of **vs. 25** has to do with the new person we are in Christ. We desire to know God and to follow Him. **Rom. 7:14-25** is not the “normal Christian life.” That is found in **Rom. 6**.
* **Rom. 7** shows Paul’s, and anyone’s challenge, of dealing with sin as is explained in **Rom. 6 and 8**.