

The War Inside Every Believer

Scripture: [Romans 7:13-25](#)

Big Idea:

We have a new Spirit that wants to follow Jesus, but our sinful flesh fights against us!

Call to Action:

What can you do when you feel the “battle” inside to do wrong?

Family Action:

Help your child to understand that sin in all of us is real, and our weapon is feeding our Spirit: by the word of God, worshiping, and talking with others.

Exposure to Exposition & Exploring the Scriptures: (15-20 mins)

- Bible Drills (Memorization of OT & NT Book order)
- Guide the children to [Romans 7:13-25](#) in the Bible. (Help them as needed, NT vs OT)
- Say: We are going to continue through Paul's letter to the church of Rome.
- We will learn that the gospel is God's power to save everyone who believes, and we should never be ashamed of Jesus.
- Read aloud. (Ask kids to start their pointer fingers on V13 and follow along)

Review:

vv. 4:1-12 Old Testament Proof for being saved by faith (Abraham's Faith)

vv. 4:13-25 God's promises come by faith, not by works. More Proof from Abraham's life.

vv. 5:1-11 Because of Jesus, I'm made right with God. Praise God!

vv. 5:12-21 Sin came through Adam, Life came through Jesus

vv. 6:1-14 The old self is dead, buried, and raised to new life through Christ!

vv. 6:15-23 Once a slave to sin, now a slave to righteousness!

vv. 7:1-13 God's Law is good—our sinful nature is the problem.

vv. 7:13-25 The war of the Flesh!

Opening Question

Have you ever turned on a light and suddenly noticed all the dust or mess in a room that you didn't see before?" → The light didn't make the mess—it showed it. → That's exactly what God's Law does with our sin.

Notes:

Chapter 6 addressed how that salvation changed our spirit for the better.

Chapter 7 explained why, despite our perfection in Christ, we still experience sin in our body.

Last week, Paul summarized his explanation of the law in v.12: *But still, the law itself is holy, and its*

commands are holy and right and good.

- The law is holy, and its instructions to us are holy and righteous and good.
- The problem isn't the Law itself; the problem is how our sinful flesh responds to God and His law.

Consequence of having our flesh body still as a believer: In coming to Christ, you have died to the law (setting you free from a covenant- like marriage), But clearly we still struggle with sin. WHY?

For Gentiles: Never under the law, but likewise, you have died with Christ, putting to death the old YOU, the spirit in you.

All believers, Jew and Gentile, are made new, born again, and have the perfect Spirit of Christ.

[ROMANS 7:13-25 NLT](#)

But how can that be? Did the law, which is good, cause my death? Of course not! Sin used what was good to bring about my condemnation to death. So we can see how terrible sin really is. It uses God's good commands for its own evil purposes.

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. 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. 17 So I am not the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it.

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. 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.

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.

21 I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. 22 I love God's law with all my heart. 23 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. 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.

Notes: More consequences of having our fleshly body still as a believer.

- V13-14 God's Law is good, but my sinful flesh fights against it.
 - The Law is good and comes from God. The Law is not the problem!
 - The problem is our sinful flesh—the part of us that still wants to sin.

- The Law helps us see our sin; it doesn't create the sin.
- God's Law is spiritual and perfect—but we still live in sinful, human bodies. (Person- flesh)
- This creates a constant war between:
 - Christ's perfect spirit in us
 - Adam's sinful flesh still attached to our body
- **Kid Point:** The Law shows us God's perfection and gives sin a name. I am made new in my Spirit but still have a sinful body (flesh).

[ROMANS 7:15-18](#) 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. [17](#) So I am not the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. [18](#) And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature.[d] I want to do what is right, but I can't.

- V15-18 Sin is real in the believer! But not what we want to do!
 - Paul says in v.15 that sometimes he does things he doesn't understand—he messes up even when he doesn't want to.
 - We all know that feeling—when we mess up and think, “Why did I do that?”
 - When we do something wrong and feel bad about it, that shows our heart agrees with God—His Word is right and good.
 - Before we were saved, we didn't care that we sinned... but now our new heart does care.
 - Paul explains that the real me—the spirit Jesus made new—doesn't want to sin.
 - But sin still lives in our flesh (our physical body), and that's where the wrong desires come from.
 - Our spirit wants to obey God, but our flesh pushes us toward sin.
 - Wanting to do what's right is inside us... but actually doing it is hard because our body resists.
 - **Kid Point:** Our spirit wants to obey God, but our flesh pushes us toward sin.

[ROMANS 7:19-20](#) 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. [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.

- V19-20 The War inside every believer!
 - Paul says, “I want to do what's good... but I sometimes do the wrong thing instead.”
 - Every Christian feels this same battle—wanting to obey God but falling into sin.
 - This shows we have two parts inside us:
 - Our spirit, which loves God and wants to obey Him.

- Our flesh, which pulls us toward sin.
- When we sin, it doesn't mean we aren't saved—it means our flesh won that moment.
- Paul repeats the truth: Your spirit is not trying to sin—your flesh is!
- This helps us understand why Christians still struggle, even after Jesus saves us.
 - *Two wills live in the same person: The War!*
 - One wants what God wants. (Spirit)
 - One wants what sin wants. (Flesh)
- **Kid Point:** Spirit vs Flesh. Who will you listen to?

[ROMANS 7:21-25](#) I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. [22](#) I love God's law with all my heart. [23](#) 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. [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.

- V21-25 Two Forces Live Inside Every Christian
 - Paul says he wants to do good, because his new spirit loves God. v21
 - But he notices something: evil is still inside his body, trying to pull him the wrong way. vv22-23
 - Those wrong desires are not his true self — they're from the sinful flesh we still live in.
 - Our perfect Spirit loves God's ways
 - Our Body Has a Different Law — the Law of Sin. v23
 - Paul says there is a “different law” inside his body, always trying to fight his spirit. It's like a foreign enemy — something actively trying to pull us into sin.
 - This creates a real war inside us
 - Paul feels like a “prisoner” sometimes because he cannot completely escape his sinful flesh until he gets a new body in the resurrection.
 - We are not hopeless:
 - Inside us, we already have the mind of Christ, the Holy Spirit, and God's Word.
 - We have everything we need to fight sin.
 - The stronger our spiritual life grows, the more we can say “no” to sin and “yes” to God.
 - **Kid Point:** Spirit vs Flesh. We are free in Christ. We have everything we need to fight sin!

Observation Questions (What did it say?)

1. What does Paul say the Law is — good or bad? (The Law is holy, righteous, and good (v.12-13))
2. Where does Paul say sin lives? (Sin lives in the “members” of his body — his flesh (v.17-18, 23))
3. Does Paul say he always does the good he wants to do? (No — he often does the opposite (v.15,19))

Understanding Questions (What does it mean?)

1. If the Law is good, what's the problem? Why is there still sin? (Because the problem is not the Law, but the sin living in his flesh (v.14-17))
2. Why does Paul feel like there is a “war” inside him? (His new spirit wants to obey God, but his sinful flesh fights against it (v.22-23))
3. What does this passage teach us about Christians and sin? (That even believers still struggle with sin, even Paul — but that struggle proves God has made us new inside (v.22))

Application Questions (What should I do?)

1. When you feel tempted, what should you remember about where sin comes from? (It doesn't come from my new spirit — it comes from my flesh, so I don't have to obey it (v.17-23))
2. What can you do when you feel the “battle” inside to do wrong? (Ask the Holy Spirit to help, choose what honors God, and follow His Word (v.22))
3. How does knowing Jesus rescued you help you fight sin today? (It reminds me that I'm not fighting alone — Jesus already won the war, and He helps me win daily battles (v.24-25))

Activities

1: Game**The Tug-of-War Inside Me!****Supplies Needed:**

- A long piece of rope (or jump rope)
- Tape or chalk to mark a center line on the ground
- Two signs (paper plates or cards):
- One labeled “Spirit – Wants to Do Good”
- One labeled “Flesh – Wants to Sin”
- Two volunteers (or two teams of kids)

Tell the kids: “Inside every Christian, there are two voices: Your Spirit (that loves God) and Your Flesh (that wants to sin). Paul says they are at war inside us!”

Read [Romans 7:21–23](#) aloud.

Directions - Round 1:

- Set Up the Tug-of-War
- Put the rope on the center line.
- Give one volunteer the “Spirit” sign and the other the “Flesh” sign.
- Let the kids tug while everyone watches.
(Keep it short so no one gets hurt!)
- After 10–15 seconds, call “STOP!”

“This tug-of-war happens inside every believer.

But there’s GOOD NEWS — the Holy Spirit helps us pull on the RIGHT side!”

Directions Round 2: Strengthening the Spirit

- Now add helpers to the Spirit’s side.
- Ask: “What things help your spirit grow stronger?”
- Kids answer: Reading the Bible, Praying, Listening to God, Obeying God, Being with other believers, Worshiping
- Every time a child names one, add another helper to the Spirit’s side of the rope.
- Do the tug-of-war again — Spirit wins easily.
- Tell them: “When we feed our spirit with God’s Word and prayer, we get stronger and can resist sin.
- We can’t stop the war, but we CAN choose which side we help!”

2: Memory Verse

Come up with moves

[Romans 6:23](#) *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.*

3: Discussion

For Older Youth students, see separate printable handout.

Remind them: What is the Gospel?

Jesus' perfect life paid for the sins of all who believe. Jesus died on the cross as the punishment for sin. But Jesus did not stay dead, three days later He rose to life (resurrection) defeating the power of death. Believe, and you will be saved!

- We are all sinful. We all deserve the consequence of sin- death.
- Jesus is what saves us from the sin we all have in our bodies. And one day, he'll even give us a new body.

Supporting Truths Kids Can Grasp:

- My spirit wants to obey God. ([Romans 7:22](#))
- My flesh still pulls me toward sin. ([Romans 7:23](#))
- It's normal to feel the battle inside. ([Romans 7:21](#))
- Sin doesn't come from my spirit; it comes from my flesh. ([Romans 7:17-18](#))
- Jesus gives me the power to fight sin. ([Romans 7:24-25](#))