

- II. **Romans 7:15-25:** Paul now pictures **the strife of the two natures**, in **the life of the believer**, from **his own personal experience**.
- A. This passage relates the experience of **the saved person** trying **in their own strength** to please & obey God, failing miserably and crying out to God for the answer.
1. It was no doubt **this experience** & the subsequent **crying out to God** (vs 24) **that led to the revelation** of how to walk with God in victory (*as recorded in Rom 8*).
 2. Hard tribulation + deep supplication = (*leads to*) spiritual revelation
 - a. Tribulation + Supplication = Revelation
- B. Rom 7:15 **For** (*because I am carnal, sold under sin*) that which I do I allow (*know, understand*) not: for what I would (*want to do*), that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. [*I do not understand why I don't do what intend to do; and I (instead find myself) do (ing) what I hate*]
1. **Allow not = (Gr) know not or understand not:**
 - a. The strife between the two natures is often **very confusing** to the sincere believer.
 2. **Would** = to intend, purpose, resolve, determine; to desire, wish.
 - a. This then makes known that in order to obey God there must be...
 - 1). **A desire in the heart** to obey
 - 2). **A determined will** to obey
 - (a) Paul calls this the “law of the mind” (Rom 8:7:23)...(It takes a made up mind to serve the Lord).
 - (b) We are free moral agents, (we have freedom of choice, so we must never minimize the element of our choice when it comes to obedience).
 - (c) Notice Paul never denounces the fact that he has the desire & determination to obey God
 - i. It is a given that this is **essential**... and **natural** for the believer
 - 3). A third element is essential, is missing in Rom 7, and will be named in Rom 8.
 3. So He will give us...
 - a. **The reason for this dilemma**, in the next few verses.
 - 1). **This is a great dilemma:** I desire to obey God... I am committed to obeying God... but I seem incapable of carrying it out.
 - (a) This will answer the question of “WHY do I sometimes fail when I try so hard?”
 - b. **The remedy for this dilemma** in the next chapter.
- C. Rom 7:16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent (*agree jointly*) unto (*with*) the law that it is good.
1. The very fact that Paul is attempting to keep the commands of God attest to the fact that the law of God is good (*as he has stated earlier*).
- D. Rom 7:17 Now then it is no more I that do it (*i.e. what I do not want to do*), but sin that dwelleth in me.
1. Sin that dwells in me = **the sin nature**. (**What are some other names for this?** Adamic, carnal)
 2. Because Paul is not choosing sin, it is the sin nature in him that is dominating & controlling him.
 - a. This **does not excuse sin**; it simply **explains** the reason for its ability to control a Christian.

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- E. Rom 7:18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform (*accomplish*) that which is good I find not.
1. Note: “the flesh” is “you”; (i.e. the carnal nature (*indwelling sin*) that you were born with & still possess as a Christian).
 - a. So “YOU” ARE THE PROBLEM
 2. “For to will is present with me” = **I am able to make the choice.** (*to do that which is good*)
 3. “But how to perform (*accomplish*) that which is good I find not”
 - a. I find not = I come not upon after searching.
 - b. “But the ability to carry out what I want to do, escapes me”.
- F. Rom 7:19 For the good that I would (*want to do*) I do not: but the evil which I would not (*do not want to do*), that I do.
- G. Rom 7:20 Now if I do that I would not (*do not want to do*), it is no more (*no longer*) I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. (*Sin that dwelleth in me = indwelling sin; i.e. the sin nature*)
1. Paul again states that it is **his sin nature controlling him** and it is **not the choice of his will** to sin.
 2. (READ THIS STATEMENT) It should be abundantly clear then, that it is possible for sin to control a sincere Christian, and *it will in fact* control him apart from dependence upon Christ for the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, which alone can enable the believer to walk in victory.
 3. This does not mean that we are not responsible for our actions; it simply explains why our actions are not always in accord with our intent.
- H. Rom 7:21 I find (*lit. I have found*) then a law (*a principle*), that, when I would (*want to*) do good, evil is present (*available; figuratively, easy*) with me (*lit unto me*).
1. *Paul states that* “I have come upon this principle: that though I choose to do what is right, evil is still easy to fall into”.
 2. If we are to walk in victory, we must first understand this principle and therefore that choosing obedience is only part of the answer.
 3. Paul explains the reason for this principle in the next 2 verses.
- I. Rom 7:22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law (*principle*) in my members (*parts of my body*), warring against the law (*the principle*) of my mind (*the will*), and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. (*The principle of the indwelling of sin wars against the law of the mind [the mind is the seat of the will, where we make the choice to obey the law of God]. This principle of the indwelling of sin is stronger than the human will and eventually wins out. We must have something greater than human will [as important as that is] and certainly greater than human strength in order to walk in victory over the sin nature [Note: the principle of indwelling sin, i.e. the sin nature, is here called “the law of sin which is in my members”].*)
- J. Rom 7:24 O wretched man that I am! (*Declares the wretchedness of the human nature and the quandary that we are in if we desire to please God*). Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? (*Makes plain the fact that even the regenerated man needs the power of someone outside of himself in order to be delivered from the power of sin which dwells in our human body. The answer to the question Paul asks*

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is, of course, the Holy Spirit, who empowers us through faith in Jesus Christ. Paul will answer this question soon in Rom 8).

- K. Rom 7:25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind (*choice of the will*) I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh (*the body*) *the law of sin. (This makes it clear that it is possible for a saved person, who loves God and wants to do His will, to struggle with sin though he does not want to commit sin, since Paul found himself there at one time. It is possible; however it is not God's perfect will, nor is it the victory Christ purchased for us on the cross. The way to victory through the power of the Holy Spirit will be described in Rom 8).*
- L. In summary: Paul has shown us that...
1. **It requires more than sincerity, to walk in victory.**
 2. **It requires more than a decision, desire or determination to dominate the power of indwelling sin.**
 3. **It requires more than strength, effort, or human ability to serve God in victory.**
 4. Paul has also shown us that. ..
 - a. If you try to please God by law you negate the power of God since you are striving in your own effort (*the flesh*).
 - b. One can not help but fail in this capacity, since you are attempting to keep God's laws by your flesh (*self*); the flesh is the very thing that you must conquer.
 - c. It is not possible to please God in the flesh, (*Rom 8:8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God*).
 - (1) Pleasing God is only possible by the power of the Holy Spirit.