

The War Within

Romans 7:7–25

Big Idea: God's Law can expose what is wrong with us, but only Jesus can rescue us from the power of sin within us.

Bottom Line: You cannot win the war against sin by trying harder; you need a Deliverer.

Opening

Romans 7 describes a struggle almost every Christian understands: knowing what is right, wanting to do what is right, and yet still finding ourselves battling sin.

Paul reminds us that the Christian life is not simply about learning better information or developing stronger willpower. We need the grace, power, and rescue that only Jesus can provide.

Read Together

Romans 7:7–25

Discussion

1. Why do you think our natural response to failure is usually, “I just need to try harder”?

Where have you seen that mindset show up in your own spiritual life?

2. Paul says that God's Law is “holy and just and good” even though it exposes our sin. Why is it important to understand that the problem is not God's Law, but our sinful hearts?

What does God's Law reveal about both **God's character** and **our condition**?

3. Paul uses the command, “Do not covet,” as his example.

Why is coveting such a powerful example of the way God's Law reaches beyond outward behavior and exposes the heart?

What are some sins that can remain hidden outwardly but still have a powerful hold on us inwardly?

4. The sermon compared God's Law to a mirror: a mirror can show you that your face is dirty, but it cannot wash your face.

How does that illustration help us understand the purpose and limitation of the Law?

What happens when we begin treating God's Law like a ladder we can climb to make ourselves acceptable to God?

5. Read Romans 7:15–19 again.

“For I do not do the good that I want to do, but I practice the evil that I do not want to do.”

In what ways can you relate to Paul's frustration?

Why can it sometimes be encouraging to realize that other believers experience this same struggle?

6. The sermon said, “The presence of a battle with sin does not mean God is absent from your life.”

How might the very fact that we are fighting sin demonstrate that God is doing something within us?

What is the difference between **struggling with sin** and **making peace with sin**?

7. Why is willpower alone insufficient to produce lasting spiritual transformation?

Think about an area where you have repeatedly told yourself, “I’ll never do that again,” only to struggle with it later.

Without sharing anything you would rather keep private, what does that experience teach us about our need for God’s grace?

8. Paul eventually cries out:

“What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?”

Why is the word “**who**” so important?

How is Christianity different when we begin asking, not merely, “What do I need to do?” but “**Who do I need to trust?**”

9. Paul immediately answers his cry with:

“Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!”

What specifically has Jesus done that we could never do for ourselves?

How does the gospel allow us to be completely honest about our sin without becoming hopeless?

10. The sermon imagined a church where people did not have to pretend they had no struggles.

What would it look like for our group—and for Mount Olive—to become a place where people can honestly say, “**There is a war within me,**” and hear in response, “**Let’s run to Jesus**”?

What can we practically do to create a culture marked by both a seriousness about sin and confidence in grace?

Personal Reflection

Consider quietly:

Where am I currently trying to defeat sin primarily through my own strength?

What would it look like this week to bring that struggle honestly before Christ and depend upon Him rather than simply making another promise to try harder?

Takeaway

When you see your sin, **run to Jesus**.

When you stumble, **run to Jesus**.

When you feel the war inside, **run to Jesus**.

When you come to the end of your strength, remember:

“Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!”

The war is real—but for those who belong to Christ, the war is not the end of the story.

Next: Romans 8:1 —

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus.”

Closing Prayer

Ask God to:

- Expose areas where we have trusted our own strength instead of Christ.
- Give us honesty about the sin we continue to battle.
- Keep us from both excusing sin and despairing because of it.
- Teach us to depend upon the Holy Spirit rather than merely our willpower.
- Make our group and our church a place where people can confess their struggles and continually run to Jesus.