

The Life-long Battle

Romans 7:1-25

The Battle We Can't Win (verses 7-13): The law's purpose is to show us how far we continuously fall short of God's standard. It compares what we are to what we should be. The more/harder we try to comply with the law, the more we fail. It is truly a battle we cannot win in our own strength.

The Battle We Can't Lose (verses 14-25): As Jesus followers, we have an internal desire to do the right thing but are unable to. We have so many good intentions, but so little ability to follow through to accomplish them.

1. As believers, we have a constant war inside of us in the battlefield of the heart (Gal 5:17; Col 3:9-10).
2. Knowing I have ultimate victory changes my disposition in the fight
 - Sinful cravings are not the true me anymore
 - I can be confident even in the most discouraging of seasons
 - I know God uses my ongoing struggle to grow my appreciation of grace.
 - Growing in grace = growing awareness of our need for grace.

The Love of God Does What The Law Can't Do (verses 1-6):

- We tried without success to find acceptance/identity through the law. However, through the Gospel, we are now motivated to do the right thing out of love for God because we are *already* accepted by him.
- God accepts us because of what he did for us, not because of what we did for Him. This unmerited love leads to the power to actually change.

Questions to Consider:

1. As you reflect on your life this past week, where is God showing you that you've fallen short of His standard? How have you responded to that shortcoming? Are there ways you feel God calling you to grow in your confidence of His ultimate victory? Are there ways God is calling you to grow in holiness or in your awareness of your need for grace? How is He calling you to move forward from last week's failures?
2. Consider your interactions with God and for God recently. Why do you spend time in His Word, in prayer, in evangelism, or in service for Him? Is it out of a heart-felt love for Him? Or is it a habit or out of a desire for

acceptance by God or by others in the church? Are your actions seeking to *earn* approval or flowing *out of* God's unmerited acceptance of you? How can you refocus on God alone and rekindle your love for Him?