

FBC Service Sunday August 24, 2025, Romans 7:14-25 The Battle Within

Intro: Slide 1 The Battle Within: There's a tension that lives inside every believer—a tug-of-war between the desire to live righteously and the persistent pull of our old nature.

It's not just a theological concept; **it's a daily reality.** We wake up with good intentions, we long to honour God, **we strive to walk in the Spirit—and yet, we stumble at times.**

We say things we regret. We act in ways that contradict our convictions. And sometimes, we wonder: **Why is this so hard?**

Paul wants us to understand that even though we are forgiven and our lives made right in the sight of God because of saving faith in Jesus, there is still a battle going on between the good we want to do and the sin that seems to come so naturally.

Paul shares his struggle not only to encourage us, but also to instruct us.

Slide 2: Image Remember those cartoons that showed a person who was going through a dilemma.

On the one shoulder was an angel, on the other, a devil. Both the angel and devil would make their arguments trying to move the person in their direction. **That's the way we often feel.**

The Apostle Paul in Romans 7, gives voice to this very battle in his own life.

He doesn't sugarcoat it. He confesses, *"I want to do what is right, but I can't... 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."*

These words aren't just his—they're ours. They echo the inner conflict of every follower of Christ who longs to be transformed but feels the weight of sin still clinging to their humanity.

As we explore this passage we're not just looking at Paul's struggle, we're looking at our own. We'll confront the uncomfortable truth that even redeemed hearts wrestle with sin.

But we'll also discover the hope embedded in this struggle: that Christ doesn't abandon us in our struggles.

He meets us there. He strengthens us. And He gives us victory, not by condemning our failures, but by empowering our transformation.

That's why Paul writes, *"Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord, and thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

So let's talk about **"The Battle Within"**—and how God is working through it to shape us into the image of His Son.

If there's one thing people appreciate in our modern world, **its authenticity.** We live in a culture that has grown weary of polished façades and A.I. generated images.

Slide 3: People long for what is real. Here in Romans 7:18–20, Paul gives us a glimpse of raw, unfiltered honesty.

The great apostle Paul—the missionary who spread the gospel across the Roman Empire, the theologian whose writings form the backbone of Christian doctrine—admits openly: “I want to do good, but I don’t. I don’t want to sin, but I keep on sinning.”

Slide 4: The Desire to Be Good This confession resonates with us, doesn’t it? Because if we’re honest, each of us has lived out this same tension.

We wake up with good intentions to walk faithfully, but by the end of the day we’ve lost our temper, entertained impure thoughts, or given in to worry and fear.

This is one of the easiest passages in the Bible for me to identify with. **It tells the absolute truth about the life of the believer!**

Some commentators feel that Paul is describing the life of a believer whose spiritual life is immature and dominated by worldly, fleshly appetites and behaviours, despite having a relationship with Christ.

Yet I read these verses and to me they are intensely personal.

It’s as if Paul rips the covers back from his life and gives us an intimate portrait of himself and of how he struggles through life.

Slide 5: A Glimpse of Paul’s Struggle No, this isn’t a description of an immature believer! This is a portrait of a maturing saint! It’s the way life is for the child of God; described with no punches pulled and no holds barred.

Most of us if we were honest, could say that we can identify with everything Paul says in these verses. While Paul is writing his own autobiography, he’s at the same time, writing about our lives as well. I can see myself portrayed in this passage.

Slide 6: We get a vivid picture here of two "Pauls". One wants to do right and the other wants to do wrong. The irony is, the more you grow in your faith, the more aware you become of the struggle.

How many of us can identify with this? There’s a part of us that wants to please God in everything we do, but there’s another part of us that fights and frustrates us at every turn.

Slide 7: The Problem Is His Old Sin Nature Twice Paul tells us that the problem is his old sin nature. The good news is that it isn’t the saved new Paul that is desiring to avoid the good.

It’s the old Paul, who still feels longings for his former way of living that is frustrating him.

Paul isn’t making excuses for his actions! He isn’t throwing up his hands and saying, "Oh well, why bother fighting it? **There will never be victory in your Christian life when that happens!**

The Devil will not give up without a fight. Neither should we

Paul’s statement is not one of resignation, **it’s one of victory!**

He’s telling us that there’s a new man living in his body and that new man is above that old sinful lifestyle. That new man loves the Lord, and that new man will fight until the day he takes his last breath and he’s delivered from the fight.

Slide 8: The Hope Found In Christ This verse is not a declaration of Paul's defeat. What he's saying is that he's not giving up the fight!

There will be good days and there will be bad days, but he's going to stay the course!

What a lesson for the children of God! Instead of rolling over and making it easy for the old life to gain its victory, let's fight and take our stand for God. Fight the flesh, fight sin, fight the will to do wrong.

Have you seen yourself in these verses? I certainly have, for I've gone through the same struggle that Paul is writing about, and I'm encouraged.

Slide 9: It's A Continuing Battle. Romans 7:14-25.

As long as we live it will be a continuing battle —between our new identity in Christ and the lingering power of sin.

Paul writes, *"In my mind I want to please God. But there is something in me that makes me want to do the opposite."* Over and over again he says, *"That which I would do, I do not do. That which I hate, I do."*

He's saying that even though he was an apostle, he felt a struggle between his desire to please God and the pull of his sinful nature.

How often do we see ourselves in this picture?

We know we should not speak negative words, but we do.

We know we should not respond in anger, but we do.

We stumble, feel bad, and ask for forgiveness.

We all understand that don't we? In the morning we get up and say, *"this is the day that the Lord has made, I will rejoice and be glad in it."* I'm going to be your servant and do your will today." So we set out to accomplish a certain number of things that we know will be pleasing to God.

Then as we go through the day, the thing we find ourselves like Christian in Pilgrims Progress, walking in bypath meadows. **Sound familiar?**

I don't believe that Romans 7 is the full explanation for Paul's dynamic spiritual life.

I'm simply pointing out that the truth of Romans 7 is part and parcel of what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ.

We have a struggle to face we didn't have before we came to Christ.

Paul, a spiritual giant, openly admits his inner conflict. This isn't a beginner's problem—it's a lifelong battle.

"I want to do what is right, but I can't."

This isn't failure; it's evidence of a heart that longs for righteousness.

For me, if the great apostle struggled, we will struggle too. If Paul felt he was being pulled this way and that, we can be sure the same thing will happen to us.

This is where the rubber meets the road. You can be a great Christian as the Apostle Paul was, and you can at the same time struggle a great deal in your walk with God. **Paul is just being honest.**

Slide 10: The Battle Is Real The struggle he describes is a struggle which is part of our walk with God. Thank God, it's not the whole story, but it's one part of the story.

Some people don't want to hear this truth. They think that the battle Paul describes should not be a part of the Christian life and we should all be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease with never an unkind word, with never an unkind thought, never an unkind action, with never a worry or a care.

Sometimes people come to Christ and then they get upset because things don't go well for them. They get upset because they have relationship difficulties, financial difficulties, personal difficulties, emotional difficulties, marital difficulties, problems in different areas in life.

They get discouraged, they get disillusioned, they get angry with God and wonder what's wrong with them. Often, it's just "part and parcel" of what it means to live on this earth as a child of God.

They feel the struggle in their Christian lives when they look at those who they think of as the "super spiritual ones," those with glowing and vibrant testimonies.

Those who talk about standards we should achieve, the victory we should know, and the abounding joy that is supposed to be part of our regular experience.

Who always seem to live their Christian lives on the mountain top but never in the valley, so they start to question their status as believers.

For it sounds sometimes like everyone has it "together" except us.

Folks, not for a second do I believe that Romans 7 is the total story of the Christian life I believe that Romans 7 is simply one part of the normal Christian experience.

Every believer faces battles—spiritual struggles, emotional pain, family pressures, financial hardships, and seasons of doubt. The Christian life is not free from trials.

I question anyone who tells you that the battle within does not belong in the Christian life.

This is why I love Romans 7:14-25 because in these words, most of us find our own experience, and from Paul we find an encouraging word.

That although the struggle he talks about is real, the grace of Christ is much greater.

Slide 11: Victory Is Assured *"Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord, and 'thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.'"*

In the midst of it all, Paul bursts forth in triumphant gratitude:

“Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!”

Paul doesn’t say we might have victory, or one day we will earn victory, but God gives us victory! It’s a present, ongoing gift—through Christ.

Victory is not because of anything that we have done—it is entirely due to God’s work on our behalf.

Slide: 12 Victory Is God’s Gift, Not Our Achievement.

Paul reminds us that victory is given. It’s not something we can buy, earn, or manufacture by sheer willpower.

This means our victory doesn’t depend on our performance—it depends on God’s promise.

Jesus told his disciples, *“Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”* [John 15: 3,4]

Slide: 13 Victory Is Secured Through Jesus Christ.

Paul is clear: this victory comes through Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the cross, Jesus bore the penalty of sin, defeating guilt and shame.

In the resurrection, He conquered the grave, proving that death has lost its sting.

The victory is not just theoretical. Jesus actually rose from the grave! And because He lives, we live. Because He triumphed, we triumph.

Today, some may feel surrounded by defeat—when prayers seem unanswered, when temptation knocks again, when sickness lingers, when the world looks darker.

But the resurrection of Jesus guarantees that every setback is temporary, and every battle is already decided in Christ.

Let’s say it together in our hearts: The tomb is empty. Jesus is alive. Victory is ours.

That Victory Gives Us Confidence to Live with Hope

Victory in Christ is not just about dying with hope—it’s about living with purpose.

When you’re tempted to give up, remember: you’re already on the winning team.

When discouragement weighs heavy, remember: the scoreboard has already been settled in heaven.

When doubts whisper, remember: your future is secure in Christ.

This victory should make us bold in prayer, fearless in witness, and steady in serving. Nothing we do for Christ is wasted. Even when no one notices, God does.

Imagine a soldier going into battle already knowing the war is won. He doesn't fight with fear—he fights with courage, knowing the outcome is guaranteed.

That's the believer's reality. **We don't fight for victory—we fight from victory.** Every prayer, every act of faith, every moment of perseverance is done under the banner of Christ's triumph.

Slide: 14 Conclusion: Thanks for Victory

So Paul teaches us to live with gratitude:

Thanks be to God—the Giver of victory.

Through Jesus Christ—the source of victory.

This is not just a verse to read at funerals; it's a verse to live by daily. Whatever your battle, whatever your burden, you are not defeated. **Victory is yours in Christ.**

So lift your head. Strengthen your heart. And echo Paul's words:

"Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

As we close, let's remember: the struggle within is not a sign of defeat—it's a sign of transformation. The old nature may pull, but it no longer rules.

So when you feel that tension—when you do what you hate and fail to do what you love—don't run from God. Run to Him. He knows your struggle. He's already made provision for your victory.

It may seem to some that Paul's words in Romans 7:14-25 are out of place. But I hope that you have come to see like I have, that these words are perfectly timed and wonderfully encouraging.

Let's walk in grace, fight with faith, and rest in the truth that Christ is greater than the struggle within.

Closing Prayer: Heavenly Father,

We come before You as people who know the battle well. We've felt the tension between our desire to follow You and the pull of our old ways. We've stumbled, we've wrestled, and we've cried out like Paul, "Why do I do what I hate?"

But today, we thank You for Your Word that doesn't hide the struggle—it reveals it. And more than that, it reminds us that we are not alone. You are with us in the fight. You are patient with our weakness. You are powerful in our transformation.

Lord, help us not to be discouraged by the war within, but to be encouraged that it means we are alive in You. Give us strength to walk in the Spirit, wisdom to recognize the lies of the flesh, and grace to rise again when we fall.

May we leave here not defeated, but determined. Not condemned, but covered. Not afraid of the struggle—but confident in the Saviour who has already overcome.

In Jesus' name, **Amen.**