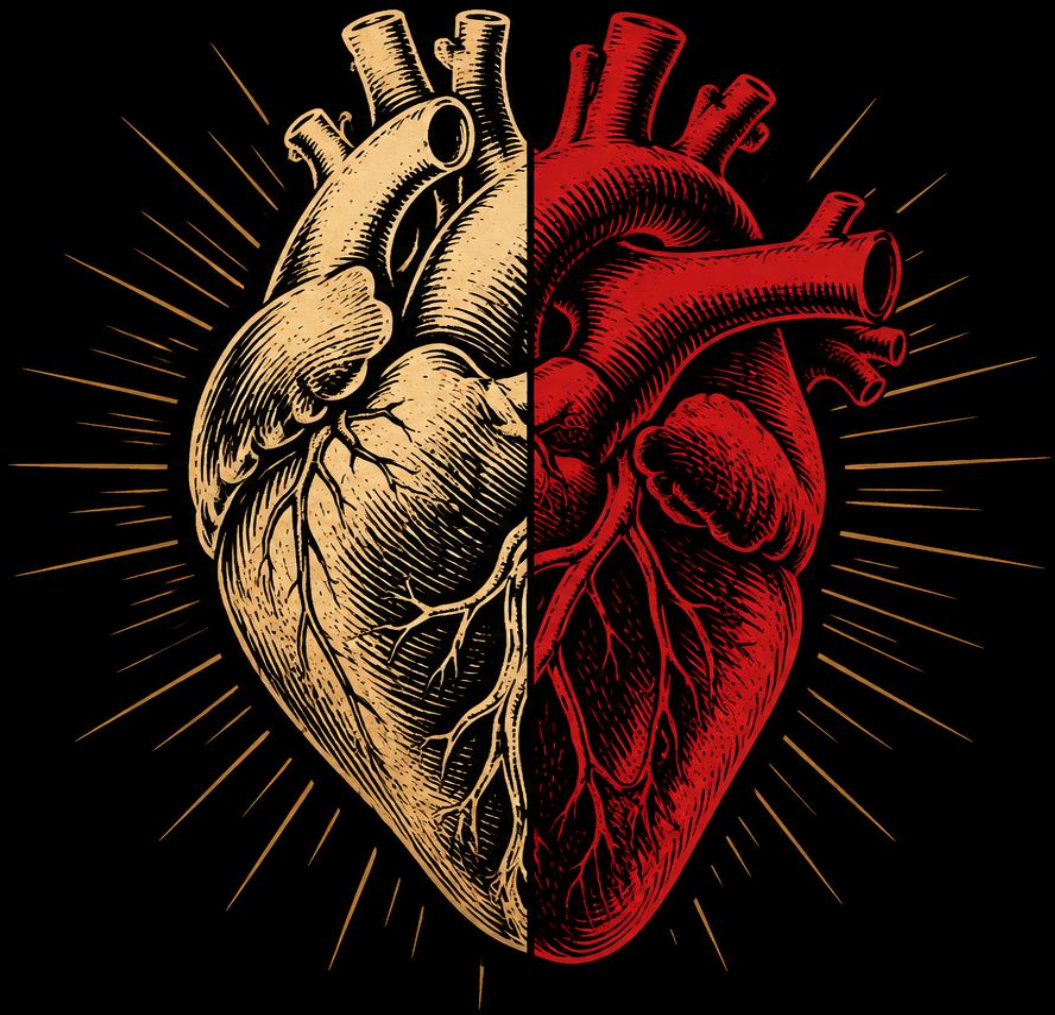
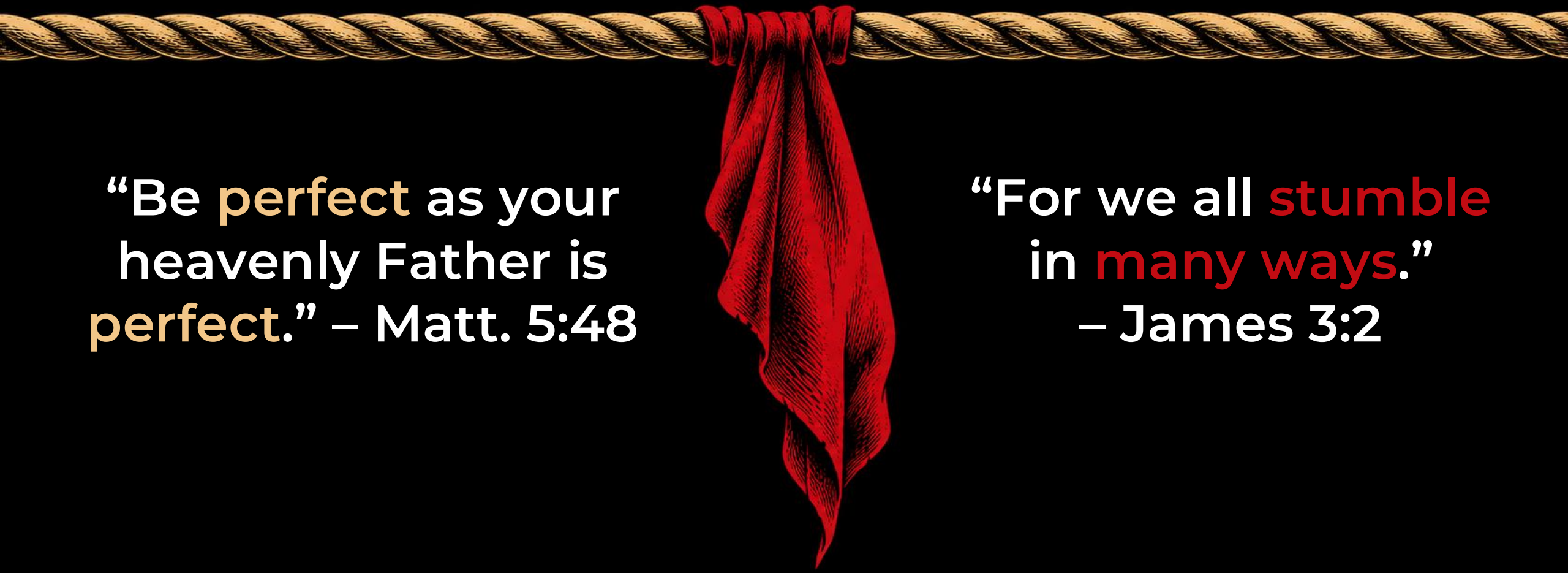
THE WAR WITHIN

– ROMANS 7:14-25 –



LIVING IN TENSION

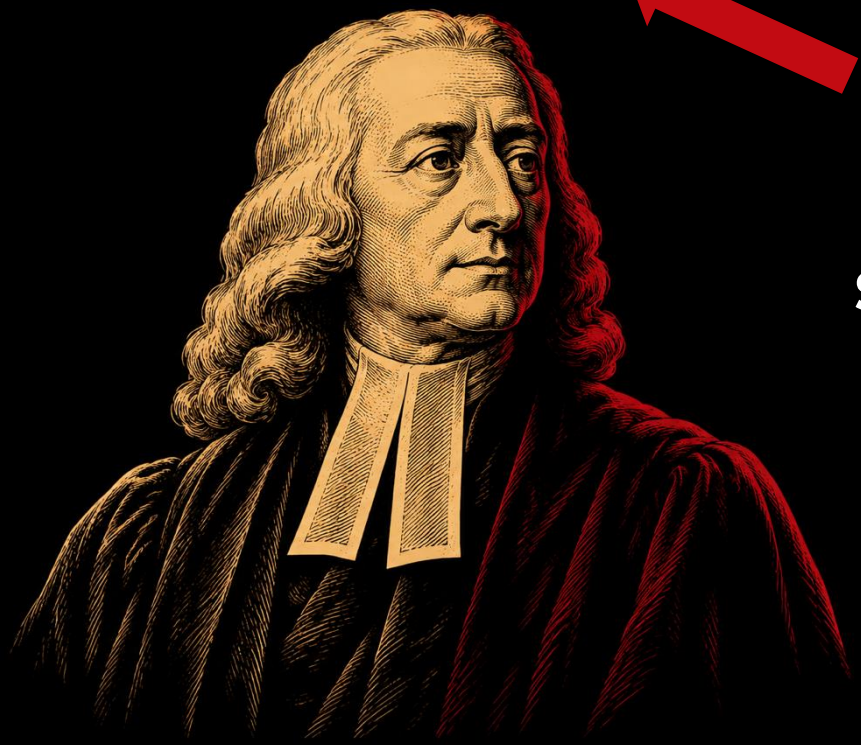


"Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." – Matt. 5:48

"For we all stumble in many ways." – James 3:2

Christian Perfectionism

The belief that Christians can and should attain a state of perfect love towards God and others in this present life



"This implies that no wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul; and that all the thoughts, words, and actions, are governed by pure love."

John Wesley

A Plain Account of Christian Perfection, §19

Wesleyan Perfectionism

Sinless before Glorification

Ought = Able

“God would never command us to do things we’re unable to do!”

Reformed Sanctification

Sinless after Glorification

Ought ≠ Able

“God has commanded us to do things we’re unable to do!”

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with your soul, and with all your mind.”
(Matt. 22:37)

“The mind set on the flesh is hostile towards God, for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so.”
(Rom. 8:7)

“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.” (Acts 16:31)

“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him.” (John 6:44)

Why would God command us to do something we are unable to do?



vs.



Self-Reliance

Total Dependence

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

1 John 1:8

“A deep sense of struggle, and a vast amount of mental discomfort from it, are no proof that a man is not sanctified. Nay, rather, I believe they are healthy symptoms of our condition, and prove that we are not dead, but alive. A true Christian is one who has not only peace of conscience, but war within. He may be known by his warfare as well as by his peace.”

J.C. Ryle
Holiness, 29



4 Marks of Genuine Believers



Hate
Their Sin
(vv. 14–17)



Recognize
Their Weakness
(vv. 18–20)



Continue to
Fight
(vv. 21–23)



Look TO CHRIST
(vv. 24–25)

Who is Romans 7 about?

"But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God..." (Rom. 6:22a)



"I am fleshly, having been sold into bondage under sin." (Rom. 7:14b)

"The Spirit of God dwells in you..." (Rom. 8:9b)



"Nothing good dwells in me..." (Rom. 7:18b)

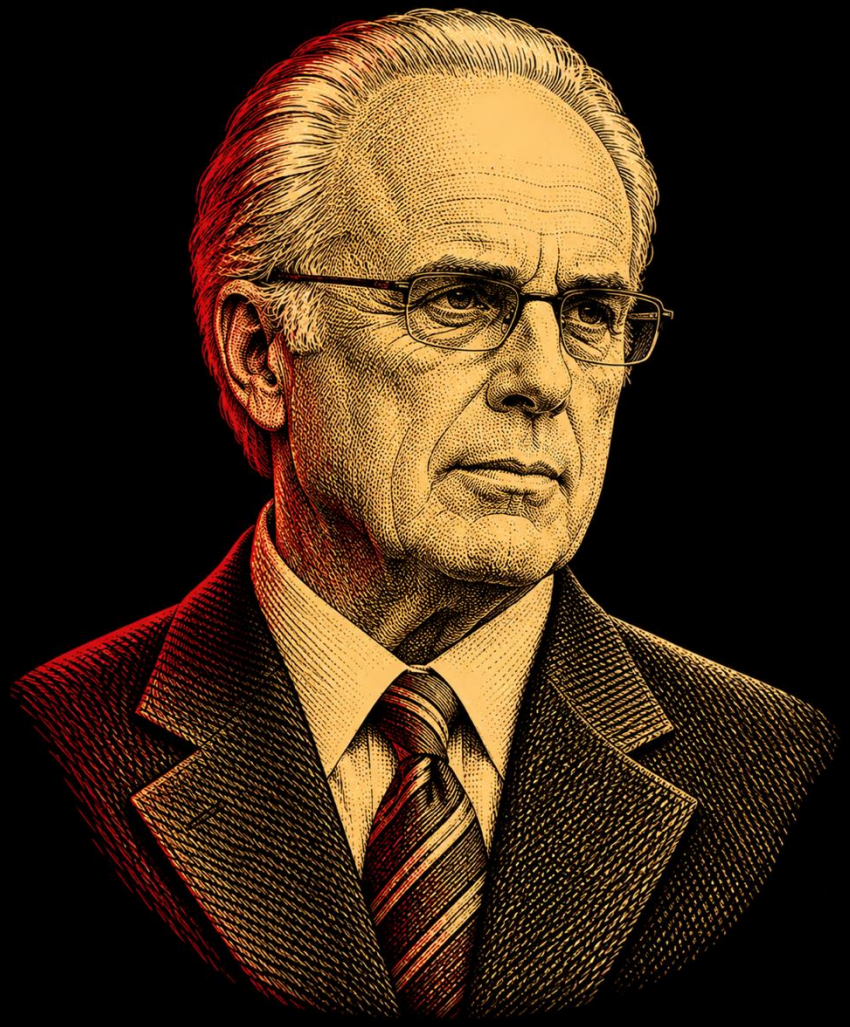
Unbeliever

Who is Romans 7 about?



- Shift from Past Tense (vv. 7–13) to Present Tense (vv. 14–25)
- Hatred for Sin (v. 15)
- Agrees the Law is Good (v.16)
- Desire to Obey God's Law (v.18)
- Joyfully Concurs with God's Law in the Inner Man (v.22)

Believer



“None of these characteristics ever describe the unsaved."

John MacArthur

Commentary on Romans 1–8, 378

The Context

Believer's Relationship with **Law**

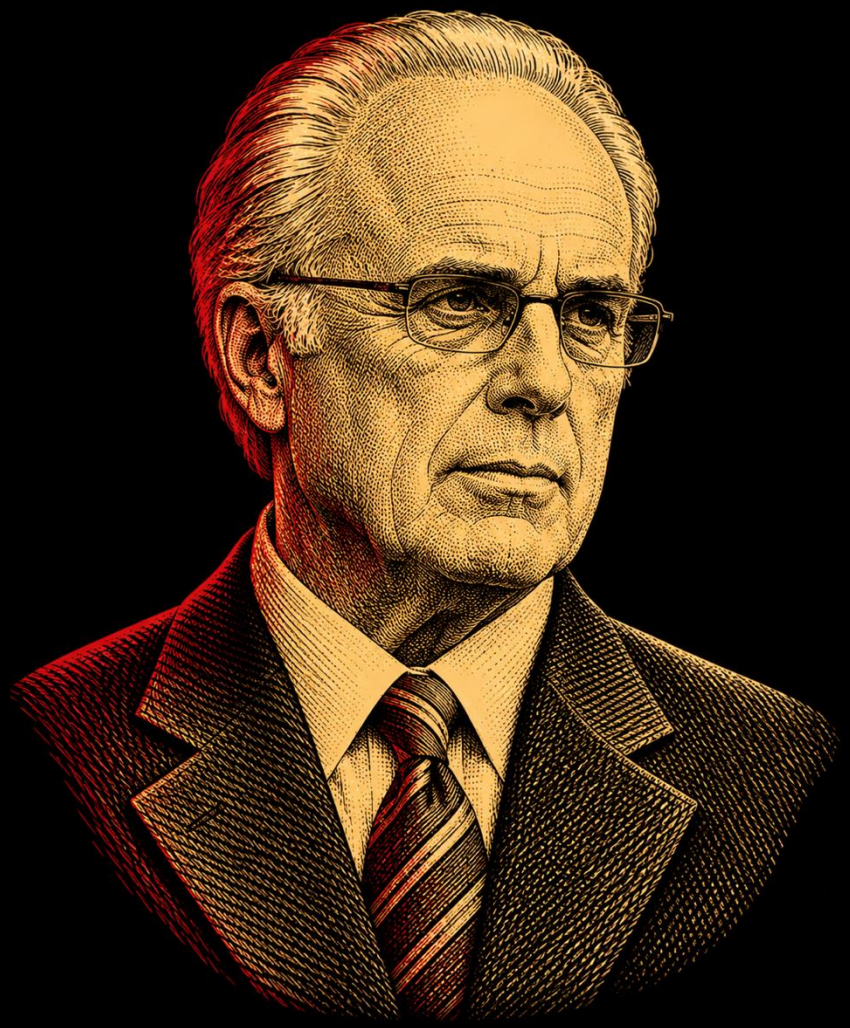
Romans 7:1-6

Law's Relationship with **Sin**

Romans 7:7–13

Sin's Relationship with **Believer**

Romans 7:14-25



“Paul is here describing the most spiritual and mature of Christians, who, the more they honestly measure themselves against God’s standard of righteousness the more they realize how much they fall short. The closer we get to God, the more we see our own sin."

John MacArthur

Commentary on Romans 1–8, 379

Read Romans 7:14-25

Genuine Believers



Hate their Sin

(vv. 14–17)

“For we know that the Law is Spiritual, but I am fleshly…”

Romans 7:14a

“In the Flesh”

Belonging to the realm of the flesh (Rom. 8:9)

Enslaved to Sin (Rom. 6:17,20)

Hostile towards God (Rom. 8:7)

“Fleshly”

Weak or fleshly characteristic (1 Cor. 3:1–3)

Struggles with Sin (Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7:23)

Wants to Please God (Rom. 7:22)

“For we know that the Law is Spiritual, but I am fleshly, having been sold into bondage under sin.”

Romans 7:14

“For we know that the Law is Spiritual, but I am fleshly, having been sold into bondage under sin.”

Romans 7:14

“For what I am working out, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate.”

Romans 7:15

Hating Our Sin	Hating Consequence
Godly Sorrow	Worldly Sorrow
Leads to Repentance	Brings Sorrow and Death
Fighting Against Sin	Covers up Sin
Rooted in New Nature	Rooted in the Flesh

“But if I do the very thing I do not want,
I agree with the Law, that it is good.”

Romans 7:16

“So now, no longer am I the one working it out, but sin which dwells in me.”

Romans 7:17

Genuine Believers



Recognize their Weakness

(vv. 18–20)

“For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the working out of the good is not.”

Romans 7:18

“For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing that I do not want, I am no longer the one working it out, but sin which dwells in me.”

Romans 7:19–20

Why the Repetition?

When I
Seek Good



vv. 7:15-17

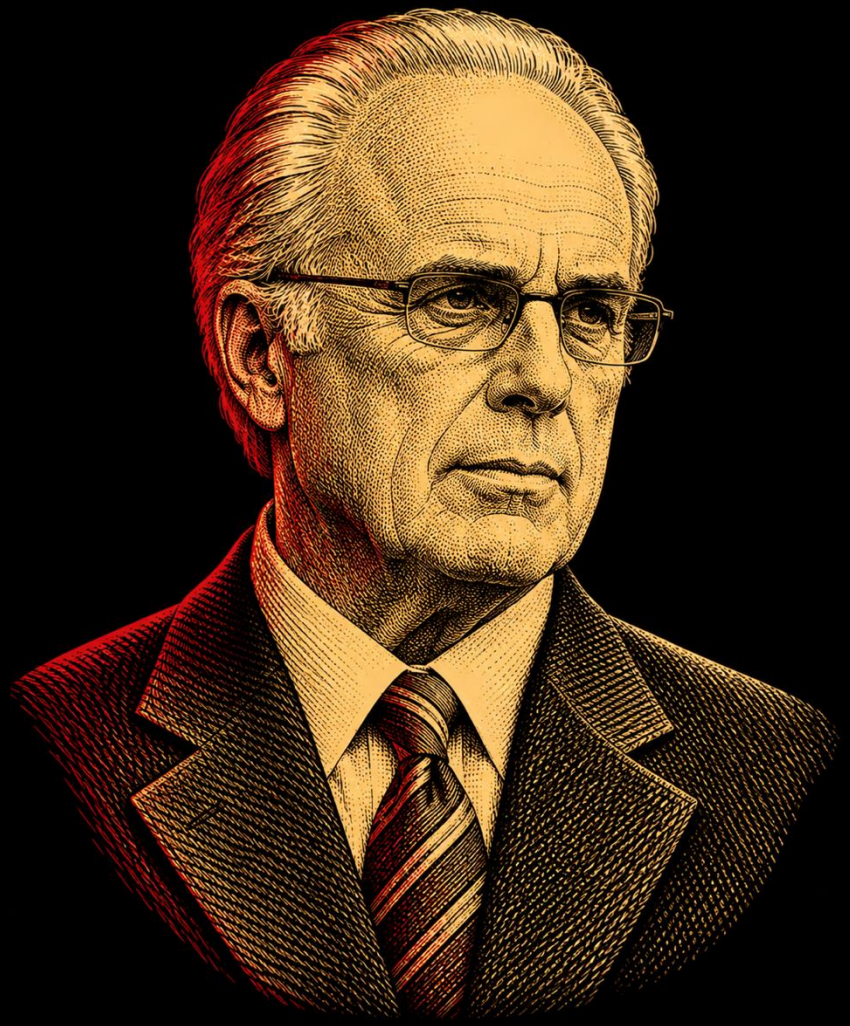
FAILURE

When I
Flee Evil



vv. 7:19-20

Paul wants to end Self-Reliance



“‘The flesh is weak’ is a warning, it is not an excuse to sin."

John MacArthur

Sermon on Mark 13:32-42

Genuine Believers



Continue To Fight

(vv. 21–23)

“I find then the principle that in me evil is present – in me who wants to do good.”

Romans 7:21

“For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man.”

Romans 7:22

“How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers, but his delight is in the law of Yahweh, and upon His law he meditates day and night.”

Psalm 1:1–3

“But I see a different law in my members, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a captive to the law of sin which is in my members.”

Romans 7:23

Genuine Believers



Look to Christ

(vv. 24–25)

“Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from the body of this death?”

Romans 7:24

“He that wishes to attain right views about Christian holiness, must begin by examining the vast and solemn subject of sin. He must dig down very low if he would build high.”



J.C. Ryle

Holiness, 1

“Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.”

Romans 7:25

“Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 3:12

THE WAR WITHIN

– ROMANS 7:14-25 –

