



“The Conflict of Two Natures”

Romans 7:14–25

Intro: In Romans, Paul takes us on a journey up a mountain...and the signs have been posted.

- In (ch.1) we see the gospel; (ch.2) Sin; (ch.3–5) Justification; (ch.6) Sanctification.
- And in (ch.7) we are reminded who we are prior to heaven.

Romans 7:2–3 – “For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning her husband. ³So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man.”

Scholars argue “Who is Paul talking about in this passage?” Is he talking about non-Christians?

1. Early Church fathers thought Paul was describing the unregenerate Pharisee under the Law.
2. Other scholars thought Paul was describing the normal Christian (Augustine, Luther, Calvin).
3. Others said this is the carnal born again Christian...somehow controlled by sin (ch.5, 6, & 7).

So today we’re going to look at **four things** Paul tells us about the Conflict of Two Natures...

1. Paul says he is empty of any goodness in himself (vv.14–17)
2. Paul says there are two forces at work inside him (vv.18–20)
3. Paul says he is a wretch and still in need of a Savior (vv. 21–23)
4. Paul says that Jesus is that Savior (v. 25)

1. Paul says he is empty of any goodness in himself (vv.14–17)

For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. (v.14)

1 John 1:9 – “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Romans 8:7 – “because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so,”

Proverbs 5:22 – “His own iniquities will capture the wicked, And he will be held with the cords of his sin.”

Deuteronomy 10:12–13 “Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require from you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹³and to keep the LORD’S commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?”

“For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate.” (v.15)

1 Corinthians 2:2 – “For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.”

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.

Galatians 2:20 – “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

2. Paul says there are two forces at work inside him (vv.18–20) Three times Paul writes...

- (v.14) “I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin.”
- (v.18) “For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh.”
- (v.20) “I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.”

Romans 8:2 – “For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.”

2 Corinthians 5:17 – “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.”

3. Paul says he is a wretch and still in need of a Savior (vv.21–23)

“I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good.” (v.21)

Ephesians 4:25,28 – “Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH EACH ONE OF YOU WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another.”

“He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need.”

1 Corinthians 15:56 – “The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law;”

“For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man.” (v.22)

“but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.” (v.23)

“Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?” (v.24)

4. Paul says that Jesus is that Savior (v.25)

“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.” (v.25)

Romans 8:1–2 – “Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

Discussion Questions

1. What does Paul mean by (v.15) “For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate.”
2. What does Paul mean by (v.24) “Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from this body of death?”
3. Can you relate to the struggle Paul describes in this passage?
4. How can we find freedom from the bondage of sin described in this passage?
5. How does this passage encourage you to rely on God’s grace and the power of the Holy Spirit?
6. What does this passage teach us about the nature of sanctification (the process of becoming more like Christ)?