



New Creation Nov 12: Away With the Old

Series Summary: As a believer in Jesus, all who have professed Christ should know you are saved by faith in Him, with a confidence of eternal security. Yet, for many, there still lies a tension between what is read about their faith in the scriptures compared to what they see play out in their habits and day-to-day living. It's possible that many still struggle with a disconnect between their understanding of the Gospel in faith and its practical application. To fully understand the difference the Gospel has the potential to make in every area of our lives.

Big Idea: Since we are a new creation in Christ we must put away our old life that we lived in sin. However, there are times where this is easier said than done. There are times where we find ourselves back in our life of sin. How do we stray from the flesh and fully live in our new identity in Christ?

Schedule:

- Live teaching
- Small group

LIVE TEACHING

Question: If we are truly a "new creation" and have the Holy Spirit guiding, teaching, and empowering us, why do we still struggle with sin?

Why do we find ourselves doing the very things we hate and failing to do the very things we know we should? Today, we're going to dive into the reality of the

Christian life as a spiritual battle and learn how the Spirit empowers us to fight and win.

THE “WRETCHED MAN”

Transition: The Apostle Paul, one of the greatest believers in history, wrestled openly with this same question. His raw honesty in Romans 7:14-25 shows us that the struggle is normal for a Christian.

Romans 7:14-16 We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. **15** I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. **16** And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good.

Note: Even though our identity has changed (we are in Christ), the presence of sin remains in our mortal bodies (that will one day pass away). This explains the feeling of being "sold as a slave to sin" even when we hate the very things that pleased our old ways.

Romans 7:17-20 As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. **18** For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. **19** For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. **20** Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

The Source of Sin: Paul identifies the problem as "sin living in me" (v. 17, 20), often called the "sinful nature" or the "flesh."

Romans 7:20-23 So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. **22** For in my inner being I delight in God's law; **23** but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me.

The Struggle is Real: Paul describes a desperate, ongoing conflict. This is not the testimony of a non-believer, but of a man who delights in God's law in his inner being (v. 22). The conflict exists because the new nature (the Spirit) is present and fighting the old nature (the flesh).

Romans 7:24-25 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? **25** Thanks be to God, who delivers me through

Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

The Deliverance: The passage ends with a triumphant answer to the desperate cry, "Who will rescue me...?" (v. 24). The answer is: "Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (v. 25). While the struggle is ongoing, the victory has been secured in Christ. We are not fighting for victory; we are fighting from victory.

DO NOT WALK IN SHAME

You Are Not Alone: Paul wrestled with sin. We will wrestle with sin. This struggle is evidence that the Holy Spirit is alive and active within you, making you aware of the difference between the Spirit's desires and the flesh's desires.

WALK BY THE SPIRIT

The solution to the Romans 7 struggle is introduced in Galatians 5, which moves the focus from the internal despair to the external, empowering work of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

This is the Spirit-led strategy for victory. It's about an ongoing alignment and surrender to the Holy Spirit's guidance.

Galatians 5:17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.

The Conflicting Desires: The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; these are opposed to each other (v. 17). This clearly lays out the conflict Paul described. The flesh, our old nature, is not passive; it desires what is contrary to God.

The Promise: If you walk by the Spirit, you "will not gratify the desires of the flesh" (v. 16). This is a promise of empowerment. The Spirit doesn't just watch the fight; He supplies the power to overcome the flesh. We are not told to try harder; we are told to walk differently.

Small Group: The Christian life is a spiritual marathon, not a sprint. The struggle with sin is real, but it is not a sign of failure; it is a sign that the war is on! Our victory is not in eliminating the struggle but in constantly choosing to walk by the power

of the Holy Spirit. In our small group, we will learn and discuss what it means to embrace the call to be a living sacrifice.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Get Them Talking: Have you ever been frustrated with yourself, like Paul was in Romans 7, because of a struggle with sin? What was going through your mind?

Read: Romans 12:1-2 as a group

Paul urges us to offer our bodies as a "living sacrifice." **In the context of our ongoing struggle with sin (Romans 7), what does it mean practically to offer your body as a living sacrifice to God?**

Leader Notes: Encourage the group to think beyond major life events. Focus on the everyday—how we use our time, energy, attention, and physical actions (our hands, feet, eyes, and mouth). If we are "fighting from victory," this is an act of grateful surrender, not earning.

Why do you think Paul calls this a "living" sacrifice, as opposed to the Old Testament concept of a dead sacrifice?

Leader Note: When sacrificing an animal according to God's law, a priest would kill the animal and place it on the altar. Sacrifice was important as it was a form of worship, but even in the Old Testament God made it clear that obedience from the heart was much more important. God wants us to offer ourselves as living sacrifices—laying aside our own desires daily to follow him, putting all of our energy and resources at his disposal, and trusting him to guide us. Our new life is to be lived in gratitude towards God- Offering our body as a living and holy sacrifice to be completely set apart for God and dedicated to his service.

In verse 2, Paul tells us to "not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind". The reality is that if we are not renewing our minds day by day, we will, by default, be conformed to the patterns of this world.

What can we do regularly to renew our mind?

Leader Notes: The world tries to impact us through media, values, and cultural pressures. We don't have to seek out or try to conform by the patterns of this world-

they just happen. One of the most impactful steps we can take is to watch how much we consume from media and cultural pressures. Transformation is active, and it starts with the mind because our thoughts drive our emotions, attitudes, and actions. The mind is the control center; renewing it with Scripture (the truth) is the Spirit-led strategy to resist the world's lies.

What is one specific lie or worldly pattern that people tend to fall for the easiest?

Note/Possible Answers: "My worth is based on performance"... "truth is found in my feelings"... "I deserve to get revenge on them"... "Follow your heart/do whatever makes you happy".

Read: Ephesians 4:20-24 as a group

Paul speaks of "putting off" the old self, which is corrupted by deceitful desires. The language of "putting off" (like taking off old clothes) shows us how intentional this must be. **Why is our former way of life (before Jesus) so appealing to us at times?**

Leader Note: We love familiarity because familiarity brings comfort, and we love to be comfortable. The issue is that comfort is going to keep us living in sinful ways, and there will be moments where we are uncomfortable living in the Spirit. Mainly because we are fighting against our natural sin nature.

What did Paul mean when he commanded us to put on the new self? How is this different from our previous life of sin?

Leader Notes: We have been declared by God as righteous. Not because of what we have done but because of what Jesus has done for us. We were once condemned, but now we are forgiven and redeemed. We are a new creation. Nothing and no one can take that away from us. So when Paul tells us to put on the new self in verse 24, he is telling us to remember who we are. Remember that you are a new creation. Remember that you are redeemed. Remember it so much that you live that way. Just like clothes, we must put on the new self—remind ourselves daily.

What steps can we take to "put on the new self" daily? In other words, what intentional steps can we take to live in the Spirit on a daily basis?

Note/Possible answers: Putting on the new self is going to take intentionality. We can't sleepwalk through our faith. It's going to take a conscious effort on our part. We have to be ready in every situation to live in the Spirit and "put on the new self", otherwise we can easily act in the flesh.