

# **The Struggle**

**2-28-21**

Romans 7:15 (ESV)

For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.

**How many can relate to this verse? This verse shows that God understands what we are going through. Let us put this in context. In Chapters 1-5, we have established our Christian belief system. We understand what it is to be a follower of Christ. In Chapters 6, 7, and 8 we understand how to implement what we believe. Chapter 6, we make a decision, Chapter 7, we experience a struggle to carry out that decision. Chapter 8, we understand how to implement the power of the Holy Spirit to carry out our decisions. Last week we saw the necessity to make a decision concerning our faith. This week we will see the struggle we have carrying out our decision as stated, **“For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.”** The struggle does not happen until we make a decision! When we say, “All I want to do is serve Jesus,” something else happens.**

Romans 7:8 (ESV)

But sin (self), seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness.

**Our specific decisions for Christ cause our old self to seize our decision as an opportunity to fall short and fail God which will produce all kinds of condemnation.**

**We feel condemn because we know God’ perfection!**

Romans 7:12 (ESV)

So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

**We struggle because no matter how hard we try; we never measure up to God's perfection.**

James 2:10 (ESV)

For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.

**However, trying to be good even when we fail shows that we believe the law is good. That is why we are trying in the first place. However, while our heart seeks after God, our flesh, self, sin constantly pulls me to the world and fleshly urgings!**

Galatians 5:17 (ESV)

For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

**The flesh/self/sin is tied to this world and operates independent of God. Our ever-present "self" is the problem. Nothing can restrain it. Thus, we get very frustrated.**

Romans 7:24 (ESV)

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

**With this frustration, we are brought back to the Cross. Jesus paid the penalty for our sins. Jesus is still the answer.**

Romans 7:25 (ESV)

Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

**With a decision of our mind, we cry out to God, but we struggle because our “ever present selfish lower nature” moves independent of God.**

**God understands our situation! This is the reason Jesus came and died on the cross. He cleansed us and rescued us.**

Romans 8:1 (ESV)

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

**Praise Jesus, God knows we struggle and there is not any condemnation for those who believe in Jesus. God totally understands our struggle in Chapter 7. Our mind is set on Jesus who paid the penalty for our sins. Therefore, Jesus does not condemn us in our struggle. Because we are not condemned in our struggle, we stand in the door of the power of the Holy Spirit. Next week in chapter 8, we will see that the Holy Spirit will overcome every struggle we face from within and without with the very power and presence of God Himself. We will see how God honors our decisions and overcomes our struggles through the Holy Spirit. God will show us how essential the Holy Spirit is for everything we do! We need to embrace the Holy Spirit.**

Romans 8:2 (ESV)

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

**The very first gospel message by Jesus' disciples highlighted the importance of the Holy Spirit.**

Acts 2:38 (ESV)

And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

**Christians are never victims. We are powerful victors!**