

“The Remedy”

Now the Apostle gives us the remedy that we were waiting for: “For the law of the Spirit of the life of Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death” (Romans 8:2). Here we see one spiritual law superseding or overcoming another spiritual law. To help us better understand this very important spiritual dynamic it will be helpful for us to consider some of the physical laws with which we are very familiar.

Let’s consider the law of gravity. We have been old friends with the law of gravity since we were born. We struggled to turn over and rise up on our knees to crawl against the relentless force of gravity. As a toddler, we battled gravity to take our first unsteady steps. When we were given our first two wheeled bicycle yet again we fought with gravity to stay upright. Even now, although we barely give much thought to walking across a room, we know that if we stumble for even a moment we can come crashing to the ground. If you let go of this pamphlet for even a moment, you know that it will head for the floor pulled down by our old friend gravity. Gravity is all around us and affects every living thing on earth and even the motion of the earth and the moon. It is extremely powerful.

But now consider the law of aerodynamics specifically reflecting on a Boeing 747. Have you ever taken a trip on a very large airliner? When you are boarding you realize that you are two or three stories off of the ground. Then you might start to consider the weight of all the passengers and luggage.



If there are 400 passengers with an average of 100 pounds of luggage, you have about 100,000 pounds to get off the ground. On the internet, I found out that the weight of a Boeing 747 at take off is 374,400 pounds! It doesn’t seem like something that heavy can ever get off the ground. And yet after the pilot taxis to the runway, pushes the throttle forward, and begins traveling faster and faster down the runway creating thrust and lift, the law of aerodynamics takes over and this huge plane rises into the air. The law of aerodynamics supersedes the law of gravity many times a day all over the world.

Even though the power of sin seems overwhelming, the dynamic power of the life of Christ in us is able to give us victory. Christ, although tempted, did not sin (Hebrews 4:15). As we cooperate with the Holy Spirit, we are able to appropriate Christ’s victory in our daily lives to conquer sinful attitudes and produce behaviors pleasing to God.

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“Conquering Sin”

How Christianity Works Series

By Pastor Curt Carter

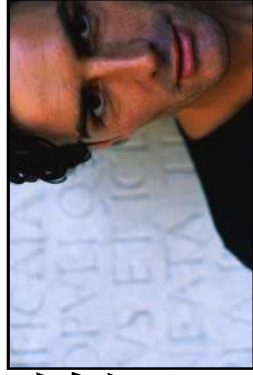
Romans 7:21-24

"It seems to be a fact of life that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love God's law with all my heart. But there is another law at work within me that is at war with my mind. This law wins the fight and makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin?"

-The Apostle Paul

When most of us begin our journey as a new believer, a well-meaning Christian will sum up our new responsibilities as reading the Bible and praying each day, attending church services as often as possible - **and**

to stop doing anything sinful that would displease God! So we go to work, usually beginning with the sins that we

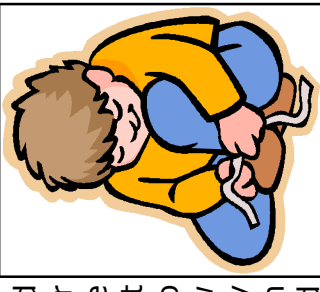


Before we go much further, we need to bring some clarification to our battle with sin. The Apostle Paul eloquently, if somewhat forlornly, represents the battle with sin in the Romans 7 portion with which we began this study. It is important, however, to recognize that there is a difference between simply *choosing* to participate in sin over and over again and *intending* to do what is pleasing to God and failing because of the compelling force of sin in our human souls. When we repeatedly choose the path of sin in our lives our Heavenly Father moves into '*operation chastisement*' bringing disciplinary measures into our lives because of His great love for us (Hebrews 12:5-15). God does not want sin to any longer dominate and ruin our lives (Romans 6:14). In Romans 7, Paul is giving a personal account of how he was working through the process of really desiring to please God but also being aware of the incredible force or law of sin that continued to dominant his human soul and dampened his newly revived human spirit. Paul was not rebelliously choosing sin. He was saddened to the point of misery at failing to conquer sin's dominance over his behavior.

But Paul doesn't leave us overwhelmed with misery but gratefully shares with us what he discovered about how to conquer sin. "*So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. For the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you through Christ Jesus from the power of sin that leads to death*" (Romans 8:1-2). Paul thanks God (Romans 7:25) that there is a solution to his continual battle with sin. It is not surprising that the remedy comes through our continued effectual relationship with Jesus Christ.

"No Condemnation"

Paul shows us that the path to victory over sin begins with the revelation that God is not condemning us in our struggle. Imagine a young child who is desperately trying to tie their shoelaces over and over again. They draw on every bit of their concentration as they attempt to manipu-



late the laces around and through each other with their pudgy little fingers. They want nothing more than to create the perfect bow that they can proudly display to their mom and dad. But again and again when they give the final tug on the loops the laces limply fall to the side of the shoe. Their little faces turn sadly toward their parents and the tears streak down their cheeks. What would happen if the parents said, "Why don't you just give up and stop trying? You're never going to get it. You aren't smart or talented enough to ever tie your shoes." Well, we would certainly find those parents cruel and responsible for deeply hindering their child's confidence in accomplishing anything in the future.

Be assured that God is also not heaping condemnation upon us when we are genuinely attempting to conquer the sin that displeases Him. The Lord knows our hearts (Luke 9:47) and is aware when we are being merely rebellious or genuinely trying to overcome sin in our lives. Rather than condemning us, He is there to cheer us on to victory.