

Romans 7 (Part 2): 14-25 - "Who Will Deliver Us?"

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Romans chapter 7, and we're beginning in verse 14 through the end of the chapter. It says, *"For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, (Paul writes) sold under sin. ¹⁵ For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. ¹⁷ So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.*

²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ²¹ So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. ²² For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, ²³ but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. ²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ 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." (ESV)

Let's pray.

Lord, we open our hearts again to You just that You would speak to us today and bring wisdom and understanding. We pray that You would guide us today into all truth for this is Your promise. And we ask it in Jesus precious name, amen.

You might remember last week, for those of you that were here, we left off with the apostle Paul talking to us about our relationship as believers to the Law. We have a love-hate relationship with the Law. We love it because it raises the standard of life to something really that's beyond us and we agree with it. We look at it.

We say things like, *"thou shalt not commit adultery."* We look at things, I'm quoting the King James. I don't know why I'm doing that, but we see passages

like, and we look, and we think to ourselves, so it's a good thing. You shall not steal. That's a good thing. We look at it and we just think, yeah that's really a good thing. We also hate it too, because it constantly condemns us. The Law constantly shows us how far short we fall of that standard of righteousness that is lifted up so we admire it. Very, very cool stuff.

But we look at it and we go, yeah, I'm not doing very good at keeping it though, but I sure appreciate it. It's like being convicted of a crime sitting in jail and trying to find a way out. Problem is you're guilty. If you were innocent, you could turn to the Law and say, I need some help with this situation. But the fact of the matter is we're all guilty before God, and so we can't turn to the Law. All the Law is going to do is further convict us and corroborate our guilt and so forth. So that's the situation.

That's, by the way, why the Law doesn't work for believers. The Law can't work for you and I because all it does is convict us of guilt. That's why Legalism doesn't work. We've been talking about that over a period of time. Well, and then there was something else, just by way of a reminder that the apostle Paul said to us about the Law last week.

Maybe you guys remember he talked about this weird little aspect of the Law whereby we see the Law; we see the rule that's in God's Law, and it promotes, or it provokes in us a desire to sin. Do you remember him talking about that? He says it actually provokes us. There's something inside of our hearts that looks at a line that's been drawn in the sand and we think to ourselves if it's the last thing I do, I'm going to cross that line.

It's, by the way, called rebellion, and anybody who's ever raised children, you see it in your children. Good grief, you ought to see it in yourself. We don't often like to admit it, but it's there. I don't know about you, but I never taught my kids to rebel. I didn't sit, my parents didn't sit me down at some point and say, now listen, here's how you rebel. They didn't have to. It was in my DNA. It was just there. It's just like, somebody tells me what to do and I go, yeah, I'm going to tell you, I'm not going to do it. You can't tell. You're not the boss of me. Stupid thing to say, but you know what I mean?

There's just something inside of us. It's like, don't tell me what to do. And it's just flat out rebellion. And the Law comes along. It says what we shouldn't do, and it just kind of stirs up all these things in our heart because our hearts are wicked.

Isn't that what the Bible says? I seem to remember somewhere in the Bible, it says, the heart is deceitfully wicked and beyond cure, sort of a thing. You guys remember that one? I think it's Jeremiah. Yeah. Anyway, that's the condition of our heart. We have this crazy relationship with the Law of God.

Well, Paul is going to talk a little bit more about the Law here in verse 14 but what I want to prepare you for is important. What I want to prepare you for today is that the apostle Paul is going to lay out for us today; the secret of living the Christian life. Pretty big stuff. For those of you that have been struggling with living the Christian life and maybe even frustrated, hopefully we're going to clear that up for you today.

And Paul begins by saying in verse 14, *“for we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh. Sold under sin.”* What is Paul doing here? He's drawing contrast. We like contrast because it makes us see things for what they really are.

Do you know how when you go to the jewelry store they take a diamond, they have diamonds sitting there and they don't put it with a white background. They put it with a black background. They find the blackest background they can so that diamond is going to look very much like a diamond. It's going to really stand out.

Paul is using contrasts here to help you, and I understand these things so they might stand out. He's saying to you and I, listen, the Law has a nature that is spiritual. You and I have a nature that is fleshly. If you have a New King James on your lap, today, then that word used that you see is, carnal. I like that word. He says, the Law is by nature, spiritual. I am by nature fleshly, right? And that is the contrast.

And so, he's going to now talk about this contrast because whenever there's a contrast, it means those things are fighting with each other. Look what he says in verse 15. Here's the fight. Here's the battle. *“For I don't, (he says) I do not understand my own actions.”* Doesn't that describe your Christian walk most of the time? He's like, I don't even understand myself.

He says, *“for I do not do what I want to do. But I do the very thing I hate.”*¹⁶ *Now if I do what I do not want, then I agree with the law that it is good.”* Those are good rules that God gave.

“¹⁷ So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells (in me or) within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the

desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want... (that's) what I keep on doing."

Stop there for just a moment. Now, I'll grant you, the way Paul is laying this out is not a way that you and I would probably lay it out. We wouldn't say it the way he's saying it, but I think we can all relate to it. Because if you could see my Christian life on a graph, it would resemble the design for the wildest roller coaster ride you've ever seen in your life, isn't that, can you relate to that?

I mean, don't you have times in your life where you feel like you're just on top of it? And you're doing great and you feel like things are going really well and then you just bottom out. It's like the worst of the worst comes out of you and it's just yuck. It's just flesh. We're soaring in on the Spirit at one minute and then boom, we're like in the pits and we're sitting there going, what is this? God what is this?

What happened here? I'm laying on the ground looking up at the sky because I've been knocked off my feet, and I'm wondering what hit me? What is going on? Why is it that I can't seem to have this life of consistency with the Lord? I want to do what's right, but I seem to have this just total inability to get there and so forth. I find myself lacking. So where am I going to get the power to live the life of God?

Is it going to come from the Law? We've already talked about that. No, the Law doesn't give me any power. The Law, there is no power in the Law except to convict and condemn. There's no power to live, right? The Law doesn't include power to live the Christian life. That's why we, that's again, why legalism doesn't work. I can sit around here throwing out rules all day long for you guys. All right, now listen up. And we can kind of do this sort of a thing, all right now we're going to tell you how to live and we can give you all kinds of laws.

Okay. Over here, we're going to write the dos and then over here, we're going to write the do nots. Here's what you do. And here's what you do not. Here you go. There's the Christian life. Now do it. Yeah it's just, it's not going to work. There's no power in a Law to cause you to not do what's wrong or to do what's right. All it does is say, this is what's good. This is what's not good, but I can't help you with it. I can just tell you, right?

Paul goes on to make this next statement in verse 20, that is very key, and I want you to see it. Verse 20. Look with me in your Bible. *"Now, if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me."* Stop there.

Now, when you read this verse, this sounds a little bit like the apostle Paul is kind of shirking the blame, doesn't it? It sounds like he's placing the blame on something else. He's saying, well, when I mess up, not really me. Like that old thing we used to say, years ago, the devil made me do it, which was just that way of just shifting the blame. And we like to shift blame, let's face it, on someone or something else. And that's what it sounds like Paul is doing here, but he's not.

Listen, Paul knows exactly what's going on. He's not shifting blame; he understands that he is a sinner. What he's talking about here, is he's saying that something inside of him that is constantly fighting against who he is in Christ is not the real him.

Now, hear me people, this is important. The apostle Paul firmly believed that we, when we come to Jesus, that we are a new creation in Christ. He believed it with all of his heart. He didn't just say it because he thought it would make you feel better. He said it because it's true. You come to Jesus; you're a new creation. End of conversation. Right?

What does that mean now as it relates to sin? What are the implications as it relates to sin? Well, he's explaining it here. When I sin, it's not the real me. It's the old me. The old me that has died. What did Paul say when he wrote to the Galatians? He said, *"I have been crucified with Christ."* And I, speaking of the old man, no longer live. I no longer live. But Christ lives in me. *"The life I now live in... (this body) I live by faith in the Son of God,..."*

Do you understand what he's saying here? He's saying that the old sin, the old sin nature is not the real you. It's the old you. It's the old you that has been crucified, hasn't given up and breathed its last yet but it is the old. So, do you understand what I'm saying? Paul is literally saying. When as a Christian you sin, you are violating your new nature. It is consistent with your new nature to live a life of righteousness and holiness. Now you don't do that all the time, and neither do I.

But when we do mess up, it is actually a violation of who we really are. The old man is the one now that is asserting himself, or a woman as the case may be, and causing you to sin. But it's not the real you. That's what Paul is saying here in verse 20. He says now I realize that when I sin it's the old stinky man that was crucified on the cross of Jesus Christ and that's not who I am anymore because I am a new creation. Do you get this? This is cool stuff.

Here's the question. Do we believe what Paul believes? I think we should, frankly. But you have to ask yourself the question, what do I believe about myself? Do I look at what I do when I sin and I say, that's me. Or do I look at what I do when I sin and say, you know what, that's not me. And that's not that I'm not taking responsibility for it. I am culpable, okay, for my actions. But what I'm saying is that's not the real me. That's not the recreated, that's not the born-again me.

That's the old me, the old stinky flesh, the old carnal man, the old self-centered me that just wants to get out of life whatever I can get out of life. You see. That's the point of what Paul is saying here in this situation. This is just a holdover from the old life. And what Paul is helping us to understand is that there is a new nature within us now that is the real you, it's the real you, it's the real McCoy. And that's the life that you need to begin to let shine forth.

Now, before you met Jesus, before I met Jesus, when I lived that carnal existence, when I sinned, when you sinned, we were being true to our nature then, because that was the only nature we had. We had an old, sinful nature. And when I don't know about you, but when I, before I met Jesus, I didn't even question what I did. Just did it because that was who I was.

I didn't really struggle with sin before I met Jesus. I struggled with righteousness, because I couldn't do it, and I didn't really want to. No, yeah, I didn't want to at all. But I was just being true to my nature, and so were you.

But then we come to Christ. We receive Jesus as our Savior. He comes to live within us. He comes to indwell us through his Holy Spirit, and He places within us a Christ nature. The nature of Jesus literally begins to take up residence inside of us. That's the new you. Welcome to the new you.

Do you live completely consistent to the new you? No. But it's still the new you and now the old man is the one who sins and that's why there's a battle going on inside of you. It's okay, seriously. You're not schizophrenic. You're just a Christian. Yeah. Thank you, Jesus.

Because there's these two natures that are vying for control inside of your life. The old sinful nature, which was crucified with Christ on the cross and the new Christ nature in you. And here's how, when Paul wrote to the Galatians, he actually talked about this. Let me put this on the screen for you. He said this,

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 that you want to do.

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 that you want to do.

It's right there. It's right there. This is the battle. This is the conflict. This is the, this is the psychosis that we're all dealing with. It's like, ah, I want to do what's right, but I don't have the ability in and of myself to carry it out. Right? That's the thing. That's the battle. That's the warfare that is being waged inside of all of us.

Do you feel a little bit better here today? I hope you do. I hope you're like, phew! Man, I'm glad you explained that one because man, I thought that was a basket case. Right? Yeah. Well, Paul actually says the very same thing here in Romans.

Look at verse 21 in your text right now. He says, “*So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand.*”²² *For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, ...*” My inner man.

The new recreated man loves the Word of God and loves doing right. And he says, I want to do right. But I find this law in me that, that evil is just right there all the time. Just waiting to pounce, right?

Jump on you and dominate you. And that sort of thing. Verse 23. “*...but I see in my members another law waging war (there's that warfare) against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.*”

And this is just, you see this going on in your life and what is your reaction to it? How are you going to deal with it? How are you going to deal with this conflict in your life?

Do you know what most people do? They just doubt their salvation. Truly. That's probably one of the most common knee jerk reactions when people really. They come to faith in Christ, they confess Jesus as their Savior, and then they realize that they are, they're just as able to sin as they ever have in their life, and sometimes it's even worse. And immediately they just go, well, I must

not be saved. What does that tell you? What does that conclusion tell you about someone's expectations?

They have an expectation. Hey, things are all going to be better. I'm going to meet Jesus, and things are going to be better, right? This whole sin thing is going to be a thing of the past and then they sin in technicolor. And they realize, oh, well, that didn't turn out like I thought. Well, maybe I'm not saved.

Well listen, salvation comes by grace through faith. You put your faith in Jesus. If you're trusting Him for the forgiveness of your sins, you are saved because that's what salvation is.

It's trusting Jesus, trusting that what He did on the cross was enough to forgive you of your sins. If you're trusting, if you're just like, you know what? Hey, what Jesus did on the cross, that was it, man, that was all I needed. Then the Bible says you're born-again. So now what are you going to do about this conflict, this warfare that's going on inside of you, this constant gravitational pull to the gutter that frankly happens in all of us.

Well, you know what it causes the apostle Paul to do? To declare things like he starts off here in verse 24. Look with me in your Bible. *"Wretched man that I am!"*

I don't know if you can relate to that or not, but have you ever felt that way? Just like, oh, I'm wretched. I'm just, I'm the worst. And that's the place that we have to come. We have to come to the place of recognizing that our hearts are wretched apart from Him because if we don't, if we don't come to that place, we're going to keep believing the mistaken idea that there's something good in me and I just need to figure it out and unlock it and then I'm going to be okay.

Listen, that's a lie from the pit of hell. The fact of the matter is Paul already dealt with that issue when he said, I know that nothing good lives in me that is in my flesh. Nothing. Did you catch that? I don't know if you're aware of it, but you and I were just insulted. Well, he's saying it about himself too, but he's saying nothing good, nothing good lives in me. Nothing good lives inside of me.

Have you come to that conclusion or are you still dancing on the notion that all people are essentially good? All people are essentially evil. I know that's a hard thing to swallow, especially in our culture. Our culture wants to pat you on the back and say that we're all essentially good people. You hear that? I hear that from Christians all the time. I know that we all have some goodness in us. We don't have any goodness in us.

Sorry, but that's the fact of the matter. Again, going back to that passage in Jeremiah, the heart of man is deceitful and beyond cure. It's wicked and evil, and that's us, you guys. And I'm sorry to be the one to lay that out, but it has to be laid out. And you and I have to come to terms with it so that we will say, I am wretched. And by the way, this word, wretched that Paul is using here, this is a word that actually means, exhausted from battle.

Isn't that interesting? It carries that connotation of being exhausted from a great conflict. And I know a lot of Christians that are fighting that battle. There's a battle going on inside of them and they're trying their best to win, but they're only doing it in their own strength, and so they are living an exhausted Christian life because they're trying to just, they're trying to be good people.

And you hear it in their voice all the time. They'll talk about some big failure in their life, and they'll say, well, I'm just, I'm working on that area of my life. And there's this very subtle sort of an idea that you get from that, that they think it's their responsibility to fix themselves, to be better people.

And Paul says, you can't. You can't be a better person. In your flesh dwells no good thing so what are you going to do? You're exhausted. Well, you come to the same conclusion Paul did, and you say, *"Wretched man that I am!"*

Because listen, it is only when you understand your true wretchedness that you're ready to ask the question that Paul goes on to ask here in verse 24. Look with me there. He says, *"Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me..."*

Now I want you to take very, very special note of something. This is the first time since we've been reading in this section of Romans 7 where Paul has made any reference really to God or Jesus. And he's only doing it now by inference. But up to this point, it's all been him. Have you noticed that? Have you noticed that since we started reading in verse 14 up to this point, it's all been Paul.

In fact, if you count, you will find that there are no fewer than 40 references to Paul himself. 40! Now, what's Paul doing? He's building a case. He's trying to get you and I to see that if in our own power, in our own strength, in our own ability, there's no hope. And we are wretched and lost and so forth, right? And we finally come to the place of saying, who's going to save me?

Now, that's the very first time Paul has said anything outside of himself. He's now stretching out and saying, So is there anybody that can save me who will save me? Do you see what Paul's doing? It's no longer me I've come to terms

with the fact I can't do it. I can't fix it. Now who's going to save me? Who's going to deliver me from this body of death?

Isn't that what he says? Who will deliver me from this body of death? It's almost like he literally understands that there is this corpse that is lashed to his body and he's carrying it around and he can't resuscitate it. There's nothing he can do because it's dead. And he's like, who's going to cut me free from this body of death that I'm carrying around? And it's weighing me down and there's nothing I can do. Who will help me? Will anyone deliver me?

But for the very first time, Paul's now reaching outside of himself and people, that's what we must do. We've got to come to that place of wretchedness of self so that we begin to realize it's not about me. I can't fix this problem. It can only come through the power of God. And that is so important.

You guys, one of my absolute favorite passages in the whole Bible is that section in Matthew that we call the Sermon on the Mount. It encompasses 3 chapters, 5, 6, and 7, and I absolutely love it. I've taught from it several times. But what's interesting about the Sermon on the Mount, which is a great sermon for believers, is that the very first thing out of Jesus's mouth has to do with understanding our wretched condition. And if you stumble over the first verse of the Sermon on the Mount, you're not going to get the whole rest of it.

If you stumble over the beginning, if you stumble walking through the door, you're not going to be able to move your way through it. Let me show you what it says on the sermon in the Sermon on the Mount. The verse says,

Matthew 5:23 (ESV)

“And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

“And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Now we've talked about this lots of times. What does it mean? What does poor mean in the Greek? You guys remember? It doesn't mean poor like I only have a little. It means poor as in I have nothing. It literally means destitute. What does spirit mean? It refers to the essence of a man. So, what is Jesus saying? There is a blessed condition for those who are destitute of themselves for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

They have now opened the door to the richest of blessings because they've come to terms with the fact, they have nothing. Nothing to offer, nothing to bring, nothing to save themselves by, nothing to deliver themselves by. They are destitute.

Do you guys understand destitute? I have nothing. I don't even have the cardboard to make my sign so I can go sit down by Walmart. I have nothing. If someone doesn't give me some money today, I won't eat. I'm not out here telling you I'm broke and I don't have very much. I'm telling you, I have nothing.

Blessed are those who have nothing in themselves, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. This is exactly what Paul is saying when he comes to terms with this thing in himself and he says, "*Wretched man that I am!*" I have nothing. I am lost. And Paul is expressing a heart of desperation. Do you hear it? I'm desperate.

Have you ever been desperate? It's not a fun place to be. We give some new perspective, doesn't it to that song we sing from time to time. And I'm desperate for you and I'm lost without you. We sing those words. They're very poetic. They're very, I mean, they sound really good.

Sometimes I think we sing them just because we think maybe it helps God feel a little bit better about Himself. Okay, God, I know you need me to need you so I'm going to sing this here. Lord, I'm desperate for you. Oh that's a cool thing to say. And I'm lost without You Lord. And I don't even mean it. I haven't come to the place of desperation. I haven't come to the place of personal wretchedness.

I have not come to the place of such incredible loss as it expresses here that I'm destitute. I haven't come there yet. I'll sing about it but when Paul says, "*Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?*" He's reaching out for something beyond himself, and the answer is found in verse 25. It's a very simple and very quick answer, and he says, "*Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*"

How am I delivered from carrying around that rotting corpse? Again, it comes by looking outside of myself. I can't do it myself, but I can come to Jesus, and I can look to Him, my Deliverer, the One who sets me free.

And this is always the turning point in everybody's life, the life of and from whatever issues or things that you're going with. I don't know what your main pain is right now. I mean with some of you, I do, but most of you, I don't.

Cause very yeah. But I'll tell you right now, whatever it is, whatever your issue is, I don't know, if it's marriage, home and family, money, resources, emotional upheaval, just problems, lost your job, whatever. I can tell you right now that the turning point in our lives related to those things is always when we take self out of the equation and we trust God completely and say, you know what? I've got nothing to bring to this. I've got nothing to fix this with.

I don't have the goods. I am just absolutely destitute, wretched man that I am who's going to deliver me? Jesus is going to deliver me. Listen, victory always comes by looking past self and finding those things through the person of Jesus Christ. How's my marriage ever going to change? You can answer it just the way Paul did there in verse 25. *"Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord."*

How am I going to survive all the difficulties I'm going through right now? *"Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord."* How am I ever going to break free from this sin that just has me around the throat? *"Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord."* It always comes down to Him.

And so, Paul ends this chapter with an interesting statement. Look at the very last sentence of the chapter, Paul says, *"So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin."*

By the way, this last sentence that Paul writes here is not meant to convey the idea that you and I ought to be, and it's normal to be living a divided Christian life as if I'm going to be serving God sometimes, and I'm going to be serving my flesh sometimes, and that's okay. It's not okay. And that's not what Paul is trying to say. So why did he write this last sentence? Sounds like a buzzkill to me.

I mean, doesn't it almost sound like we're going backwards a little bit here, and we're giving permission for my schizophrenic life to come to the surface, and be a Christian sometimes, and a total fleshed-out person the next?

Listen, Paul has already laid out the answer. The answer is Jesus. The answer is trusting Him. But he wants you to know something. It's not going to take the struggle away and that's why he ends with this sentence. I've given you the answer, but it's not going to take the struggle away. You're still going to struggle.

In fact, you're going to struggle every day, every single day of your life on this earth. The old fleshly life is going to rise up and say, feed me. Now! Like my stupid cat. My cat. It's funny, we have this weird relationship with our dumb cat.

It's funny, isn't it? We got this cat back when we had kids at home, and then the kids grow up and they leave, and you're left with the pets. What's up with that? I have this dumb cat that I never wanted and the cat looks to me to get fed. Doesn't look to Sue. Doesn't ever say to her, feed me. But oh, that cat, I tell you, if I'm ever gone for a couple of days, I come home and that cat yells at me. I mean, looks at me like, hey, where have you been? And it's like, sorry.

It reminds me of my sinful nature though. It says, hey, feed me. Right? Where you been pal? It's time to eat and boy that's a struggle. Now with the cat I have to break down and feed the dumb thing because I could be arrested if I don't. But not the sinful nature, I don't have to give in, and we talked about that in Romans chapter 6. But the struggle is still going to be there. The struggle will still remain.

I know the answer. The answer is my own personal wretchedness and reaching out to Jesus Christ, but the struggle will remain and that is such an important thing. And so, we have to be trusting the Lord to see us through every single day. Coming to Him every single day Lord, I just I come to you because I recognize I can't fix this thing.

Some of you, by nature, are fixers, and you know who you are. Most of you. And when you deal with an issue in your home, your family, your life, your heart, your mind, your whatever it is, you just, you snap to, and you just start fixing things. Isn't it an exhausting way to live? Yeah.

And what's really nasty about the whole thing is that there are times when God will allow our temporary fixes to give us the impression that they actually have had some lasting effect. And that only feeds that sense of, here's what I need to do about the problem. I'm just going to take care of it. And we get into this habitual sort of a rut of just fixing problems.

And ultimately, we come to something that we can't fix. We come to something that just, there's no, I have no magic for this thing. So what am I going to do? Ultimately, I have to come to that place of just total, I don't have it God. And you know what?

I think that's one of the healthiest things as Christians we can say. I can't, but you can. What is your problem? What is your issue right now? Just tell God, I can't do this. I can't do it, but you can, I can't do it. I can't fix this, but you can, I can't take care of my heart, but you can. I can't take care of my marriage.

I can't fix this thing. But you can. You can do it, but I am unable, I don't have the goods. I'm a wretched man, I'm a wretched woman. Whatever your case, and I can't do it. But Lord, I'm trusting you every single day.

Now, listen, Romans chapter seven was never meant to be studied and understood apart from Romans chapter 8, but we're not going to get into it today. But I just want you to know that there is so much more that the apostle Paul wants to say, because after this, after he has established the wretchedness of our life and that we must look to God.

Romans chapter 8 is going to begin to open up some new doors of understanding concerning the life of the Spirit and the power of the Spirit to enable and strengthen that is going to just absolutely delight you. Don't miss it. Because again, these things were never meant to be taken in their own personal microcosm where we separate it from everything else going on in the Book of Romans. It's meant to be taken together. Unfortunately, we only have time to study so much of the Word in one given sitting. But this is all to be taken together.

The life of the Spirit, boy don't miss, do you know there are Christians right now who they've missed the Spirit. It's like there's a Spirit bus and they just missed it. They didn't get on.

And it's like, and they're sitting there trying to live the Christian life and walk down the road. It's like, I'm a Christian, praise the Lord. And they missed the bus and the Spirit is nowhere to be seen in their life. The power to live a Christian life is not there. They're just gritting their teeth and gutting it out. And I'm telling you, they are going to come to a wall and they're going to crash against that wall someday.

It's probably what they need to do so that they'll come to the point of saying, *"Wretched man that I am! Who's going to deliver me..."* I've been trying to deliver myself all these years.

I wonder how many Christians there are. What do you suppose the percentage is? How many Christians are there who've been living the Christian life on their own steam? On their own power? Trying to just gut it out and be the best Christian they can be?

Sounds to me like an exercise in futility. We're going to start trusting Jesus to do that work inside of us that only He can do, amen?