

THE GOSPEL IS STRUGGLE

ROMANS 7:7-25 // PASTOR TODD DUGARD
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Living out the gospel is a struggle, not because I'm confused about what's sinful (7:7-12), but because I'm at war with my own flesh (7:13-20); but I win when I delight in God's Word (7:21-22), I admit my frailties (7:23-24), and I adore Jesus (7:25).

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you were to describe the Gospel experience with a few words, would you choose 'struggle' to help people understand it? Why or why not?
2. In Romans 7:7, Paul says, "...if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin". It can be easy to think of sin as a list of wrong actions but consider it conceptually as Paul is doing here. What do you know now about sin and its effect on you and people in general?

"No one should be confused about what's sinful; the law lays it out. Where people get off track is in ignoring, rejecting, or re-interpreting the Word of God. The in-vogue thing to do today is to re-define what is sinful. Not liking the way God's Word has laid things out, people are simply moving the stakes. Changing the field of play." – Pastor Todd

3. How have you observed our society adapting the rules to incorporate sinful activity? What role does the entertainment industry have in eroding or challenging God's moral concepts?

4. Did you identify with the idea of “two you-s” that are at war within you? Why is it good for us to acknowledge this internal struggle together?

5. How does Romans 7:13-20 explain where the motivation to sin comes from? Where does it say the inspiration for righteousness comes from?

6. We all know what it feels like to lose the battle with sin! This passage points us to strategies that help us overcome sinful tendencies. How do you delight in God’s word? How do you stay fresh in this strategy?

7. What help could you gain by admitting your frailty to someone in a wise way? (Taking this a bit further, is it possible to confess to sin without actually realizing weakness?)

Simul justus et peccator

At the same time, saint and sinner

8. Do you think your sinful tendency puts you in danger of God’s wrath? If Jesus returned and met you as you were delighting in your sinful nature, what do you expect would happen to you? (*Consider here that the serpent lied to Eve by saying she would not die for disobeying God.*)

9. As you reflect on Romans 7:24-25, what would say is Paul’s reason for adoring Jesus Christ as he does? Have you reached the same conclusions about yourself and Jesus that Paul has?