

FOCUS
Cultural Issue

TITLE
Big Struggles

REFERENCE
Romans 7:21–25

• brown merit •

Romans

... LESSON 5

• FOR THE LEADER

• PREP



FOR THE LEADER

WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT:

The war within us can only be won with Christ.

THINK ABOUT IT:

- What important historical battles or wars do you remember?
- Which sport do you believe is the most difficult?
- What do you think the first Olympics involved?



PREP

- large rubber bands

• *Notes* •

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Romans

... LESSON 5

· READ



· REFLECT



· RESPOND



READ

So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin. Romans 7:21–25

Name a few important historical battles or wars. Maybe World War I, Desert Storm, or the Vietnam War comes to mind. Each battle or war has its own unique reasons for taking place. Wars often are rooted in the principle of dominance. One party or group feels as though it should have dominance over an opposing party or group. Often the opposing party or group feels that it should be the dominant one, or that no one should be dominant.

In the Book of Romans, we read how the apostle Paul faced the inner struggle that everyone faces—the battle between the doing what he knew was right and doing evil. Just like Paul, we usually know the things that Christ wants

us to do. However, evil is always struggling against us, wanting us to do things that are selfish, self-pleasing, and oftentimes harmful in the long run. The evil things can sometimes be fun and have no immediate consequences. But the truth is that when we give in to our evil desires, there are negative effects. This is the war Paul is talking about—a never-ending war between the part of us that wants to follow Jesus and the part of us that wants to be selfish and please ourselves.

Parts of our modern culture try to make us think that there are no moral boundaries. Culture sometimes tells us that people should be able to do or say anything they want and not be held accountable. This type of thinking is extremely dangerous. It would be a crazy place if people did whatever they wanted to do.

The lines on the sides and in the middle of our roads are boundaries. But aren't you thankful for them? Without those lines, cars would crash into other cars and innocent pedestrians. Drive-thru would take on a whole new meaning! In the same way, moral boundaries keep us safe and away from the harms of evil.

To win this war between our desires to do good and evil, we must first choose a side, though that can be easier said than done. We can either side with our evil desires or we can side with God and do what we know is right. Your choice is evident by your behavior and the things you

place the highest priority on. Both sides cannot lead. In order to win this war, we must choose God as the leader. Our evil desires will always fight to be in control, which means we must continue to fight to keep God in control of our lives. Paul made that difficult decision and reminds us that that we need rescuing from this conflict. Paul found the love and strength of Christ more important than any reward his evil desires had to offer.

In today's world, it's very important that we follow the Holy Spirit's leading for our life. Yielding to the Holy Spirit is the only way to completely overcome our evil desires. The good news is that because of the love of the Father, we have access to the power of the Holy Spirit and it is possible to overcome those desires if we believe and obey the Holy Spirit's direction!

PRAYER: God, I need Your help with the inner struggle that I face. Please grant me the faith and strength to follow Your lead. I thank You for Your love and I believe in Your power to lead me to what is best for my life. Amen.



REFLECT

Grab a handful of rubber bands. Make sure they are all the same size. With your friends, shoot a couple across the room—but not at each other. Watch where they land. Now shoot a few more but hold them a different way. Instead of just pulling the rubber bands back equally, pull so that one side of the rubber band is tight while the other is loose. The rubber bands fly at least twice as far.

The reason this happens is that shooting them normally makes the sides of the rubber band slap together. In doing so, it slows down. The new way allows the rubber band sides to follow each other, like circling, which lets it fly farther. When our worldly side follows the spiritual side, which is in control, we go a lot farther in our walk with Christ. Give it a try and see!



RESPOND

Learn Romans 7:21–23 and say the verses for your group leader, a parent, or a guardian.

- 7-DAY BIBLE READING PLAN**
- Sunday ·
 - Monday ·
 - Tuesday ·
 - Wednesday ·
 - Thursday ·
 - Friday ·
 - Saturday ·

The *Fire Bible: Student Edition* provides a reading plan that follows a two-year design for reading the entire Bible. Follow that reading plan in order to earn the green Bible Reading merit.

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