

DEFEATING THE ENEMY INSIDE OF ME, PT. 1

Series: Spiritual Bootcamp
Next Steps Devotional Guide
Romans 7:15-25
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1. If we genuinely truthful to ourselves, we would admit that the greatest enemy we face is . . . ourself. When have you seen that you are your worst own enemy and what did you learn from it?
2. In America, we are raised to be self-reliant, to pull ourselves up by our boot straps, and to be independent. But in the end, many times this creates frustration and failure. Where are have you seen this happen to you spiritually?
3. Read Romans 7:15 from your sermon notes under point #1 under the heading, *“What Are The Emotional Costs of This Battle Going On Inside of Me?”* In Romans 7, Paul uses the word “I” over and over and over. In fact, in just twelve verses he uses the word “I” 27 times. He uses the word “my” 6 times. He uses the word “me” 6 times. He uses the word “myself” 2 times. All in all, Paul uses the first person pronouns 46 times in twelve verses. Paul has an “I” problem! And you have an “I” problem. The problem is I try to do it all my way and that’s going to cause me to fail. I am my biggest problem. “I” am the cause to most of my bewilderment and perplexity. How does Paul’s transparency and openness help you?
4. Read Romans 7:16 from your sermon notes under point #2 under the heading, *“What Are The Emotional Costs of This Battle Going On Inside of Me?”*
 - a. Read the explanation of the word translated as “conscience” in Romans 7:16. What are some things you have done that you knew were wrong, but you did them anyway? What were the consequences and what did you learn about yourself?
 - b. Read Matthew 26:38, 40, 41b — Jesus’ words to His disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane — under point #2, under the heading, *“What Are The Emotional Costs of This Battle Going On Inside of Me?”* Just hours earlier in the Upper Room, Jesus had poured out His heart to His disciples. He revealed there was a traitor among them and that He was going to be crucified. Most of us would think this would have traumatized His disciples — especially after He told them what He did in verse 38. You would think they would have been alert and aware. Yet, they fell asleep in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus woke them up and told them their spirits were willing, but their bodies were weak. Why do you think they did not give Jesus the support He asked and when has this happened to you?
5. Read Romans 7:17 under point #3 under the heading, *“What Are The Emotional Costs of This Battle Going On Inside of Me?”* All of us have a fallen nature. All of us have an inclination to do the wrong things. We are into what is comfortable and easy to do, not what is difficult and beneficial. All of us have bad habits and hangups that trip us up. And if you do these bad habits and hangups long enough you get addicted to them and they become your strongest desires. In what ways have you said something like this to God: *“God, today is going to be different. I am going to be different. I am not going to do _____; instead, I am going to _____,”* only to fail? When, where and with who is this true for you?
6. Read Hebrews 11:25 from your sermon notes under point #3 under the heading, *“What Are The Emotional Costs of This Battle Going On Inside of Me?”* The Bible affirms that sin can be fun. But, as you have you kicks, there are kickbacks. What are some of the kickbacks you have experienced from viewing sin as fun?
7. Read Romans 7:18a from your sermon notes under doing #4 under the heading, *“What Are The Emotional Costs of This Battle Going On Inside of Me?”* It has been said there are people who: (a) loathe themselves; (b) people who loathe others; (c) some people who genuinely love others; (d) but fewer people who love themselves. Take your Bible and read Jesus words in Matthew 22:37-40.
 - a. When we try to please God with willpower alone, we always come up short. Always. When Jesus tells us to “love our neighbor as ourself,” what do you think He means?
 - b. Many people when they experience frustrations and failures by their own hand, resort to putting down themselves. Is such a reaction and attitude godly?
 - c. People fail us. People disappoint us. People do not live up to our expectations, but we do the same thing. Who are you harder on: others or yourself? Why?
8. Read Romans 7:18b-19 from your sermon notes under point #5 under the heading, *“What Are The Emotional Costs of This Battle Going On Inside of Me?”*
 - a. All of us are familiar with the physical law of gravity. Gravity is what pull us down. In Romans 7:18b-19, we see another law mentioned here: there is a “spiritual law of gravity.” It is always easier to pull someone down than to lift them up. Do you agree and if so, where have you witnessed this? When and where have you been guilty of doing this?
 - b. Pastor Kelly read to you a chapter called “Cookies” from the children’s book, *Frog And Toad Together*, by Arnold Lobel. The moral of this story is that good intentions are not enough. Willpower is not enough. Resolutions are not enough. We tend to eat the cookies anyway. What “cookies” have you attempted to avoid, but eventually found yourself “eating” them? Why? What did you learn about yourself?

9. Read Romans 7:21, 23b from your sermon outline from point #6 under the heading, *“What Are The Emotional Costs of This Battle Going On Inside of Me?”*
 - a. Notice the emphasis on the word “mind” in Romans 7:21, 23b. Take your Bible and read Proverbs 4:23. If we do not guard our heart, if we are not careful how we think, we will feel like giving up. We will feel hopeless. War is tough. It is frustrating. It is disparaging. It is taxing. It is discouraging. It creates despair. Have you ever felt like this from bailing the enemy inside? If so, when and what were the circumstances?
 - b. It is overwhelming to have one voice in your mind telling you to do this, and then another voice in your mind telling you to do the exact opposite.
 - i. These two opposing voices are at war inside of you. Willpower alone is not enough keep you godly. Education and knowledge is not enough either. In 1964, the United States Surgeon General concluded that smoking causes lung cancer and heart disease. Ever since then, there have been labels on cigarette packages warning smokers about the dangers and risks. Yet, this knowledge has not stopped people from smoking. Since then, there have been warnings about AIDS and HIV, but people still engage in unprotected sex. We have spent billions of dollars educating people about these two vices alone and yet, people still smoke and have unprotected sex/ Why?
 - ii. Read Romans 7:24a as well as the explanation of the explanation of the words translated as. “terrible predicament” from your sermon notes under point #6 under the heading, *“What Are The Emotional Costs of This Battle Going On Inside of Me?”* Have you ever felt this way from the battles waged against you by your two natures?
10. Had Romans 7:24-25 under point #1 under the heading, *“How Do I Defeat The Enemy Inside of Me?”*
 - a. Paul talks about how we are “dominated by sin and death.” Jesus does not just want to be a caregiver or caretaker for you. He wants to be the CEO of your life. He doesn’t want “improved”; He wants new. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. What does this say to you about your old sinful nature verses the answer to defeating this enemy inside of you?
 - b. Rome had an unusual punishment it sometimes imposed as punishment for murder. Instead, of capital punishment for committing murder, they would sentenced you to live a free life, BUT only with the person’s corpse you had murdered chained and attached to you until it was fully decomposed. For a moment, write what you think this would and feel like. Why do you think Rome applied this sentence?
 - c. Paul is clear that is not a what who frees us from sin and this body of death — it is not another principle, or pill or program that frees us from our old sinful nature. It is not another a Tony Robbins seminar. It is not a new book or another conference. It is not psychology or philosophy or therapy. It is a Who — the person of Jesus Christ. Where and when have you experienced this in your own life?
11. Read 1 John 1:8 from your sermon notes under point #2 under the heading, *“How Do I Defeat The Enemy Inside of Me?”* We have to reject the lies we are believing as truth. Sin causes us to deceive ourselves and deception causes us to sin.
 - a. What are you pretending isn’t a problem in your life? What are you pretending not to know?
 - b. We have an amazing ability to lie to ourselves and to convince ourselves of things that aren’t true. The biggest liar you know is you and the person you lie to the most is yourself. You make excuses. You rationalize. You minimize and you tolerate sin and your old sinful nature. Read Jeremiah 17:9 under sub-point (a) under the heading, *“Behind every lie I am believing.”* What does this tell you about yourself.
 - c. Read 1 Corinthians 3:18. and John 8:32 from your sermon notes under point #2 under sub-point (b) under the heading, *“Behind every lie I am believing.”* It is important for you to become a person of truth. What is the truth you need to admit about yourself?
 - d. Read John 8:44 and John 14:6 from from your sermon notes under point #2 under sub-point (b) under the heading, *“Behind every lie I am believing.”* What do these passages teach you?
 - e. Denying the truth about yourself will only make you miserable and mad. Humility eliminates both. How can denial about yourself create the results it does and how can humility created liberating freedom and victory over this enemy inside of you?
12. Read James 5:15 from your sermon notes under point #3 under the heading, *“How Do I Defeat The Enemy Inside of Me?”* Why do you think we do not do this? If you do not do this, why? Look at the middle letter in the word PRIDE. What is it? what does that tell you?
13. Read Galatians 5:16 from your sermon notes under point #3 under the heading, *“How Do I Defeat The Enemy Inside of Me?”* In Romans 8, Paul mentions the Holy Spirit 19 times as the means to defeat your old sinful nature. Romans 8 is the exact opposite picture of Romans 7 — victory verses defeat. Romans 7 is Paul saying, “Here is the bad news.” Romans 8 is Paul saying, “Here is the good news.” Do you live your life more by your own spirit or more by the Holy Spirit?
14. Read Philippians 2:13 from your sermon notes under point #3 under the heading, *“How Do I Defeat The Enemy Inside of Me?”* If you were walking at the beach and all of a sudden, a seagull died and fell out of the sky in front of you, if you immediately picked it up and threw it back into the air, what would happen? It would fall right back to the ground. It is not the muscle, it is not the bones, it is not the wings, it is not the feathers that makes a seagull fly. It is the life that God puts into it. When the spirit is out of that bird it isn’t flying. It’s still got all the same equipment but it’s not going to fly. You can have the best intentions, the strongest willpower and the most determined spirit, but if you do not have the Holy Spirit empowering you and and giving you ambition, you will fall back too. So, what will it take for you to let the Holy Spirit do this for you?