

Romans 7:24-25

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It is through faith in Jesus that we are set free from our carnal desires and the sin nature that produces them. While we are still on this earth our sin nature will always be fighting against our desire to serve God.

This battle against the sin nature makes Paul miserable, and he wants relief, exclaiming, *Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?* Paul yearns to be set free from his sin nature, in his earthly body, that leads to death (disconnection of fellowship in our relationship with God, suffering the earthly consequences of sin). In verse 25, Paul tells his audience that it is God, through Jesus, who can set us free from our sin nature in our *experience*.

Through faith on Jesus, Paul is able to serve God and do His will, while still struggling against his sin nature. *Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!*

Paul's ultimate goal is to do the will of God and follow His law, but he knows that he will struggle with his sin nature. *With [his] mind he is serving the law of God, but on the other with [his] flesh the law of sin.* Because of the grace of God through Jesus's sacrifice on the cross, Paul is able to serve God's law while struggling with the sin nature within him. Without faith in Jesus, it would be impossible to fight this sin nature.

Paul uses the term law of God in the mind verses law of sin in the flesh to describe the old nature and new nature combatants in the inner contest we all endure, in this Romans passage. In Galatians he used the labels Spirit and flesh to describe the same battle.

Paul's letter to the Galatians brings up this conflict of the believer's old nature (of the flesh) and their new nature (of the spirit) in chapter 5:16-18.

"But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. "

Paul restates that the flesh and the spirit are in opposition to each other, and while the spirit-part of those who believe in Jesus has them wanting to do what God asks, the flesh prevents them from doing "the things that you please."

In Romans 8, Paul will show the believers of Rome that even though we cannot keep the law (because of our flesh and sin nature) we can still fulfill the law by walking in faith with Christ.

Biblical Text

²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.