



Living by Faith Part 6–The Conundrum

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USING THIS SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

We have provided all the Scriptures references in the sermon and some discussion questions for you to use to discuss the weekend message.

This Sermon Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. For most groups, there are too many questions to answer in one session together. Give priority to the needs and pace of your group members.

While the questions are important, remember your group's goal is to create an atmosphere that will foster true friendships. Use the discussion questions as you see fit but emphasize the relationships.

Water baptism is a New Testament commandment, not a suggestion. Water Baptism is a sacrament of the Church that, when done in faith, changes our spiritual reality, giving us victory over sin, as we identify with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ

The struggle with sin is real, and Paul wants to walk us through the progressive process of how to deal with it.

[Romans 6:5-6]

Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was. We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ **so that sin might lose its power in our lives.**

We are no longer slaves to sin. For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin.

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| conundrum = “anything that puzzles or that doesn’t have a clear answer” |
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[Matthew 5:17, AMP]

“Do not think that I came to do away with **or** undo the Law of Moses or the writings of the Prophets; I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

[Matthew 5:20]

“But I warn you—unless your righteousness is better than the righteousness of the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven!”

The problem with the Law is that no one can keep it; it drives us to the Cross. We are broken, and we find our identity in the One who could fulfill the Law.

[Romans 7:14-17]

So the trouble is not with the law, for it is spiritual and good. **The trouble is with me**, for I am all too human, a slave to sin. I don’t really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don’t do it. Instead, I do what I hate. But if I know that what I am doing is wrong, this shows that I agree that the law is good. So I am not the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it.

[Romans 7:18-24]

And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can’t. I want to do what is good, but I don’t. I don’t want to do what is wrong, but I do it

anyway. But if I do what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it.

I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love God's law with all my heart. But there is another power within me **that is at war with my mind**. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. Oh, what a wretched man I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death?

[Romans 7:25]

Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

[Romans 8:1-4]

Therefore, **there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus**, and because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. ⁴ He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, **who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit**.

The key to unlocking the conundrum, to experience victory in your situation, is to live a spirit-led life.

[Galatians 5:16-25]

So I say, **let the Holy Spirit guide your lives**. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. ¹⁷ The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful

nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions. ¹⁸ But when you are directed by the Spirit, you are not under obligation to the law of Moses. When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God. **But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives:** love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. ²⁵ Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives.

Pursuing a Spirit-led life:

- 1. Identify the lies and replace them with truth.**
- 2. Walk daily with The Holy Spirit.**

The road you are going to walk on in the future is paved with your thoughts.

[Romans 8:5-6]

Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. **But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace.**

All the lies the enemy has told me are actually a ‘smokescreen.’ None of what he has told you can actually keep you distant from the grace of God.

FOR MONDAY—

1. Invite God to lead you by His Spirit into fruitfulness.
2. Identify what you’re being told and spend time in God’s Word replacing any lies you’ve bought into with truth.

TALK IT THROUGH

1. When have you found yourself lost or misdirected? How did you eventually find your way to your destination?
2. What are some real struggles that challenged your resolve despite your determination to stay the course in a particular area of life? Where have you ran up against some standards or expectations that felt too rigorous to meet?
3. What is a conundrum? Why was attempting to “exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees” a conundrum? [Matthew 5.20] Why do you think Jesus would raise the bar so high? How does Jesus provide the solution?
4. How does the sentiment in Romans 7.17 point to the warfare required to live in freedom and obedience to God? How could it resemble gnostic thought patterns when someone uses it to justify sinful choices?
5. What does the Apostle Paul say in Romans 7-8 about the battle for sin being first in our mind? In actuality, how is this freedom often progressive?
6. How have you seen God’s fruitfulness in your life, as a by-product of living a spirit-led life? [Galatians 5.16-25]
7. What are some lies that you need to replace with truth, so you can experience true freedom?
8. In your own life, what does it look like to walk daily with The Holy Spirit?