

THE FRAILITY OF MAN, THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT

(Introduction)

Why this study; if we are honest with ourselves, we realize we are not what we want to be, or even what we thought we were. In keeping God's Law, we find how frail we are, therefore we need help in the simplest obedience. My prayer is that this study will help us to understand our weakness and the full power of the Holy Spirit.

1. Take your time to study **Rom 7:13-25** and attempt to give your understanding of this great portion: One of the primary purposes of the Law for believers is to make our sinful state known to us. We can't repent if we think nothing is wrong. Remember the law isn't bad but good. The frustrating thing is that it shows us how much we hate our sin.
 - a. Looking at **V13-14** carefully, how can the commandments be good? The commandments are good because that is God's will for all believers, but in our flesh they are impossible to keep.
 - b. How can you identify with **V15-16**? How I want to obey all of God's law, but find in my flesh it is impossible.
 - c. How is sin in us causing us to fall? Our flesh demands to be satisfied, it is relentless.
 - d. Why do we find it easier to sin than to obey? We are natural sinners, but it takes surrender to God's will to do what is right.
 - e. What is the law we find present within us? The law of fleshly desire that is constantly demanding to be satisfied.
 - f. What is this battle we fight? The battle we fight is against the flesh, the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak in obeying, but very strong in demanding its fulfillment.
 - g. What is the encouraging conclusion of this portion? What we are not able to do in the flesh the Spirit of God is able to give us the victory through Jesus Christ.

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(Chapter 1)

1 Peter 4:3-4: For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles — when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. **4** In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.

Eph 4:17-19: This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, **18** having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; **19** who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

So much of what people call Christianity, or define it as, is nothing but outward appearance; the way we walk, talk, places we go or don't go, what our political involvement is, in others words it is all about what people perceive us to be, but not what we are. This is why so many have a hard time with believers who are real. Even believers have faults, short comings, and even sin areas they are constantly dealing with. Have you ever wondered what others would think of us if they knew our inner thoughts, our sinful desires, our anger, and resentment that is expressed under our breath, or by our thoughts? What about the things we read, watch, and desires that we have, how would we respond if they were made public? Understand you are not alone; this is the battle ground of every believer. Wars that are fought can be messy and take casualties, but when you have the greatest, and

strongest leader you can be assured victory. (**Gal 2:20**: I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.) We must understand the battle we fight is not one of the flesh, but that of the Spirit.

What we are attempting to discover in this study is how we can have a great measure of victory over this horrible flesh that contains soul, and spirit. This my friends is the objective of this study. (**Prov 27:7**: *A satisfied soul loathes the honeycomb, but to a hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet*). This verse is telling us that if we are filled with the things of God, fully satisfied, then the bitter taste of the sinful things of this world has no pull on us. If we are honest with ourselves we know this to be true; when we are in prayer, study of the word, and worship the sensual desires of the flesh lose their appeal, but when we are not praying, reading the Word, or worshipping the ugly things of this world can become very appealing. The sober truth is that we will either satisfy one appetite or the other. In relationship to this, consider the fact of gradualism; if you put a frog in a pot of cool water on your stove it will swim around contently. Now if you turn on the heat under the pot and the water starts becoming gradually hotter, and hotter, the frog will continue to swim until it boils to death. Now if you put a frog in a pot of boiling water it will jump right out. Here is the analogy; if you take a believer and put them in a harmless worldly environment the believer will feel comfortable, but if the harmless environment gradually become sinful the believer will continue in that environment making excuses, and as the sinful environment become more sinful the believer will find himself being consumed by the sinful desires of the flesh. Now if you take a believer and thrust him into a very sinful environment, he will jump right out of it. Satan knows that the best way to pull Christians away from

their convictions is gradualism. Brothers and sisters remember, ***Gal 5:9***: A *little leaven leavens the whole lump*. When you find yourself being drawn toward the weakness of your flesh and away from the Lord, turn and run to Jesus with all of your strength. **2** ***Tim 2:22***: *Flee also youthful lusts*; but *pursue righteousness*, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. ***James 4:7-8***: Therefore submit to God. *Resist the devil* and *he will flee from you*. **8** Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Don't ever think you're at a place where you are too strong to fall; ***1 Cor 10:12***: Therefore let him *who thinks he stands* take heed *lest he fall*. We live in a fallen world filled with fallen man; therefore life is filled with difficulties, disappointment, and even tragedy. To know what is the right way to handle situations is one thing, but the ability to do what is right is often another. The only conclusion we can come to here is that we know what is right, we have a desire to do what is right, but in the flesh we are incapable of living the Christian life. This brings us to the question; how then are we to live for Christ in such a depraved world? We are facing temptations our fathers never dreamed of. The answer is that we need the power of the Spirit possibly more than any time in history. It is one thing to face evil head on, but another to have evil surround every aspect of our culture. Go to the movies, turn on your TV, pick up a magazine, the worldwide web, and discover the greatest trap man has ever faced. Your privacy can be intruded upon in ways our fathers never imagined. There is viewing that not too many years ago was considered illegal, of which people were prosecuted. It is one thing to seek after the temptations of this fallen world and quite another to have the worst possible temptations seeking after us.

My friends this battle would be without victory if it were not for the Holy Spirit, our greatest and only advocate in fighting the temptations of this world. But remember He will not come to our aid unless invited, He must be invited to participate in our life. (**2 Tim 2:22**: Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.) Our choice is to be swallowed by the lusts of this world or seek the Lord with a pure heart. Remember the Lord answers us, leads us, and strengthens us by His Holy Spirit.

The times we are living in are very strange, and we are being challenged by the Prince of this world (*Satan*) in many ways this planet has never known previously. This is a time we need the power of the Holy Spirit, and I believe, more than any time in human history.

