

FAILING FORWARD!

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Inside Out

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While we may never fully be free from the power of sin in this life, we can discover hope and forgiveness as we trust and rely on Jesus!

SERMON SUMMARY

We are continuing our series called Inside Out, which focuses on the spiritual transformation God wants for each of us. Unfortunately, on our journey of becoming more like Jesus we may discover patterns of sin, ungodly behaviors, and habits we can't seem to overcome. In a startling statement from someone who was such a devoted follower of Jesus, Paul talks about his own experience with sin in Romans 7. He says there are things he does he doesn't want to do but can't help himself. This can be an encouragement and challenge to us when we struggle. It is encouraging in that struggling is not unique to us, but it can be discouraging in that we don't want to struggle. And so, knowing that the struggle is real, we need to manage ourselves and our struggles well if we are going to live a victorious Christian life. This doesn't mean adding more laws or rules to follow – instead, we rely on Jesus and what He has done for us!

- In the book of Romans, we get a deep theological study of our struggle with sin.
 - In Romans 3:23 Paul says we all have sinned. Why is it important to acknowledge our struggle with sin? How does this impact our daily lives?
 - In Romans 6:11 Paul says that we are told to count ourselves dead to the power of sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. How does this get lived out in our daily lives?
- In Romans 7 Paul talks about our relationship with the Old Testament law and his personal struggle with sin.
 - What was the purpose of the law? What good comes from the law? What are the limitations of the law? Why do we need to be free from the law?
 - For someone who followed the law diligently Paul's honest reflection of his struggle with sin might be surprising. How do you relate to Paul's struggles with sin that he describes in verses 14-24? As you consider your own struggles with sin, are Paul's words encouraging or discouraging? Why?
- In Romans 7:25 Paul shares with us where we get our hope – in Jesus. We may stumble and fall on the journey of life, but Jesus offers us hope and forgiveness.
 - What does it mean to call out to Jesus? How do we experience the hope Jesus provides?
 - What should our expectation be in regards to overcoming sin? Will we ever truly have victory over sin? How can we keep ourselves from just accepting sin as normal?
 - How can the gifts of the Holy Spirit, our ability to cooperate with God, and our fellow believers in Christ help us navigate a healthy response to our personal struggles?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Let's take time to examine our lives and the sin we may be dealing with. If you find there are some significant struggles you are facing, don't try and hide them but bring them to God. And, find people in your life who can support and encourage you along the way!

PRACTICAL APPLICATION & READING REFLECTIONS

Sunday: Romans 7:14–25 (The War Within)
Monday: Exodus 4:1–17 (Moses: The Reluctant Leader)
Tuesday: Jeremiah 20:7–13 (Jeremiah: The Emotional Struggle)
Wednesday: Luke 22:54–62 (Peter: Impulse and Regret)
Thursday: 2 Corinthians 12:7–10 (When Weakness becomes Strength)
Friday: Proverbs 16:32 & 25:28 (Wisdom on Self-Control)
Saturday: Romans 12:3–8 (Gifts, Personality, and Humility)