



— Week 7 —

This weeks focus scripture: Romans 7:14-25

This weeks reading challenge:

- Read all of Romans seven, and Galatians 5:17
- Read Romans 7:14-25, several times.

This weeks memory challenge: No memory verse this week! But next week, get ready for Romans 8:1-4

— Study and Reflection —

This week, work your way through the definition of “the flesh” from this weeks message. Journal what this looks like in YOUR life, asking God to show you your ‘flesh patterns’, and how they impact you (and those around you). The goal here is NOT to get bogged down in guilt or self-condemnation, but honestly and introspectively acknowledge the ways your flesh is seeking to control you.

The *flesh* (self-life), is the CONDITION (mindset, attitude, strategy of living)

- *What is your primary ‘strategy’ or mindset of living each day? Looking to God, trusting him, or looking to and trusting yourself?*

Where my focus is primarily on MYSELF; (even if it is ‘good looking’ self, ‘well-adjusted’ self, or ‘socially acceptable’ self)

- *How would you describe your flesh? High performance, good looking flesh, ‘gutter’ flesh, or somewhere in between? What is the consistent thing all these expressions of our flesh have in common?*

Where I am living out of my own RESOURCES; (such as heritage, education, IQ, personality, sense of humor, looks, talents, abilities, finances, etc..) In order to: Cope with LIFE, Solve my PROBLEMS, Meet my NEEDS, Become a SUCCESS!

- *What are my resources I try to use to make life work on my own?*
- *What are your ‘flesh patterns?’ Remember, ‘the flesh’ isn’t just about morally negative thoughts, feelings, and actions, although it may include those. It is any way we seek to make life work apart from God.*

Reality! Flesh always tries to live by law, and it always FAILS.

- *How can I see my ‘flesh’ failing me as a means of living the Life God calls me to, that He saved me to experience?*

What flesh does: Keeps me in opposition to God.

- *What does this look like in your life? Prayerfully take this to God and acknowledge this to him. As a believer, you are already forgiven, but God wants you to know freedom!*

† Humanities Great Crisis

We KNOW what is right, we AGREE what is right, but we don't DO what is right.

The failure of the 'old way': "For when we were in the realm of the *flesh*, the sinful passions aroused by the *law* were at work in us, so that we bore fruit for death."

† The Law...

- What I think it is: INSTRUCTIONS that will lead to LIFE
- What it really is: A TASKMASTER with an IMPOSSIBLE standard
- What it does: Brings me to CONDEMNATION and the experience of DEATH

† The Flesh...

- What I think it is: Morally NEGATIVE thoughts and actions
- What it really is:

The *flesh* (self-life), is the CONDITION (mindset, attitude, strategy of living)

Where my focus is primarily on MYSELF; (even if it is 'good looking' self, 'well-adjusted' self, or 'socially acceptable' self)

Where I am living out of my own RESOURCES; (such as heritage, education, IQ, personality, sense of humor, looks, talents, abilities, finances, etc..)

In order to:

Cope with LIFE Solve my PROBLEMS Meet my NEEDS Become a SUCCESS!

Reality! Flesh always tries to live by law, and it always FAILS.

- What it does: Keeps me in opposition to God.

Galatians 5:17 *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.*

† **Paul's struggle, our struggle, my struggle** *Romans 7:14-25*

Reality! As believers, we do not have two natures! We are New Creations In Christ, our spirit is in union with Christ, and what is true of Christ is true of us. *This is our true identity*. However, this side of eternity, we also have the ever-present reality of our flesh, which is indwelt by sin, and constantly seeks to control us. Our hope is not to reform, improve, or manage our flesh. *That is the old way of the law*. Our hope is nothing less than to offer ourselves, surrender ourselves, fully, constantly, unreservedly, and practically, to the reality and authority of *Christ in us, the hope of Glory*, and who we are (our new Identity) in Him. And this doesn't happen by ACCIDENT.