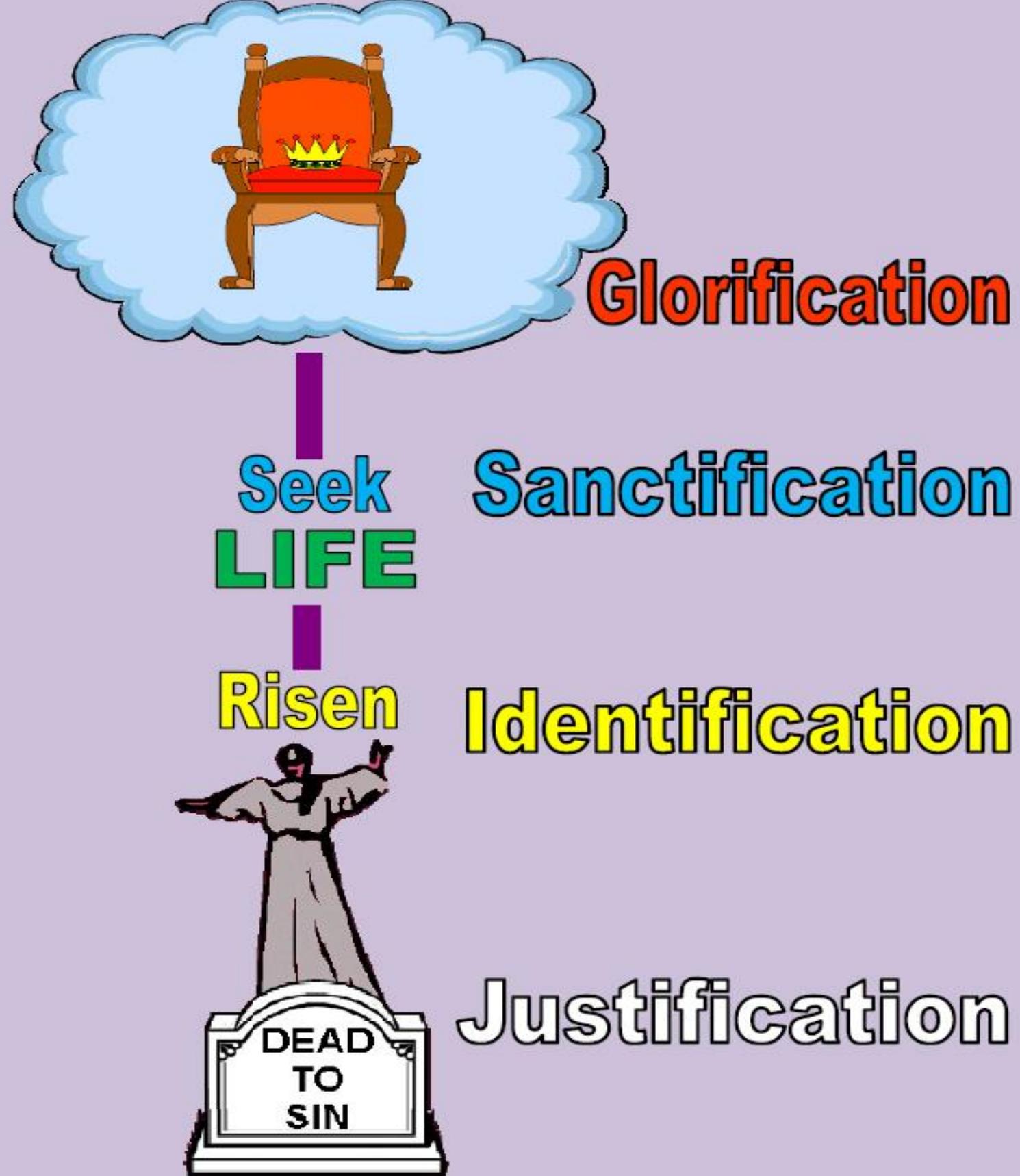


# WHAT IS WRONG WITH MY CHRISTIAN LIFE?

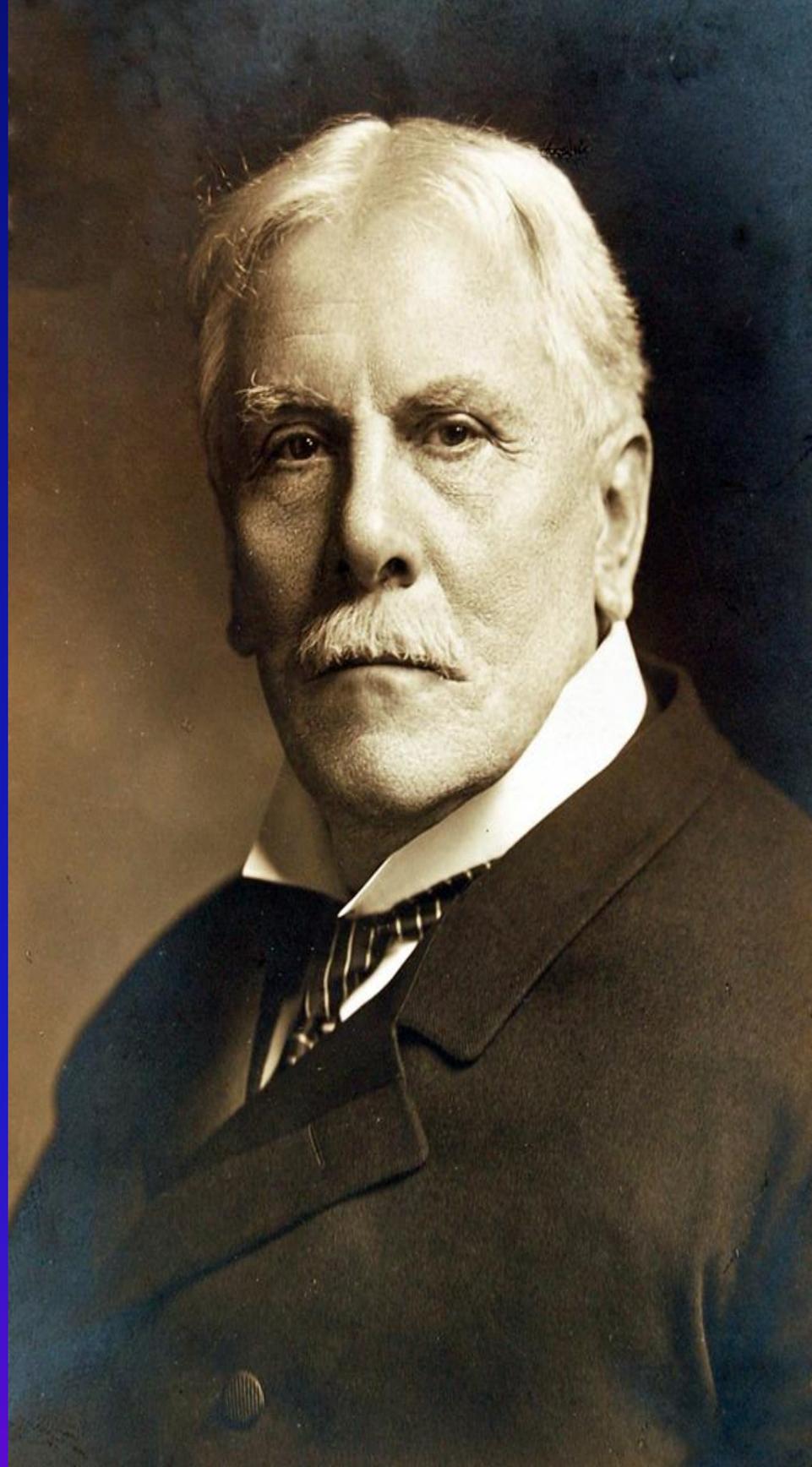
{Romans 7}

Dr Dennis Rokser

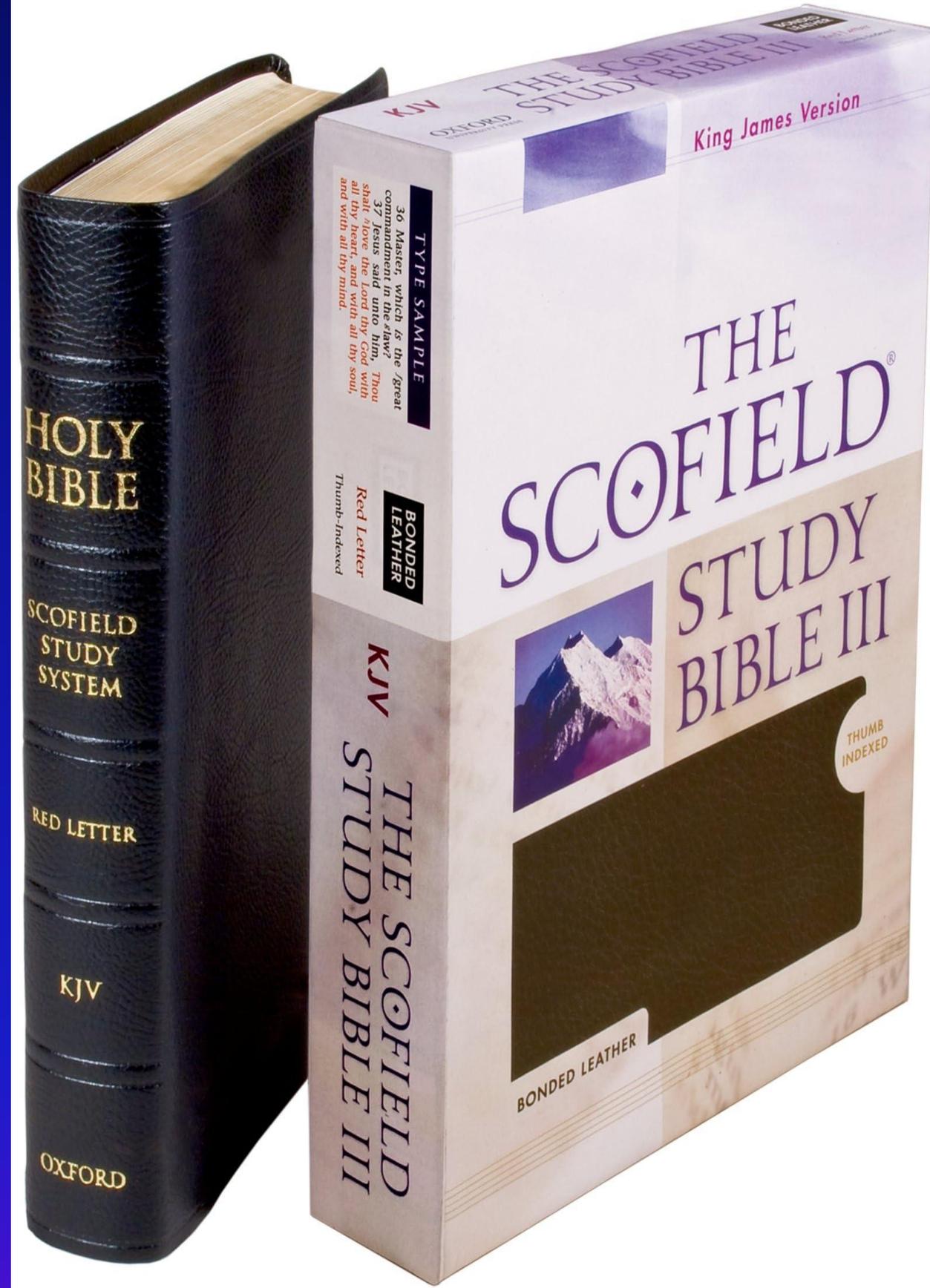
Grace for the Race Ministries



**C.I. Scofield on Romans 7** “Not everyone, by any means, has had the experience of the seventh of Romans, that agony of conflict, of desire to do what we cannot do, of longing to do the right we find we cannot do. It is a great blessing when a person gets into the seventh of Romans and begins to realize the awful conflict of its struggle and defeat; because the first step toward getting out of the struggle of the seventh chapter and into the victory of the eighth, is to get into the seventh.



Of all the needy classes of people, the neediest of this earth are not those who are having a heart-breaking, agonizing struggle for victory, but those who are having no struggle at all, and no victory, and who do not know it, and who are satisfied and jogging along in a pitiable absence of almost all the possessions that belong to them in Christ.”

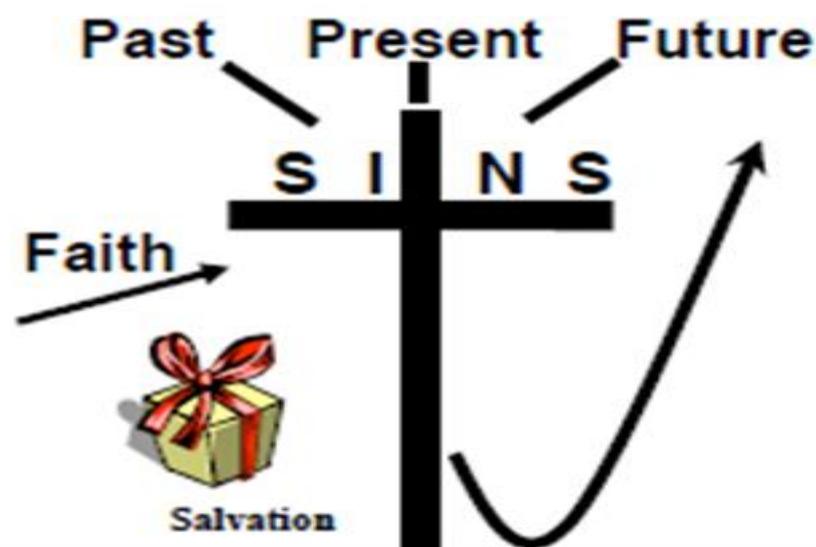


# SALVATION BY GRACE

Deliverance in Stages 1, 2, and 3 of Salvation  
All Deliverance is by God's Grace Provision

## Stage #1 Justification

*Saved from the  
the Penalty of sin  
(Past Tense)*



## Stage #2 Sanctification

*Being saved from the  
Power of sin  
(Present Tense)*



## Stage #3 Glorification

*Will be saved from  
Presence of sin  
(Future Tense)*



**Believer in Time**

Titus 3:5  
Ephesians 2:8-10  
John 3:17

1 Timothy 4:16  
James 1:21  
Philippians 2:12-13

Romans 5:9-10  
Romans 13:11  
1 Corinthians 3:15

- A. **POSITIONAL** SANCTIFICATION.  
{6:1-10}
- B. **PRACTICAL** SANCTIFICATION.  
(6:11-14)
- C. **PERSONAL** SANCTIFICATION.  
(6:15-23)
- D. **POWERLESS** SANCTIFICATION  
(7:1-25)
- E. **POWERFUL** SANCTIFICATION  
(8:1-17)



# A. The Believer in Christ PRESENT RELATIONSHIP to the LAW

*Positionally. {7:1-6} –*

Every believer has **DIED** to the law by becoming united to Jesus Christ {to bear fruit to God} and has been **DELIVERED** from the Law to now serve the Lord in the newness of the Holy Spirit and not in the oldness of the Law.

A. The Believer in Christ  
PRESENT  
RELATIONSHIP to the  
LAW *Positionally*. {7:1-6}

B. The LAW'S Relationship  
to the SIN NATURE.  
(7:7-12)

GRACE

We Just Don't Get It

## B. The LAW'S Relationship to the SIN NATURE.

(7:7-14) - The Law, which is holy, just, and good, does **NOT** really **PREVENT** sin but **PROVOKES** the sin nature **TO REBELLION OR PROMOTES SELF-RELIANCE** to perform it, though is nothing wrong with the Law which came **FROM GOD** but there is something inherently wrong **WITH US**, even **AFTER** our justification {being declared righteous} before God by faith alone in Christ alone}

Lewis Sperry Chafer wrote,  
“Any aspect of life and conduct which is undertaken in dependence on the energy of the flesh is, to that extent, purely legal in character, whether it be the whole revealed will of God, the actual written commandments, or the exhortations of grace. Dependence on the arm of the flesh is consistent with pure law; dependence upon the power of God is demanded under pure grace.”



\* What are two imbalances with a legalistic approach to the Christian life?

**self-righteous** when they think that they are doing well.



**despair** when they are honest with themselves and clearly see that they are not living up to God's standards



**LAW**



**GRACE**



**LAW**



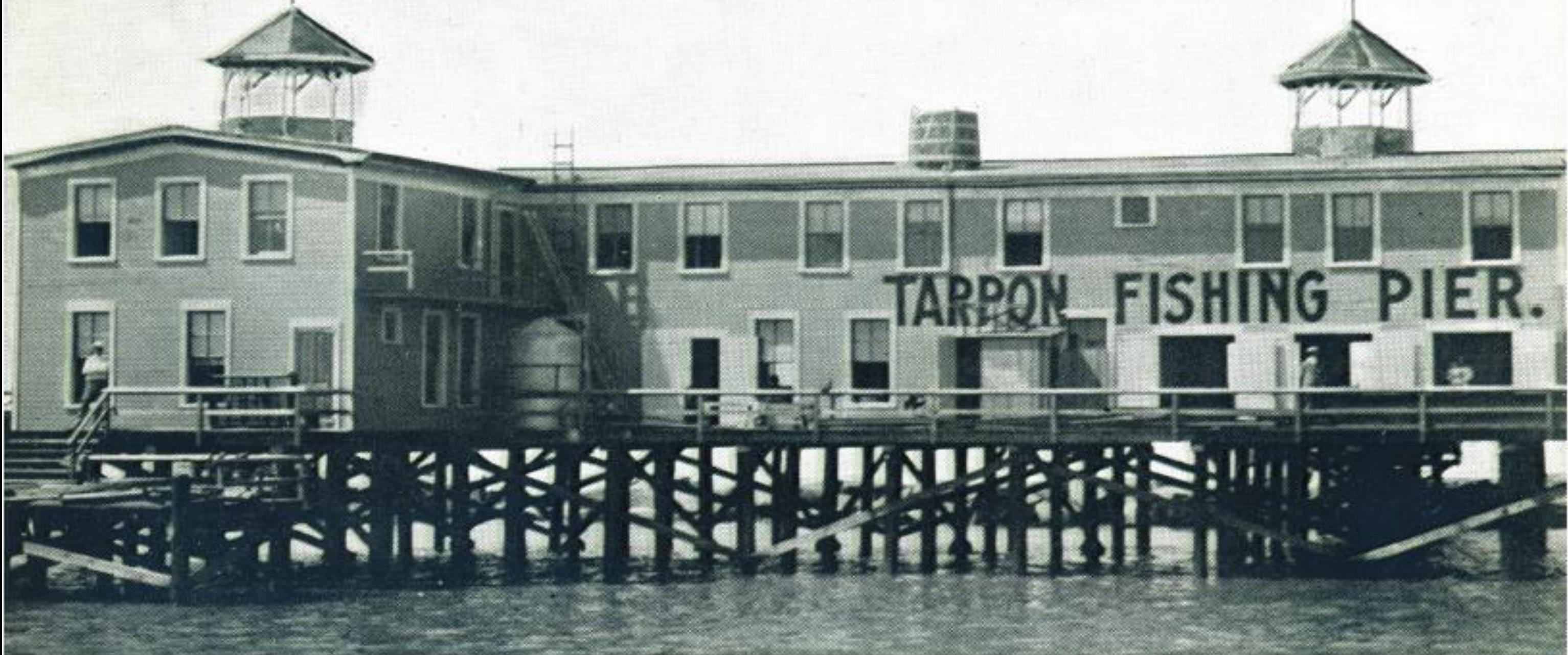
**GRACE**



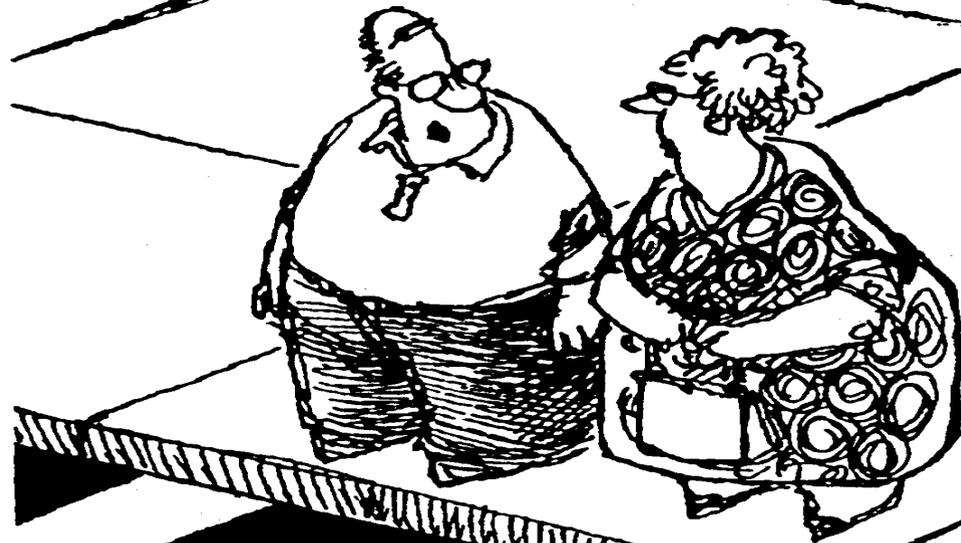
**Thou shalt love  
thy neighbor...**

**the love of  
God is shed...**

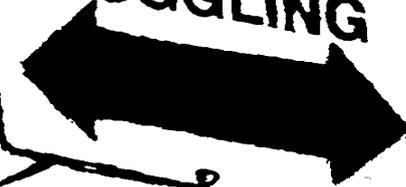
**TARPON FISHING PIER**  
R. L. Bettison, Mgr.  
Open All the Year. Six Miles from City on  
North Jetty.  
Excellent Hotel Accommodations. 25 First-Class  
Rooms. First-Class Cafe in Connection.  
GALVESTON, TEXAS.



SUDDENLY I HAVE  
AN URGE TO  
JUGGLE MACHETES...



ABSOLUTELY  
**NO**  
MACHETE  
JUGGLING

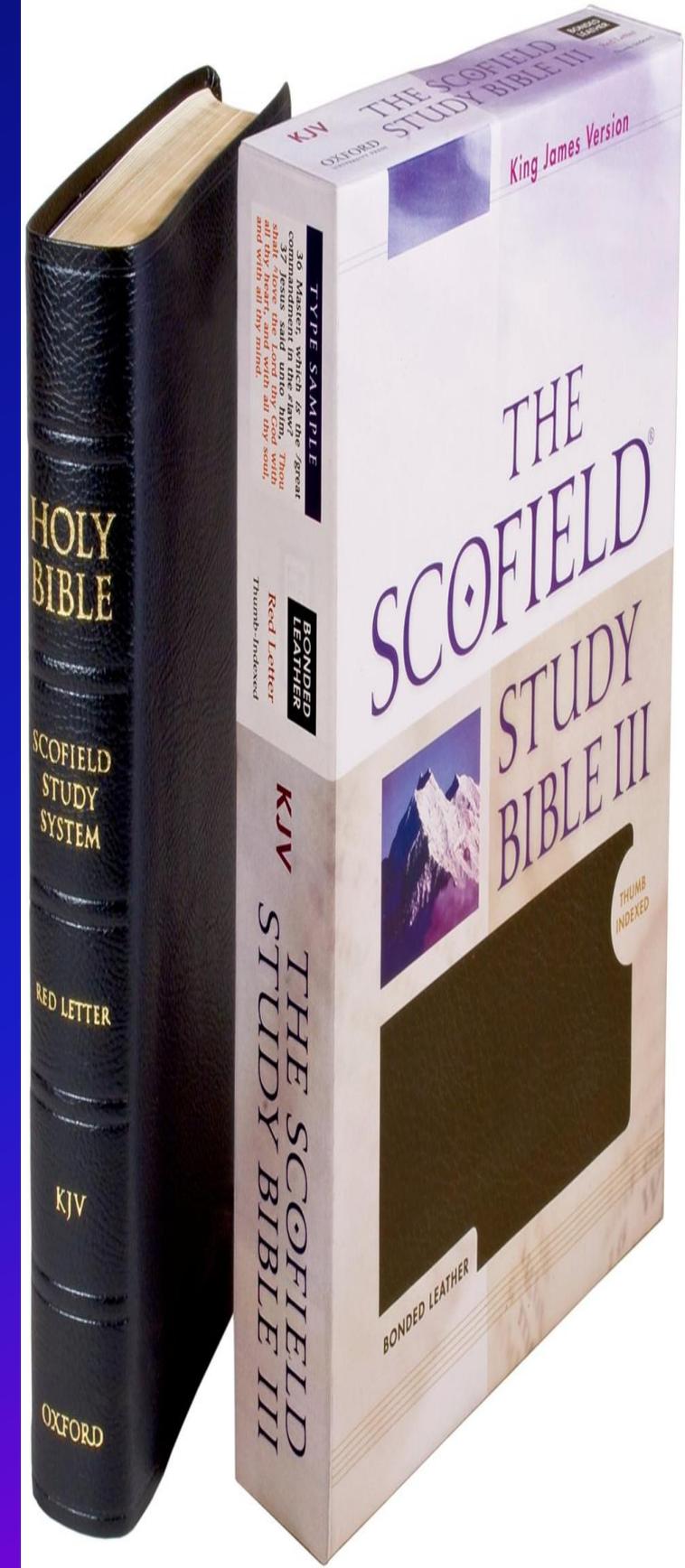


THE ESSENCE OF HUMAN NATURE

## Scofield Note on Romans 7:9

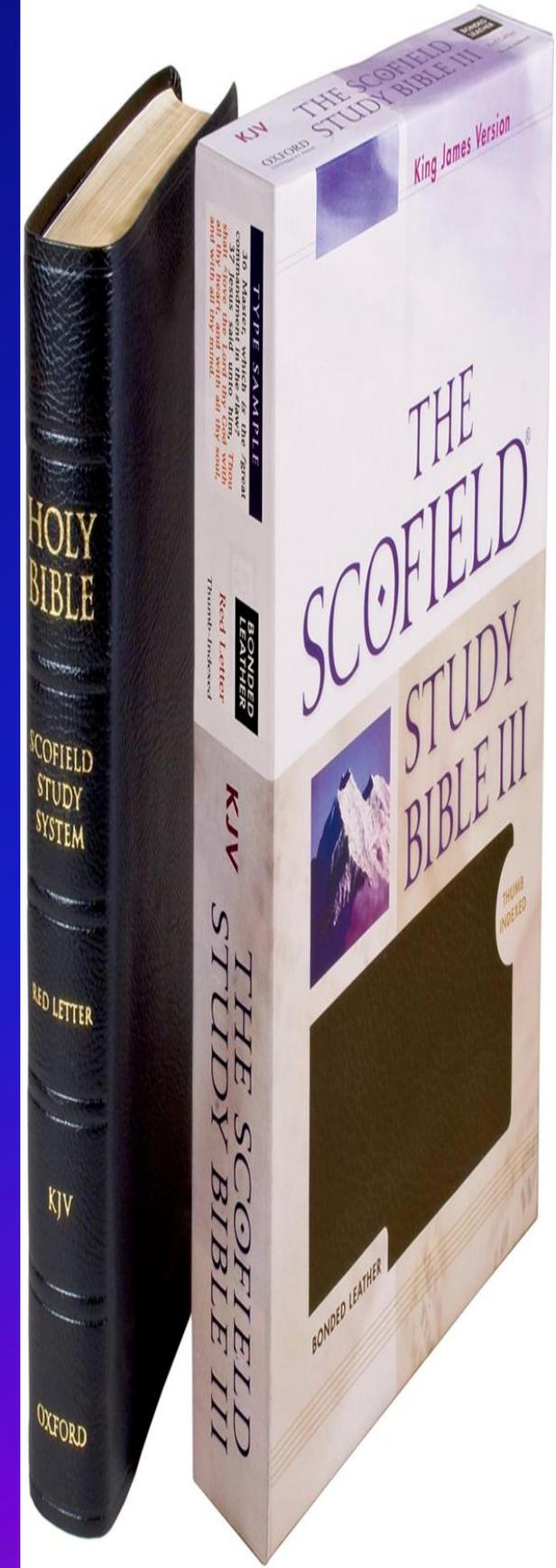
“The passage (vs. 7-25) is autobiographical. Paul’s religious experience was in three strongly marked phases.

(1) He was a godly Jew under the law. That the passage does not refer to that period is clear from his own explicit statements elsewhere. At that time he held himself to be “blameless” as concerned the law. (Phil. 3:6) He had “lived in all good conscience” (Acts 23:1).



(2) With his conversion came new light upon the law itself. He now perceived it to be “spiritual” (v. 14). He now saw that, so far from having kept it, he was condemned by it. He had supposed himself to be “alive,” but now the commandment really “came” (v. 9) and he “died.” Just when the apostle passed through the experience of Rom. 7:7-25 we are not told. Perhaps during the days of physical blindness at Damascus (Acts 9:9); perhaps in Arabia (Gal. 1:17). It is the experience of a renewed man, under the law, and still ignorant of the delivering power of the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom. 8:2).

(3) With the great revelations afterward embodied in Galatians and Romans, the apostle's experience entered its third phase. He now knew himself to be “dead to the law by the body of Christ,” and, in the power of the indwelling Spirit, “free from the law of sin and death” (8:2); while “the righteousness of the law” was wrought in him (not *by* him) while he walked after the Spirit (8:4). Romans 7 is the record of past conflicts and defeats experienced as a renewed man under law.”



## The *personal testimony* regarding the Law: (7:11)

*For* {further explanation} {the} SIN {nature},  
*taking* {seizing} *occasion* {opportunity; advantage; acting  
as a base of sinful activity} *by the commandment*  
DECEIVED {thoroughly deceived} *me*,  
*and* {the sin nature} *by it* {using the Law} *killed me* {put  
me to death}.



## A principle to remember (7:14)

*For we know that* {introduces the content of what they knew} *the law is SPIRITUAL* {pneumatikos – characterized by being spiritual in nature},  
*but I am CARNAL* {perfect tense - sarkinos – fleshly, human in nature still packing a sin nature even as a believer & allowing its control},  
*sold* {sold like a slave but not “to” but} *under* {hupo – under the governing power of} {the} *sin* {nature}. (7:14)

C. Discovering the **NEW NATURE'S CONFLICT** with the **SIN NATURE** and **SPIRITUAL DEFEAT**. (7:15-25)

- Some preliminary observations:

## **Some preliminary observations:**

**1) This passage addresses Paul's {as a believer in Christ} DESIRE to do God's will {due to having a new nature} but his repeated FRUSTRATION and FAILURE due to having a sin nature and his reliance on HIMSELF to try to live the Christian life under LAW.**

What is missing from this passage is any mention of the **HOLY SPIRIT** (until Rom. 8).

**“There are earnest Christians who are jealous for a free Gospel, with acceptance of Christ, and justification by faith alone. But after this they think everything depends on their diligence and faithfulness. While they firmly grasp the truth, ‘justified by faith,’ they have hardly noticed the larger truth, ‘the just shall live by faith.’ They have not yet understood what a perfect Savior the Lord Jesus is, and how He will each day do for the believer just as much as He did the first day when they came to Him. “**

**“They know not that the life of grace is always and only a life of faith, and that in the relationship to the Lord Jesus the one daily and unceasing duty of the disciple is to believe, because believing is the one channel through which Divine grace and strength can flow into the heart of man. The old nature of the believer remains evil and sinful to the last; it is only as he daily comes, all empty and helpless, to his Savior to receive of His life and strength, that he can bring forth the fruits of righteousness to the glory of God.”-A.M.**

**“There are earnest Christians who are jealous for a free Gospel, with acceptance of Christ, and justification by faith alone. But after this they think everything depends on their diligence and faithfulness. While they firmly grasp the truth, ‘justified by faith,’ they have hardly noticed the larger truth, ‘the just shall live by faith.’ They have not yet understood what a perfect Savior the Lord Jesus is, and how He will each day do for the believer just as much as He did the first day when they came to Him. “**

**“They know not that the life of grace is always and only a life of faith, and that in the relationship to the Lord Jesus the one daily and unceasing duty of the disciple is to believe, because believing is the one channel through which Divine grace and strength can flow into the heart of man. The old nature of the believer remains evil and sinful to the last; it is only as he daily comes, all empty and helpless, to his Savior to receive of His life and strength, that he can bring forth the fruits of righteousness to the glory of God.”-A.M.**

**Some preliminary observations:**

**2) This passage {7:15-25} is loaded with emphatic PERSONAL PRONOUNS and PRESENT tense verbs.**

Why is this important to observe?

**Not**



**but**



*Christ*

**“A superficial acquaintance with God’s plan leads to the view that while justification is God’s work, by faith in Christ, sanctification is our work, to be performed under the influence of the gratitude we feel for the deliverance we have experienced and by the aid of the Holy Spirit.**

**But the earnest Christian soon finds how little gratitude can supply the power. When he thinks more prayer will bring it, he finds that, indispensable as prayer is, it is not enough. Often the believer struggles hopelessly for years, until he listens to the teaching of the Spirit, as He glorifies Christ again, and reveals Christ, our Sanctification, to be appropriated by faith alone.”-A.M.**

## **Some preliminary observations:**

**3) This passage is connected with Paul's conclusion of 7:14, "For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am CARNAL, sold under sin."**

What does this mean? You must distinguish "in the flesh" {a position} vs "of flesh" {a condition}. This Greek word "sarkikos" is found 4x in the nt – only of believers.

C. The Believer's Confusion of the NEW NATURE'S CONFLICT with the SIN NATURE and SPIRITUAL DEFEAT. (7:15-25)

Some questions you need to correctly come to grips with are...

1. Can the inner conflict & spiritual defeat you experience as a believer be baffling & very confusing at times? YES!

“For what I am doing {by way of sin or human good}, I do NOT UNDERSTAND”. (7:15a)

## J.C. Metcalfe on Romans 7

“Many a young Christian, who has not been warned of this necessary voyage of discovery upon which the Holy Spirit will certainly embark him (Romans 7), has been plunged into almost incurable despair at the sight of the sinfulness which is his by nature. He has in the first place rejoiced greatly in the forgiveness of his sins, and his acceptance by God; but sooner or later he begins to realize that all is not well, and that he has failed and fallen from the high standard which he set himself to reach in the first flush of his conversion.

He begins to know something of the experience which Paul so graphically describes: “What I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I” (Romans 7:15), and, in consequence, he feels that the bottom has fallen out of his Christian life; and then perhaps the Devil whispers to him that it is just no good his going on, because he will never be able to make the grade. Little does he know how healthy his condition is, and that this shattering discovery is but the prelude to a magnificent series of further discoveries of things which God has expressly designed for his eternal enrichment. All through life God has to show us our own utter sinfulness and need, before He is able to lead us on into realms of grace, in which we shall glimpse His glory.”

C. The Believer's Confusion of the NEW NATURE'S CONFLICT with the SIN NATURE and SPIRITUAL DEFEAT. {7:15-25}

Some questions you need to correctly come to grips with are...

2. Can the Christian life be lived by your sheer will-power and inner desire? NO!

“For what {the will of God} I WILL to do {desire to do due to a new nature}, that I do NOT practice.  
{7:15b}

IS PAUL'S PROBLEM IN  
ROMANS 7:15-20 AN ISSUE OF  
**MOTIVE OR MEANS** as BOTH  
ARE IMPORTANT ISSUES IN  
THE CHRISTIAN LIFE?

SCRIPTURE

And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

Colossians 3:23-24 NKJV

- It's **not enough to want to live** a life that honors the Lord.
- The Christian life is **not about will-power**.
- When you were saved, **you received a new nature**, which gives you a desire to please God.
- The **new nature does not give you the ability** to please God.
- You begin the Christian walk with the best intentions, expecting God to **work mightily** in your life.
- Until you learn **how** to live the Christian life, you find yourself disappointed because you are failing over and over again.



C. The Believer's Confusion of the NEW NATURE'S CONFLICT with the SIN NATURE and SPIRITUAL DEFEAT. (7:15-25}

Some questions you need to correctly come to grips with are...

3. Can you actually end up doing the very opposite of what you desire and even hate? **YES!**

“but what I HATE, that I DO. (7:15c)

Some questions you need to correctly come to grips with are...

4. While God wants you to succeed in your Christian life, how is God using your failures?

If {1st}, then, I do {by way of sin or human good} what **I WILL** {desire} **NOT** to do, I agree with the law that it is good. (7:16)

Some questions you need to correctly come to grips with are...

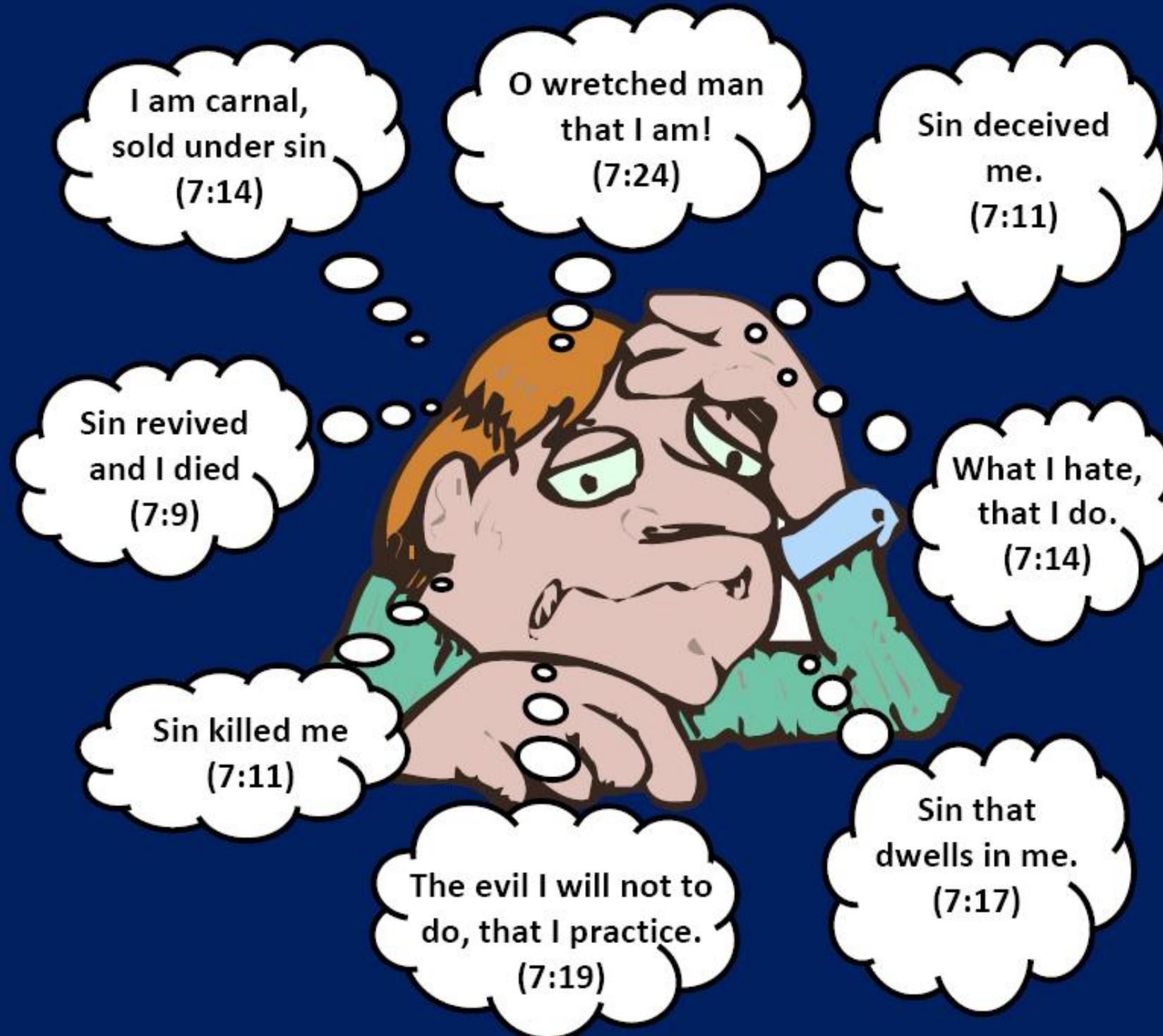
5. What is God seeking to teach you to be your real source of your spiritual defeat?

**“But now, it is no longer I {as a new creation in Christ – 6:3-7; Gal. 2:20} who do it, but {it is ‘the’} SIN {nature} that **DWELLS IN ME.**” (7:17)**

What and where then is your greatest problem?  
{6:11-13}

# The Christian's Battle With Indwelling Sin

## Romans 7



Some questions you need to correctly come to grips with are...

6. Does God change your “flesh” at salvation / justification? NO!

“For I know that **IN ME** (that is, **in MY FLESH**)  
...”(7:18a)

Why does Paul qualify “in me” with “in my flesh”?

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

Galatians 5:16-17 NKJV

Some questions you need to correctly come to grips with are...

7. What does God want you to learn about yourself that is vital to living the Christian life?

“For I **KNOW** that in me (that is, in my flesh) **NO GOOD** dwells”. (7:18b)

Some questions you need to correctly come to grips with are...

8. What must God teach you about your new nature vs the sin nature that still dwells in you?

“for **TO WILL** {desire} is **PRESENT** with me {due to a new nature}, but **HOW** to **PERFORM** what is good I do not find.” (7:18c)

IS PAUL'S PROBLEM IN  
ROMANS 7:15-20 AN ISSUE OF  
MOTIVE OR MEANS?

## Romans 7:18

For I know that in me  
(that is, in my flesh)  
nothing good dwells; for  
to will is present with  
me, but how to perform  
what is good I do not  
find.



# Romans 7: POWERLESS SANCTIFICATION

I ME MY MYSELF

Some questions you need to correctly come to grips with are...

9. Why do believers live in spiritual defeat?

1) Due to false or incomplete teaching on sanctification.

Some questions you need to correctly come to grips with are...

9. **Why do believers live in spiritual defeat?**

- 1) **Due to false or incomplete teaching on sanctification**
- 2) Willful carnality
- 3) **Ignorance of true spirituality ... "BUT HOW ... I DO NOT FIND"**
- 4) Presenting / yielding themselves to the SN resulting in either legalism, license, or mysticism
- 5) **Self-dependence**

- When believers do not understand Romans 7, what wrong conclusions do they embrace about the Christian life?

- 1) That Romans 7 DOES NOT refer to a believer in Christ leading to a lack of ASSURANCE of eternal salvation based upon their walk and works instead of faith in Jesus Christ and His finished work (1 John 5:11-13)

- When believers do not understand Romans 7, what wrong conclusions do they embrace about the Christian life?

2) They conclude that they will **LOSE** their salvation when the Bible clearly teaches the eternal security of every believer – whether spiritual or carnal. (John 10:28-30; Romans 5:9-10; 8:38-39)

- When believers do not understand Romans 7, what wrong conclusions do they embrace about the Christian life?

3) They think this is the “NORMAL Christian life” and that they just need to “try harder” and seek to become “more committed” to Christ, failing to distinguish between Romans 7 & 8.

- When believers do not understand Romans 7, what wrong conclusions do they embrace about the Christian life?

4) They turn from legalism to **HYPHER-GRACE** {licentious} false teaching and seek to remove their spiritual responsibility from the Christian life to eliminate a sense of failure or guilt.

- When believers in Christ understand Romans 7, it clarifies ...

- 1) That the sin nature has not been **ERADICATED** after their salvation / justification and remains their #1 spiritual foe in their practical sanctification.

• When believers in Christ understand Romans 7, it clarifies ...

2) That the victorious Christian life CANNOT be experienced by law living, determination, or self-effort.

- When believers in Christ understand Romans 7, it clarifies ...

3) That when their new nature and sin nature clash, the SIN NATURE wins apart from the cross {Romans 6} and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit {Romans 8}.

- When believers in Christ understand Romans 7, it clarifies ...

4) That their frustration and failures in seeking to living the Christian life in not **UNIQUE** to them and that there is **GRACE OPTIMISM** of spiritual victory by God's grace still available.

## **C.I. Scofield on Romans 7**

“Not everyone, by any means, has had the experience of the seventh of Romans, that agony of conflict, of desire to do what we cannot do, of longing to do the right we find we cannot do. It is a great blessing when a person gets into the seventh of Romans and begins to realize the awful conflict of its struggle and defeat; because the first step toward getting out of the struggle of the seventh chapter and into the victory of the eighth, is to get into the seventh. Of all the needy classes of people, the neediest of this earth are not those who are having a heart-breaking, agonizing struggle for victory, but those who are having no struggle at all, and no victory, and who do not know it, and who are satisfied and jogging along in a pitiable absence of almost all the possessions that belong to them in Christ.”