



(open Bibles to Romans 7)

- Characteristics of a Spiritual Infant:
 - 1. They covet the things of this world
 - 2. They struggle with self-doubt
 - 3. They are self-centered
 - 4. They are uneducated (ignorant)
 - 5. They are unaware of their personal faults
 - 6. They are stuck in their sin issues
- The reason people do not become more spiritually mature is because of their sin issues. Sin issues stunt a person's spiritual growth.
- There are laws that govern our bodies...
 - Laws that enable us to see (use image 1)
 - Laws that allow us to hear (use image 2)
 - Laws that keep us alive (use image 3)
 - Laws that permit us to move around (use images 4 &5)
- There is another law inside your body. You cannot find evidence of this law by performing an autopsy, because this law is a spiritual law (spiritual, not constructed of matter or atoms). However, you can see the evidence of this law by examining the Scriptures and your own life. THIS LAW IS THE LAW OF SIN (also referred to as "the flesh" by Paul).
 - Romans 7:23 – "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to *the law of sin which is in my members.*"
- The law of sin...
 - A result of the fall of man (Rom. 5:17)
 - Abides in all the descendants of Adam (all humans) (Rom. 5:17-19)
 - Is in us from conception (Ps. 51:5)
 - Leads to death (Rom. 7:11)
 - Death in relationships
 - Death in marriages
 - Death in our reputations
 - Death for our futures
 - Eternal death and separation from God
- This law of sin totally and completely enslaves the lives of those who do not know Jesus...

- They are slaves to sin (Rom. 6:20)
- They are under sin's dominion (Rom. 6:9)
- They are dead in their trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:5)
- The law of sin controls them, and they are powerless to defeat it.
- Many unbelievers are unaware of the law of sin, because they have yielded to it.
- The law of sin is yielding brokenness and ushering in death in their lives.
- Consider the example of Cain in the Old Testament...
 - **Cain and Abel: Genesis 4:1-10**
 - God showed grace to Cain by speaking to him about the condition of his heart, so...
 - Cain turned around and murdered Abel!
 - Many of you might say, if God spoke to me about a sin issue in my life before I did it, I surely wouldn't commit that sin! The example of Cain shows us the power of the law of sin to make people its slaves.
 - Because of the law of sin, Cain was enslaved by sin and, despite a word from heaven, fell subject to the law of sin in his body.
- Not only does the law of sin totally enslave those who are not in Christ, but...
- The law of sin powerfully manipulates believers to make themselves slaves to sin.
 - Romans 7:18-21: "For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, *in my flesh*. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but *sin that dwells within me*. So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand."
 - Paul is saying that, *in his flesh*, he does not have the power to overcome sin. Why?
 - Romans 7:22-23: "For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and *making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members*."
 - Paul admits he does not have the power on his own to overcome sin because the law of sin is more powerful than his will. What does Paul say in response to this reality?
 - Romans 7:24-25: "*Wretched man that I am!* Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!"
 - Grace! Paul recognizes that Jesus is the answer for the believer to overcome their sin issues!
 - To be sure, the law of sin does not have the same authority over a believer as it does over an unbeliever...
 - Romans 8:1-2: "There is therefore now *no condemnation* for those who are in Christ Jesus. For *the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin* and death."
 - Glorious! Old man is dead AND GONE. No old nature left. New creation in Christ!

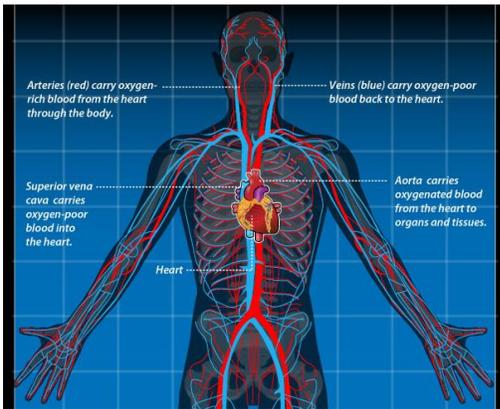
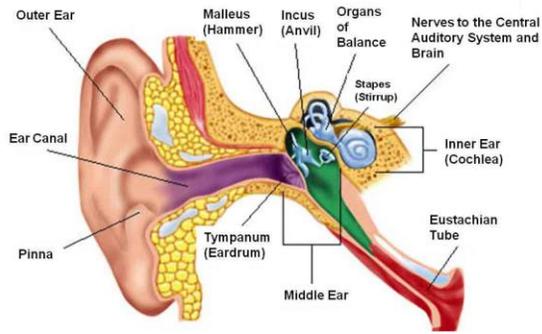
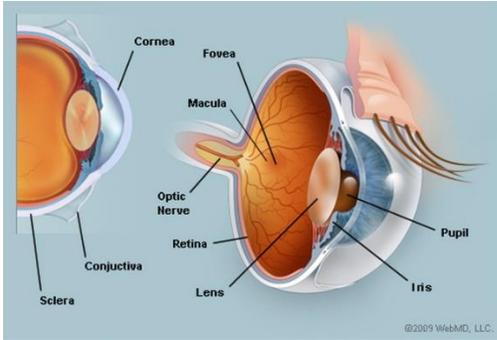
- However, there is also no question that, though a believer has been set free from the law of sin, they can subject themselves as slaves to the law of sin once again...
 - Romans 6:16: “Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, *you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?*”
- The law of sin *cannot* overpower those who are in Christ! Sin is broken!! But Christians can still submit themselves to the bondage of sin once again!
 - Galatians 5:1: “For freedom Christ has set us free; *stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.*”
- REALITY: The only way for a believer to walk free from the law of sin (or the flesh) is to walk in the Spirit...
 - Galatians 5:16-18: “But I say, *walk in the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.* For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. *But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.*”
- But we need God’s grace!!
 - Romans 6:14: “For *sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.*”
- We need God’s grace to be saved of our sins and born again, and we need God’s grace to continue to walk free from sin!
- Stop and consider – is there a sin issue in your life that you have tried to break before but you have not been able to rid yourself of it?
 - Lying?
 - Greed?
 - Complaining?
 - Speaking slander or gossip behind someone’s back?
 - Anger? (road rage, anger towards your spouse, anger towards your children, etc.?)
 - Sexual sins?
 - Secret sexual sins like looking at pornography or entertaining a relationship with some other than your spouse (whether an affair or an affair in your heart)?
 - Sexual perversions such as an attraction for the same gender or some other sexual perversion?
 - Unwillingness to submit to God-given authority (parents, church leaders, civil authorities)?
 - Rebelling against the Holy Spirit’s promptings to share Jesus or make disciples?
 - Being self-centered rather than God and other’s centered?
- Why haven’t you been able to beat these sin issues even though you have tried to overcome them? Based on this message, it is one of two reasons:

- 1) You cannot overcome your sin issues because you are still separated from God and lost in your sins. You have never received forgiveness of sins and new life through Jesus.
- 2) You cannot overcome your sin issues because you are *making yourself* a slave to sin rather than walking in God's grace as a slave to obedience and to the Holy Spirit.

My Story:

- Born again at 6 years old while Pastor Jerry was preaching and I was on the third row – right here.
- I know I was born again at the age of 6. How? Because the Holy Spirit came into my life.
 - He broke the power of sin in my life.
 - He filled me with a desire to please God.
 - He continued to convict me of my sins.
- As a young man (around 11 or so), I allowed the law of sin to manipulate me into becoming its slave once again.
 - I started practicing secret sexual sins.
 - I hid my sins from my parents and my church family.
 - I tried to stop the sin on my own but could not. I was stuck.
- However, I know I was still a Christian. I know that because...
 - The Holy Spirit constantly brought conviction (although I continued to quench the Spirit)
 - I felt compelled to confess my sins after nearly every time I chose to give in to the law of sin.
 - I had to quench the Spirit at every sermon about sin. I imagine at least one of you listening to this message are feeling that pressure to quench the Spirit now).
- There were milestones for me, milestones where I had a break-through
 - 12 years old – called to ministry
 - 1 week before 18 years old – repent of secret sins
 - A few years into my marriage – repent of sin issues impacting my marriage
- So what about your story? Perhaps you are understanding for the first time the law of sin that is in your members, and your need for God's grace to walk in the Spirit. What now?
 - **Goal of message:** Identify that it is the law of sin that is seeking to control you.
 - **Good news:** God has not let you down! He has already provided all you need to overcome sin in your life. Recognize that the law of sin is broken and choose to submit yourself to the Spirit. This is a moment by moment, day by day.
 - **Hope:** The law of sin has less and less influence over you as you learn to walk in the Spirit more and more.
 - **However:** The law of sin will always be present until you die. You must always fight.

- **Hope:** That is one of the reasons why Christians do not grieve for those who have passed away like those who do not have hope! Battling the law of sin has ended for them!! Pity us! We still have to fight the battle.
- **RESOLVE: (purpose and mission)**
 - God's purpose is for you to be conformed into the image of Jesus (Rom. 8:29)
 - God's mission for you is to share Jesus and make disciples (Acts 1:8, Matt. 28:19-20)
 - Resolve to no longer be enslaved to sin, but to submit yourself as a slave to righteousness and walk in the Spirit!
- **Invitation...**
 - Bow for prayer.
 - Move to piano.
 - First, invite one of our pastors, Hugh Sauer, to the front. If you need to repent of your sins for the first time and ask the Holy Spirit to come into your life, come see Hugh.
 - Next, if you are a Christian but you have been enslaved to sin, come kneel at the alter and repent of your sins. They are stunting your spiritual growth. It starts with repentance – a milestone. Come drive a stake here – others will come pray with you.
 - Finally, if you have any other prayer needs, come stand at the front. Others will come and prayer for whatever need you have on your heart.
 - **Sing: Lay Down Your Burdens (Come as You Are)**
 - 1st verse and chorus



The Human Skeleton



Human Muscular System



(Put the muscular system and skeletal system on the same slide.)