

Good news: there is a power stronger than the flesh!

"Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified" (1 Corinthians 9:26, 27).

The contrast between the rule of the flesh and the rule of the Spirit is clearly shown in Romans 7:14-24. Here is pictured a man who is under the power of the flesh, "carnal, sold under sin," who longs to do good, and wills to do good, but the flesh will not let him do the good that he would.

It describes the man who is subject to the flesh, "to the law of sin" that is in his members. When he would break away and do good, that power still brings him into captivity and holds him under the

dominion of the flesh, the law of sin.

But there is deliverance from that power. When he cried out, "O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" there is given an instant answer: "I thank God--through Jesus Christ our Lord" (vss. 24, 25). There is the way of deliverance; for Christ alone is the Deliverer.

In the seventh [chapter] of Romans the man is subject to the flesh, but is longing for deliverance. The ninth [chapter] of first Corinthians shows the flesh subject to the man through the new power of the Spirit of God. This blessed reversal of things is wrought in conversion.

By conversion the man is put in possession of the power of God, and under the dominion of the Spirit of God. By that power he is made ruler over the flesh, with all its affections and lusts; and through the Spirit, he crucifies the flesh in fighting his "good fight of faith" (1 Tim. 6:12).

We are not saved by being delivered utterly

from the flesh; but by receiving power to conquer, and rule overall the evil tendencies and the desires of the flesh. We do not develop character by being delivered into a realm of no temptation; but by receiving power, in the field of temptation exactly where we are, to conquer all the temptation. [1]

Note:

1. Lessons on Faith, pp. 132-135.