

THE WEAKNESS OF GOD'S SERVANTS

If someone asked us, "What is the Bible?" we probably would not begin our answer by saying, "The Bible is a realistic book." Yet in the twentieth century this might be the best place to start—to stress the realism of the Bible in contrast to the romanticism which characterizes the twentieth-century concept of religion. To most modern people, truth is to be sought through some sort of leap from which we extract our own personal religious experiences.

Many feel that the Bible should portray a romantic view of life, but the Bible is actually the most realistic book in the world. It does not glibly say, "God's in His heaven—all's right with the world!" It faces the world's dilemmas squarely. Yet, unlike modern realism which ends in despair, it has answers for the dilemmas. And, unlike modern romanticism, its answers are not optimism without a sufficient base, not hope hung in a vacuum.

So we should say at once to twentieth-century people: the Bible is a tough-fibered book.

[Schaeffer, Francis A. (2003-09-11). No Little People (Introduction by Udo Middelman) (Kindle Locations 629-638). Crossway. Kindle Edition.]

- ✓ **The Bible is a realistic book.**
- ✓ **The Bible is a tough-fibered book.**

WHO DOES CHAPTER SEVEN DESCRIBE?

Some interpreters believe that chapter 7 describes the carnal, or fleshly, Christian, one who is living on a very low level of spirituality. Many suggest that this person is a frustrated, legalistic Christian who attempts in his own power to please God by trying to live up to the Mosaic law.

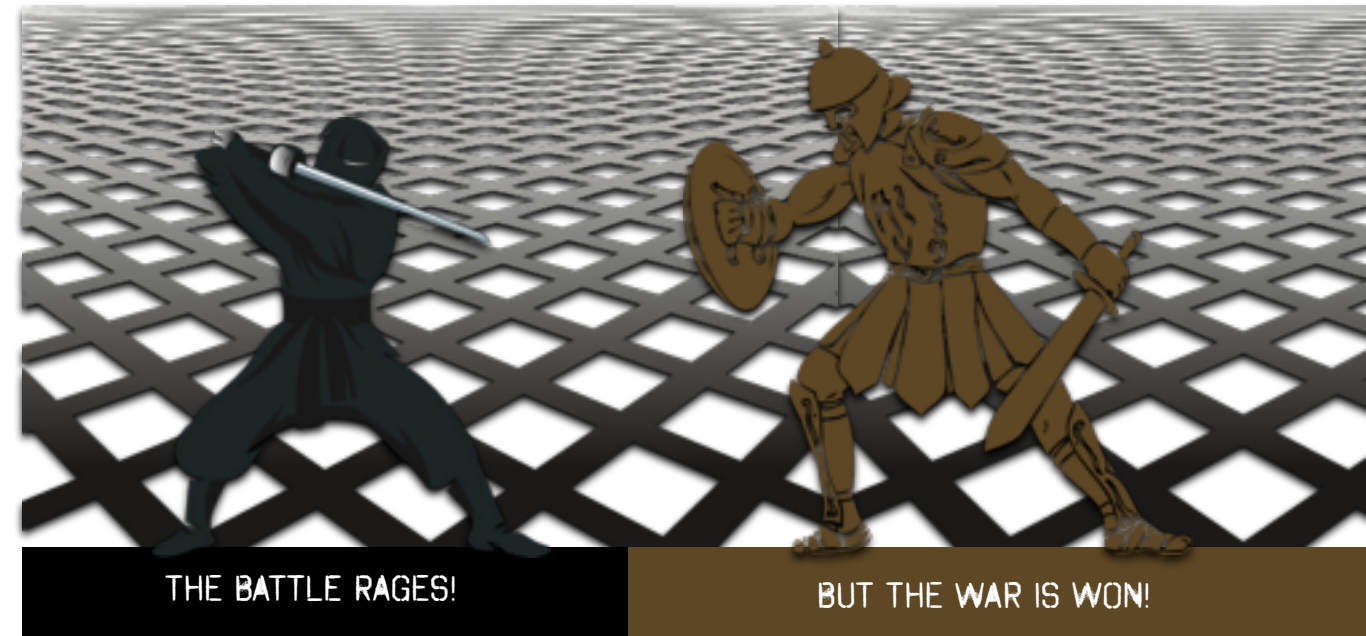
But the attitude expressed in chapter 7 is not typical of legalists, who tend to be self-satisfied with their fulfillment of the law. Most people are attracted to legalism in the first place because it offers the prospect of living up to God's standards by one's own power.

It seems rather that Paul is here describing the most spiritual and mature of Christians, who, the more they honestly measure themselves against God's standards of righteousness the more they realize how much they fall short.

The closer we get to God, the more we see our own sin. Thus it is immature, fleshly, and legalistic persons who tend to live under the illusion that they are spiritual and that they measure up well by God's standards.

The level of spiritual insight, brokenness, contrition, and humility that characterize the person depicted in Romans 7 are marks of a spiritual and mature believer, who before God has no trust in his own goodness and achievements.

[MacArthur, John. Romans / MacArthur New Testament Commentary. Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.]



OUTLINE ... Romans 7:7-25 ... "The Battle Rages, but the War Is Won!"

- (1) **The law is good, really good, even holy, 7:7-12.**
 - The law reveals our sinfulness, 7:7-8, cf. 5:20-21.
 - The law reveals holiness and exposes our false perceptions of life/salvation, 7:9-12.
 - "Once was alive" ... Had "no need of a physician" ... righteous, not a sinner - Matthew 9:10-13.
- (2) **Sin is bad, really bad, even deadly, 7:13-16.**
 - Sin produces death and slavery in us, 7:13-14, cf. 6:6-7.
 - Sin feeds our spiritual confusion, 7:15-16, cf. Jeremiah 17:9.
- (3) **We struggle in the middle of who we were and who we are, 7:17-23.**
- (4) **Jesus Christ our Lord is our only Deliverer, 7:24-25.**
 - We must identify the power of sin in our lives, 7:17.
 - We must accept our inability to battle sin in our flesh, 7:18-21.
 - We must fully believe in Jesus Christ our Lord as our only Deliverer, 7:22-25.