



Ecclesiology: The Study of the Church

Lesson 19: The Enemy of Discipleship

INTRODUCTION

1. As you seek to grow as a Christian and help others grow as Christians, what are some of the main challenges you face? How do you respond to them? _____

MAIN IDEA

The sin that still dwells within us and within others opposes our discipleship every step of the way, but by God's grace we can overcome it.

DIGGING IN

In Romans 7:1–12, Paul says that even though God's law is good, it brings death to sinful people because it provokes our sinful natures to act out against it. Then, in verses 13 through 25, he discusses how, even though we Christians have been given new life by the Spirit and are no longer under sin's dominion, sin still dwells in us and opposes our efforts to grow in Christ.

Romans 7:13–25

1. Why doesn't Paul understand his own actions (v. 15)? _____

2. What does Paul conclude from the fact that he does the opposite of what he wants (v. 17)? _____

3. Does this mean that Paul isn't responsible for what he does? Why or why not? _____

4. What does Paul have? What does he lack (v. 18)? _____

5. What does Paul find to be a law, that is, a regular, predictable pattern (v. 21)? _____

6. How would you summarize Paul's struggle in your own words? _____

7. Can you identify with this struggle? If so, in what ways? _____

8. What does this passage teach us about the nature of sin? Is this different from how you typically think about sin? _____

9. In light of this passage's teaching, what should our attitude toward sin be? What should it not be? _____

10. Read Romans 8:12–13. What does Paul tell us to do to the sin that dwells within us? What are some practical means by which we can do that on a day-to-day basis? _____

11. As we've seen in previous studies, all of us are called to help our fellow church members grow in Christ through teaching the Word and modeling godly living for others.

What are some ways that sin can threaten discipleship in the church? What are some of the ways Scripture calls us to respond when others sin against us? Discuss the following passages:

- Matthew 18:15–20 _____

- Romans 12:17–19 _____

- Galatians 6:1–5 _____

• Ephesians 4:32 _____

• 1 Peter 4:8 _____

12. Consider the Scripture passages we've just discussed. Which of these responses to sin do you find to be most difficult? Why? What are some things that could help you grow in this area?¹ _____

¹ Bobby Jamieson, *Growing One Another: Discipleship in the Church*, ed. Mark Dever, 9Marks Healthy Church Study Guides (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 35–37.