

# Dear God | What's Wrong With Me? | Discussion Guide - Rom 7:18; Col 3:5-17

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**Romans 7:18 (NLT)** *...I want to do what is right, but I can't.*

The question is often asked, "Is Mankind Inherently Good or Evil?". Debate.org scores the debate as appr. 48% saying we are inherently Good and 52% saying we are Bad. ([link](#))

The Heidelberg Catechism (1563) asks this question, "Did God create man thus wicked and perverse?" Then answers with, "No, but God created man good, and after His own image, that is, in righteousness and true holiness; that he might rightly know God his Creator, heartily love Him, and live with Him in eternal blessedness, to praise and glorify Him." Of course the next question and answer in the catechism is, *Whence then comes this depraved nature of man? From the fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise, whereby our nature became so corrupt, that we are all conceived and born in sin.*

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## I Do What I Want! Don't I?

We seldom realize the extent to which the heart of mankind has been ruined by Adam's decision. Most of us are quick to declare the control we believe we have over our own destinies. Yet, we are not so quick to admit that each choice we make has a consequence. Or, to put it another way, we are often unwilling to accept that our current choices are often limited by our past choices. Nor are we willing to discuss the reality that often our choices are limited by the choices of others. And, the simple truth is that Adam made a decision that limited everyone. In effect, It was Adam's decision which ruined our hearts. This is why God makes this statement regarding the heart of mankind...

**Jeremiah 17:9 (NLT)** *"The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?"*

God's answer for this conundrum is extreme. We need to see that our inherent condition is too far gone to be reformed or reeducated. So God took another course...

**Romans 6:6 (NLT)** *We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin.*

God brought an end to things that are natural to us upon the Cross. In the Cross we clearly see God's opinion regarding our natural state of ruin brought on by sin. The Cross of Jesus is the judgment and punishment for our mistakes. This is how God ended our ruin, by death and resurrection.

**Ephesians 2:5 (NLT)** *that even though we were dead because of our sins, He gave us life when He raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!)*

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## Why is the right thing the hardest thing?

We now find ourselves in a truly awkward situation as believers. We are no longer under the POWER of Sin! But we don't know anything else. So, we are kind of lost. We are free from the only life we know and empowered to live a new life that we don't understand. *Awkward!* (Gal 5:17)

Consider the Nation of Israel, ten minutes after the whole Red Sea thing, they were probably ecstatic! "Whoopee, We are free!!! No more bricks, no more mud, straw, and slave masters!" "What do we do now?" Their nation had been slaves for four hundred years. They had no idea how to be anything but a slave. They did not know how to be free.

This perfectly illustrates our situation. We need to get rid of what we know. We need to learn to see the things that come so naturally to us as harmful to our true, resurrected selves.

*Colossians 3:5,8 (NLT) So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you... now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language.*

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## What Hope Is There For Me?

We must begin by getting rid of the junk in our hearts and habits, but the idea that we can simply eliminate the negative is incomplete. It's time to learn *what* has been done for us and *who* we are now. It's time to start *believing* what is TRUE about us. It's time to live *behaviors* that agree with those truths.

New Life in Jesus Christ is designed to give NEW Life. And, the Holy Spirit empowers that life. We are not left on our own. Additional willpower is not required. God starts doing something amazing in our lives the moment we turn away from our sins and mistakes to trust Jesus.

*Philippians 1:6 (NLT) And I am certain that God, Who began the good work within you, will continue His work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.*

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## Discussion:

- Discuss the question, "Is mankind inherently good or evil?"
- Discuss the question, "Do people have a free will?" Add [Romans 6:16](#) to the discussion. Add [John 8:34-36](#) to the discussion. How do these verses change the conversation?
- Discuss [Jeremiah 17:9](#). How extreme is the corruption or ruin of mankind?
- How does the discussion regarding the ruin of mankind connect to Jesus' Death on the Cross? Does the Cross seem extreme in light of the ruin of mankind? Why or why not?
- Discuss [Ephesians 2:5](#). What does it mean that people are dead in sin? What thoughts come to you regarding your own spiritual condition?
- Discuss the story of the Prodigal Son ([Luke 15](#)). How does it illustrate a new start in life?
- Discuss [Colossians 3:5-17](#). How do we "strip off" the old? How do we "put on" the new?
- Discuss [2 Corinthians 3:8,18](#). What does 'More God' look like in your life?
- Did anything stand out in your reading today that you could share with someone else?
- Write a personal action step based on this conversation. (*What will you do about it?*)