

GRACE

THE SERIES

- I still carry this reality called the flesh 14
- Sin dwells in my flesh 17
- Whatever produces sin is not
the real me 17, 20
- The ongoing discovery of sin in me
confounds and confuses me 15-20
- Attempting to manage the flesh
makes me miserable 24



The Christian life is not about attacking the flesh with spiritual resolve. The flesh always remains underwhelmed and untouched. The Christian life is about maturing in Christ.



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Paul knows something horrible will happen in their communities if he doesn't tell them. They will create cultures of hiding, or bragging, or comparing or shaming. They will claim they could never do such a thing, they will create false standards, they will give themselves permission to separate instead of drawing closer when the other sins.



So Paul models what a Christian culture looks like. Paul brags many times about Christ in him. But Paul also freely admits to embarrassing, devastating sin in him. He knows we need to see him doing it so we will copy it. He knows he needs it. Especially him. Because we want to raise him up as a hero. And elevated ones, in hiding, all eventually go down in flames.



There is no clergy. There is no laity. There are only believers risking to let some amongst us be elders and deacons and staff. If they are not servants first, if they are not telling the truth of their own vulnerabilities and failures, you've got the wrong people. Clean house. Because they went to seminary doesn't make them a better person. It means they can parse a verse in Greek and count in Roman numerals. Because they wear a collar does not make them immune to horrible failure. It means they know how to wear a collar. We all have this flesh and residing sin.



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You'll know you're becoming a mature Christian when you discover that you are allowing God and others to know the worst of you, and then letting them protect you and stand with you in the truth of God's new story about you. Instead of the lie you made up that gets fed in hiddenness.



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