

# Lifetime Guarantee

(Pages 218-220)

by Bill Gillham,

The Bible teaches that the believer battles against an inner power called *sin*: "But I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members" (Romans 7:23). Notice this power is not in the believer's *mind* where his thoughts are generated, but in his body. The verse says your mind wars against this power.

This power called *sin* entered the world at the fall (Romans 5:12). You inherited it through your dad, originally from Adam, not Eve. (You'll notice that Jesus had no earthly dad because if He had, sin would have indwelt Him. He is the only person in Scripture spoken of as "seed of woman.")

Every war must have at least two opponents. In your inner battle, the power of sin sides with Satan. Since Romans 7:23 says your mind fights against this power, whose side does your mind *have* to support? God's, else there would be no inner war. Your mind fights the power of sin because you have the law of God written on your mind (see Hebrews 10:16). God says, "I will put My Spirit within you and *cause* you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances" (Ezekiel 36:27, emphasis added). That describes you, brother and sister. You have a deep inner longing to obey God. That's God's law which is written on your heart.

However, perhaps you have believed that your war within is a *civil* war. If so, you interpret verses which speak of your inner struggle as an "evil you" warring against a "good you." Small wonder you lose so many battles. You fire your weapons at the wrong enemy.

Years ago, God showed me that the power of sin uses two techniques to "war against" your mind. One: It presents thoughts to your mind using first person singular pronouns (I, me, my, myself, etc.). Second: It uses your old flesh patterns as a channel through which to present thoughts to your mind. Is this biblical? Let's check it out.

A Ph.D. from a well-known evangelical seminary once said to me, "Bill, you are personifying sin by stating that the believer has a foreign power in his body which gives thoughts to him, seeking to influence

him to do evil. To my knowledge, this has never been taught by the church." I tactfully responded that *Paul* taught it to the church, but because many ceased to teach it we now see defeated, impotent believers—a far cry from the first-century church.

W. E. Vine's *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* explains that the Greek word *hamartia* (which translates to the English "sin") is a noun, *while hamartano* (also translated "sin") is a verb. In Romans 6:14 where Paul writes, "Sin shall not be master over you," *sin* is a noun; while in verse 15, "Shall we sin . . .?" it is a verb. In Romans chapters 5-8 the word *sin* appears 41 times, once as a *verb*, *forty times as noun!* Why the emphasis? Because *if you interpret the word sin in Romans 5-8 as a verb you will never understand these chapters, and they are vital to walking in victory.* We have been conditioned to perceive the word sin as an action word. Thus, when we read it in the Bible we think, *Yep, that's when I stole the hubcaps.*

In Romans 5:21; 6:12,14,17; 7:11,14,17,20,23,25; 8:2; 1 Corinthians 15:56; Hebrews 3:13; 11:25; 12:4; James 1:15b, Vine states of the noun *hamartia*, "This GOVERNING principle is PERSONIFIED" (represented as a person). It governs (controls) and it has a persona (the characteristics of a person). So what? Here's what. *The power of sin presents thoughts to your godly mind for consideration by making them seem like they're your own thoughts!* Misinterpreting *sin* as a verb is kind of like being a student who never learns his locker combination. Instead of growing to maturity, you'll stand outside the classroom spinning the dial.

As you experience the thoughts which sin (the persona) feeds up to your mind with first-person pronouns (I, me, my), you'd swear on a stack of Bibles that the old man has been resurrected. You'll think a *monologue* is going on in your mind (a conversation with yourself), when in fact it is a *dialogue* (a conversation with sin) (see Romans 7:17,20). This explains why many Christians teach that the old man is still alive. They cite isolated verses attempting to explain their experience. This is called "proof texting" and is not legitimate biblical interpretation. No one can accurately interpret chapters 5-8 of Romans, verse by verse, and prove the old man lives. It states categorically that he died in Romans 6:2,4, 5,6,7,8,11,13, et al. Since only Christ has resurrection power, the old man has not been resurrected. We must, therefore, search the Word to see what God identifies as our opponent in our inner battle. Romans 5-8 says it is a power called *sin* (the noun).

Second Corinthians 10:5 says, "We are (to take) *every thought* captive to the obedience of Christ" (emphasis added). There are three sources for the thoughts you experience: your mind, the Holy Spirit, and the power of sin. The thoughts from the Holy Spirit and your mind are godly (1 Corinthians 2: 16b). Your mind no longer *generates* sinful thoughts (1 John 3:9; 5:18); it *receives* sinful thoughts from the power of sin and your will puts them into action. To prevent this, you must "take (sin's) thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5) by *acting* like you are dead to them but "alive to God" (Romans 6:11). By employing this battle tactic, "sin (the persona) shall not be master over you" (Romans 6:14).

Sin is a persona. It has intelligence. It obeys its master, Satan. It can put thoughts into your mind. It seeks to control you. But, by Christ's life through you, you do not *have* to give in to sin's urgings: "For sin (the persona) shall not be master over you" (Romans 6:14); "He who has died is freed from sin (the persona)" (Romans 6:7, emphasis added); "So consider yourselves to be dead to sin (the personal, but alive to God" Romans 6:11). It is only in following the imperative of these verses that you can realize consistent victory over sinning (the verb).