THE TRUE “WAR ZONE” OF THE COVENANTS

While we have noted some significant differences between the old and new covenants (the different rituals involved, and so on), we have also seen that at the most fundamental levels they share the same spiritually defining DNA and gospel of Christ. In fact, God’s historical covenants wage war as allies against the enemy of souls through their presentation of “the gospel of Christ.”

This week’s passage, Romans 8:1–17, focuses on the internal “war zone” of the covenants.

Satan cannot change the gospel. It is an objective reality. The covenants speak with one voice affirming them. What Satan can, and does do, is attempt to keep people away from the gospel, to blind them to God’s covenantal love for them and His promises to redeem them from the pit (cf. Ps. 103:4). He can seek to turn them away from the gospel when they do hear it, luring them to reject it outright or, alternately, lure them to “accept” it and relate to it aberrantly, thinking they are safe when they are not.

The true battle of the covenants is not between God’s historical covenants but is experiential and relational. God will force no one to accept Him or His love for them. His love draws and woos us, but does not strong-arm into submission. Despite Satan’s efforts everyone will hear the gospel in one form or another (John 1:9). And everyone will respond—either with an old covenant experience (rejection, legalism), or with a new covenant experience (faith and the obedience spawned by faith). The Bible describes it as a war between “the flesh” and “the Spirit.”

Welcome to the true “war zone” of the covenants.
Write out Romans 8:1–17 from the translation of your choice. If you’re pressed for time, write out Romans 8:4–14. You may also re-write the passage in your own words, outline, or mind-map the chapter.
Go back to your scribed text and study the passage.

**Circle** repeated words/phrases/ideas

**Underline** words/phrases that are important and have meaning to you

Draw **Arrows** to connect words/phrases to other associated or related words/phrases

What special insights do your marks seem overall to point to?

---

Memorize your favorite verse in Romans 8:1–17. Write it out multiple times to help with memorization.

The chart presents major New Testament contrasts of the "flesh" versus "Spirit." Dwell on each horizontal contrast individually, and then on each of the two vertical columns. Note the contrasts.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“That…born of the flesh is flesh”</td>
<td>John 3:6</td>
<td>“That…born of the Spirit is spirit”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can’t fulfill Law’s requirements</td>
<td>Rom. 8:3, 4</td>
<td>Fulfills the Law’s requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mind set on what flesh desires</td>
<td>Rom. 8:5</td>
<td>Mind set on what the Spirit desires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Death”; “will die”</td>
<td>Rom. 8:6, 13</td>
<td>“Life and peace”; “will live”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Enmity against God”; “Not subject to the law of God”</td>
<td>Rom. 8:7</td>
<td>[Love God; “subject to the law of God”]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Cannot please God”</td>
<td>Rom. 8:8</td>
<td>[Can “please God”]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not belong to Christ</td>
<td>Rom. 8:9, 14</td>
<td>Does belong to Christ “Sons of God”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrighteous works; “Won’t inherit kingdom of God”</td>
<td>Gal. 5:19–24</td>
<td>Righteous fruit “crucified the flesh”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The works of the law”</td>
<td>Gal. 3:2–6</td>
<td>“Believing/faith”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Read more at www.inversebible.org/cov05-3
After looking at your scribed and annotated text, what special insights do your marks seem to point to overall?

What questions emerge after studying this passage? What parts are difficult?

What other principles and conclusions do you find?

Do you ever feel the war between "the flesh" and "the Spirit" going on inside of you? If so, when do you seem to become most aware of it?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/cov05-4
What relationship do the following verses have with the primary passage?

John 3:3–6
Galatians 3:2–6; 5:19–24
Hebrews 2:14–18; 4:14–16
2 Corinthians 5:20–21
Romans 5:20

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Romans 8:1–17?

Review your memorized verse from Romans 8:1–17.
How can Jesus fight the battle against “the flesh” for you?

What is He saying to you through these texts?

How do you see Jesus differently or see Him again?

Prayer: How do you respond to seeing Jesus in this way?

Meditate on Romans 8:1–17 again and look for where Jesus is.

Read more at www.inversebible.org/cov05-6

The “War Zone” of the Covenants
Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

After this week’s study of the chapter, where are “wins” needed in your spiritual walk?

Where are “wins” needed in your public witness and walk with God?

Read more inSight from the Spirit of Prophecy at www.inversebible.org/cov05-7
Share insights from this week’s memory verse and Bible study as well as any discoveries, observations, and questions with your Sabbath School class (or Bible study group). Consider these discussion questions with the rest of the group.

How have both the old and new covenants been allies in your life against the enemy of souls?

Explain further the two primary ways that the flesh expresses itself.

Which of the two has been tangible in your life?

How has this study on covenants affected your response to God?

How did this war zone manifest itself in the life of Christ?

Why is it crucial to understand the complementarity of the two covenants?

How does this impact your personal spiritual walk and development?

Share an experience in which the Spirit won over the flesh. If you haven’t had this type of experience, why not?

The "War Zone" of the Covenants