He further explains that sin is alive because of the Law, which he also refers to as “the commandment.” Because the Law affords the opportunity to sin by transgressing it, the weakness of the sinful nature succumbs to it and we die, this of course a reference to Adam, and all of us in our transgression and resulting physical death. And even though the Law is “holy and good,” yet we violate it becoming sinners and reap the just penalty of death as a result. This of course is affected through “sin” which is in us, and responds to the opportunity to transgress, “effecting my death.” His point is, the Law is not to blame, but rather, sin which is within us, and through its passions, causes us to transgress the Law, resulting in death (God’s judgment against sin).

Then he digs into the nature of the warfare that is taking place in us. He explains that sin is present within us, that “sin indwells me.” Indeed SIN and EVIL are within us and “present in me,” says Paul. In fact Paul says, “For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh,” making the point that “the flesh,” or sinful nature of Paul (and us) is entirely EVIL. In contrast to the flesh is the “inner man,” in whom Paul says that it “delights in the Law of God,” which is “spiritual,” and joyfully wishes to “practice” the Law and “do good.” But he explains there is a sinister warfare constantly being waged against us by “indwelling sin,” and this warfare is “in the members of my body,” that is, these mortal “bodies of death.” Here see that the “Law is spiritual” v-14, but our physical “bodies of death” v-24, are subject to the power and temptation of sin, and there is a war being waged in our hearts and minds v-23. Our inner man delights in God’s Law and desires to “do good,” yet is encumbered by the “flesh” v-17 and weakness of the physical body v-23, and this creates a massive spiritual warfare which is constantly being waged in the Christian life.

See in this section Paul’s key points about spiritual warfare.