

Romans 7, Daily Devotions

☐ Monday - The Newness of the Spirit.

Romans 7:6

The apostle Paul writes, "But now we have been released from the Law ... so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter" (Rom. 7:6). The Christian is not "under the Law" (Rom. 6:14); that is to say, he does not obey the law in order to be saved or to stay saved. No, rather, the Christian's obedience and service are motivated by love for the Lord (John 14:15; 1 John 5:3). He walks by the Spirit (Gal. 5:16, 25), and serves by the Spirit (Rom. 7:6). And, as a by-product of the Spirit's operation in his life, flows the fruit of the Spirit of love (Gal. 5:22), which is the fulfillment of the Law (Rom. 13:8-10; Gal. 5:14; Jam. 2:8).

Read Galatians 5:18; John 13:35

☐ Tuesday - Purpose of the Law.

Romans 7:7

Once again in Romans, the apostle reminds us of the purpose of the Law, saying, "I would not have come to know sin except through the Law" (Rom. 7:7, cf. 3:20). The strength of the Law is its ability to reveal sin, but the "weakness" of the law, as Paul later calls it, is its inability to help us overcome sin (Rom. 8:3). Despite its promises of blessing for obedience and threats of curses for disobedience (Lev. 26; Deut. 28), the Law cannot effect any permanent inward change. Knowing this, what do you do when you catch yourself in some sin? Do you promise God that you will try to do better next time and stick closer to His commandments? If that is what you do, then you do not need Christ! Jesus is calling today for your unconditional surrender.

Read Matthew 16:24

☐ Wednesday - The Flesh is Weak.

Romans 7:18

The Christian life is a call to continual change (Eph. 4:22-23); and yet, as we have already seen, the Christian cannot change himself. Paul recognized this defect: "The wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not" (Rom. 7:18). Christ also spoke of this weakness in man, when he proclaimed, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt. 26:41). Yet God has not left us as orphans (Jn. 14:18), to fend for ourselves, but has given us His Spirit to strengthen us. So then, "walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16).

Read Philippians 4:13

☐ Thursday - Your New Identity in Christ Jesus.

Romans 7:22

In his epistles, Paul repeatedly talks about the "inner man" (Eph. 3:16; 2 Cor. 4:16). Here, in Romans 7, Paul uses the term again, when he declares, "I joyfully concur with the law of God in the *inner man*" (Rom. 7:22). Who or what is the inner man? It is what Paul describes elsewhere, "Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a *new creature*; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come" (2 Cor. 5:17). That new creature, the new you, is the inner man that Paul is talking about. It is your new, born-again, spirit-led nature, your new identity in Christ. Next time your friends ask you, "What's new?" Say, "I am!"

Read Romans 8:5-15

☐ Friday - War Between Your Ears.

Romans 7:23

There is a war raging within every Christian, and it takes place between your ears. It is the battle between the flesh and the Spirit to take control of your mind. In his own life, the apostle Paul declared, "But I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my *mind*" (Rom. 7:23). We fight this battle by "taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5), and by being "transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2), through the Word of God (Heb. 4:12). Today, let us fight the good fight!

Read 1 Peter 2:11; Gal. 5:16-17; Romans 13:14

☐ Saturday - Wretched Man That I Am!

Romans 7:24

Earlier in Romans 7, Paul declares, "For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh" (Rom. 7:18). And here he calls himself a "wretched man" (Rom. 7:24). Elsewhere Paul refers to himself as "the chief of sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15), and "the least of the apostles" (1 Cor. 15:9). The poor guy obviously suffered from very low self-esteem. Undoubtedly that is why God used him so mightily. Christian, you and your self-esteem must decrease and Christ must increase (John 3:30).

Read 1 Peter 5:5-7