

Read: Romans 7:15-25

God Gives Us Rest by Giving Us Victory Over Sin

Romans 7:19,24-25

For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

“Why would you do that?” the frustrated parents asked Isaiah. “I don’t know,” he said. “Well what were you thinking?” they asked with a firm tone of voice. “I guess I wasn’t thinking,” he replied. “Haven’t we talked to you about this before?” With a shaky voice and tears in his eyes, Isaiah said, “I don’t know, OK? I didn’t mean to. I didn’t want to. But I just did. I don’t know why I did it, but I did. I guess I can’t help myself.”

How frustrating! Sometimes we try *so hard* to do what is right. We *try* to do what God wants. We *try* to show love to him and love to others. But then we fail again . . . and again . . . and again. And many times, we commit the same sins over and over and over! Why is that?

Even though we are God’s children who are forgiven and dearly loved, deep down inside we still have something rotten and bad called our “sinful nature.” This is the natural part of us that wants to fight against our faith. Our faith says, “Obey God!” but our sinful nature says, “Don’t do it!” And many times, we lose the fight and do what’s wrong. That’s called sin.

The apostle Paul understood this battle. Even though he was a great apostle who preached God’s Word to many people, he was still a sinner. Many times Paul felt like a worn out wrestler who was losing the wrestling match with his sinful nature. He wanted to do good things, but often he didn’t. And when he didn’t want to sin, he would sin anyways. This made Paul feel sometimes like he was the chief—the worst—of all sinners. So finally Paul cried out, “Who will rescue me from this?”

Thankfully Paul knew the answer and he shares it with us today. Who will rescue us from the sins we keep falling into? Jesus! Paul wrote, “Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!”

You see, Jesus knows what it is like to be tempted. He was tempted to do all the things that we are tempted to do. But Jesus never sinned. Not once! Yet not only did he defeat the devil with his perfect life, Jesus also crushed him at the cross when he washed all our sins away. Jesus even came out of the tomb alive on Easter to prove that he won the victory over death and the devil. Jesus won the fight once and for all!

Do you know what that means for you? You are still going to wrestle with sin. You are still going to be tempted. And yes, you will still fall into sin. But you can *always* rest in the victory of Jesus! Jesus is the mighty Savior who will give you the strength to fight against temptation, and Jesus is the loving Savior who will always forgive you when you fall into sin. His victory is your victory now and always. Thanks be to God!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for Younger Children

- What are things that your parents or teachers remind you to do over and over again?
- Whom do we make happy when we listen to and obey other adults?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- What temptations do you think are the most difficult for kids to fight against?
- How do we know that Jesus has more power than sin and Satan?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Agree or Disagree: Since I can't help myself from falling into sin, I shouldn't even bother to try.
- Recall the brief opening story of the devotion about Isaiah. What kinds of thoughts and feelings go through the minds of people who fall into the same sins over and over? How does Jesus give us comfort and rest when we have those kinds of thoughts or feelings?

Closing Prayer:

Heavenly Father, remind me that you are always with me. I know that when you are with me you will guide, guard, and protect me. Take my hand and lead me throughout life. Amen.

Hymn: CW 385:4,5 – Chief of Sinners Though I Be

Chief of sinners though I be, Christ is all in all to me.
All my wants to him are known; All my sorrows are his own.
Safe with him in earthly strife, I await the heav'nly life.

Strengthen me, O gracious Lord, By your Spirit and your word.
When my wayward heart would stray, Keep me in the narrow way;
Grace in time of need supply While I live and when I die.