

- I. Take some time to invite the Holy Spirit in to guide your thoughts and feelings as you go through this Bible study. Ask the Lord to reveal specific areas of your life you may need to turn from and leave behind.
- II. Repentance can be a tough topic. It requires us to recognize our sins, feel sorrow for our sins, face God and confess our sins, and do things God's way rather than our own.

In His infinite love and grace towards us, God makes repentance really easy. We already know the outcome of repentance. Repenting is our chance to turn from our own ways, choose God's way, and receive His grace and forgiveness.

Our sin comes between us and God. In order to reconcile and come back into a right relationship with God, we have to repent. It would be the same as if you got into a fight with one of your friends, and then the two of you just didn't talk about it. The thing you fought over would sit beneath the surface, impacting your relationship. Until you both talk it out, ask for forgiveness, and offer grace, your relationship won't be right with each other. It's the same with your relationship with God.

In the space provided, write out your definition of repentance and why it's needed to have a fruitful relationship with God: _____

- III. You're going to be looking at Paul's tongue twister in Romans chapter 7. Whenever you're in Paul's letter to the Romans, it's important to remember that the letter is one big continuous thought and there's great purpose for it. Paul is writing to a society that's at the center of everything the world knew at the time. Rome has all the influence. This letter Paul is writing is really important stuff, and he knew it. Basically, Paul is laying out the case for Christianity to the known world. He does it in a very systematic way, so that the philosophers and progressive thought people in this educated society can't just dismiss what he's saying.

Because of this, and because the Book of Romans is what the Holy Spirit led Paul to produce for the advancement of the Gospel to the world, most theologians would say that Romans, especially chapters 1-8, is the most important outline of the Christian faith there is. Chapters 1-3 present our need individually and collectively for the Gospel of Christ and for a Savior, Chapters 4 and 5 back it all up, and chapters 6-8 discuss the working out of the Gospel and having a Savior in a Christian's life... they talk about the Law and grace and walking out our faith.

Romans 6:14 in the NLT says, "Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God's grace." And Paul goes on talking about grace vs. the law and our need for both.

At that time, the Law (God’s way of doing things) was a big list of do’s and don’ts that kept people safe and healthy and getting along with each other and stuff. The Law also kept people from experiencing the negative consequences of not doing things God’s way. BUT, because the wages of sin is death, the law without grace also condemned people to death. People were very aware they couldn’t do everything the way God said, so they lived with a lot of shame and guilt.

But remember, Paul is talking about the Good News here. He’s delivering God’s message of grace and at the same time saying it’s a really good idea to do things the way God says to. There’s a duality at play here (two things existing at the same time). We are saved by grace, AND it’s good to believe and do what God says.

Sometimes though, even when we really want to do what God says, we screw up. We sin. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are saints who sin. Paul is well aware of this, and here he is 20 to 30 years into ministry writing about the struggle that he himself experiences. If we pay attention, we can see what God’s amazing grace is really all about. We can see that God’s grace actually leads us towards repentance!

IV. Read Romans 7:14-25

This is written for Christians. It implies a certain level of humility, a desire to obey God’s law, and an acknowledgement that Jesus is Lord and Savior. The readers should believe they should be led by the Holy Spirit. Paul says there is sin that dwells in us and has some type of power to control us. But remember, the Holy Spirit also dwells in us, convicts us of our sin, and reveals the things we need to repent of.

V. Keep your place in Romans, and read Revelation 3:19 (read multiple translations if possible)

- What does this verse have to do with what we’re looking at in Romans?

- Note: God convicts us of sin because He loves us. The sin “living” in us is due to our indifference towards it. So, we should repent and turn from our sinful ways when we are convicted to do so.

VI. Back to Romans 7:14-25; answer the following questions:

- What do you think Paul means by the “sin living in me”?
How does it get there? How does it live and have power over us?

- Do you believe you allow sin to stay in (live) you and have power over you when you don’t repent?
