

# Just A Minute! *With Scripture*

The King James Bible is used for all references. Verses may be made bold or numbered for emphasis.

Newsletter Theme: Application of Romans 7

## Pleading For Help in Tough Times

To get through life's difficulties today, do we need to beg God to help us and give us 'more' good things? *"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also **freely give us all things?**" (Rom. 8:32) Is Christ, who works in us, sufficient in the sufferings? *"And God is able to make **all** grace abound toward you; that ye, **always** having **all** sufficiency in **all** things, may abound to **every** good work."* (II Cor. 9:8) God has given us powerful resources, but do we use them?*

Let us briefly think about just three key provisions: the Spirit, the Word of God, and grace. As we read the Scriptures, the Spirit teaches our spirit (I Cor. 2:9-12) about His grace, which works in us to help us endure and live godly. Do you trust this to live?

Paul our Apostle performed many miracles, yet later in his ministry he had a grievous thorn in the flesh. He asked that it be removed; God's response was surprising. The Father taught him that applying the grace teachings of the gospel of Christ has great power: *"And he said unto me, **My grace is sufficient** for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness..."* (II Cor. 12:9)

Notice the five results that Paul experienced when he learned to trust Christ in the sufferings of life: *"1)...Most gladly therefore 2) will I rather glory in my infirmities, 3) that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 4) Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: 5) for when I am weak, then am I strong."* (II Cor. 12:9-10) Interestingly, the number five often refers to grace.

In the midst of any challenge, we can allow Christ to change our thinking to trust and endure, rejoicing to see Christ's power. When we're weak, unable to negotiate difficulties, we can look to God and His grace as our provision. This grace is sufficient in any difficulty or situation, and more, God uses it to help us grow.

**Food For Thought:** Though the flesh desperately wants sufferings and circumstances changed, could it be that we're not trusting (relying on) God's provision? It can be an opportunity to mature. Sin (a lack of faith) will strive against what God wants for us. *"For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."* (Rom. 7:22-23) Yield your will to be confident and thankful. Rest! You already have what you need. Instead of asking for more, think how to use what you have to yield. It all can work for good (Romans 8:28).

## The Game of Living Life God's Way

Could life be compared to playing a card game? Consider, we are dealt a hand to play when we're born i.e. physical, mental, and emotional traits and abilities, gender, race, culture, family, society, time in history, and circumstances. Until we mature to make wise choices, many things can make us feel like victims.

The inherited sin nature plays a role in this game of life: *"For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death."* (Romans 7:5)

Yet God desires for saints to take responsibility to play the hand we have, using the teaching we know in the gospel of grace (Romans-Philemon) and walk by faith. *"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God...think soberly, according as **God hath dealt** to every man **the measure of faith.**"* (Romans 12:2-3)

The walk by faith will access God's power and wisdom in the measure of grace as we learn. When problems or unforeseen situations happen, we can find abundant help with the renewed mind: *"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then **with the mind**, I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."* (Rom. 7:25)

This game isn't competitive nor designed to defeat or critique others. We're to kindly work together: *"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge (Cont. P. 3)*



Search it out!

Choose Something to Study in This Section

## Romans 7: Realizing Grace Words Vs Law Words

Examine verses!



Another helping tool for our study of the book of *Romans* is on Page 18 of “Exploring the Bible Using Study Tools,” available for purchase on Amazon:

**Grace and law words:** Sometimes words are used to express grace: ‘I beseech you,’ ‘might,’ ‘let,’ ‘receive,’ ‘permission,’ etc. In contrast, there are other words that seem law oriented: ‘Obey,’ ‘shalt not,’ ‘beware,’ ‘command,’ order, charge, etc.

**1. Romans 7:1-3:** Read through this first section to find the words used that are law and grace-oriented.

**2. Romans 7:4-6:** In these verses, notice related words to the law and their impact upon the believer.

**3. Romans 7:7-13:** List the words/phrases in these verses describing the results associated with putting yourself/others under the law. What does it teach?

**4. Romans 7:15-20:** In this section, note the type of behavior listed that results from keeping the law in our own effort. Does it seem acceptable unto God?

**5. Romans 7:21-25:** Could there be a law that gives peace and rest? What law is described here and how are we to use it? Take a moment to think on this.

**6. Observe the use of law and grace words in other passages:** *Rom. 12, Rom. 14:1-4, and II Cor. 1:23-24.*

Application: When you are in difficult interactions, use what you have learned to know how to think and say things. How can you manifest more of a grace attitude?

*\*Newer students: Focus on ‘reading’ Scripture rather than on using many new study insights.*

### Awareness Helps Us Avoid the Pitfalls of Romans 7

Paul begins this section by putting himself on display to teach us: *“What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God Forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.”* (Verses 7-8) As we read this chapter, we will observe that Paul tried to live under the law by his flesh. This happens whenever someone believes ‘I am able.’ God says **we are not able**: *“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”* (Rom. 3:23)

The natural man has patterns of behaving and reacting that are ingrained into our thinking and is our default approach in life. For example, when a law comes to mind, our flesh is exalted to think, ‘I can do it.’ Until we learn to consistently think and live God’s way to have the mind of Christ (*I Cor. 2:16*), we will continue the pattern of high-mindedness. Even a person with a renewed mind, such as Paul, can fall prey to the flesh. Whenever we take our focus off the Truth of God’s Word, we will allow the flesh to rule, follow Satan’s design for the course of this world, and become his victims. (*Eph. 2:1-3*) This is why we need to renew our mind each day: *“And be renewed in the spirit of your mind.”* (*Eph. 4:23*)

Sin in our flesh is much stronger and deceptive than we often realize. *“For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. (Verse 11)* Paul, our Apostle, says he was duped into trying to keep this law. The Law will accomplish what God designed it to do (*Verse 13*): Sin was made manifest and became exceedingly sinful. It humbled our Apostle to realize his need to yield unto God: *“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord...”* (Vs 24-25) Paul needed deliverance from his wretched body of sin, as do we.

It is important to be regularly reminded by the Word about our inability to produce anything acceptable on our own to our Father. Otherwise, we will continue in self-effort, the Romans 7 sin pattern. This brings discouragement, frustration, anger, and failure. Relationships within the Body of Christ are affected greatly when we try to please each other in the effort of our flesh. We need to bow in prayer and yield, humbly knowing God is the Provider. He will work His Word in us to manifest Christ’s life. His grace message teaches we’re saved and sealed eternally by the blood of Christ (*Rom. 1-5*). It also provides us a way to avoid the pitfalls of Romans 7 to have a holy walk and please God (*Romans 6:22*).





## The Lie That Traps Us in a Cycle of Sin

The Romans 7 Sin Cycle can be defined as being on a perpetual treadmill of sin, whether in thought or behavior. This happens whenever a saint tries to live doing good works, apart from God. His flesh attempts to meet the standards of a law, his own expectations, or another's requirements upon him.

For example, Paul tried to keep one commandment, "...Thou shalt not covet." (Rom. 7:7). Chapter 7 teaches that 'sin in the flesh' prevents a saint from being successful at keeping any law: *"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."* (Rom. 7:18) We all need God's power to live our life.

We can maintain an 'appearance of godliness' by trying to live a standard in our own efforts for a time. It is a façade and failure is inevitable, because we fall short of God's perfect righteousness. *"For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."* (Rom. 7:19) Sin is ever with us.

In Genesis, Cain attempted to please God with the works of his own hands, tilling the ground: *"And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD."* (Gen. 4:3) It was not good nor acceptable to God because a blood sacrifice was required. God taught Cain, but he decided to do things his way, apart from wisdom: *"If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door..."* (Genesis 4:7)

The great lie is believing YOU are wise, strong, and able to live without God, though He is your true power/strength. Adam decided to hearken unto Satan to be his own god in Genesis 3:5. He set aside what he knew, that God was his Provider, to exalt himself: the lie. We naturally follow Adam, perpetuating Satan's lie, without a renewed mind.



## The Game of Living Life God's Way

*this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way...Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."* (Rom. 14:13, 19) All is to be to the glory of God as we will give an account at the judgment seat of Christ. (Rom. 14:10-12)

This game of life is highly individualized and about living our faith, using our inner man wisdom. It requires us to really think. Now we can play the cards we have (resources/circumstances), make wise decisions, and push past the unknown, fear walls, & obstacles, all to God's glory: *"...Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind...For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."* (Rom. 14:5,8)

As life or any good card game proceeds, challenges and new situations arise that require interactive decision-making. We can be confident, as God gave us free will, but also access to His resources, and all things we need. Are we actively in the game or passively playing the victim of Satan's course for this world? *"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."* (Rom. 7:18) We can throw in the cards. Or, we can stay in there and play.

God wants us to humbly trust Him and His resources as our total provision: *"For in him we live, and move, and have our being..."* (Acts 17:28) Choices, choices... what will we decide? To effectively negotiate this life, we need to read daily, meditate, and apply the Word. Once we trust Christ's blood as payment for our sin, (Rom. 1-5), our basic game directions are in Romans 6-16. They give us guidelines and resources to start. We can not only stay in this game of life, but also help others as members one of another. (Romans 12:4-21)

**Think on this:** For some, it may help to see life as a card game in order to function in a new way. Take the cards you have, be thankful that God supplied all you need (Phil. 4:19), and know that *"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."* (Phil. 4:13). When your game of life presents unexpected challenges, detach and pause to evaluate your choices. Reflect on what you've been taught, readjust, then walk by faith. You have the best game partner...the Living and powerful God! Trust Him! Making mistakes is merely an opportunity to grow.

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Stamp

To:

**“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...” (Romans 3:24)**

## **God's 613 Commandments** By Erin Alexander

When we speak of the ten commandments, most are aware of what that means. They were rules written in stone by God and given to Moses. We often use them as a guiding point on how to live our lives. What do we say when someone asks us about the 613 laws that God commanded Israel to keep? How many are aware that there were that many?

Israel was made under the Law. This means that in order to live godly, they were required to keep many laws, much more than the ten commandments. The question is, did they keep them? Could they remain perfect? Scripture gives us the answers. Acts 7:53: “Who have received the Law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.” Acts 13:39: “And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses.” They could not keep the Law or be justified by it. The Law was never meant to save them. Romans 3:20: “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”

The Law was meant to show man how corrupt he is by nature and how much he needs God and His merciful grace to obtain salvation. Do not think that you have managed to keep the ten commandments and are perfect in God’s eyes. If you plan on trying to obtain salvation through the Law, you better be prepared to follow all 613. Salvation is always by faith, not by working to be good enough. In this dispensation of grace, just believe in what Christ did for you on Calvary, 2,000 years ago.

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