

a new Mirror – Study Guide

April 8, 2018

What do you see when you look into the mirror?

To help explain this passage of Romans 7:14-8:1, I want us to picture three different mirrors.

First, there is the mirror of Conversion.

In this mirror, we see the law, showing us right from wrong.

So the trouble is not with the law, for it is spiritual and good.

We also see ourselves, as slaves to sin.

The trouble is with me, for I am all too human, a slave to sin. (Romans 7:14, NLT)

We are disappointed in what we see, and we even hate what we see in ourselves.

I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate. (Romans 7:15, NLT)

It looks something like this...

That is the process of repentance and conversion, and it is a good process.

But if I know that what I am doing is wrong, this shows that I agree that the law is good. (Romans 7:16, NLT)

Enter, the New You.

But there is another mirror, a better mirror, that defines who you are after Conversion.

Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 7:25, NLT)

And in this mirror is another person that we haven't seen yet. And that is the New You.

*This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; **a new life has begun!** (2 Corinthians 5:17, NLT)*

Paul has shown us the New You already in a subtle way.

*So **I am not the one** doing wrong; it is **sin living in me** that does it. (Romans 7:17, NLT)*

*But if I do what I don't want to do, **I am not really the one** doing wrong; it is **sin living in me** that does it. (Romans 7:20, NLT)*

The mirror of No Condemnation.

So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1, NLT)

No condemnation means:

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1. God does not reject you because of your sin.
2. God is not angry with you when you struggle with sin in your life.
3. God will not punish you when you sin, but he will train you as a Father/Coach.
4. God does not look backward at your sin but he looks forward to what you are becoming.
5. You no longer live under the fear of condemnation.

But the mirror of Conversion can become the mirror of Condemnation.

When we look into the mirror of Condemnation day after day...

- We feel like a failure.
- We feel unacceptable.
- We only see our flaws.
- We fear being rejected.
- We feel condemned.

In short, we see our sinfulness, in the mirror, staring back at us, day after day.

But instead of leading us toward a healthy Christian life, this only leads us to increased condemnation.

The apostle Paul is showing this to us in Romans 7. He is giving us a picture of this failure cycle.

And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. (Romans 7:18, NLT)

I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. (Romans 7:19, NLT)

I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. (Romans 7:21, NLT)

And he finally concludes...

Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? (Romans 7:24, NLT)

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What do you see when you look into the mirror?

Read Romans 7:14-24

How many times does Paul say that the law is good?

How many times does Paul describe the idea that he is failing to do the good that he wants to do?

In what ways can you identify with that feeling of failure?

How frustrated is Paul with himself in verse 24?

Have you ever felt like that? Explain.

Sin and the New You.

How does Paul describe himself in verse 14?

Is he identified with his sin or is he separated from his sin at this point?

How does Paul describe himself in verses 17 and 20?

Is he identified with his sin or is he separated from his sin at this point?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17

How do you think this verse is connected to what Paul is saying in Romans 7:17 and 7:20?

Read Romans 8:1

What does this verse tell you about the New You?

How does God see you?

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a while inserting the word “God” for the word “Love.”

Does this help to give you a different perspective on how God sees the New You? Explain.