

Transformed – teen devotion – October 7, 2018

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So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. 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!

Romans 7:21-25

Rebel #1 – The Enemy

Do you ever feel like you don't belong? Do you ever feel like you don't fit in?

It's supposed to be that way for us in this world. The Bible calls us aliens and strangers in this world. We're supposed to be different. While our friends go one direction pursuing sin and priorities that are not God's, we go against the stream pursuing that for which Jesus took hold of us. We don't belong in this world. Heaven is our destiny; that is where we belong. Not only that, but we have a different God, a different guide, and we fight a different war than everyone else in this world.

This month's devotions consider what it means and looks like to be rebels as followers of Jesus. This week we look at our enemy. Immediately, we think of the devil who like a prowling lion creeps in the tall grass looking to devour us. We also think quickly of the temptations that the world dangles in front of us.

Those are certainly our enemies, but sometimes you are your own worst enemy. Paul knew it was true: “Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me.” There was a war inside of him. It made him a prisoner to sin. Previously in Romans 7, Paul expresses a deep frustration because he isn’t doing and can’t do what he knows he should.

You’ll find the same thing as you look at your heart and life. You know the good that you should be doing, but you don’t do it. Sometimes you intentionally plan to do that thing you shouldn’t do. Other times, you fall into sin and feel helpless against it.

Paul is teaching us a powerful and important truth about ourselves: We’re worse than we thought. There isn’t a spark of goodness in us. We can’t just get over our sin by trying hard and doing the right things. It’s not in us. What a bunch of wretches we are!

Our only hope is that we are more loved than we would even dare imagine. Our God has delivered us from sin and death. Our God has even rescued us from this wicked, sinful nature in us. He has drowned it to death in our baptisms. He has given us complete victory in our Savior Jesus and set us free to live for him. He does it daily for us as we confess our sins and hear his forgiveness. He does it daily in the waters of our baptisms.

The truth is you don’t belong to sin anymore; you belong to your God. He redeemed you by his Son and gives you the victory through his Son, Jesus.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I am so frustrated by the sins I commit. I don’t want to do them. Sometimes I do them on purpose. Sometimes I do them without even thinking about it. Forgive me for them all and set me free by your blood to live for you. I belong to you. Help me to live for you. Amen.

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