

**May 10, 2026**

**God's Good News Story: The Church Alive & Growing**  
***Romans: For Today's World – Part 8 – Chapter 7***

**The Struggle Is Real—But So Is Grace**  
**A Mother's Day Reflection from Romans 7**

Paul's letter to the Romans, written around A.D. 57 while he was in the city of Corinth, Greece. It was written to a diverse group of Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome, addresses the challenges of unity and faithfulness in a multicultural, often hostile environment. It appears that this letter was hand delivered by a faithful servant and friend of Paul, a lady by the name of Phoebe, from a nearby port city town of Cenchrea. The Letter to the Romans centers on humanity's universal need for salvation, justification by faith in Jesus Christ, the transformative power of grace, emphasizes unity between Jewish and Gentile believers and the call to live by the Spirit. "*Romans For Today's World*" highlights how these foundational truths call the modern church to embrace grace, pursue righteousness, break down barriers of division, and embody Christlike love and service in a complex world. In other words, Romans is a life changing, purpose directing book that hopefully will bring a great effect upon us today in 2026.

Mother's Day is a time to honor, celebrate, and encourage. But let's be honest, Mother's Day can also bring a mix of emotions. For some, it's a joyful day; for others, it's bittersweet or even painful.

Today, we turn to Romans 7—a passage not often chosen for Mother's Day, but its themes of struggle, perseverance, grace, and dependence on God can speak powerfully to the real struggles and victories of motherhood. Mothers, if you've ever felt like you're not measuring up, you're in good company.

Does this scenario sound a little too familiar?

A mother wakes up determined to be patient and loving. Before breakfast is finished, she's already snapped at her kids and fussed at her husband... She feels defeated. She groans... "*Why can't I get this right?*" Paul's words echo this sentiment...

***Romans 7:18,19... .<sup>18</sup> 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.<sup>19</sup> 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.***

Have you ever felt like you're caught in a tug-of-war inside your own heart? Romans 7 is Paul's honest confession—he's wrestling, just like us, with the gap between who he wants to be and who he is. He talks about the law, that old voice of "should" and "must," always pointing out where we fall short. But Paul doesn't stop at the struggle—he shows us that the law can't save us, that self-effort perfection isn't the goal. Instead, he points to a new way: a life not chained to guilt or impossible standards, but set free by grace, by the Spirit, by Jesus Himself. Romans 7 is for every mother, every father, every person who's ever tried and failed and tried again. It's a chapter about the struggle, the honesty, and the hope that comes when we let go of perfection and lean into the victory Christ has already won.

Paul's words in Romans 7 are not the polished, perfect testimony of someone who has it all together.

They are the raw, honest confession of a man who knows the tension between **desire and reality** — between **who we want to be** and **who we sometimes are**. That’s why this passage is perfect for Mother’s Day — because it reminds us that **God’s grace meets us in the struggle, not after we’ve conquered it**.

In today’s passage Paul shows us that before we can ever serve God with joy, we have to be set free from the chains of trying to earn His love. So, let’s look at how Romans 7 invites us to move from chains to choice, to serve in the Spirit instead of striving under the weight of the law.

### **I. From Chains to Choice: Serving in the Spirit**

Paul begins Romans 7 with an analogy from marriage, explaining how we have died to the law and now belong to Christ. The law reveals our sin and our need for grace, but it cannot empower us to live righteously.

***Romans 7:4-6... <sup>4</sup> So, my dear brothers and sisters, this is the point: You died to the power of the law when you died with Christ. And now you are united with the one who was raised from the dead. As a result, we can produce a harvest of good deeds for God. <sup>5</sup> When we were controlled by our old nature, sinful desires were at work within us, and the law aroused these evil desires that produced a harvest of sinful deeds, resulting in death.***

***<sup>6</sup> But now we have been released from the law, for we died to it and are no longer captive to its power. Now we can serve God, not in the old way of obeying the letter of the law, but in the new way of living in the Spirit.***

All of us at times, and Mother’s especially, feel the pressure of what Paul refers to here as “the law”—whether it’s the law of perfection, comparison, or expectations from society and themselves.

Paul’s message is liberating:

- You are not bound by the old way of trying to measure up.
- In Christ, you are released from the burden of “doing enough” and invited to serve your family and God in the freedom and power of the Holy Spirit.
- This new way is marked by grace, not guilt; by relationship, not rules.

This freedom doesn’t mean we ignore God’s standards or stop caring about right and wrong—it means our motivation and our power have changed. Instead of serving out of fear or obligation, we serve out of love and gratitude for what Christ has already done. The Spirit gives us new desires and new strength, so that even when we fall short, we’re not crushed by condemnation.

For mothers, this means you can approach each day not as a test to pass, but as an opportunity to walk with God, trusting that His grace is enough for every weakness and every moment. The pressure to be perfect is replaced by the invitation to be present—with your family, and with the God who loves you as you are.

### **Illustration:**

Perhaps you know a mother who found freedom when she let go of perfectionism and embraced God's grace, allowing her to love and serve her family with joy rather than pressure.

This sets the stage for the struggle Paul describes in the next verses, showing that even as we are released from the law, we still wrestle with sin—but now we do so with the Spirit's help and Christ's victory.

## **II. The Struggle is Real, Be Honest**

Paul's confession in Romans 7 is raw and honest. He describes a tug-of-war within himself—a desire to do good, but a reality of falling short. He openly admits his failures and inner conflict.

***<sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> But if I know that what I am doing is wrong, this shows that I agree that the law is good. <sup>17</sup> So I am not the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it.***

***<sup>18</sup> 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. <sup>19</sup> 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.***

Paul admits he often does the opposite of what he knows is right. This is not a license to sin — it's an acknowledgment of the human condition.

Mothers, you may feel guilty for not being “enough” — enough time, enough energy, enough wisdom. The truth is: **Struggle is part of the Christian life, not proof that you're failing at it.**

A mom was heard to say this: *“I thought being a Christian mom meant I'd always be calm and joyful. But some days, I'm just tired and cranky.”*

### **Mothers, how often do you feel this tension?**

- Wanting to be endlessly patient but losing your temper.
- Wanting to be present but feeling pulled in a dozen directions with an endless “to-do” list.
- Wanting to model faith but feeling spiritually dry.

### **You are not alone.**

Paul would say,

“Welcome to the club — and welcome to grace.”

As Pastor and writer Ray Pritchard writes,  
“Romans 7 grips us because we see ourselves in it. The struggle you are undergoing doesn’t mean you’re a failure. It means you’re human. God uses our struggles so that we would be stripped of self-reliance and begin to trust in God and God alone” 3.

Paul’s honesty gives us permission to be honest, too. The church should be a place where mothers—and all of us—can admit, “I don’t have it all together.” Think of this. Paul nor mothers are not alone in feeling this way at times. In the society we live in there is so much pressure to look right, act right be perfect, and have it all together.

Remember this: when our children, friends, co-workers and others around us see us being honest with our struggles and challenges it gives them permission to accept their struggles and release the guilt and need to be perfect. We are not giving them an excuse we are giving them a lifeline to accept their struggles and then to seek help, from others but most importantly from God.

### **Practical Application:**

Instead of trying to be the “*perfect mom*,” be the *grace-filled mom*. Let your kids see you repent, apologize, and depend on Jesus. That’s a greater legacy than flawless performance.

### **III. The Source of Strength – Christ, Not the Law**

**Romans 7:21-25...** <sup>21</sup> *I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong.* <sup>22</sup> *I love God’s law with all my heart.* <sup>23</sup> *But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me.* <sup>24</sup> *Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death?* <sup>25</sup> *Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So, you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God’s law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin.*

Paul recognizes that willpower alone isn’t enough. The answer isn’t in trying harder, but in leaning deeper into Christ.

#### **NOTE THIS:**

#### **The Law Shows Our Need, Not Our Strength**

Paul says there’s a “law” at work — he wants to do good, but sin is right there with him.

- The law of God is holy, but it can’t give us the power to obey.
- Rules alone can’t change the heart — whether it’s our own heart or our children’s.

Mothers, you can’t parent your kids into perfection — and you can’t parent yourself into it either.

Mothers, you face a unique “tug-of-war”:

- Between career and home
- Between caring for others and self-care
- Between wanting to do it all and knowing you can’t

We all need to remember this:

The gospel is not “try harder” — it’s “trust deeper.” Mothers, your hope is not in your ability to hold it all together, but in Christ who holds you together. Think of a child learning to walk — they stumble, they fall, but the parent’s hands are always ready to catch them. That’s how God parents us.

Paul’s struggle mirrors yours and mine. But notice where he turns:

*<sup>25</sup> Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord.*

#### **Application:**

- When you feel torn, surrender that area to God.
- Let God’s truth, not guilt or comparison, guide your steps.
- Remember, Romans 8 follows Romans 7: “***There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.***” (**Romans 8:1**)

As J.D. Greear notes, “*Be killing sin, or it will be killing you. But as we fellowship with our crucified and risen Savior, we start to bear the fruit of change*” [2](#).

The Spirit brings freedom and transformation.

## **Practical Takeaways for Mothers as Well as the Rest of Us**

➤ **Be honest about your struggles** — your vulnerability can be a gift to your children. We can’t do it all, and that’s okay. Your struggle does not disqualify you—it draws you closer to Christ. You are seen, loved, and valued by God.

➤ **Model dependence on Christ** — let them see you pray, repent, and worship. Release the burden of perfection. Embrace the freedom of living in God’s grace. Your worth as a parent is not in your performance, but in God’s love for you. Let God’s truth, not guilt or comparison, guide your steps. The answer is not in trying harder but in leaning deeper into Christ’s strength.

➤ **Rest in Grace, Live in Gratitude** — your worth is not measured by your performance but by God’s love. God’s grace covers your failures and empowers you to keep loving and serving. Paul’s journey was not one of defeat, but of dependence. So should ours be. Gratitude shifts our perspective from what’s lacking to what’s given. A thankful heart is a powerful legacy to give your children.

➤ **Point your children to the Rescuer** — not just to Rules, but to the Relationship with Jesus.

INVITATION

**Romans 7:1-25...** <sup>1</sup> Now, dear brothers and sisters—you who are familiar with the law—don't you know that the law applies only while a person is living? <sup>2</sup> For example, when a woman marries, the law binds her to her husband as long as he is alive. But if he dies, the laws of marriage no longer apply to her. <sup>3</sup> So while her husband is alive, she would be committing adultery if she married another man. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law and does not commit adultery when she remarries. <sup>4</sup> So, my dear brothers and sisters, this is the point: You died to the power of the law when you died with Christ. And now you are united with the one who was raised from the dead. As a result, we can produce a harvest of good deeds for God. <sup>5</sup> When we were controlled by our old nature, sinful desires were at work within us, and the law aroused these evil desires that produced a harvest of sinful deeds, resulting in death. <sup>6</sup> But now we have been released from the law, for we died to it and are no longer captive to its power. Now we can serve God, not in the old way of obeying the letter of the law, but in the new way of living in the Spirit. <sup>7</sup> Well then, am I suggesting that the law of God is sinful? Of course not! In fact, it was the law that showed me my sin. I would never have known that coveting is wrong if the law had not said, "You must not covet." <sup>8</sup> But sin used this command to arouse all kinds of covetous desires within me! If there were no law, sin would not have that power. <sup>9</sup> At one time I lived without understanding the law. But when I learned the command not to covet, for instance, the power of sin came to life, <sup>10</sup> and I died. So, I discovered that the law's commands, which were supposed to bring life, brought spiritual death instead. <sup>11</sup> Sin took advantage

of those commands and deceived me; it used the commands to kill me. <sup>12</sup> But still, the law itself is holy, and its commands are holy and right and good. <sup>13</sup> But how can that be? Did the law, which is good, cause my death? Of course not! Sin used what was good to bring about my condemnation to death. So, we can see how terrible sin really is. It uses God's good commands for its own evil purposes. <sup>14</sup> So the trouble is not with the law, for it is spiritual and good. The trouble is with me, for I am all too human, a slave to sin. <sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> But if I know that what I am doing is wrong, this shows that I agree that the law is good. <sup>17</sup> So I am not the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. <sup>18</sup> 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. <sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. <sup>22</sup> I love God's law with all my heart. <sup>23</sup> But there is another power<sup>[E]</sup> within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. <sup>24</sup> Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? <sup>25</sup> Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So, you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God's law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin. (NLT)