

Romans 8:9-17 NKJV

9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. 10 And if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. 13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.

This lesson was originally written ten years ago by Rick Mitchell while Bro. Mike was in Brazil on mission. Bro Mike has later edited the lesson, but the vast majority of the writing originates from Bro. Rick.

Let’s review a little before we dive deep into the passage for tonight. At the end of Romans 7, the author cries out, “What a wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?” We saw in those first seven chapters, we had been taught and had discovered that the LAW couldn’t free us. The law made nothing perfect. In fact, as a covenant of works, the law made no provision, and so left us as it found us. The Law itself is, objectively, “holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good. (Romans 7:12)

The Law had several important characteristics:

- The law established _____ by which people could measure and evaluate their behavior.

- The law provided a partial picture of _____. It pictures righteous behavior and lets us know what is unrighteous.

- The law, designed to bring about the knowledge of sin, reveals our deeds as sinful and ourselves as _____.

- That the Law is designed to stir up sin in us. Because we are all rebels, the law (God's Commands) stirs us up or stimulates us to rebel more. Even this function has a gracious intent: Unless we recognize that we are sinners, we won't seek _____ at the foot of the cross of Christ.

- The law shows our desperate need for redemption and a Savior.

The point in the first seven chapters of Romans is that the Law always relates to the old nature. AND, the Law always energizes that sin nature. But in Chapter 8 things shift away from the Law. In Chapter 8, we find that the Spirit makes the difference. In the first seven chapters of Romans, the Holy Spirit is mentioned once; however, in chapter 8, the Holy Spirit is mentioned almost 20 times.

From last week's lesson, we remember that God does not free us from our sin so that we can do as we please! Rather, we are saved from our sin so that we can do as _____.

Ephesians 2:10 NKJV For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Romans 8:4 NKJV that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

In Chapter 8, Paul's word pictures were brilliant and thought provoking. Without Christ, you stand condemned. With Christ – you are pardoned. Without Christ, you are an enemy of God. With Christ you are an adopted son and call out, "Abba, Father." Without Christ we are eternally separated from God. With Christ, nothing can separate us from the love of God.

9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

Last week, we finished up by describing two types of people - those who were mindful of the flesh and those who were mindful of the Spirit. In our passage tonight, Paul addresses his audience directly.

The person who gives no evidence of the presence, power, and fruit of God's Spirit in his life has no legitimate claim to Christ as Savior and Lord. (John MacArthur, 1991)

The interchange of the titles "Spirit of God" and "Spirit of Christ" argues for the deity of Christ and this verse makes it clear that the identifying mark of a believer in Jesus Christ is the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

1 John 3:24 Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

1 John 4:13 NKJV By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

It needs to be pointed out that the Holy Spirit is not merely an influence or an _____ that comes from God. The Holy Spirit is a person, the third member of the Trinity, equal in every way to Father God and God the Son. Although the doctrine of the Trinity is one of the most certain truths in the Bible, the Holy Spirit is often overlooked or not respected as much a divine person as the Father and the Son.

A test of saving faith is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Another aspect of faith assurance is the believers' changed and changing lives. These are the kinds of internal desires that provide a faith evidence of conversion:

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1. Having _____ over sin
 2. Desiring to be like Christ
 3. Desiring to be with the _____
 4. Hungering for God's Word
 5. Senses a need to do _____
 6. Senses a need for Christian sacrificial _____

10 And if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness.

This is another example of a conditional statement. The "if" can be understood as "since" or "because". So we understand this verse better as, "Since Christ dwells in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness". Because of the righteousness that is divinely-imparted, and which justifies every believer, the believer's spirit is alive. The body is dead or mortal, although the eternal, spiritual life of God is implanted by the indwelling Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ.

"Methinks, were there no other argument, love to our bodies should make us hate sin, because it is such an enemy to our bodies. The death even of the bodies of the saints is a remaining token of God's displeasure against sin." (Henry, 1996)

11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

In other words, God promises spiritual resurrection life now...

Romans 6:4 NKJV Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

...for each believer's mortal body and physical resurrection in the future for that mortal body.

Romans 6:5 NKJV For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness of His* resurrection,

1 Corinthians 6:14 NKJV And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power.

1 Corinthians 15:42 NKJV So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. *The body* is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption.

Paul wants to emphasize what he has just taught in the previous verses. Because believers are indwelt with the Holy Spirit, we are not _____ to the flesh to do the bidding of the flesh. Rather, we are _____ from that flesh that desires to pull us back down into the muck and mire of sin, through the resources of the Spirit of Christ which dwells in us.

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.

13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Paul is not saying that we can lose our _____ in verse 13. Rather he is repeating what he taught earlier. A person whose life is characterized by the things of the flesh is not a Christian and is spiritually dead, no matter what his religious affiliations or office. That person must die the second death.

Scripture offers believers helps for avoiding and for killing sin in their lives.

1. _____ the presence of sin in our flesh. Paul did. (Romans 7:21)
 2. Fix your focus and your heart on God. (Ps. 57:7)
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3. _____ on God's Word. (Ps 119:11)
 4. Pray regularly. (I Pet 4:7)
 5. Practice _____ to God. (John MacArthur, 1991)

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."

16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

Have you ever slipped and lost your focus? Have you allowed your heart to wander away from God and then neglected His Word, forgot to pray and failed to be obedient? That can lead you to doubt your salvation because of your indifference to God and the things of God. But even an obedient child of God can doubt during times of pain, sickness, sorrow, failure and disappointment. Satan is always looking for such an advantage to make us question our salvation. But still there is verse 14. Since you are sons of God, you will be led by the Spirit of God. The question becomes, "How is a believer led by the Spirit"?

1. Victory over sin comes from what? V-13 says, by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body. This is a sign that you are being led by the Spirit when you have victory over sin.
2. When we begin to _____ biblical truths that have long escaped or troubled us.
3. When we experience God's convicting our conscience over sin, and it grieves us that we have sinned.

Only the _____ Spirit of God can instill such understanding, conviction and godly sorrow.

God does not force us to do His Will. He desires our willing obedience. When we are obedient, He can supernaturally _____ and reshape our will to conform to His will. We can't necessarily understand how, and we don't need to know that. It is sufficient for us to know that God saves by faith and that He also leads by faith.

God leads primarily by illumination and _____. God will illuminate the very thoughts of God found in the Bible to make it understandable to our finite and still sin-stained minds. As we meditate and pray, the Holy Spirit becomes our divine interpreter. Then the Holy Spirit leads God's children by divinely enabling believers to obey what they understand in God's Word. That is sanctification.

Another way in which the Holy Spirit confirms our adoption as God's children is by liberating us from the spirit of slavery that causes us to fear again. Sinful men are subject to fear because they are always under God's judgment. Slavery to sin invariably leads to slavery to fear. One of the works of the Holy Spirit is to deliver God's children from both.

2 Timothy 1:7 NKJV For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Here in Romans, the Spirit of Adoption is ripe with the ideas of love, _____, compassion, and an intimate relationship.

The Spirit of Adoption works in the children of God a filial love to God as a Father, a delight in Him, and a dependence upon Him, as a Father. A SANCTIFIED (my emphasis added) soul _____ the image of God, as the child bears the image of the father. (Henry, 1996)

In the Roman culture of Paul's day, an adopted child, especially an adopted son, sometimes had greater prestige and privilege than the natural children. This important legal point required several carefully prescribed legal procedures. The first step totally severed the boy's legal and social relationship to his natural family, and the second step placed him permanently into his new family.

In addition to that, all of his previous debts and other obligations were eradicated, as if they had never existed. (John MacArthur, 1991)

This is a wonderful word picture of adoption; however, it fails to fully picture God's work of _____ in the believers' life. The believer is also cleansed from sin, saved from the _____ of death, spiritually reborn, justified, sanctified, and ultimately glorified.

Because we, as believers, are God's adopted children, and because of that gracious relationship believers have the full right and privilege to cry out, "Abba, Father".

And a further _____ of our eternal relationship is when the Holy Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. How is the witness given? _____ produced by the Holy Spirit in the lives of God's children (Gal 5:22-23) Or when the Spirit's presence _____ believers' for service. (Acts 1:8)

17 and if children,
then heirs—heirs of God
and joint heirs with
Christ, if indeed we suffer
with *Him*, that we may also
be glorified together.

Here is the crowning conclusion to our study tonight. Verse 17 has two of those first class conditional sentences. That just means that from the writer's point of view the statement is assumed true.

So this verse could read, "Because you are a child of God, you are an heir of God and a fellow heir with Christ." Believers inherit God. The greatest blessing God's children will have in heaven will be the eternal presence of their God. And because God's resources are not limited, believers are fellow heirs with Christ! Believers share in everything that the true Son of God, Jesus Christ, inherits!

Everything that Christ receives by divine right, we will receive by divine _____. (John MacArthur, 1991)

AND, "because we suffer with Him, we also will be glorified with Him." Suffering because of our faith not only gives evidence that we belong to God but is a preparation for heaven. The more we suffer, the more we are forced to depend upon Him. The more we depend upon Him, the more power or strength we receive from Him. And nothing that we might suffer temporarily will compare to what we will gain.

According to this verse, we have no greater privilege and no greater guarantee of glory than to suffer for Christ's sake. (John MacArthur, 1991)
