

SERVING FROM YOUR NEW SPIRIT

Part 4 Romans Chapter Seven

Romans 7:5-6

For when we were in *the flesh*, the sinful passions which were aroused by *the law* were at work in *our members* to bear *fruit to death*.⁶ But now we have been delivered from *the law*, having died to what we were held [fast] by, *so that* we should serve in the newness of *the S-spirit* and not in the oldness of *the letter*.

Paul speaks of a time, 'When we were in the flesh' NB: THE PAST TENSE ... 'For **WHEN WE WERE** in the flesh ...' Paul refers to the time before we were Born Again WHEN THE FLESH WITH ALL ITS INORDINATE PASSIONS DOMINATED OUR LIVES.

The days when we lived, 'IN OUR FLESH' or 'FROM THE FLESH'.

THESE WERE DARK DAYS ... CONFUSING DAYS ... PAINFUL DAYS ... DAYS OF PRESSURE ... DAYS OF GUILT, FULL OF SORROW AND DEPRESSION ... HARD DAYS ... DAYS WITHOUT GOD.

N.B. ALL NON-BELIEVERS STILL LIVE IN THESE DAYS ... THE DAYS OF 'THEIR FLESH'. They don't have any other alternative. THEY LIVE A LIFE WITHOUT THE LIFE OF GOD WITHIN. THESE DAYS OF THE FLESH ARE ALSO THE DAYS OF DEATH

Romans 7:5

For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions ... were at work in our members *to bear fruit to death*.

Being separated from the life of God brought man into the horror of death.

Remember God said to Adam, '*the day you eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, you will surely die.*' (Genesis 2:17)

THIS IS SO EMPHATIC IT'S A DOUBLE NEGATIVE (mō-wt) To Kill & (tā-mūt) To die

HE'S SAYING, 'IN THE DAY YOU EAT ... IN DYING YOU WILL DIE.'

MAN DEPARTED FROM THE LIFE OF GOD ... HIS SPIRIT BECAME DEAD TO GOD AND THE FLESH RULED. THE WHOLE HUMAN RACE NOW LIVED 'IN THE FLESH' UNDER DEATH.

Romans 5:12 NLT

When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. *Adam's sin brought death*, so *death spread to everyone*, for everyone sinned. (1 John 2:16)

But Paul goes even further and now adds that even *the Law of God helped produce death.*

Romans 7:10 Berean Study Bible

So I discovered that the very commandment that was meant to bring life *actually brought death*.

WITHOUT GOD'S LIFE WITHIN, all people trying to do good ... do right ... to live better ... fasting, praying, meditating ... trying to live up to God's moral standards ... means ... THEY DO IT ALL 'IN THE FLESH' WHICH PRODUCES DEATH FOR THEM AND OTHERS ... TODAY, WE HAVE DEAD CHURCHES ... DEAD GOOD PEOPLE. **SLIDE**

Even though a person dresses it up and makes it look and act moral and respectable WITHOUT THE LIFE OF GOD WITHIN ... it still has this evil core of DEATH.

In some way, a person is more honest if they get sick-and-tired of all the hypocrisy of pretending and trying to be moral and good and says, 'What the heck! I'm just gonna be

real and become a self-professed sinner.'

This person who outwardly sins and the person who pretends to not sin but sins inwardly are both in the same boat of death ... they just wear different clothes.... even though the 'good-guy' might outwardly live a moral life in the flesh.

NB THERE ARE THREE ENTITIES, ALL WORKING TOGETHER TO BRING ABOUT DEATH FROM DEATH.

THE FLESH / SIN / THE LAW – THE BIG THREE.

SO WE WERE TRAPPED ... WITHOUT HOPE ... DESIGNATED THE CHILDREN OF WRATH AND DEAD IN TRESPASSES AND SINS ...

BUT THIS IS HOW WE WERE ... NOT HOW WE ARE NOW!

Ephesians 2:4-5 **SLIDE**

But God who is rich in mercy ... when we were dead in trespasses, [God] made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) ...

GOD PUT A NEW LIFE DEEP WITHIN US ...

GOD TOOK AWAY OUR SIN AND **MADE OUR SPIRIT COME ALIVE IN CHRIST ...**

SO **NOW ... INSIDE ...** WE NOT ONLY HAVE A GREATER LIFE ... WE HAVE A GREATER POWER.

Let's look at our text ...

'BUT NOW' PAUL SAYS,

Romans 7:6 **SLIDE**

*But now we have been delivered from the law ... so that we should serve in the newness of the **S-spirit***

Most commentators say that the phrase '*in newness of spirit*' refers to the Holy Spirit, but I believe it is a reference to our human spirit.

NB: There is no definite article before 'spirit' and it doesn't have a capital 's'.

PAUL IS REFERRING TO **OUR REGENERATED NEW HUMAN SPIRIT.**

CAN YOU SEE HERE WHAT PAUL IS SAYING BY '*The newness of spirit*'?

HE'S SAYING THAT GOD HAS GIVEN **US A NEW SPIRIT / A PRISTINE SPIRIT ...**

One that is not subject to THE LAW / not subject to SIN in the flesh and NOT controlled anymore by THE FLESH.

OUR HUMAN SPIRIT HAS BECOME ALIVE ... REGENERATED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT WHEN WE WERE BORN AGAIN.

John 3:6 **SLIDE**

That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Literally: 'Flesh is born of flesh but spirit is born of THE Spirit.'

NB: There is no definite article preceding the first mention of 'spirit' as this is our human spirit, whereas the second mention of 'Spirit' has the article meaning, 'The Holy Spirit'.

We see the same thing in John 4:23 when Jesus talks about True Worship. There is no definite article preceding 'in spirit' meaning in 'human spirit'.

OF COURSE OUR NEW SPIRIT IS EMERSED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT ... we see it here ...

Romans 8:10-11 NASB SLIDE

*If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin [your body unredeemed], yet **the spirit [your human spirit]** is alive because of righteousness. ¹¹ But if **the Spirit of Him [Holy Spirit]** who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give **life [energy – inspiration]** to your **mortal bodies** through **His Spirit [Holy Spirit]** who dwells in you.*

Here we see our human spirit ... born again of the Holy Spirit, working in relation to the Holy Spirit and how together they make **our mortal bodies alive** in the service of God.

Note carefully the contrast: Verse 10 - **Our body** is DEAD through sin and verse 11 - The Holy Spirit will give LIFE to **our mortal body**.

SO THE MORTAL BODY CAN BE EITHER SPIRITUALLY DEAD OR SPIRITUALLY ALIVE

As a believer in Jesus Christ, you now have the power of life within you which can bring life to your dead flesh and its members.

So many Christians who don't get this are spending all their lives trying to get their outward, mortal body and its members to stop sinning.

BUT HERE PAUL IS SAYING ... **FORGET TRYING TO GET YOUR FLESH TO STOP SINNING. GET YOUR FLESH SERVING ...** Paul puts it like this:

Romans 6:12-14 SLIDE

*Do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³ And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but **present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.** ¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.*

I like the old KJV which says, '**yield yourselves ... and your members**'. (Romans 6:13)
It doesn't say ... **make them obey!** It doesn't say ... **bind them up.** IT SAYS, 'YIELD THEM'.
TO WHOM DO YOU YIELD? YOU YIELD TO A HIGHER POWER!

Is this a greater power above you? Indeed it is but not only that ...

It is a greater power within you.

There is a greater power now within you than the power of sin without you.

NB: There is no neutral ground. Your flesh is either self-serving in sin no matter how subtle it may be, or it's serving righteousness ... no matter how subtle that may be.

NB: It says yield YOURSELVES first as the way of yielding your members

Now Paul tells us that to keep our flesh from sinning is to get it serving ...

Paul tells us HOW THIS HAPPENS ...

HE SAYS, YIELD YOURSELVES TO THE NEW LIFE WITHIN – A POWERFUL LIFE ... A PURE LIFE.

... Forget your flesh's antics and passions on the outside and remember who you are within ... You are alive ... a new creation ... and as you remember your flesh will also yield with you.

YOU WON'T FOLLOW YOUR FLESH ... YOUR FLESH WILL FOLLOW YOU. IT HAS TO, AS IT IS A PART OF YOU. NO LONGER DO YOU HAVE TO FIGHT SIN IN THE FLESH BECAUSE YOU HAVE A GREATER POWER WITHIN.

HOW DO WE DO THIS?

GET INTO THE CONTROL ROOM – YOUR NEW SPIRITUAL MAN. Get in the driver's seat with Christ and start driving from there ... **SLIDE**

From here you have access to EVERY FEELING ... PASSION ... THOUGHT ... DESIRE ... IMPULSE ... that your flesh has ever known. **SLIDE**

So just as SIN infiltrates your flesh, YOU NOW CAN ACCESS ITS EVERY PASSION AND REROUTE IT TO BEGIN TO SERVE GOD.

From here we have the power to **start getting control of our appetites** and rechanneling them in service for God.

God doesn't want us to bury our flesh ... try and bind it up with law ...

He wants us to set it free to serve him.

SOME OF US HAVE DEACTIVATED THE FLESH

YET, SOME OF US HAVE DEACTIVATED OUR FLESH BECAUSE OF WHAT IT USED TO BE LIKE. Communist Claim

You westerners have stifled your youth's ideals ... We Communists have channelled them.

Paul in Romans doesn't tell us to **deactivate** the flesh ... He tells us how to get it to be active for God instead of sin. **SLIDE** ALLOW CHRIST IN YOU TO REACTIVATE YOUR MEMBERS – YOUR THOUGHTS – YOUR FEELINGS – YOUR DESIRES TO SERVE GOD.

Romans 7:6 (As Interlinear)

*... We should serve in **newness** of spirit and not in oldness of letter.*

New means something new has begun ... It's a new era ...

But it also speaks about the essence of life – a freshness, an unused, unspoiled vitality with all its potential still intact. IT SPEAKS OF NEW ENTHUSIASM ... INNOCENT EXPECTATION ... A WIDE-EYED EXPECTANCY ... AN UNCOMPLICATED HOPE, A NEW DAWN OF A SPRING MORNING ... THE RENEWED VITALITY OF YOUTH.

THIS NEW SPIRIT WITHIN YOU IS ALWAYS IN THE NEWNESS OF LIFE.

YET SOME PEOPLE BELIEVE ABOUT THEIR LIFE, 'THIS IS AS GOOD AS IT GETS.'

*Some of us have grown old and tired. Our flesh members are subdued and we're just accepting our lot in life. **This is as good as it gets.** Some are just waiting to 'Go Home'*

*Bruce Cockburn wrote an amazing song with the saddest lyrics called 'PACING THE CAGE'
Sunset is an angel weeping ... Holding out a bloody sword
No matter how I squint I cannot ... Make out what it's pointing toward.*

*Sometimes you feel like you've lived too long ... Days drip slowly on the page
You catch yourself ... Pacing the cage*

About 15 years ago, I knew an American Christian guy who was slightly older than me.
His goal at that time was to retire to Tasmania and to eventually die there.
THIS MADE ME FEEL SO DEPRESSED.

You know what happened? HE DID EXACTLY THAT. HE DIED IN TASMANIA ABOUT 4 YEARS AGO. HE CHECKED OUT!

SO I SPEAK TO OLDER PEOPLE HERE ... don't 'check out' yet! Your time is not over.
Don't retire from God's plan for your life ... **refire!**

Psalm 103:5 NLT **SLIDE**

*He fills my life with good things. **My youth is renewed like the eagle's!***

Your entire core has been made new ... Your body may feel old ... you might have many aches and pains ... but don't live there ...

GET INTO THE FRESHNESS OF LIFE INSIDE YOU ... IT'S NEW

THERE'S A NEW HOPE ... A NEW HORIZON ... A NEW VISION ... A NEW JOY ...

We should serve in the newness of **spirit**.

YET, YOU SAY, I DON'T HAVE THE ENERGY ANYMORE

Ephesians 3:16 NIV **SLIDE**

*I pray that out of his glorious riches he may **strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being.***

THIS NEWNESS OF SPIRIT HAS THE POWER TO MAKE YOUR MORTAL BODY COME TO LIFE

Romans 8:10-11 NLT **SLIDE**

Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, your spirit is alive because you have been made right with God. ¹¹ The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

SERVING IN THE NEWNESS OF SPIRIT IS PHYSICALLY HEALTHY

Several years ago I was diagnosed as being, insulin resistant. I had to radically change my diet to low carbs and no sugar, but there were times in those early days when I started to get 'Hypos' ... the same problem diabetics get from low sugar. I had the insulin but it wasn't being absorbed.

One Sunday I was assigned to lead the singing but turned up to church shaking ... my head spinning and feeling strange and weak.

Well, I got a chair out thinking, I'll lead sitting down, but something in me (the Holy Spirit) seemed to say, 'You'll be ok when you start singing praise to God'.

So, I said to the musos ... I don't need the chair, we'll be fine.

*We started the songs which spoke about His goodness and His grace ... I had to think about the words and began believing them again ... **My heart came alive with His Spirit and my spirit rejoiced** ... I was now gliding on His Spirit ... I was being lifted by His power ... the same power that raised Jesus from the dead ... **I WAS SERVING IN THE NEWNESS OF MY NEW SPIRIT ... NOT IN THE OLD WAY OF STRIFE AND HAVING TO PERFORM, TO TRY AND ACHIEVE SOMETHING ... SOME RIGHTEOUSNESS.**
I felt His energy ... and at the end there was no sense of weakness or hypos at all.*

Paul said this ...

Galatians 2:19-20 SLIDE

*For I through the law died to the law **that I might live to God.** ²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but **Christ lives in me**; and the life which I now live **in the flesh I live by in faith** in of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

WHAT DOES HE MEAN, 'I LIVE IN FAITH IN THE SON OF GOD'?

Does that mean that HE LOOKS UP TO HEAVEN AND PRAYS FOR JESUS' HELP?

*Friends, it's a subtle difference of an external Jesus to whom we pray and ask for help and an **internal abiding presence and power from which we are completely guided and fully equipped.***

*Paul is not praying to Heaven for help or trusting in Jesus seated in Heaven ... He's saying '**CHRIST LIVES IN ME**' (Verse 20)*

*So, the faith I have is within me already and I live today from that realm within me where **Christ already lives.** He's saying ... I live from the source and resource within me. I already have it and there is my focus ... This is my priority ... this is my trust – no longer in my own ability but His ability flowing through me.*

THIS IS THE NEWNESS OF SPIRIT.

HERE IS INSPIRATION ... MOTIVATION ... ENERGY AND ABILITY ALREADY WITHIN YOU

NOW IT'S LEARNING TO LIVE FROM THAT SOURCE – IN THIS FAITH OF CHRIST WITHIN - STEP BY STEP.

EACH DAY, STOP BEFORE YOU START AND FIND YOUR ETERNAL SOURCE.

THE MIND RUNS FAST BUT THE HEART RUNS SLOW.

HARNESS YOUR NATURAL THOUGHTS AND GET INTO THE DRIVER'S SEAT WITH CHRIST – IN FAITH IN THE INNER MAN – DRIVE FROM HERE.