

LIVING WITH THE SPIRIT

Part 6 Romans Chapter Eight

Romans 8:12-14

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 [must] 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.

Romans chapter 8 is NOT talking about our Salvation or Justification ...

That's been settled in the previous chapters of Romans e.g...

Romans 1:16 - The Gospel of Christ is the power of God to **Salvation to all who believe ...**

Romans 3:28 - A man is **justified by faith** apart from the Law ...

Romans 5:1 - Being justified by faith (declared righteous) **we have peace with God ...**

EVERYTHING IS OK BETWEEN GOD AND YOU IF YOU ARE A BELIEVER IN JESUS CHRIST.

WE ENTER ROMANS CHAPTER EIGHT FROM THIS ESTABLISHED FOUNDATION

So, our text today is not about being OK with God ... trying to stay OK with God ...

IT IS ABOUT HOW WE NOW LIVE, BECAUSE WE ARE OK WITH GOD.

IT'S NOT ABOUT ESCAPING HELL ... BEING SAVED FROM HELL ...

IT'S NOT ABOUT GOD DECLARING US RIGHTEOUS OR MAKING US RIGHTEOUSNESS.

THIS HAPPENED THE MOMENT WE BELIEVED AND IT'S A PERMANENT STATE.

THIS IS ABOUT 'SANCTIFICATION' HOW WE NOW LIVE OUT THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WE HAVE RECEIVED ...

SLIDE LOOK AT THE NUMBER OF TIMES THE VERB 'LIVE' IS USED IN OUR TEXT. (3 times)

THIS IS WHERE MANY CHRISTIAN'S GET IT WRONG AND CONFUSE SANCTIFICATION WITH SALVATION, for example, *If we live right we'll be saved or stay saved; however, if we live wrong we're in danger of Hell's flames.*

This is what many preachers preach and teach. So ... many people rock up to church in fear and trembling to receive approval from the Pastor because he's the guy that's more righteous than most and he confirms how they're doing.

Many Christians are locked into church in a desperate attempt to try and live right so they get God's acceptance and approval.

SO, KNOWING WE ARE SECURE IN OUR SALVATION ... PAUL GOES ON TO SHOW US -

HOW WE CAN MANIFEST WHAT WE HAVE RECEIVED BY GRACE ...

HOW WE CAN DEMONSTRATE IN OUR LIVES THE RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT HAS BEEN FREELY IMPARTED INTO US ...

HOW WE CAN SHINE AS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD ...

HOW WE CAN LIVE FREE FROM SIN AND FAILURE ...

SO HOW CAN WE DO THIS WITHOUT BEING RELIGIOUS?

OUR TEXT SHOWS US **3 STEPS ...**

1. THE WAY TO LIVE FREE FROM SIN AND FAILURE IS ...

BY HAVING ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH THE FLESH. SLIDE

Romans 8:12 **SLIDE**

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

WE are debtors not to the [sinful] flesh to [try and] live according to the flesh.

‘Debtors’ = obligation (opheiletai) Person indebted; morally obligated.

‘THE FLESH’ IS THAT EXTERNAL, UNGODLY PART OF US THAT STILL KEEPS FAILING.

So Paul says, even though your flesh keeps failing you are not morally obligated to try and fix it ... Because your Flesh cannot be fixed ... Neither can it be crucified.

(This sounds like antinomianism but it’s not. It’s only step 1 in God’s eternal process.)

NOT = (ou) is the absolute negative adverb ... **absolutely not! In No way!**

WE OWE THE FLESH NOTHING.

WE ARE IN NO WAY MORALLY OBLIGATED TO TRY AND MAKE THE FLESH RIGHTEOUS.

HERE’S WHAT HAPPENS:

Even as Christians, we know we still do wrong ... even though we now desire to do right.

So, the Law and Religion make us feel obligated to get the flesh to STOP sinning.

We feel it’s our responsibility ... so we fight the lusts of the flesh with self-discipline ...

*because we feel obliged to try and make the flesh righteous ... **yet we fail.***

*But as we found out in Romans 7:17-20 ... We get even worse **(READ)***

THE FLESH WILL NEVER BE RIGHTEOUS UNTIL JESUS COMES AGAIN AND GLORIFIES IT ...

YOU WILL NEVER OVERCOME THE FLESH BY TRYING TO OVERCOME IT BY YOURSELF.

Yet, many Christian’s keep trying to appease the broken law by trying to perfect the Flesh and keep failing. They keep trying to make the flesh act ‘Christian’ ... trying to make the flesh look good and act good ... but they keep on failing. That’s why so many Christians are so miserable and uptight ... cannot relax or enjoy life ... because they are fighting their flesh.

SO WE HAVE PAUL’S RADICAL DOCTRINE.

YOU ARE NOT MORALLY OBLIGED TO THE FLESH ANYMORE.

SO YOU SAY, ‘DO I JUST GIVE IN TO IT?’ NO, BECAUSE YOU DON’T BELONG TO THE FLESH.

Realise NOW as a Born Again believer you have been spiritually raised a new person into a new life in a new realm.

REALISE WE'VE DIED TO THE SIN REALM AND HAVE BEEN RAISED INTO NEWNESS OF LIFE. AND PAUL SAYS ... We are alive in a realm that has NO FLESH AT ALL.

Romans 6:4 KJV

*Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so **we also should walk in newness of life***

Romans 7:6 Berean Study Bible

*But now, having died to what bound us, we have been released from the Law, so that we serve in **the new way of the Spirit**, and not in the old way of the written code.*

Romans 8:9, 12 Paraphrased **SLIDE**

You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit ... ¹²THEREFORE, WE ARE NOT MORALLY OBLIGATED TO IT, TO EITHER ACCEPT IT OR FIX IT. HAVE NOTHING AT ALL TO DO WITH IT.

THE RADICAL IDEA IS ... THE FAILURES OF THE FLESH ... **I DON'T OWN ANYMORE.**

A common statement in counselling is, 'Own your problem'.

WE MUST OWN OUR SIN-PROBLEM WHEN WE FIRST COME TO CHRIST AND FIRST BELIEVE

Here we come to a place where we do own our problem of sin and receive His answer. We confess we are guilty before God and we need a saviour ... and God the Father justifies us.

HOWEVER, AFTER WE HAVE DONE THAT WE ARE TOLD, THE GUILTY ONE, **OUR OLD MAN, HAS BEEN CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST** AND THE PENALTY FOR OUR GUILT HAS BEEN PAID.

Romans 6:6 **SLIDE**

*Knowing that our **old man was crucified** with Him [Jesus] that the 'body of sin' might be done away with [rendered inoperative to sin] ...*

SO NOW, AFTER THE CROSS, WE DO NOT OWN THAT 'OLD MAN' NOR THE SIN HE WAS INVOLVED WITH. **IT IS NO LONGER OUR RESPONSIBILITY. THE SINFUL FLESH USED TO BELONG TO THE 'OLD MAN' WHO IS DEAD ...** Now I am alive in a New Realm where the

Flesh does NOT belong to me anymore. **I AM NO LONGER A DEBTOR TO THE FLESH.** I AM NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FLESH'S UNRIGHTEOUSNESS NEITHER AM I RESPONSIBLE TO TRY AND MAKE IT RIGHTEOUSNESS. **IT IS NO LONGER MY JOB.**

SLIDE IN FACT, THE MORE I TRY TO FIX THE FLESH, THE MORE I HINDER THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK IN ME AND THROUGH ME.

2. THE WAY TO LIVE FREE FROM SIN AND FAILURE IS ...
BY BEGINNING TO LIVE **BY** THE SPIRIT. **SLIDE**

Romans 8:13 SLIDE

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

THIS IS NOT 'DYING TO SELF'

A few years ago when I realised there is no such practice in Scripture as 'Dying to Self' ... I couldn't even look at this verse. It seemed to be saying, 'Die to Self' ... However, as I gingerly approached it I realised it wasn't saying that at all.

LOOK AT WHAT THIS VERSE ACTUALLY SAYS:

Firstly it is not talking about *the Flesh* but *the physical Body* (Soma not Saka).

Secondly it is not saying kill the Body but *the [sinful] 'Deeds'* of 'the body'

SO THE SINFUL DEEDS OF THE BODY CAN BE STOPPED. *That's what it's saying.*

Thirdly it tells us **THE SECRET TO HOW WE ARE TO DO THIS.**

It doesn't tell us to fast and pray ... confess Scripture ...

It doesn't say overcome it by TRYING TO CONTROL OUR THINKING and trying to block it out.

That's like the drunkard who says over and over again, 'I won't drink that whisky ... I won't drink that whisky', while all the while he's thinking about drinking the whisky and the more he resists ... the more he begins to taste it ... to feel the sensations of its intoxication ... and in his mind's eye the bottle gets bigger and bigger ... HOW LONG WILL IT BE TILL HE FINALLY GOES BACK?!

He's in a losing battle.

BUT THIS SCRIPTURE TELLS US HOW TO OVERCOME ...

THIS VERSE TELLS US ... WE OVERCOME **'BY THE SPIRIT', NOT OUR RELIGIOUS EFFORTS.**

THE WAY TO PUT TO DEATH THE SINFUL DEEDS OF THE BODY IS ... **'BY THE SPIRIT'.**

Last week we saw that the Holy Spirit in us brings sustaining life to our mortal bodies.

Today we see the Holy Spirit in us 'Puts to Death' the sinful deeds of your body.

THIS ALSO DOESN'T MEAN, **I ATTACK THE FLESH 'IN THE SPIRIT' BY SPEAKING IN TONGUES ... REBUKING IT ...**

No friends, this is **turning our face toward Christ and letting the Holy Spirit DO THE WORK FOR US, IN US ... HE LEADS US OUT OF FAILURE BY LEADING US INTO THE TRUTH.**

Hebrews 12:1-2 SLIDE

... Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²looking unto Jesus, the ^[a]author and ^[b]finisher of our faith ...

NOW NOTICE THERE IS YET ANOTHER ELEMENT TO THIS EQUATION OF
LIVING THE LIFE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS ... **YOU!**

Romans 8:13

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

We do have to do something ...

There is a school of thought that says, **God will sovereignly sanctify me ... I just need to rest in Him and He will do it. SLIDE OF LAZY MAN**

As John Wesley said about Calvinism ... 'If I am to believe in Calvinism, I'd just sit at home and wait for God to fly me to church.'

**YES, HE WILL DO IT AS I REST IN HIM ... (But here's the nuance -)
HE WILL DO IT AS I WORK WITH HIM ...**

He won't do it without you. You are involved ... you must be involved

SO HOW DO WE DO THIS WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The next verse tells us how ...

3. THE WAY TO LIVE FREE FROM SIN AND FAILURE IS ...
BY FOLLOWING THE HOLY SPIRIT'S PERSONAL INSTRUCTION AND
DIRECTION. **SLIDE**

Romans 8:14 **SLIDE**

*For as many as are [personally] **led by the Spirit of God**, these are sons of God.*

NB: This does not mean, being led by the Spirit makes us Sons of God ...

It means, being 'Sons of God' enables us to be led by the Spirit.

THIS IS NOT THE CONDITION FOR SONSHIP BUT THE CONSEQUENCES OF SONSHIP.

A CHARACTERISTIC OF THOSE BORN OF THE SPIRIT IS THAT THEY ARE [PERSONALLY] LED BY THE SPIRIT.

The Spirit who gave them life now leads them in that life He gave them.

THE HOLY SPIRIT ORGANICALLY STARTS **TO LEAD** THE CHRISTIAN BELIEVER.

I used to always try hard to walk in the Spirit. I'd pray the Holy Spirit would lead me ... as if the Holy Spirit wasn't really that interested in leading me in His ways – it was only a

privilege for the rich and important people and not for unworthy sinners like me. So I thought I had to prove myself worthy ... and this is what I was taught to do.

BUT THIS IS NOT TRUE:

The Spirit is leading us ... we're not leading Him.

We don't have to pray for the Holy Spirit to lead us ... IT'S HIS PURPOSE IN US.

He's constantly working in us – inspiring and empowering us to live godly lives by His grace and He will be doing so until Jesus Comes Again..

THE RESPONSIBILITY IS NOT FOR YOU TO DO IT ... ONLY TO FOLLOW.

WE SHOULD PRAY THAT HE WOULD HELP US HEAR HIS WORD.

The Spirit is leading us ... not driving us.

- **HE INSTRUCTS US SO WE KNOW WHAT WE SHOULD DO.**
- **HE INSPIRES US SO WE WANT TO DO WHAT WE SHOULD DO.**
- **HE EMPOWERS US SO WE'RE ABLE TO DO WHAT WE SHOULD DO.**

The truth is, the Holy Spirit remains in us through all our struggle with sin and failure. He remains in us to instruct us, inspire us and empower us to *want to do* and to *be able to do* the Father's good pleasure. (Philippians 2:13).

WE ARE NOT CALLED TO TRY AND LIVE THIS CHRISTIAN LIFE BY OURSELVES ... We are called to follow and flow with the Holy Spirit as He leads us into all truth.

SLIDE The Holy Spirit Leads BY SPEAKING ...

THE HOLY SPIRIT SPEAKS TO US ... DEEP INSIDE

Isaiah 30:21 SLIDE

*Your ears shall hear a word **behind** you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," Whenever you **turn to the right** hand or whenever you **turn to the left**.*

Why behind? Because he teaches us as we go.

With positive affirmation when we do right (turn to the Right).

With loving correction when we go wrong (turn to the Left).

Song of Solomon 2:14 SLIDE

*"O **my dove**, in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely."*

TO BE CONTINUED ...