

Romans – Bible Study – Chapter 8:1-17

In chapter six, Paul explains that we are no longer under the dominion of sin since we are united to Christ in his death and resurrection. In chapter seven, he states that we are no longer in bondage to the law and what the law failed to do (produce righteousness in us all), God now does through the Holy Spirit.

In this chapter, Paul describes the transforming work of the Holy Spirit in our lives as Christians, as have new life in Christ and shows us what that means and how it should mark our lives.

Life in the Spirit

(Verses 1-4) What does it mean that those in Christ Jesus have ‘no condemnation’? How is this marked in a Christian’s life and what is the significance? What has God done in order that we are no longer under condemnation (v.3-4)?

- No condemnation is different from no judgment
- This is good news
- No condemnation (i.e. penal servitude) means that God will never condemn us to an eternity separate from Himself for our sins
 - The reason is that the believer is in Jesus Christ
 - The Saviour has suffered the consequences of our sins as a substitute
 - He will experience no condemnation, and we, as those He represents, will not either
 - We are eternally secure
- There is “rest” and “peace”
- We have been set free from the law of sin and death, meaning that the law of the Spirit now has ‘authority’ in our lives and our former ‘rulers’ no longer have that authority
- If we look at the law, it does not have the power to save mankind
 - It has the ability to show us what is right according to what God states
 - It urges us intellectually to obey God, but it does not provide power for obedience
- God sent His son to effectively deal with sin
 - Christ came ‘in the likeness of sinful flesh’ (**Philippians 2:7**)
 - It is important to note that he didn’t come in sinful flesh (i.e. inheriting Adam’s sin) nor in the likeness of flesh (i.e. In a way that would make him seem unreal)
 - He was both sinless and a real person
 - Sin is condemned in our flesh
- Because of this, the righteous requirement can be fulfilled as Christ has done it and we put our faith in His work, which is inputted on us

(Verses 5-11) In this set of passages, Paul compares “life in the flesh” and “life in the Spirit”. Write down the contrasting elements found in this passage. What does this passage say about the Holy Spirit and His relationship to the believer (v.9-11)?

- According to the Flesh
 - Set their minds on the things of the flesh
 - Leads to death
 - Hostile to God
 - Does not submit to God’s law because it cannot
 - Cannot please God

- According to the Spirit
 - Set their minds on the things of the Spirit (i.e. righteousness, obedience to God, etc.)
 - Leads to life and peace (with God and others)
 - Will be lead by Him
- According to the flesh means to allow the human nature to dominate one's life
- To "be in the flesh" is to be unregenerate, to be devoid of the Spirit
- Everyone who trusts in Jesus Christ in the age in which we live possesses the indwelling Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13, 1 Corinthians 12:13)
- We receive the Holy Spirit at the time of our conversion because in the latter part of verse 9, it states that anyone that does not have the Spirit does not belong to Christ
 - This shows that we are truly children of God
 - The Spirit does not come afterwards (i.e. baptism)
- If we are true followers of Christ, we will have the Holy Spirit within us and vice versa, if we have the Holy Spirit within us, it is a mark that we are true followers of Christ
- The Holy Spirit also gives life to the believer

(Verses 12-13) How is the Christian to respond to the new life we are given (Titus 2:11-12, 2 Peter 1:3-11; 3:18)? Why is it difficult for the Christian to do this? How does the Holy Spirit help the Christian to live (Galatians 5:16-18)

- We are to be obedient to the teaching of Christ
- We must no longer live according to the flesh, but rather we are to put it to death
- Progressive sanctification is something the Christian is to pursue and it is not something we can ignore
- **Titus 2:11-12** – We are to live godly, self-controlled, and upright lives, renouncing evil and worldly passions in this present age
- **2 Peter 1:3-11** – To grow in the faith that we have by taking on more of the good things that God has given to us
- **2 Peter 3:18** – Grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ
- We still have the sinful nature within us, though we are battling it every day with the help of the Holy Spirit
- We must choose to mortify the flesh daily and hourly
- As we see in chapter 6 and 7, there is a necessity to put to death the flesh, meaning that it is still present after conversion and that it causes us 'grief', that we need to deal with it in this life
- If we don't put to death the ways of the flesh and of this life, we are no different from the non-Christian and are life is not marked as a regenerate one
- **Galatians 5:16-18** – If we walk in the Spirit, we will not gratify the desires of the flesh
- Have you concentrated on something with such intensity (i.e. an assignment or a project) that you forget to do the things you need to do (i.e. eat lunch or dinner)? This is the same way, that if we walk in the ways of the Spirit, we won't have time to focus on what the world wants us to do

(Verses 14-17) What is our relationship to God now that the Holy Spirit indwells within a Christian? What is the implication of this relationship?

- We are adopted as ‘sons’ of God
 - This is akin to justification, where it is a legal standing before God
 - It is a permanent condition, meaning that once we are in the family, we cannot fall out of it
- We are now called “sons” and “children” of God
 - The term “son” defines our legal standing based on our adoption
 - The term “children” defines our relationship with God
- As a child of God, we are heirs (1 Peter 1:3-4)
- We inherit sufferings, as His disciples now, and glory, which is promised in the future (1 Peter 4:13)
- The inheritance is both physical and spiritual see (Matt. 5:5; 1 Cor. 3:21-23; Eph.1:11-18; 1 Pet. 1:3-4)

In tonight’s passage, we examined the following points:

- No condemnation now for those in Christ
- The difference between the Christian and non-Christian mindset
- A guaranteed future inheritance if, by the Spirit, we are battling sin

Paul, in his conclusion of the previous two chapters, gives the Christian hope in the battle of the sinful nature that still is within. It is the Holy Spirit that gives us the ability to battle against the flesh nature that is within. Also as a promise upon our conversion, we are included in God’s family, meaning that we can call God our Father on an intimate level and are also deemed to be co-heirs with Christ. This is such a great promise to look forward to as we continue to be sanctified, to be more like Christ, so that we may be glorified with Him one day.

Point to Ponder: Do you continue to battle the flesh nature daily with the help of the Holy Spirit?