

(Romans) Romans 8:1-14

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a moment-by-moment life in the Holy Spirit, which brings life and peace, and distinguishes it from the Old Testament law and the flesh.

Duration: 47:06

Scripture: Matthew 4:4, Romans 8:1, Galatians 3:24

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Christian Living"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on Romans chapter 8 and verse 4, which states that the righteous requirement of God's law can be fulfilled within us if we choose to walk according to the Spirit and not the flesh. The preacher emphasizes that even after conversion, we will still be tempted by the flesh to sin, just as Jesus was tempted throughout his life. However, Jesus consistently rejected temptation and relied on the word of God. The purpose of God sending His Spirit and Son was to judge our sins on the cross and enable us to fulfill the righteous requirement of God's law. The sermon concludes by highlighting that the Christian life is a moment-by-moment choice to walk according to the Spirit.

Transcript

Let's turn today to Romans chapter 8 and verse 1. We have been looking through in our past studies of the gospel message. That's what is described in Romans. And we've been looking so far at man's guilt, God's forgiveness, how God justifies us.

We've seen how He frees us from sin's power in Romans 6 and from a legalistic spirit in Romans 7. This is all the preparation for Romans 8, which describes life in the Holy Spirit. And this chapter begins with this statement, There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. That has to be established.

The Holy Spirit did not come to condemn us. Any spirit-filled preacher will never preach in a way that makes people feel condemned, convicted. Yes, the Holy Spirit has come to convict the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment.

But never to make a child of God feel condemned. The Spirit of God has come to make you feel accepted, not condemned. Please remember that.

Whenever you listen to preachers who condemn you, you can be pretty sure they are not led by the Holy Spirit. Or you've got the spirit of the message wrong. Conviction is different from condemnation.

Conviction always gives us hope. It's the Spirit's correction. He'll show you how to be more Christ-like.

Condemnation makes you feel useless. There is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. Don't let the devil condemn you.

Don't let any preacher condemn you. Don't let your conscience condemn you. Open yourself to the Spirit's conviction.

And when He convicts you, as I said, there will always be hope. The Spirit of God has also come to bring us into freedom. It says in verse 2, The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

These are two laws. One is the law of sin, which leads to death. When a man is tempted, this law of sin in his members, he spoke about this law of sin in his members in chapter 7, verse 23.

The law of sin is like the law of gravity. It keeps pulling you down. It drags you down continuously.

And to overcome sin is like overcoming the law of gravity. Is that possible? We know that the law of gravity keeps pulling us down. But consider a bird.

How does that bird fly? Doesn't the law of gravity operate on that bird? And yet it flies. It flies because of another law which lifts it up. The same law that lifts an aeroplane into the sky.

How does that aeroplane fly? The law of aerodynamics conquers the law of gravity and makes that massive metal aircraft go up into the sky. This is a picture of life in the Spirit. It's not that the law of gravity ceases to operate.

The moment that bird dies, it drops to the ground, pulled by the law of gravity. The moment the plane's engines conk out, the plane crashes to the ground. The law of gravity takes over.

And the moment a person ceases to live in the Spirit, the law of sin takes over and he falls into sin. It's an exact picture. But as long as we submit, as long as that plane submits to the law of aerodynamics, gravity has no power over it.

As long as that bird submits to the laws of flight, the law of gravity has no power over it. And as long as you submit to the law of the Spirit, the law of sin and death has no power over you. This is a wonderful gospel.

It's not just forgiveness. It's freedom from the power of the law of sin and death. It's exactly like overcoming gravity.

It's as exciting as flying and overcoming gravity. The law of the Spirit. Now, the law of the Spirit is also different from the Old Testament law.

The Old Testament law was a law of commandments. It brought condemnation, not glory. It did not bring deliverance from sin's power.

It merely pointed out sin. It's a law of commandments written externally on tablets of stone. But the law of the Spirit is expressed in this simple phrase in Romans 8. Life in Christ Jesus.

It's life in that bird that makes it fly. The moment life ceases, gravity takes over. The law of the Spirit is not in rules and regulations.

Many churches live by rules and regulations. That is not God's way. You can have a church look prim and proper with a lot of rules and regulations, but that is not God's way.

God's way is by giving us a life that has the power to overcome sin. And that life is the life of Jesus Christ Himself. When Jesus Christ, our Lord, walked on this earth, there was a life that was manifested in Him.

It was the very life of God. And that life could overcome sin without any problem. And so we see that this is the law of the Spirit.

This life, when it comes into us, is just as capable of overcoming sin as it was in the life of Jesus. Jesus never sinned. Imagine if He gives us that life.

Keeping the commandments is like holding a pig with ten chains, ten commandments, keeping it from getting dirty. But like I said in an earlier study, if we could put the nature of a cat inside that pig, the life of a cat, the nature of a cat, then you would not need the chains. And the Bible says, when you are led by the Spirit, Galatians 5, you do not need the law.

Those who are led by the Spirit do not need the law. It's those who are not led by the Spirit who need the law. If a pig does not have the nature of a cat, then it needs the chains to keep itself from getting dirty.

And so we see this is how God wants man to live in the New Covenant. Not by a number of rules concerning how we should do this and how we should do that and how we should dress and how we should not do the other thing. There are commandments in the New Testament, but they are guidelines.

We cannot keep them apart from the life of Christ Jesus. You read the Sermon on the Mount, for example. A very high standard.

Do you think you can keep it? Man could not even keep the Ten Commandments under the Old Covenant. The Ten Commandments showed up everybody's failure. Where can you keep the Sermon on the Mount? Only if we have the life that is in Christ Jesus.

And so we see the main purpose of the Holy Spirit is not to give us gifts first, but to give us life. And the mistake that so many Christians have made today in relation to the Holy Spirit is to think of His gifts before His life. Gifts are like the members of a body, we read in 1 Corinthians 12, but life is like the life in the body.

And I would rather have a little baby that's got life than a giant that's dead. So without life, what's the use of huge fingers and hands and massive gifts? Life is primary, even if the gifts are small, like a baby's hands. So the emphasis here is on life.

The law of the Spirit is life in Christ Jesus. That life alone can set us free from the law of sin and death. And then he contrasts the Old Covenant with the New Covenant.

What the law could not do, it says in verse 3, weak as it was through the flesh. What was it the law could not do? We saw that in Romans 7.7. The law said you shall not lust, but it could not help Paul or anybody else to overcome lust. It could prevent a man from committing murder and adultery because there was punishment for it, but it could not deliver a man from lust.

The law could not do it. The law could only show a man his failure, but not help him to overcome it. But the Spirit is different.

The law of the Spirit is different. That Old Testament law was weak. Why was it weak? Because our flesh is corrupt and nothing good dwells in this flesh.

How can this flesh ever keep the law of God? So what did God do? He sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. He did not come in sinful flesh. It is very clear in this word.

He came in the likeness of sinful flesh. He was not born of a human father. He was born of a virgin by the power of the Holy Spirit.

And therefore there was no sinful nature in Jesus Christ. There was no tendency towards sin in His life. But He came in our flesh exactly like us.

Tempted like us. And He gave Himself as an offering for sin. And in His flesh He judged sin.

When God judged sin on when Jesus died on the cross. When Jesus died on the cross in that flesh of Jesus, God judged the entire sin of the human race. So that now the righteous requirement of the law, verse 4, can be fulfilled inside us.

Till now under the Old Covenant it could only be fulfilled outside. Now it can be fulfilled inside because we no longer walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. This is God's will for every one of us.

That we might walk in the Spirit and be upheld by that life in Christ Jesus so that we might not sin. Let's turn today to Romans, chapter 8, verse 3 and 4. We were seeing in our last study about the Holy Spirit giving us the very life that was in our Lord Jesus Christ. And thereby enabling us to overcome the law of sin and death which the law could not do.

The law could not help us to overcome the law of sin and death. It could only show us sin. But here it says what the law could not do, verse 3, which is set us free from the law of sin and death, verse 2. Now God has done by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, as I said in our last study, not in sinful flesh, but in the likeness exactly like us, but without a sinful nature.

And as an offering for sin, God condemned sin in the flesh of Jesus when He died on the cross. And the whole purpose of this was that the righteous requirement of God's law might be now fulfilled in us. When Jesus was on earth, the Bible says He was tempted like us in all points.

And He did not sin. Thereby manifesting that the life of God in Him could overcome every temptation. We have no doubt about that.

Now what we read here in Romans 8.2 is that that same life that overcame every sin for thirty-three and a half years on earth is now communicated to us through the Holy Spirit. Don't be satisfied with a superficial emotional experience thinking that that is what the Spirit has primarily come to give us. That is all external.

That's like the wrapping in which a diamond comes. Little babies are occupied with the wrapping, the colorful paper, the ribbon. But a mature person will look for the diamond inside the box and throw away the wrapping.

Today we find so many Christians are occupied with the wrappings, the emotional experiences on the outside. What is required and what is important is the diamond inside, which is the life of Jesus Christ. And if we open ourselves to that life, that life is capable of overcoming anger, lust, the love of money, bitterness, jealousy, strife, and every imaginable temptation.

Does this mean that we shall not value the gifts of the Holy Spirit? Well, the life of Jesus Christ when it was manifested on earth had all the gifts of the Spirit. Now there is a difference between the gifts of the Spirit and emotions. Emotions are not necessarily the gifts of the Spirit.

The gifts of the Spirit are those abilities, supernatural abilities that God gives us to help us to serve other people. So there is no conflict here. But we need to be wise and careful in these days of deception.

And the whole purpose of all this, of God sending His Spirit, God sending His Son, was that first of all, all our sins may be judged in the flesh of Jesus once for all on Calvary's cross. And then, so that now, verse 4, the righteous requirement of God's law. God's law has got a righteous requirement.

Can now be fulfilled inside us, verse 4, if we walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. That latter part of verse 4, that phrase, those who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit, teaches us that the Christian life is a moment-by-moment life. There is no such thing as a once-for-all experience that guarantees perfection or holiness for the rest of our lives.

What is walking? Walking is a moment-by-moment experience. You take one step and then another step, another step. Like the old Chinese proverb says, the journey of one thousand miles begins with one step.

And how do you complete the thousand miles? With many, many, many steps. The Christian life is likened to a race. And in a race, a runner puts one foot forward and then the other foot forward, and he goes on and on and on and on and on.

And so here it speaks about walking. The Christian life is a walk. And this is a walk in which we choose to walk.

It's like you choose to put your left foot forward, and then you choose to put your right foot forward, and then you choose to put your left foot forward. Even though walking has become automatic for us, we must not forget that we are choosing. Anytime you want, you can stop.

You can go backwards if you like. We have a choice in walking. It's exactly the same in life in the Holy Spirit.

God does not compel us. God doesn't compel anybody to do anything. I mean, the greatest proof of that is He doesn't even compel people to go to heaven.

Think that the greatest loss a man can ever suffer is to go to an eternal hell, because he lives in sin, rejects the salvation that Christ has purchased for him, and is eternally lost. And God doesn't stop people from going there if they want to. God doesn't stop a person from living in sin if he wants to.

Even a believer, if he wants to sin secretly, God doesn't stop him. Holiness is a matter of choice. And it's a moment-by-moment choice, exactly like walking.

It's true that when we were born into the world, that was an act of a moment. And when we are born again into God's kingdom, that's also an act of a moment. But a little child, after it's born, has to learn to walk.

And that takes a little while. And in the same way, a born-again Christian must also learn to walk in the Spirit. And that takes some time.

And after we have learned to walk, we may still choose not to walk. That's up to us. We can sit down instead of walking.

We can go backwards. And that can also happen in the Christian life, where we don't progress. You can go backwards if you like.

Which teaches us that God never takes away our free will. Once He takes away our free will, we are no longer free beings. We become like computerized robots that are manipulated by God.

And God doesn't do that. You don't want computerized robots in your home. You want children.

And God also doesn't want computerized robots on the earth, but children. And your child can refuse to obey you, if he wants. And what delight it brings to your heart when your child obeys you.

In the same way, God's children can disobey Him if they want to. But what delight it brings to God's heart when they obey Him. So we can read verse 4 as, The righteous requirement of the law can be fulfilled inside our hearts, in the hearts of those who choose moment by moment to walk according to the Spirit and not according to the promptings of the flesh.

Which teaches us also that after we are converted, the flesh will still prompt us to sin. We will be tempted. Constantly we will be tempted.

Jesus was tempted till the end of His life. We read about the temptation in the wilderness. But at every point, He rejected the temptation.

He told the devil, Get behind me, Satan. Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from God's mouth. He rejected it.

And we have to reject it. And the Holy Spirit that helped Jesus to reject temptation, helps us too. This is the wonderful message of the New Covenant that our being can be opened up to the same Holy Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, that dwelt in Jesus Himself.

So those who are according to the flesh, now, verse 5, set their mind on the things of the flesh. How do you know whether a man is according to the flesh? It's not primarily by his external actions. We can be deceived by that.

You know, a person can go to church, to the meetings, and pray, and read the Bible, and fast, and even be involved in missionary activity, and be a full-time worker. But if his mind is set on the things of the flesh, the question is, where is your mind? If your mind is on the things of the flesh, then you are in the flesh. Whatever religious activity you may be engaged in, those who are according to the Spirit, that means those who follow the Holy Spirit.

How do you know that? Whether you are following the Holy Spirit. Their mind is set on the things of the Spirit. So you can know whether you are following the dictates of your flesh, or following the Holy Spirit, by seeing where your mind is set.

Not where your mind is tempted, but where is it set. What do you choose? There may be thoughts of temptation that flash into your mind every now and then. That means nothing.

Where is your mind set? That is the important question. The mind set on the flesh will ultimately lead to death. That's certain.

But the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace. What a wonderful message! If I allow my mind to be set on the temptations in my flesh, it will ultimately lead me to death. That is certain.

But if I allow my mind to be set on the things of the Holy Spirit, it will lead me to increasing life and increasing peace. This is also the way to know the will of God. The mind of the Spirit, we can say, is the will of God.

The Holy Spirit knows the deep thoughts of God. We read in 1 Corinthians 2 how to know God's will for our life. This is the way, according to Romans 8, verse 6, that as you contemplate a particular course of action, maybe you are considering a certain decision right now, and you are praying about it.

How do you know whether that is God's will for you or not? This is the way to find out. As you pray about it, as you consider it, do you find in your heart an increasing surge of divine life? Do you find in your heart a surge of peace, more and more peace? Maybe you are considering a marriage proposal. Do you find yourself disturbed in your spirit as you think about it more and more, even though externally the factors seem to be okay? That disturbance would, generally speaking, indicate that that is not God's will.

If it is God's will, and you are listening to the Holy Spirit, you will have peace. Of course, if your mind is set on how much money you can make and earthly things like that, you will not discover the mind of the Spirit. But, if you say, Lord, I want to seek Your glory, and you pray concerning a job, concerning moving to another location, concerning a marriage proposal, concerning anything, as you pray, God is faithful to lead you into His will for your life.

And the way He shows it is not like in the Old Testament through some prophet coming and telling you that this is God's will, not through a voice from heaven like they heard in Sinai, but rather by a voice inside our hearts, a voice inside our hearts saying, this is the way I want you to go. How do we hear that voice? By peace and joy and a surge of life coming up within us by which we know that this is God's will for us. So, keep Romans 8.6 before you at all times whenever you are considering God's will.

If there is no life, if there is no peace, wait on the Lord still more to be sure of the will of God. We turn today to Romans 8.6 The mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace. Because the mind set on the flesh is hostile towards God, it does not subject itself to the law of God.

It is not even able to do so. The mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, means it works against God's purposes, against God's will. If your mind is set on the lust of your flesh, you can be pretty sure that you are an enemy of God in those actions of yours.

It does not subject itself to God's law and it is not even able to do so. You see, we are incapable of doing God's will. The difference between the message of Jesus Christ in the New Testament and the message in the Old Testament and the message in many other faiths is all that we read in the Old Testament is do this, don't do this, do this, don't do this.

But never dealing with man's fundamental problem of man's inability to keep that law. So the Old Testament was only there to show us that we were incapable of keeping God's laws. The law was our schoolmaster, it says in Galatians 3, to lead us to Christ, to show us our helplessness so that we could come to Christ and ask Him to do what the law could not do.

And so we see here, we are not told to do this and not do that in the New Testament. We are told to open ourselves to allow God to work in us through His Holy Spirit. Open your being so that Jesus Christ can fill you with His Holy Spirit and give you the desire and the ability to do God's will.

That is the Gospel message. And that's why all can receive freely. You can serve God just as much as any other outstanding servant of God.

Your calling in ministry may not be the same, but just as powerfully, in your particular calling in the body of Christ, if you open yourself to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Romans chapter 8 is dealing with the whole subject of life in the Holy Spirit. And those who are in the flesh, it says in Romans 8, verse 8, cannot please God.

It is impossible to please God no matter how much you make good resolutions, no matter how much you try to do your best, you will never be able to please God. The only way to please God is to trust Him to fill you with His Holy Spirit. Without faith, it is impossible to please God.

Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. So what does God expect from us? God does not expect from us that we do this and don't do that and do this and don't do that. That is not the Gospel message.

The Gospel message is open yourself to be filled with God's Holy Spirit. Let Him fill you, let Him change you, let Him change your nature, and let Him lead you into the glory of the true Christian life. Romans 8, verse 9. See, these Roman Christians had opened themselves to the Holy Spirit.

But the danger was, like in the case of the Galatians, with many Christians also, that having begun in the Spirit, they think they can be made perfect by the flesh. This is the mistake that so many people make. Having begun in the Spirit, they think that they can become made perfect by the flesh.

But that is not possible. You are not in the flesh, he says to the Roman Christians, but in the Spirit, the Spirit of God dwells in you. If you open yourself to the Holy Spirit and you allow the Holy Spirit to dwell in you, to control your life, you are not in the flesh anymore.

Yes, there is a sense in which you have a flesh, but you are not controlled by the flesh. You are controlled by this new nature, by the Holy Spirit that has come inside you, prompting you all the time to do what is right and to avoid what is wrong. Now, if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him at all.

You see, if a man has not even received the Spirit of Christ into him, he is not born again, he is not a Christian at all. So God does not expect a Christian to live his life on earth without being filled with the Holy Spirit. That is basically it.

It is not enough to be merely forgiven. You have got to open your being to be filled with God's Holy Spirit. Verse 10, If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness.

The body that we have can never be improved. It is a body that is corrupt because we have lived in sin for so many years before we were converted and even after we were converted, we used our body to commit sin. And here it says, the body is dead because of sin.

The wages of sin is death. The Lord told Adam in the day that he disobeyed his commandment, he would die. When we disobey God's commandment, we die.

Any commandment. If Adam ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, it was a disobedience to God's commandment. Death takes over immediately.

As soon as we disobey any commandment of God, death takes over. And here it says, because of that, the body is dead because of sin because we have used every part of this body to commit so many sins. But the spirit in us when we are born again has now been made alive.

There was a time when our spirit was also dead because we were unconverted. We had no contact with God. But now the spirit is alive, made righteous by the Holy Spirit.

Our spirit becoming alive is something like putting on an electric switch in a room. You know what an electric switch does? All it does is, if you look inside the switch, bring two electric wires in contact with each other. One is the live wire and the other is the connection to the electrical gadget, whether it's a fan or a light or anything.

The moment these two are joined at the switch, immediately current flows in and the lights burn, the fans run, etc. It's exactly the same with life in the spirit. The spirit brings us in touch with God.

That's what happens when we are born again. It's like putting on an electric switch. Immediately we are in touch with God.

We are clothed with the righteousness of Christ. Our spirit which was dead becomes alive. It's like the resurrection of Christ.

That's why the Bible pictures conversion to resurrection. In Romans 6, your old man was buried and raised up from the dead. That's why a person genuinely being converted is the greatest miracle that takes place on the earth.

To raise a dead body is easier than to raise a dead spirit. Because Jesus raised Lazarus' dead body with just a word. There was no resistance from that dead body.

That dead body was an inert object and it could come back to life. But when Jesus tries to raise dead spirits, we know how difficult it is. The vast majority of people don't respond.

Millions of people say no to Jesus Christ and their spirits remain dead. What does that teach us? It teaches us that to raise a dead spirit is a far greater miracle and a far more difficult job for God than to raise a dead body. We never find a single case of Jesus trying to raise a dead person that did not work.

There are three cases mentioned in the Gospels. In each of those cases, when Jesus spoke, the dead body was raised. But we see hundreds and thousands of millions of cases all around us of people who are dead in their spirit and Jesus wants to bring them to life and they don't respond.

It's a tremendous miracle when a person is born again and when his spirit is made alive. It goes on to say in verse 11 Now if the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, you see this is the same spirit that raised Jesus from the dead. Now let's look at the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

Do you know that the Bible never says even once that Jesus raised himself from the dead. It always says God raised Jesus from the dead. It says that the spirit of God who raised Jesus from the dead.

Notice here it was God who raised Jesus from the dead and it is the same God through the same spirit who raises our dead spirit. Now and one day he will also raise our dead body if we died. It's exactly the same process that when a person is born again his spirit is raised from the dead.

It's already taken place. And one day when Christ comes back and the man is dead physically too it says the same God who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his spirit who indwells you. Now that resurrection of our dying of our dead body from the grave one day when Christ comes back we can have a foretaste of that even now in our earthly bodies.

We cannot experience a resurrection body. No. No one can experience that.

But we can experience a taste of it. Like you know in times of praise and worship we have together we get a foretaste of heaven. The love which we have among brothers and sisters in a church is a foretaste of heaven.

We have many foretastes of heaven. It's like getting a little teaspoon of what one day we will get in a large quantity. It's getting a little taste of a very tasty meal and that wets our appetite for more.

In the same way in our body we can experience physical healing when we pray as a foretaste of the resurrection power that we can experience one day. Now for God's own reasons sometimes he does not grant perfect healing or total healing to many of his children that is for some spiritual purpose but there is this possibility mentioned here that the Holy Spirit can give life to this dying body of ours through his Spirit. The Holy Spirit can give us this life in our mortal body and give us a foretaste of that resurrection life which will one day flood our body.

So let's trust him. God is interested in our spirit, soul and body and the Holy Spirit wants to energize all three parts of our being. Let's turn today to Romans chapter 8 and verse 12.

In the first 11 verses that we were considering up until now we were told how the Holy Spirit enables us to have the life of Jesus Christ which is able to conquer the law of sin and death and how that life that's verse 2 and how that life, verse 4 can enable us to keep God's laws in our hearts inside us and how that Spirit will explain to us the mind of God by giving us life and peace verse 6 and how that Spirit leads us day by day so that we can walk in Jesus' footsteps and how that Spirit can make our spirit to live because of righteousness verse 10 and also give us a foretaste in our mortal dying bodies of that resurrection life that we will one day experience in fullness when Christ returns verse 11 then he says in verse 12 so then so then means in view of all these wonderful

blessings that God has promised us we are not under any obligation to the flesh we don't have to obey what the flesh says we don't have to live according to the flesh anymore if you live according to the flesh you must die see, under our former condition when we were unconverted there was an obligation to live according to the flesh that was the way our nature pushed us and we kept on doing things which were hostile to God and against God's will but now when the Holy Spirit has come in and freed us why do we

have to listen to the old master again it's like saying what we said earlier in an earlier study that if Jesus has purchased you from the old slave master you are not under obligation to listen to that old master again the old master may still call you think if you were working in one

office let's take a modern day example if you were working for one company say for many many years let's say you worked in a company for 30 years and then you left that company and joined another company let's call these companies A and B you worked in A for 30 years and now you are working in B and now you are working in B A is no longer paying you one day the old master in A asks you to come and work for him do you have to listen to him are you under any obligation to him not at all you say I'm sorry I'm working in another company now I have to go to work there that's exactly what it says here Jesus has purchased us there is absolutely no need for you to listen to your old master once upon a time you had to because he was your master and you couldn't do anything else but no longer so it

says here we are not under obligation but if you go back listening to your old master then you must die now this is written to believers it's very interesting now many people think can a believer die spiritually well a lot of people discuss on that on both sides arguing this way that way let's read God's word simply as it is you know when we come to God's word we must be willing to change every opinion that we ever held first of all verse 12 to whom is it written is Romans chapter 8 written to the unbeliever or to the believer is Romans chapter 5, 6, 7, 8 for whom is it written it's for people who are justified by faith in Christ and it's very clearly mentioned in verse 12 of Romans 8 brethren we are under no obligation to the flesh Paul includes himself but when he talks about living

according to the flesh he says you Paul has no intention of living according to the flesh notice that difference where he uses we in verse 12 and you in verse 13 why is that because Paul says I have no intention to live according to the flesh so I don't include myself there but 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 that's your choice as far as Paul is concerned he says I've already made my choice I'm going to live according to the flesh sorry, according to the spirit every day and I'm going to live but I don't know what your choice is but the interesting thing is verse 13 teaches us that a believer can live according to the flesh and you know from your personal experience that that is possible is there a

single day in your life where you can say it is impossible for me now to sin the planets can say that that it's impossible for them to disobey God they just have obeyed God for thousands and thousands of years it's impossible for them to disobey God because of one reason they don't have a free will is it only before we are converted that we have a free will what about after we are converted what about after we are filled with the Holy Spirit look at the multitudes of cases around us of people who were once filled with the spirit and who are living in sin today and who have fallen away from the faith what does it prove?

God never takes away man's free will even after he is born again even after he is filled with the Holy Spirit because the moment he takes that away we become dead objects like a tree or a planet and he doesn't want that he wants sons and daughters and because of that free will we have a choice if you live according to the flesh you must die it's similar to what the Lord told Adam if you eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil you must die you will surely die and the very first word the lie that Satan spoke to Adam and Eve to Eve was you will not die where God had said you will die Satan said you will not die the implication was because God is so loving, he is so good why will he allow you to die, Eve? he is a good God he is a loving father it's the lie of the devil you will not die

you will live, you will not go to hell you will be alright it's the lie of the devil but by the spirit if you put to death the deeds of the body then you will live Romans 8.13 apply what we read in Genesis 3 to Romans 8.13 and what do you find? there it was eating the tree of knowledge of good and evil here it is living according to the flesh the punishment in both cases was same you will die and in both cases the devil comes and says you will not die and that day he told it to Adam and Eve and this day he tells it to a lot of believers he says that's ok if you live according to the flesh, you are a child of God you will never die is that what the Bible says? listen to the word of God brethren, if you live according to the flesh Romans 8.12 and 13 you must die, you will certainly die you

will surely die do you hear the devil coming and telling you right now you will not die that's exactly what he told Eve but there is no need for you to die God has given you the Holy Spirit and he has given you the Holy Spirit to put to death the deeds of the body and then you will live, just as certainly so God gives you freedom whether you want to obey the Holy Spirit whom he has put inside you or whether you want to obey the flesh that you still carry around with you and then he goes on to say that those who are led by the Spirit of God these are the sons of God now there is a difference between being a child and a son you know that difference in any home a child is a baby it wants the father and mother to do so many things for it it's always expecting to receive, receive, receive the

smaller a baby is, the more dependent it is and expects the father and mother to do everything for it one mark of growth is that you have a greater sense of responsibility a ten year old has a greater sense of responsibility than a six month old and a twenty five year old has a far greater sense of responsibility than even a ten year old they are all children but the sense of responsibility is immensely different and when we move from being a child to a son we have a sense of responsibility in our life towards God's work towards God's house towards pleasing Him and fulfilling His purposes this is how the Holy Spirit leads us and that's why it says here as many as are led by the Spirit of God these are the sons of God when we receive Jesus Christ into our heart we are born again and from

that moment if we are filled with the Holy Spirit and allow the Holy Spirit to lead us we can become sons of God very quickly responsible sons we don't have to wait 15 years like in natural life we can be sons of God with a sense of responsibility from day one if you allow the Holy Spirit to lead you with a sense of responsibility that's what Peter did on the day of Pentecost the Spirit of God filled him and he immediately had a sense of responsibility towards God's work and he began to preach the Gospel and serve Jesus Christ so God gives us His Spirit so that the Spirit can lead us and when you read verse 13 and 14 together you find that the Holy Spirit leads us to put to death the deeds of the body so when you read verse 12 and 13 together, what do you get? those who are led by the

Spirit of God are the sons of God and these are the ones who are led by the Spirit, verse 13, to put to death the deeds of the body a son of God is not one who is just thinking of going to heaven when he dies that's a baby who is thinking of what God can do for him a son of God is one who lives in a responsible way putting to death those deeds of the body which he did in the old days which pleased his flesh living in sin he puts that to death all the things that come out of his body which are contrary to God's will God gives him the power of the Holy Spirit to put it to death and as he does that, he walks in the Spirit in resurrection life and pleases God day by day and he is a son and a daughter of God

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