

Romans 8:1-17 Life in the Spirit

Text

¹Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, ⁷because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, ⁸and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

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

¹²So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— ¹³for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. ¹⁵For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.

Key Points in the text

- Having been justified we cannot be condemned as the Lord has made us righteous, the cause of condemnation has been removed.
- We are active in our own sanctification by the power of the Spirit in us. If we were doing it by our own strength, it would be from the flesh which would be of no use.

Text Study

Verses 1-3: A continuation of the idea that Christ has set us free from bondage of sin.

- **¹Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.**
 - Condemnation is the opposite of justification.
 - You can't be both condemned and justified.
- **²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.**
 - Here Paul offers an explanation for this statement, because we are in Christ, we enjoy the results of His work.
 - The Law of Sin and Death - The results of the Law Moses give if you are an unregenerate sinner.
 - The Spirit of Life - The results of the law of the Spirit is righteousness, sanctification, and life because now the Law is written on our hearts.
 - Christopher Ash summarizes it this way, “The law on the wall, becomes the law on our hearts.”

- **³For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh**
 - Paul offers further explanation of the original statement
 - The Law is outside of us and cannot win against the sin that is inside us.
 - He through His Son's death and resurrection, killed the sin in us, and placed the law on our heart.

Verses 4-6: Why did God set us free? (God's purpose in doing this)

- **He condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace**
 - Jesus set us free of sin through His death on the cross was 'so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us'
 - What does this mean? Christ fulfilled the law, which causes those who are in Him to be justified and made righteous. It also means that since Christ is in us we now live a life in the Spirit not the Flesh
 - We used to live controlled by the flesh, but now we live according to the Spirit. Which also moves us from death to life.

Verses 7-8: Life in the Flesh

- **⁷because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, ⁸and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.**
 - The flesh is hostile toward God
 - The flesh will not and in fact cannot listen to God much less follow His law.
 - The flesh cannot please God.

Verses 9-11: Life in the Spirit

- **⁹However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. ¹⁰If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. ¹¹But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.**
 - Christ in us gives life to our spirit, though the flesh is dead.
 - Our living spirit filled by the Holy Spirit allows us to love God.
 - Our living spirit filled by the Holy Spirit allows us to listen to and obey God.
 - Our living spirit filled by the Holy Spirit allows us to please God.
 - Our mortal body will become alive, to be resurrected on the day of glory.

Verses 12-13: The Christian's Obligation

- **¹²So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—¹³for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.**
 - We used to serve the flesh, now we serve the Spirit
 - How do we serve the Spirit? By participating in our sanctification.
 - Life in the flesh is progressing to death (Romans 1:18-32)
 - Life in the spirit is progressing to life

Verses 14-17: The Christian's Privilege

- **¹⁴For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. ¹⁵For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" ¹⁶The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.**
 - By adoption we are now children of God.
 - By adoption we now can cry out Abba! Father!
 - By adoption we are now heirs with Christ.
 - Do not miss verse 16, if the enemy or our flesh questions any of this, the Holy Spirit in us is there telling the devil and our dead flesh, leave my child alone he is an heir to My kingdom, you are heir to only death.

Application

- Don't fall into the 'let go and let God' trap, we must be active participants in our sanctification, by accessing the means of grace to make us more like Christ.
- Remember who you are as one living in the spirit, you are His child and heir to His kingdom. He wants you to come boldly to Him in prayer and supplication.

Next Week's Lesson Prep/Preview

Text: Romans 8:18-30

Focus: Suffering and Future Glory

Devotional: Philippians 2:1-18

Preparation: Read The Order of Salvation

The Order of Salvation - Romans 8:29–30

"And those He predestined, He also called; those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified" (v. 30).

In theology, we speak of the *ordo salutis* and the *historia salutis*. The *historia salutis* is the history of salvation, and most of the Bible is concerned with it. When we do theology from the perspective of the *historia salutis*, we consider what Christ our Head has done and what He has been given, and then we consider what we as members of Him participate in. He suffered and was glorified, and in union with Him so have we. He was raised, ascended to heaven, and sits enthroned; in union with Him we have these privileges in essence now, and look forward to their fulness in the world to come. He judges all men, and we in union with Him will also judge the world. This is the way theology is done in terms of the *historia salutis*.

The *ordo salutis* is the order of salvation. This focuses on the acts of God and the response of the individual in salvation. God calls us, produces regeneration in us, so that we respond with repentance, faith, and obedience. Behind the divine call is God's electing decree. The *ordo salutis* is not concerned with a temporal sequence of events, but with a logical order.

Paul provides a condensed form of the *ordo salutis* in Romans 8:29–30. He tells us that God foreknew certain people and predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son. Since God exists in eternity, foreknowledge and predestination are not sequential actions on His part, but logical aspects of His decree. Romans 8:30 says that God called these people to His kingdom, and that those who are called are justified. Since we are justified by faith, we can insert faith between calling and justification. In fact, God's inward call produces regeneration in us, which causes us to cry out in repentance and faith, so that we are justified.

There is no time sequence in this, as if we could be called for a while before we are regenerated, and then live regenerated without having repented, and then we could repent but not turn to Christ, and then finally come to justifying faith. No, they are all logical steps in the same event. When God calls us we are immediately regenerated, and we turn from sin to God in one action, which justifies us. And those who are justified are immediately glorified in the sense of being adopted as children of God.

Coram Deo

The value of *ordo salutis* theology is that it enables us to see clearly that it is God who saves, freeing us from the sinful tendency to take some credit for our own salvation. We do not proclaim, "I found it," but, "He found me." Rejoice that it is God who is the author and finisher of your faith.