

## **Romans, Part 20**

The Holy Spirit is drawing our attention to the new life that is possible in Christ Jesus. This new life is facilitated by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We have been instructed to walk in the Spirit and not according to the flesh. This is a totally new manner of living that relies upon the intervention of the Holy Spirit in every aspect of life. The rule of the Holy Spirit empowers and equips us to live and do right and be free from the rule and power of sin and death. The life and energy of the Holy Spirit brings us into a new life of liberty without condemnation.

**Romans 8:9 NKJV** But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

Notice the dramatic change that is indicated by the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in us. The Holy Spirit is the responsible agent for identifying that we belong to Christ. Later the Holy Spirit not only identifies that we belong to Christ but that we have been made sons of God.

**Romans 8:16 NKJV** The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

The abiding presence and work of the Holy Spirit within plays an integral and fundamental part of our Christian walk.

### *What does it mean to “walk in the Spirit?”*

The walk in the Spirit is not necessarily an emotional spiritual activity, but more of a settled residence of the Holy Spirit within us that is the guiding principle of our life. By the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit, we have the power, assurance and mind to walk pleasing to God. He teaches and directs us in all areas of our lives. We notice this throughout the lives of the early church. The Holy Spirit was the responsible agent for guiding, empowering, instructing, and maturing believers.

*After the Apostle Paul discussed his miserable failure to walk pleasing to God, he certified that Jesus was the answer for his wretched condition.*

**Romans 7:24-25 NLT** Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God’s law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin.

In Paul’s writing, when He refers to Jesus, he is talking about His earthly life.

When he refers to Jesus Christ, he is referring to the Lord's finished ministry. In Christ, our life has been made new. In Christ, our old life and lifestyle has been crucified and we have been raised with Christ into a new life, so that in Jesus Christ we are blessed.

**Ephesians 1:3 NKJV** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

*To enable us to live and walk in Christ's victory, we have been given the Holy Spirit.*

**Romans 8:5 NKJV** For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

This *life* or *walk* involves deliberately following the Holy Spirit in thought, word, and action. The *life of the flesh* is starkly absent of the blessings of *living and walking in the Spirit*. When we walk after the life or lifestyle of the flesh we miss the blessing, covering, and favor of the life of the Spirit. Without the abiding presence and life of the Spirit, our life is a contradiction of Christ and His work and victory. What is true in Him is not and cannot be expressed in us. Without the Holy Spirit, we may refer to all that Christ accomplished without actually walking in His victory.

*Those who are born again are in Christ and Christ is in them.*

This is an undeniable fact, (John 3:6-8). We have been made a new creation in Christ Jesus and the old life is gone and a new life has begun. The issue then is not the reality of our conversion, but it is how we live or walk. If we live after the flesh, we live outside of what Christ has purchased and provided for us.

Let me illustrate this.

A rancher purchased thousands of acres of prime grazing fields and surrounded his ranch with a secure boundary fence. Within the ranch, he put everything his cattle could want or need. There are lakes, ponds and grasses of all kinds. He planted clover and sweet sorghums. He built barns and shelters and provided every kind of protection and covering to secure his cattle's safety and wellbeing. He did this for two reasons. First, the fence was made to keep predators and renegades out. Second, it was made to shield the cattle and keep them in the place of safety.

*If we live and walk according to the Spirit, we are in a place of safety and provision.*

On the outside of this rancher's property were all manner of disasters, vile

thieves, and dangers that would kill, steal and destroy. There were deep crags, crevices and vast barren wastes. On the outside were poisonous and deadly plants along with rancid water and many swampy bogs.

*The life of the flesh is filled with many pitfalls and disasters.*

If we live after the flesh, we will find that we are missing the many things that Christ has provided. We must learn to live in the Spirit. Sixteen times, Jesus said: “He who has an ear, let him hear.” In several of these, He said, “Let him hear what the Spirit says...” When we have ears for the Spirit and a mind for the Spirit, we find life and peace. The Holy Spirit knows all of the thoughts that God has toward us and all of the profound and rich blessings that are prepared for us in Christ Jesus, and makes them known and available to us. Our strength and life comes from the rich vastness of the supply that is in Christ Jesus.

*Living in the Spirit means that we trust the Holy Spirit to do and supply what we cannot do or supply.*

If we live according to our natural desires, we will wander into every kind of disaster. Trouble is normal to those who live according to the flesh. In the flesh, we are open for a number of destructive life patterns, thoughts and reckless and wanton desires. In the flesh, we are free from the blessing and providence of Christ’s provision. It is impossible to enjoy the benefits of Christ’s blessing, victory and provision if we are not walking according to the Holy Spirit.

*Everything Christ has provided is available to us.*

We have all lived in Romans 7 in a life that was dead in trespasses and sins. We walked according to the course of this world, and according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience. When we walked according to the flesh, we fulfilled the desires of our flesh and mind, (Ephesians 2:1-5).

*God has made it possible for us to live in the bounty of Christ’s provisions and the Holy Spirit, (Romans 7:24-25 and Romans 8).*

*When the Apostle Paul examined his struggle with the flesh, he came to this conclusion.*

**Romans 7:24-25 NLT** Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin? Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jesus Christ is the answer for all of our lives. His life and victory must become fully developed in us.

**Galatians 4:19 NLT** ...until Christ is fully developed in your lives.

### *What does “fully developed” mean?*

The original language refers to the internal reality of a change in character, the character of Christ. God has a plan for your success and overcoming victory in Christ Jesus.

### *What is this new life like?*

*First, it is a life free from sin.*

**Matthew 1:21 NKJV** And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.

### *Why is He called “Jesus”?*

He came to save His people from their sins. This is God’s plan for you. Anyone may come and receive God’s salvation.

*Second, it is a life that enjoys intimate fellowship with God.*

**1 Corinthians 1:9 NKJV** God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

God has raised a mighty Savior, Jesus Christ our Lord, Who has delivered us out of the hand of our enemies. By His death, burial, resurrection and ascension, God has made it possible for us to have and enjoy this fellowship.

*Third, it is a life that is wholly satisfied with the Lord.*

**John 4:14 NKJV** But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.

This soul satisfying is available to every believer. Whoever drinks... shall never thirst again. The gift Jesus gives becomes “in us” a “fountain springing up into” or resulting in “eternal life.” This “living water” results in “eternal life.” “Living water” refers to the “life giving Spirit of God.” Every believer may experience this.

*Fourth, it is a life that is full of influence.*

**John 7:37-38 NKJV** On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”

Take note that the river of living water flows out of your heart. “Out of your heart”

refers to your “innermost being” or “inner life.” The next verse says this is concerning the Holy Spirit. You are a conduit for the flow of the Spirit of refreshing.

*My aunt Edith was a conduit for refreshing. Aunt Edith was dying with cancer. Norene and I went over to see her to pray for her and encourage her. We got there and Aunt Edith was her normal self. We had prayer. Edith was a woman of the Spirit and she began praying in unknown tongues and we could tell she had been in the presence of God. It appeared that she lived by the fountain of living waters. She began worshipping and lifting her hands to the Lord. Her heart was full of God’s goodness. I am not sure that we were as great of a blessing and refreshing to her as she was to us. Before we left, Aunt Edith had to give us some of her jellies and home canned goods. She was a conduit for refreshing.*

*Fifth, it is a life that is free from the power of sin.*

**Acts 3:26 NKJV** To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.”

The word for iniquities means “an evil and wicked nature.” Other translations say: “Turning every one of you from your wickedness and evil ways.”

Wickedness means: morally bad, the quality of being evil. The minimum experience for every Christian involves this turn away from evil and to turn to God. We have been freed from sin. Everything we know about sin must be conquered. We are more than conquerors through Jesus Christ.

**Romans 6:14 NKJV** “sin shall not have dominion over you”

**Romans 8:1 NKJV** There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

*Sixth, it is life that overcomes circumstances.*

**Romans 8:35 NLT** Can anything ever separate us from Christ’s love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death?

**Romans 8:37 NLT** No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.

**2 Corinthians 2:14 NKJV** Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.

The overcoming life is normal for Spirit-led believers. This does not mean that

we are free from trouble, calamity, persecution, or a myriad of other things, but we are always led into triumph in Christ.

*Seventh, it is a life that practices good.*

**Ephesians 2:8-10 NIV** For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

This is not a description of a special class of believer. When we are saved by grace, God creates us in Christ Jesus to do good works. When we are saved, something happens inside of us that enables or makes it possible for us to do good works.

*Eighth, it is a life full of light.*

**John 8:12 NIV** When Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

Everyone who follows Jesus has this light of life in them. 1 Thessalonians 5:5 says, “*we are sons of light*” and “*we are not of the darkness.*” Darkness is representative of every evil work. It is normal for us to be full of light.

*Ninth, it is a life that is wholly sanctified.*

**1 Thessalonians 5:23 NKJV** Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We need to make room in our faith for God to sanctify our spirit, soul, and body. God wants to sanctify us completely so that we are preserved blameless. We will have this new life that is a result of our being in Christ and having the Holy Spirit work in us powerfully.