

“THE CHRISTIAN LIFE”

Romans 8.5-11

Is it possible to live the Christian life in our own power? The answer is “NO.” We need supernatural help to live the way our Lord wants us to live. That’s what Romans 8 is all about.

In fact, Romans 7 is all about the Christian’s struggle with sin. The perpendicular pronoun “I” is prevalent in this chapter. Hear the testimony of none other than the apostle Paul . . .

Romans 7:19... For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want.

In Romans 8, another term dominates the conversation. It’s the repeated reference to the “HOLY SPIRIT.” He has secured four powerful, life-altering blessings for us:

- **A persuasive affirmation (1)**
- **A permanent liberation (2)**
- **A perfect compensation (3)**
- **A personal transformation (4)**

Here's the truth I want you to latch onto today:

**THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS US
LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.**

Let's see how that plays out in our text today:

1. THE CONTRAST

Romans 8:5–6... For 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. 6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace....

Do you see the contrast between the “SPIRIT” and the “FLESH?”

“Spirit” refers to the Holy Spirit. Keep in mind that we worship one God who has eternally existed in three persons—*God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit*. The Holy Spirit is fully God. He can be pleased or grieved. Paul’s emphasis in Romans 6-8 is sanctification. The Holy Spirit’s key ministry is the transformation of believers into the image of Jesus Christ.

“Flesh” refers to our fallen human nature. The members of our body, our soul, and our spirit are all susceptible to temptation and sin. In this particular text, Paul is referring to someone who has not been saved. He or she is unregenerated. MacArthur explained this contrast . . .

In God’s eyes, there are only two kinds of people in the world, those who do not belong to Him and those who do. Put another way, there are only those who are according to the flesh and those who are according to the Spirit. As far as spiritual life is concerned, God takes no consideration of gender, age, education, talent, class, race, or

any other human distinctions (Gal. 3:28). He differentiates people solely on the basis of their relationship to Him.¹

The distinctiveness of being a Christian is clearly addressed here. You either belong to God, or you don't. You are either forgiven or unforgiven.

- **You're not a Christian because you are an American.**
- **You're not a Christian because you have a godly dad and mom.**
- **You're not a Christian because you are religious.**

The only way to be a Christian is to repent of your sins and to receive Jesus as your Savior and Lord by faith!

Verse 4 and verse 5 are connected by the conjunction "FOR." It carries the idea of

¹ John F. MacArthur Jr., [Romans](#), vol. 1, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 415–416.

“BECAUSE.” The point is that a believer does not behave according to the flesh because his/her mind is no longer focused on the things of the flesh. Notice the word **“MIND”** is used 3 times in 2 verses.

“Set their minds” (Philippians 2:5, Colossians 3:2)—Think of the word, *FOCUS*. When you’re driving, it’s imperative that you maintain a forward, front windshield focus. If you are distracted by a group of deer in a field or by a text, your vehicle will drift. Is your mind absorbed with the things of God or the things of the flesh?

- The mind set on the flesh is DEATH... being cut off from the life of Christ.
- The mind set on the Spirit is LIFE and PEACE.

Where’s your focus? I remind you. God the Father sent God the Son to save us, and He sent God The Holy Spirit to be our ***“HELPER.”***

THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS US LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

2. THE CONFLICT

When the things of God dominate one's mind and heart, there is life.² God has included in that life a desire to please Him, to read His Word, to pray, to share our faith, to obey Him, to worship Him, and to rest in the security of His love and peace. These two words—*life* and *peace*—imply contentment, inner security, and purpose for life. Do we experience conflict between the HOLY SPIRIT and our FLESH?

Romans 8:7–8... because 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, 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

² Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), 306.

Consider someone who is not a Christian, an unbeliever. What are their spiritual characteristics?

THEY ARE SPIRITUALLY DEAD (6).

THEY ARE HOSTILE TOWARD GOD (7).

THEY ARE RESISTANT TO THE WORD (7).

THEY ARE POWERLESS TO OBEY GOD (7).

THEY CANNOT PLEASE GOD (8)

A true Christian has three enemies. . .

- **External—the world**
- **Internal—the flesh**
- **Infernal—the devil**

These three enemies try to lure the believer back into the old sinful ways (**Galatians 5:16-25**). The conflict is real! Is there any hope for the believer? Yes, there is!

3. THE CONQUEST

Romans 8:9... However, 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.

The constant presence of God the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer is vitally important. HE is not an occasional visitor; HE takes up residence in Christians.³

1 Corinthians 3:16... Do you not know that you are a temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?

1 Corinthians 6:19–20... Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? **20** For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your

³ Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), 308.

Let me make this crystal clear. EVERY CHRISTIAN IS BLESSED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT'S PRESENCE! The result is life and peace and victory over our 3 enemies. As we consider our CONQUEST, look at verse 10 . . .

Romans 8:10... If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness.

So, we have here a dying body and a living spirit (ours) that has been energized within us because of the righteousness that the resurrected Christ has imputed to us. No wonder Paul wrote . . .

Romans 7:24–25... Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? **25** Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

It is clear from verses 9–11 that the various designations all refer to ONE MEMBER OF THE TRINITY. . .

- **“Spirit” (9)**
- **“the Spirit of God” (9)**
- **“the Spirit of Christ” (9)**
- **“Christ is in you” (10)**
- **“the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead” (11)**
- **“His Spirit who dwells in you” (11)**

These all refer to the mighty and powerful Holy Spirit. The variety of titles indicates the glorious unity existing between *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*.

Romans 8:11... But 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.

God the Holy Spirit, raised God the Son from the dead. Hey, He dwells within the Christian and raises him/her to new life, to new desires, to a new purpose, to new fruitfulness, and a new destiny! Now this is power!

The Spirit of God will take all the believers for all time and recreate their bodies into immortal, glorified bodies like that of Jesus Christ. We will dwell forever in the new heaven and the new earth with that glorified body.

CONCLUSION

**THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS US
LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.**

Examine your life today. Does your life revolve around what Paul called *“the flesh?”* If it does, this means that you are not saved. **Today, the good news is that your condition is reversible.**

Jesus Christ died for your sins on the cross and paid your penalty for your sin. He was

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resurrected from the dead. If you will repent of your sin and place your faith in Jesus, He will forgive your sins and justify you before the Father. The Holy Spirit will make you into an entirely new person with a new purpose and a new power.

If you are a Christian, that means you are to be distinctively different. Your life should be focused on the Holy Spirit and what He desires to do with your life. Live under the Spirit's control and He will transform you into the likeness of Christ. He will do this by exercising the same power that raised Jesus from the dead!