



## World Christian Fellowship

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### Romans 74

### Holy Spirit- Power to fulfil Law!

### Romans 8:4-6

**Romans 8:1-11**, *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. <sup>2</sup>For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. <sup>3</sup>For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup>that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. <sup>7</sup>Because the [c]carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. <sup>8</sup>So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. <sup>9</sup>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. <sup>10</sup>And if Christ is in you, the body is dead*

*because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.* <sup>11</sup> *But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.*

**Romans' 8<sup>th</sup> chapter** is where the Holy Spirit's ministry comes into clear focus.

This chapter moves to an unequalled crescendo on the pages of Scripture, which is familiar to us from verses 28 to 39. But the rest of the chapter is equally rich in its fullness.

No one can be the same after they have internalized and meditated on these truths as they were before.

The Father initiated salvation.

The Son validated salvation and then demonstrated it.

The Spirit activates it.

The two great works of the Spirit are,

1. Sanctification.
2. Secure for Glorification.

The Spirit of God is conforming you to the image of Christ and is holding you until your final glory.

**Verse 1**, we are in no-condemnation status before God because we are in Christ.

**Verses 2&3**, The Spirit frees us from sin and death.

All men are sinners.

All have sinned and violated God's law. Therefore, all are under the curse. All come short of the glory of God, and, therefore, are sentenced to eternal death.

**V 2-3**, *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. <sup>3</sup> For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,*

These two verses spell the great work of the Spirit in producing our no condemnation status was to free us from sin and death. We could not be freed from sin and death by the law, as Romans 3 said, for by the works of the law, none of us could be saved or justified.

**Why?**

Because no man can keep the law.

**James 2:10**, *For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.*

The law could not save us.

We couldn't keep it.

The law can't help us.

It doesn't energize us.

It doesn't provide any assistance to us.

It just stands there as a divine, holy, and unattainable standard over which we are smashed by our failures.

We are weak in the flesh, and we can't do it.

We cannot deliver ourselves from condemnation to non-condemnation status, and neither can the law help us.

### **What can help us?**

The principle of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

The Holy Spirit, who is the One who sets us free from the law of sin and death.

The Spirit of God comes and frees us from sin and death. It is because He is the One who convicts.

He is the One who produces repentance and faith.

He is the One who regenerates.

He is the One who applies to us the atoning work of Jesus Christ.

It is the miracle of the work of the Holy Spirit, and that's why it is said that we are born of the Spirit.

### **How does the Spirit do that?**

**V 3**, *For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,*

It is done by the work of substitution.

We couldn't please God.

We couldn't keep His law.

The law couldn't help us.

We were in a damnable situation and condition.

We were under severe and eternal condemnation.

There was no way out until God brought Jesus Christ to our rescue. Jesus Christ came into this world in the likeness of sinful flesh.

He came as a man.

He was not sinful.

He was separate from sinners, holy, harmless, and undefiled.

But He came and took our place.

He was the spotless lamb without blemish that God offered for sin on the cross.

He was the sacrifice that satisfied the justice of God.

He bore in His own body our sins on the cross.

Because of His work of substitution salvation can be brought to us through the Holy Spirit.

Jesus paid the penalty for sin.

He condemned sin in the flesh. And it was that great and mighty work that He did which made it possible for us, by the power of the Spirit, to be delivered from the principle of sin and death.

God the Father, who gave up His only Son to die for our eternal salvation.

God didn't owe us anything, but freely, out of His matchless grace and mercy, delivered up His Son for us.

By that work of God, the Spirit was able to free us from the law of sin and death and give to us what verse 2 calls the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

We live because He died, and the Holy Spirit applied His death to us. We praise God for the Holy Spirit's work in our lives.

In this lesson we see the second great benefit in our no condemnation status by the Holy Spirit.

### **Holy Spirit enables us to fulfil God's law.**

*V 4, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*

- If we are going to have a relationship with God,
  - If we are going to be right with God,
  - If we are going to know God,
  - If we are going to come into fellowship with God,
- 
- We must keep His law.
  - We must be made righteous.

Precisely that is what happens.

The law of God is nothing but a transcript of His holy character. Nobody has fellowship with Him that doesn't bear that holy character.

Saving grace was given so that the law might be fulfilled. We could never come into the presence of God without holiness.

**Hebrews 12:14**, *Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:*

There must be something more than just delivering us from the law of sin of death. There must also be the fulfilment in us of the righteous requirements of the law.

### **How can we possibly fulfil the law?**

Even if we put our faith in Jesus Christ, we are imperfect. We are still battling our fallen flesh.

**1 John 1:8**, *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

**1 John 1:10**, *If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.*

**So how could we ever fulfil the law?**

**How could every requirement of the holy law of God be fulfilled in us?**

Only one way, and that is by imputing to us the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

When a soul is regenerated, there is put to that soul's account the perfect righteousness of Christ. God sees us as if we lived His perfect life, just as on the cross He saw Christ as if He lived our imperfect life.

On the cross, God treated Christ as if He had lived our sinful life. In salvation, God treats us as if we had lived His perfect life.

The reason Jesus had to live a perfect life all those years before He died was so that there would be a perfect life to impute to our account.

So, the fullness of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, who fulfilled all righteousness in His earthly life, is granted to us.

The Holy Spirit in saving us, regenerating us, delivers us from condemnation and from the law or the principle of sin and death that damns eternally.

Then the Spirit of God, though the regenerating work applies to us the all-sufficient and perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is put to our account. Our Lord Himself, by the work of the Spirit in Him, He said, fulfilled all righteousness.

So, when we put our trust in Jesus Christ under the regenerating work of the Spirit, the righteousness of Christ is imputed to our accounts.

**V4**, *"In order that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us."*

When we look at the cross then, the negative side would be expressed this way:

- We are delivered from the law of sin and death.
- We are rescued from our just condemnation.

The positive side would be expressed this way:

- We are granted the full righteousness of Jesus Christ.
- God sees us as perfect as Jesus Christ.

That is the incredible reality of the Spirit's work in giving to us the righteousness of God as fulfilled in the law.

We could never do either of those things on our own. But by the Spirit, we are delivered from the principle of sin and death, and we are enabled to fulfil God's law perfectly.

### **Holy Spirit changes our nature!**

This thought starts from second half of verse 4 and until verse 11.

**V 4, "Who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."**

He changes our nature.

We have not only been delivered from the just condemnation of the law and been granted the righteousness of Christ by imputation, but those are also judicial acts.

Those are declarations made by God purely on the merits of the work of Jesus Christ. But there is something more than that which would be called justification, the forensic act. There is also the real transformation, and the conversion.

The conversion that changed, the new birth, the newness of life which comes to us.

We are now given a new nature, a new character, a new operative life principle.

Sanctification, which is the beginning of a process that goes through all our life in which we respond now to the power of the ever-present Holy Spirit, rather than being dominated by sinful flesh.

**Ephesians 2:10**, *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

When you were saved by grace through faith, and you were justified by God imputing your sin to Christ and His righteousness to you, "became His workmanship."

In other words, He also not only did a forensic deed or declaration, but He did a real work on you. He picked you up and re-crafted you.

We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus.  
That's the new creation, regeneration, involving conversion.

- You were created in Christ Jesus for good works.
- You have now a new personality.
- Your life takes on a whole new direction.

**1 John 3:6**, *Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.*

- You no longer do what the devil wants you to do.
- You do what God wants you to do.
- You love God.
- You pattern your life after Christ.
- You have holy desires and righteous aspirations.

This is because your nature has been transformed, changed, converted.

So, it is not just a declaration but a new creation!

**Titus 2:14**, *who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.*

A counterpart passage to Ephesians 2:10.

- ✓ We have been changed.
- ✓ We have been purged and purified.
- ✓ Our nature has been altered.

This is the work of sanctification. We have been transformed.

This transformation is part of the new covenant promise that you find in Old Testament passages.

**Jeremiah 31:33-34**, *But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their*

*God, and they shall be My people. <sup>34</sup> No more shall every man teach his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."*

Something is going to change on the inside.

The transformation aspect is Him planting His law in our hearts.

**Ezekiel 36:26-27**, *I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.*

When you have a real conversion, you have a changed life!

The Spirit not only frees us from the principle of sin and death, not only enables us to fully satisfy the law of God by imputed righteousness, but the Spirit changes our nature.

Now, there are only two kinds of people in the world.

- Saints
- Sinners.

**V 4**, *"Who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."*

Only two kinds of people in the world.

- Those who function at the impulse of the flesh and
- Those who function at the impulse of the Spirit.

God never divides people by culture.

He never really divides them by race or education or sex or material possessions or achievements.

God recognizes there are differences among people in the world. But the only differences that matter are the differences between those who are of the flesh and those who are of the Spirit.

There are degrees, of course, within those classifications, but the difference in those classifications is absolute and eternal.

These two classifications of people then become the theme from verse 4b all the way down to verse 11.

The contrast between those who walk according to the flesh and those who walk according to the Spirit is a contrast in behaviours.

The word “walk” means behaviour.

It's a word in the New Testament used many times, particularly by the Apostle Paul to describe daily conduct.

We are not talking about forensics here.  
We are not talking about declarations.  
We are not talking about God's justifying act.

What we are talking about here is conduct.

Whole matter of behaviour with the word “walk.”

**V 5**, *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.*

Clear definition of the distinction between a believer and a non-believer.

- Believers set their minds on the things of the Spirit.
- Non-believers set their minds on the things of the flesh.

Behaviour based on the word “walk” in verse 4, but behaviour is a product of the mind. Thinking.

Those who walk according to the flesh do so because that's where their mind is set. Those who walk according to the Spirit do so because that's where their mind is set.

**Proverbs 23:7**, *For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. “Eat and drink!” he says to you, But his heart is not with you.*

At the point of conversion, there is a dramatic internal change. A new nature or a new disposition or a new principle.

This is out of that new kind of thinking compelled by the Spirit of God rather than compelled by fleshly desire, that a person's behaviour is affected.

**V 5** gives us a basic axiom.

*"Those who are according to the flesh are so because they set their mind on the things of the flesh."*

People who live carnal, fleshly, sinful, indulgent lives do so because that's how they think.

The ones being according to the flesh is simply another way of expressing people who are dominated by the flesh. This is an unsafe person, habitually controlled by unregenerate and depraved and fallen humanness.

- They don't know God.
- They can't understand God.
- They are not connected to God at all.
- They may be religious.
- They may be atheistic.
- They don't know God.

**V 8,** *"Those who are in the flesh cannot please God."*

Being in the flesh, being according to the flesh, simply means being unregenerate and dominated by sinful impulses.

Here Flesh is not your physical anatomy.  
It does incorporate that, but that's not its meaning.

The flesh is Paul's word for fallen human nature apart from God. Fallen human nature apart from God. Corrupt, directed, and controlled by sinful impulses.

The flesh is so corrupt, that no matter how much a wicked person would like to change his condition, he can't do it.

**Jeremiah 13:23,** *Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Then may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil.*

**Jeremiah 17:9,** *"The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?"*

So, these people who are in the flesh, who are dominated by unredeemed human nature both in the physical part and the mental part of who they are do what their fleshly impulses tell them to do.

When it talks about the mind being set.  
It is from the verb ***phrone***.

A word used for the seat of all mental faculties, mental affections, expressing any form of mental activity, including emotion, will, as well as just pure intellect.

Their whole mind and their emotion and their will the whole realm of mental activity is corrupted by the flesh.

They have a deliberate mindset. The unsaved person is dominated by unredeemed carnal, fleshly impulses. They are bent toward the expression of their depraved nature.

**V 5**, *"They set their minds on the things of the flesh."*

In the New Testament, you would read about the affections of the flesh, the confidence in the flesh, the deeds of the flesh, the desires of the flesh.

All the ungodly impulses of unregenerate people which are very natural to them. They love the world.

**1 John 2:15**, *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

This is real and true condition might be masked by religion.

Jesus unmasked the Pharisees.

**Matthew 23:27**, *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.*

They may mask it with religion and external morality, but the fact of the matter is unregenerate people think sinful thoughts and do sinful deeds.

Even if those sinful deeds aren't morally wicked, they are wicked because they are self-satisfying, self-exalting, and self-fulfilling rather than honouring to God.

Self-satisfaction, self-fulfilment, prestige, honour from men is a huge area of sin as exemplified in Scripture by many hypocrites, not the least of which were the Pharisees.

**V 5**, *“Those who are according to the Spirit (implied, set their minds) on the things of the Spirit.”*

Now, here you have a whole different category of people. This is a whole different disposition. These people are in the realm of the Spirit and are drawn by the truest impulses in their heart to the Spirit.

They submit to His direction.

They concentrate their attention, purpose, desire on whatever is precious to the Holy Spirit.

They love what He loves.

*"They seek the things of the Spirit."*

This is the disposition of the believer because the Holy Spirit has changed his nature.

We can be confused by whether people are Christians or not. But we shouldn't be as confused as we are. It doesn't mean anything that somebody somewhere in the past made some public statement about faith in Christ or some public act of going into the prayer room or praying a prayer or something like that. It doesn't really matter that someone makes a claim.

When you look at their life and you see someone whose behaviour is indulging the flesh and who's bent and disposition is toward the flesh, you have categorically defined the person.

### **What about Christians?**

We sin, too, don't we?

But we resent it.

It's not the truest expression of our nature. It's an invasion. It still happens because we are not all yet redeemed.

Our flesh, our humanness is still there, even though our inward nature has been changed and our longings are toward God and energized by the Holy Spirit toward what is righteous and pure and good and holy.

We still must fight the battle of that changed nature being incarcerated in unredeemed humanness. That's why in Romans 8, Paul is so anxious to have the glorification of his body. We will get into that later in the chapter.

Now, the results of these two dispositions are given to us in verse 6.

**V 6**, literally in the Greek would be read this way, *“The mind set on the flesh equals death. But the mind set on the Spirit equals life and peace.”*

This further describes the state of these two kinds of people.

In the case of the mind set on the flesh, death is the result.

- It doesn't say it leads to death.
- It says it is death.
- It isn't that they're going to die.
- They are dead.
- They are dead right now.

**Ephesians 2:1**, *And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,*

### **What does it mean to be dead that way?**

It means that you are totally insensitive to God.

The most obvious characteristic of a dead person is the inability of that person to respond.

Simple definition of death, a person who cannot respond in any way to any part of his or her environment.

That is what spiritual death is.

- It is an inability to respond to the divine presence.
- It is an inability to respond to anything in the realm of divine truth and the presence of God.
- They are dead in terms of being utterly insensitive.
- They are like a corpse in a casket with no awareness of anything going on at the funeral around them.

So, it is a current death, and it is in that death a spiritual separation from God which someday will become an eternal separation from God.

This kind of death is utterly insensitive to God, but highly sensitive to godlessness.

So that the sinner in this life is highly sensitive to sin and temptation around which dominates his life.

In eternal death will be eternally insensitive and separated from God, but highly sensitive to all the repercussions of wickedness and sin in this life and all the consequent punishment that's meted out against them forever.

**1 Timothy 5:6**, *But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives.*

People who live according to the flesh, who have that disposition, are currently dead to all that is divine, and they will be forever. But they are sensitive to sin now, and they will be far more sensitive to its consequences in the life to come as they bear that eternal judgment.

To be fleshly minded, equals death.

This is a clear statement to me that a mind bent toward the flesh can't be in a state of salvation because justification is always connected to Sanctification.

Where you have a legal declaration that someone is out of non-condemnation status and made righteous through the imputed righteousness of Christ, you also have the Spirit doing a transforming work of creating a new disposition.

**V 6, "The mind set on the Spirit is life and peace."**

Alive to God.

When you come to Jesus Christ, and you are changed by the Holy Spirit, you are alive to God. You are sensitive to God. You read the Word and it comes alive to you. The Spirit of God moves and prompts your heart to give praise and thanks to God.

You are filled with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and you sing and make melody in your heart to the Lord.

We are alive to God and, not only are we alive to God, but we are also alive to God without fear.

We are alive to God and, at the same time, at peace with God. The life and peace Paul is talking about here is not just something so easily defined as, "we enjoy our living, and we really have peaceful, tranquil lives." That's not the idea.

The idea is we are alive to God. We are alive to His working, and His Word, and we are alive to Him and not in a hostile way but complete peace with Him. Therefore, life takes on consummate blessedness.

We are alive to God because He gave us His life.  
He made us alive together with Christ.

Romans chapter 6.

We were buried with Him in death, through faith in Him.  
We rose with Him to walk in newness of life.

**John 10:10**, *"I am come that you might have life."*

What Jesus meant was that we have a living communion with God, because we share the same life.

We have peace. We have fellowship with God, and we are at peace with God. We made truce with God. We are in communion with Him, and that will never change. God is never going to cast us out.

We will see that at the end of Romans 8.

God will keep Him in perfect peace is the promise to those who have come to know Christ.

We have life.

We have sweet communion with the living God.

We hear His voice on the pages of Scripture.

We long to obey and respond.

We long to worship Him

We want to know Him better and to serve Him.

We have received His grace.

His love has been shed abroad in our hearts. We have been given permanent peace with God and joy forever. We have an inner assurance that all is well, and nothing can ever change our eternal relationship with the Lord.

He doesn't mean that we are never going to be disturbed in life. Even Jesus was disturbed about things.

Even Paul said in **Romans 7:24**, "*Wretched man that I am.*"

He wasn't talking about psychological tranquillity. He was talking about a relationship with God that is forever settled.

We may have trouble.

We will have trouble.

But we will count it all joy because that trouble can never change our relationship of peace with God.

So, we who are believers are not according to the flesh.

We are not in the flesh.

We don't mind the things of the flesh.

We are not compelled by the flesh.

We are in the Spirit, according to the Spirit, minding the things of the Spirit. For us, there is a pursuit of the things of the Spirit. Love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control; these are the things of the Spirit.

The things of the flesh: Immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these.

**Galatians 5:21**, *“those who practice those things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.”*

We have a wonderful new disposition, and it was not something we earned. It was something we were given, in the regenerating, converting, transforming work done in us by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit then, sets us free from sin and death.

The Holy Spirit enables us before God to have fulfilled completely His law, and the Holy Spirit totally changes our nature, so that we are new creations in Christ Jesus.