

Series: Romans
Title: Walking After the Spirit
Text: Romans 8: 1-27
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As you know the chapter divisions were added by the translators. They are helpful when turning to scriptures. But sometimes the division is simply not in a good place. Romans 7 and 8 is an example. There is no division here in context.

Romans 8: 1: *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

The verse begins with “*Therefore.*” We need to go back and see what it is there for. Romans 6, 7 & 8 are one subject with no division. Romans 6 declares that by the death and resurrection of Christ every regenerated child of God is dead to sin and alive unto God—free from sin’s condemnation before the law of God and free from sins’ dominion within. Romans 7 declares that by the death and resurrection of Christ every regenerated child of God is also dead to the law and married to Christ. But immediately, before Romans 8, Paul described the conflict between the two natures that all true believers experience.

Romans 7: 21: I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22: For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24: O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25: I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. 8:1: *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*”

Subject: Walking After the Spirit

The most comforting thing to a believer is that as we experience this inner conflict, the Spirit of God quickens us in the inner man, renewing and reminding us “*there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.*” That is how our sinful-nature is mortified. God the Holy Spirit turns our affection from minding the flesh and sets our affection on things above to Christ our Righteousness.

As our sin-nature takes us captive, in our inner man we mourn over our sin. God the Holy Spirit strengthens us in the inner man, comforting us with the gospel that there is no condemnation. We find that the word of our Lord Jesus Christ is true, “*Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted*” (Mt 5: 4).

In the inner man, we hunger and thirst after righteousness, delighting in the law of God in our inward man. But we see this other law in our sin-nature taking us captive. But then the Holy Spirit fills our inner man with this good news that we are righteous in Christ. Once again, we find it to be as our Master promised, “*Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled*” (Mt 5:6).

All who are born-again of the Spirit of God—“*are in Christ Jesus.*” All in whom the Spirit of Christ dwells, “*walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*” Therefore, by the Holy Spirit within our inner man, true faith does not go on defending self or making excuses or blaming others or running back to the law. True faith is made contrite and broken to confess our sin before God, to cry out for mercy, “*O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*” As the Spirit makes us confess our sin and beg for mercy, the Holy Spirit gives us the assurance that we have no condemnation in and by Christ Jesus. The Spirit purges our conscience so that we know that we have complete justification and absolution through the

precious blood of Christ; no condemnation before the judgment seat of God and no condemnation in the court of our conscience by the precious blood of Christ Jesus. We find it to be just as the Holy Spirit declared through the apostle John,

1 John 1: 7: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin....9: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

How did we come to be freed from our sin-nature so that we hear the good news and confess our sins and believe on Christ in the first hour? How do we continue to do so?

Romans 8: 2: For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

The law of sin and death is two things. One, the law sin and death is the curse and condemnation of the commandments of God. God's law declares us guilty and ministers death to us. Two, the law of sin and death is the law of sin in our spiritually dead sin-nature. God's elect must be delivered from both the law of sin and death in the commandments and from the law of sin and death in our sin-nature in order to be saved. How is this accomplished?

Proposition: Through the hearing of the law—the gospel of Christ—the Holy Spirit gives us life and faith in Christ by whose blood and righteousness we are made free from the law of sin and death. And this is how we are continually delivered. Christ has, is and shall deliver his people by his Spirit by this means of the gospel.

FREED FROM THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH IN THE COMMANDMENTS

First, the law of sin and death is the curse and condemnation of the law of commandments. It is the curse that all Adam's race came under when we all broke the law in Adam in the garden. God gave the law of commandments at Sinai to expose our sin and minister death to us. (Rom 3:19-20; 5:20; 2 Cor 3: 6-7) How are God's elect delivered from the curse and condemnation of the law of commandments which we have broken?

Romans 8: 3: For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

The law was "*weak through the flesh.*" There was nothing wrong with the law. It is my sinful flesh that made me incapable of fulfilling the law. No sinner can keep the law of God in perfect righteousness by his own obedience before or after conversion. Before conversion, sin is all we are; we are guilty by Adam's transgression and we are conceived in sin by Adam's corrupt seed. After conversion, we still have our sin-nature so that sin is mixed with all we do. Therefore, no sinner can fulfill the righteousness of the law by our own works.

Since this is true of all God's elect, "*God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.*" It would have been a great step down had the Son of God been made in the likeness of his holy, elect angels. But the Son of God was made in the likeness of his sinful brethren, though he knew no sin (Heb 2: 9-18).

Hebrews 2: 16: For verily he took not on *him* the nature of angels; but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham. 17: Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins

of the people. 18: For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to make a sacrifice “*for sin.*” As the Head of his elect, the spotless Christ Jesus made his soul an offering for sin. The spotless Lamb of God was fit to be our sin-bearer. By bearing our sin, God was just to make our Substitute a curse for us as God poured out justice on him in our room and stead.

Isaiah 53: 4: Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 5: But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. 6: All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 53: 9: And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth. 10: Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. 11: He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. 12: Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

2 Corinthians 5: 21: For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

1 Peter 2: 24: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

1 Peter 3: 18: For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

By Christ’s accomplished redemption—“*he condemned sin in the flesh.*” Our successful Redeemer condemned the condemnation for all God’s elect. It means, before the law, our body of sin was destroyed when our old man was crucified with Christ. It does not mean our sin-nature was destroyed within us; it means before the law, our old man died under the justice of God. He that is dead is justified, freed from sin. When Christ died, all his people became justified from our sin and dead to the law.

Romans 6:6: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7: For he that is dead is freed from sin.

Romans 7: 4: Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

Galatians 3: 13: Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:

Christ did this work “*that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*” The righteousness of the law is not fulfilled BY us but IN US. We are not regenerated

and given the ability to fulfill the righteousness of the law by our obedience. Some think that is what this verse means. But the law that God writes on our hearts in the new birth which we obey is not the ten commandments. It is the new covenant, the gospel of Christ, *“the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.”* Then what does this verse mean when it says that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us? When regenerated by the Holy Spirit, through faith, God imputes Christ’s righteousness to us because Christ made his people righteous by his obedience. It means every true believer fulfills the righteousness of the law through faith in Christ who established the righteousness of the law for us. We establish the law in every jot and tittle the same way Abraham did 430 years before the law at Mt Sinai was given, that is, through faith in Christ.

Romans 3: 31: Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law. [through faith] 4:1: What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? 2: For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before 3: For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.)

Free from the law, O happy condition
Jesus hath bled and there is remission
Cursed by the law and [ruined] by the fall,
Christ hath redeemed us once for all.

Brethren, rejoice! We are delivered from the curse and condemnation of the law of commandments because the Holy Spirit gave us life through the hearing of the preaching of the gospel of Christ in spirit and in truth. He brought us irresistibly to believe on Christ. And through faith, God imputed the righteousness of Christ to us. *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”*

FREED FROM THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH IN OUR SIN-NATURE

The law of sin and death also refers to the law of sin which is in our sin-nature. As Paul said in Romans 7: 23, *“But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.”*

We are delivered from the law of sin and death in our members (in our sin-nature) by the Holy Spirit in the new birth through the preaching of the gospel. It is through the preaching of the gospel by which we are born-again of the incorruptible seed. That is what Paul refers to as *“the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.”* The apostle Peter called the word, which by the gospel is preached unto us, the incorruptible seed.

1 Peter 1: 21: Who by [Christ] do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. 22: Seeing ye have purified your souls in OBEYING THE TRUTH THROUGH THE SPIRIT unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:* 23: Being BORN AGAIN, not of corruptible seed, BUT OF INCORRUPTIBLE, BY THE WORD OF GOD, WHICH LIVETH AND ABIDETH FOR EVER. 24: For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: 25: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. AND THIS IS THE WORD WHICH BY THE GOSPEL IS PREACHED UNTO YOU.

Peter says through the preaching of the gospel, I am born-again of the incorruptible seed of the word of God by the Holy Spirit, so that I am brought to believe on Christ. Paul says the same thing when he says *“the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”*

It is necessary that we be freed from the law of sin and death in our sin-nature because before we were born again we were in the flesh and could only mind the things of sinful flesh.

Romans 8: 5: For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh;

This is what 99.9% of religion teaches poor sinners to do. They teach sinners to keep their mind on their religious charade, making sure they play all their parts just right. Minding the things of the flesh includes obvious lewd sin and the cares of this world. But more than anything else, the apostle Paul applies it to vain, self-righteous, will-worshipping religion.

Will-works religion (will-worship) teaches poor sinners to memorize a system of doctrine. It may be the doctrine of grace or it may be free-will doctrine. But they do not preach Christ. They teach sinners that salvation is in their knowledge of a system of doctrine.

They teach sinners to reform their lives in order to prove themselves fit by their works to make a profession of faith in baptism. Most teach there is some saving efficacy in baptism. Those after the flesh mind the time when they were baptized and got their name on a physical church membership roll, putting much confidence in those things.

They mind the flesh by hearing of works in the messages they preach and hear. They are taught to constantly mind their flesh by minding the commandments of the law, by minding their sin, by mortifying their flesh using the law. They mind their flesh by keeping their eye on their morality and their so-called good deeds and their religious acts.

Those who mind the flesh think that they make themselves holier and holier by their works until at last they make themselves ripe for heaven. These are they spoken of the one place in scripture where God speaks of a sinner being holy in a relative sense—as in a sinner thinking himself holier than another. This is the one place a sinner is said to be holier than another sinner and listen to how God regards those who think they are holier than others.

Isaiah 65: 5: Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These *are* a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day.

Is their life and peace in minding the things of the flesh? Are those in this kind of religion happy? Do they have peace? What does God say?

Romans 8: 6: For to be carnally minded is death...7: Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

The carnal minded man is a natural man who has not been born-again of the incorruptible seed of the word of God through the hearing of faith, that is, the hearing of Christ and him crucified. Such a man can become religious. He can speak of grace and Jesus and salvation through faith alone but it is all fleshly. The grace that a fleshly minded man speaks of is not grace but works. Carnally minded men speak of another Jesus and of another gospel which is not another. (Gal 1: 6-9)

The carnally minded man hates God. He does not hate his idol who he calls God and who he calls Jesus. He does not hate the God that has done all he can do but needs the sinner to let him save. He does not hate the God who has no hands but his hands. But he hates the true and living God of the Bible.

The carnally minded man is not subject to the law of God. He is not subject to the gospel of Christ nor to the law of commandments. Not only is he not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can he be.

1 Corinthians 2: 14: For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

Romans 8: 8: So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

The only way to please God is to either keep the law of God from a perfectly holy heart in perfect righteousness with no sin or to worship God in spirit and in truth believing on Christ apart from our works. The carnal mind is not subject to either one. He does not keep the law of commandments nor is he subject to the gospel of Christ. Nor can he be. *“So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”*

Brethren, this is what every elect child of God is as we come into this world. All those God saves are, by our Adam-nature, God-hating, flesh-minding rebels. We come into this world hating God, incapable of submitting to the law of God. This is the law of sin and death which is our sin-nature which all God’s elect must be delivered from before we can worship God through faith in Christ Jesus. And this is the sin-nature still in you and I who are born of God from which we must continually be delivered by the Spirit of Christ.

But what happens when God gives us a new nature in the new birth?

Romans 8: 5...but they that are after the Spirit [mind] the things of the Spirit.

It is God’s good pleasure to send each of his elect the gospel of Christ Jesus his Son. Through the preaching of the gospel—*the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*—you who truly believe have been born-again of the incorruptible seed of the word by the Holy Spirit. He created in us a new spirit. God set our new mind on the things of the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 2: 12: Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13: Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual....15: [and you that are] spiritual judgeth [discerneth] all things, yet [you yourself are discerned] of no [unregenerate] man. [the unregenerate man does not have the mind of the Spirit that he might be instructed by the Spirit] but ye have the mind of Christ.

The only way a spiritually dead sinner is turned from our flesh and our works to Christ alone is by the Holy Spirit speaking effectually into the new spirit he has given and commanding us, *“Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory”* (Col 3: 2-4). Thereby, is our flesh mortified!

Romans 8: 6...to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

When *“the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death”* then my spiritual mind is set on Christ my Life, Christ my Peace. Therefore, to be spiritually minded is life and peace. The reason there is now no condemnation and the reason those born of God can never fall away in unbelief is because...

Romans 8: 9: But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Brethren, what good news! If the Spirit of God dwells in you then you dwell in the Spirit. *“Ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.”* What does this mean? The apostle John

tells us, “*As he is*”—as Christ is at God’s right hand—“*so are we in this world*” (1 Jn 4: 17). How is Christ at God’s right hand? He is not in the flesh but in the Spirit.

1 Peter 4:1: Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: FOR HE THAT HATH SUFFERED IN THE FLESH HATH CEASED FROM SIN; 2: THAT HE LONGER SHOULD LIVE THE REST OF HIS TIME IN THE FLESH TO THE LUSTS OF MEN, BUT TO THE WILL OF GOD.

That speaks of Christ and it speaks of you and I in whom the Spirit of Christ dwells. Our risen Redeemer no longer lives in the flesh, he only lives unto God. Likewise, by our being risen in him and by the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us, we, too, have ceased from living the rest of our time in the flesh, we are now in the Spirit. We have ceased living under the power and dominion of the lusts of our flesh and we now live under the power and dominion of God’s grace. We have ceased living unto men and now we live unto God.

This is all by the Holy Spirit of Christ dwelling in us, making us to no longer be in the flesh but in the Spirit. You and I may still see ourselves as living in the flesh but this is how God sees it and this is how it really is by the power of the Spirit of Christ abiding in us. We do not live in the flesh but in the Spirit if so be that the Spirit of Christ lives in us.

Romans 6: 10: For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11: Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Galatians 2:19: For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

Philippians 3:3: For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

John 4: 23: But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24: God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.

We “*walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit*” because we “*are not in the flesh but in the Spirit.*” We “*walk in newness of life*” because we “*are not in the flesh but in the Spirit.*”

Romans 7: 5: For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. 6: But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

Now, Paul’s next point is very important. This is the main point of how we are continually delivered from the law of sin and death in our sin-nature. This is referring to Paul’s question back in Romans 7. Not only is this how I was delivered from my sin-nature when at first I was born-again of the Holy Spirit but this is how I continue to be delivered when my sin-nature takes me captive. Paul asked, “*Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*” I continue to be delivered by the Spirit, not by my flesh. Read these next two verses carefully and get what this says.

Romans 8: 10: And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. 11: But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that

raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Being born-again of Christ, the Holy Spirit is life within us. He has given us a new nature in which we are eternally alive. And the Spirit of Christ is the life of our new man—*"Christ in you, the hope of glory."* The Spirit is life because of righteousness. He is our Righteousness and he gave us this life because Christ made us righteous by his obedience. Also, our new man is created in righteousness and is truly holy and cannot sin.

Ephesians 4:24: And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

1 John 3: 9: Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

Yet, he says our sin-nature is still nothing but sin—*"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."* Get that: the body is dead because of sin. Every true believer has a new man which is holy and a sinful nature which is a body of death. As we saw in Romans 7 (and as we know from experience) our sin-nature brings our new nature into captivity. So who shall deliver me from my sin-nature? That was Paul's question in Romans 7:

Romans 7: 22: I delight in the law of God in the inward man 23: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24: O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

Will-worship religion says you must go back to the law and mortify the deeds of your flesh yourself. Their message by which they tell you that is called in scripture "the hearing of works." That is minding the flesh.

But who does God say shall deliver us? —*Romans 8: 11: But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* Yes, the Spirit shall quicken our mortal bodies in the resurrection. But in context Paul is declaring how we are continually delivered from the body of this death, from the law of sin and death in our members, from our sin-nature. It is by the Spirit!

When our inner man is taken captive by our sin-nature, the same as he did in the very first hour, through the hearing of Christ's faithfulness the Holy Spirit quickens our inner man, mortifying our flesh and freeing us from the law of sin and death in our sin-nature. As the Spirit of Christ renews our inward man in the knowledge of Christ and his works (reminding us we have no condemnation), he quickens our mortal bodies by his Spirit so that our sinful nature cannot make our bodily members do what our sin-nature would have it do.

Galatians 5: 17: For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

In Romans 7, Paul declared that we cannot do the good things our inner man would do because of our sinful flesh. In Galatians 5, in context, Paul declares that our sinful flesh cannot do the sinful things it would do because of the Holy Spirit who mortifies our flesh. In Galatians Paul was giving them the same instruction as here in Romans 8, which we see next in the application.

THE APPLICATION

Romans 8: 12: Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13: For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

Brethren, we owe this flesh nothing. We are never to look again to ourselves, to the law, to attempt to mortify the deeds of our sin-nature ourselves. The apostle Paul warned about this more than anything else in his letters.

Col 2:8: Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and NOT AFTER CHRIST...20: Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ FROM THE RUDIMENTS OF THE WORLD, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, [TOUCH NOT, TASTE NOT, HANDLE NOT]...

“For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die.” If we go back to the law to mortify the deeds of the body, [which religion erroneously calls sanctification] after that we claim to be born of the Spirit of Christ, then we leave Christ for Moses, we leave Christ for our flesh. If we do so, we shall die. If we do so, we prove we never were born of Christ to begin with.

Galatians 5: 1: Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. 2: Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. 3: For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. 4: Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”

How then do we mortify this flesh?—*“but if ye THROUGH THE SPIRIT do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”* This is what Paul was telling them to do in Galatians 5 instead of going back to the law.

Galatians 5: 13: For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only *use* not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. 14: For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 15: But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. 16: *This* I say then, WALK IN THE SPIRIT, AND YE SHALL NOT FULFIL THE LUST OF THE FLESH. 17: For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Again, in Romans 7, Paul declared that we cannot do the good things our inner man would do because of our sinful flesh. But in Galatians 5, Paul declares that our sinful flesh cannot do the sinful things it would do because the Holy Spirit mortifies our flesh. So we are to mortify the flesh through the Spirit.

How do we through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh? How do we walk in the Spirit? How did we begin? Was it through the hearing of works or the hearing of Christ? It was through the hearing of the gospel of Christ. When we hear the gospel preached all the troubles we have vanish away as the Spirit fills our hearts. Our flesh is mortified through the Spirit as we mind the things of the Spirit, as our affection is set on Christ above. This is what Paul told the Galatians who were being turned back to their flesh by those who came preaching the works of the law. Those Judaizers were saying that it was fine to believe on Christ for justification. But for sanctification they needed to go back to the law and mind their own works. Paul asks them how their flesh was mortified in the beginning. How were we brought to believe on Christ in the beginning?

Galatians 3: 2: This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3: Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? 4: Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if *it be* yet in vain. 5: He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Believer, Christ ministers the Spirit to us. Christ works these miracles among us. How did he do it in the beginning? We saw the answer in Romans 8: 2. It is through the gospel—"*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*" It was the hearing of the gospel of Christ's faithfulness, the incorruptible seed of the word, by which the Spirit made me free from the law of sin and death.

So, believer, if we would walk in the Spirit, if we would mortify our flesh through the Spirit, let us immerse ourselves in the preaching of the gospel of Christ. Study the word we heard preached. Set our affection on things above. Be always thinking on spiritual things. This is what Paul meant when he said,

Philippians 4: 8: Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.

Romans 8: 14: For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15: For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16: The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

Remember, why God gave us the Holy Spirit. We are sons, not slaves. We have been given the Spirit of adoption, not the spirit of bondage again to fear. So we are to call on God our Father to deliver us! The Spirit even frees us as he bears witness with our new man, reminding us we are children of God so that he brings us to cry Abba, Father! "But preacher I can't even pray!" But look at this good news! It is also the Spirit that makes intercession for us when we call on the Father for help.

Romans 8: 26: Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27: And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

So seeing that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus because of Christ's obedience on our behalf, seeing that we were delivered from our sin-nature by the Holy Spirit through the hearing of the gospel and seeing that we continue to be delivered by the quickening of the Holy Spirit, notice what comes next.

Romans 8: 28: And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

By the work of Christ for us on the cross and the work of Christ in us, if you read the rest of the chapter the conclusion is this: no one can charge us with sin and no one can separate us from the love of God in Christ. Indeed, God is working all things together for the good of us who are THE CALLED—us who the law of the Spirit of life in Christ has set free from the law of sin and death. And God is doing it because this is his eternal purpose in Christ! None can condemn us, none can separate us! Oh, let us praise God and thank him that "*the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death!*"

Amen!