

Living Free

Romans 8:11-14 (NLT)

The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you. Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.

We have often heard in our Christian circles what the Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 6:23 (NLT), *For the wages of sin, is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.* But what exactly does that look like? I see here as we read just a couple of chapters further into the same letter to the Romans this truth gaining a little more clarity for us. Look at this part of a sentence in the chosen passage, *For if you live by its dictates*, meaning the dictates of the flesh, *you will die.* In other words, if you live according to the flesh along with the desires thereof you will most assuredly die in your sins.

But we have great encouragement as people of God who have the Spirit of God abiding in us. We are not without hope even as we feel hopeless. There may be some reading this right now who think, “yeah, but you don’t know the situation I am in or the things which I have done, I will never be free from my sin and the mistakes I keep making” Yes, that might be true, I cannot possibly know what anyone else may be going through. But in light of that, I know that we are all bound by sin to one degree or another and that because of this we are all in the same boat and are all afforded this same encouragement today. That encouragement is that by the very

same Spirit that rose Christ from the dead we can be given true life that abolishes the death that is at work in us by the desires of the flesh. In other words, the same Spirit that rose Jesus from the dead *will give life to your mortal bodies*. The words that Jesus speaks to us about this are found in John 6:63 (NLT), *The Spirit alone gives eternal life. Human effort accomplishes nothing. And the very words I have spoken to you are spirit and life.*

The question is then, are you allowing the flesh to dictate to you where you should go and what you should do? If you are allowing the body of death to lead you into more death, I beg you to allow the Spirit of the living God to come in and lead you out of death and into life leading into more life. Jesus alone is the answer to all of life's problems.

This message is for saint and sinner alike. We are all in bondage because of the sinful flesh. Yours and my heart bear witness to this truth, for when we want to do right evil lies close at hand. As Paul also says in Romans 7:19-20 (NLT)

I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. But if I do what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it.

In other words, whenever we desire to do the good we know God expects from us, we still crave the evil He is opposed to. What shall we do? Well, that is the encouragement spoken of here. We are to allow God to fashion us and mold us into His image by the putting to death of the deeds of the flesh by the Spirit of the living God. What is so encouraging about this and that directly relates to the good news is that the very power of God that rose Jesus from the grave is abiding in us if, in fact, we are His, and if we are His He gives us through faith this same power to overcome the desires of the flesh and to provide life even in our flesh so that we can live

above the desires of the flesh and in fact overcome the flesh. I think this would be a good point to meditate on and pray through diligently. Because it is only by faith that we receive this into our lives. The question is, do you believe that you can be free from your burden of sin? There is power in the blood of Jesus!

As for those who do not know Jesus and do not have the Spirit of God living in them, there is even hope for you. For this reason, Jesus died and rose from the dead in the first place. He paid the price for our sin so that through faith in Him we can stand right before God. Despite all of the evil we have done, God stands ready to not only forgive but to cleanse you from inbred sin by giving you His very own Spirit. This Spirit God gives you is a seal that guarantees your eternal possession in heaven. So through faith in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you are realizing that you are in sin and as such are also in need of a Savior to save you from the power of this sin in your life. Paul said it best in 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.* If this is you, then simply pray and ask God to forgive you and cleanse you from all sin and dedicate your life to His service. Surrender to His will above all else, and realizing that we cannot do it without Him any longer is important, after all, life's purpose and the meaning of it is to live for God who created you.