

This is written in response to question 15 on the test

What do we know about the issue of flesh vs spirit?

We know the fruit of both because they are listed in scripture- one produces life, the other death. **Works of the Flesh produce** – adultery, fornication, uncleanness lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murder, drunkenness, revellings producing no inheritance in God's kingdom. **Galatians 5:19-21** and the **fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness gentleness and self-control. – **Gal 5:23**

We know that there is no power in the energy of the flesh – it is weakness according to **Matthew 26:41** – that is what Jesus said

We know that Abraham operated in the flesh when he refused to believe God regarding His promise of a son of his own body, so he took Hagar and brought forth Ishmael.

We know that when we are operating in the flesh, we cannot please God. **Romans 8:8**

We know that the opposite of moving in the flesh – is moving in the Spirit.

What I'm not sure we understand is what does it mean to be walking in either. I.e. How is it that one prevails over the other and what can we do about it?

Let's review a scripture for the possible answer.

Romans 8 please- Let's look at verse 1

In the index of your bible there should be some sort of note that tells us that "who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." Is NOT IN THE ORIGINAL TEXT AND WAS ADDED FOR UNDERSTANDING PURPOSES.

Here-in I believe as I study more, is the problem. It does not add to our understanding, it further complicates the issue.

What is the theme of Romans 8 here?

An issue altogether not recognized. Paul is telling us that there is a difference between folks that are under law, as a means of living – and those who are not under any law as a means of living.

In other words, living under laws, living under rules to live by, living under "how we should now act as believers (rules to live by if you will) are not FREE PEOPLE.

Flesh as listed here is living under something other than the direction of the Holy Spirit.

The contrast between verses 2-4 is the difference between walking in the power of the Holy Spirit or walking after a set of rules to live by.

Notice verse 4 of Romans 8 – We have again the same verbiage as in verse 1 and it belongs here, not verse 1.

Notice that in verse 4 it says that “the righteous requirements of the law (rules to live by) might be fulfilled IN us (not by us) who do not walk according to those rules, but rather walk because of a relationship.

Let me give you an example – What kind of relationship would I have with Sally if I was continually reminding her to “clean the house” or make the bed or do the dishes, or fix a meal now and then?

She does some things, and I do some other things. We needn't be constantly reminding each other what needs doing.

In our relationship, I have her best interest at heart, and she has mine. Plus we have an inner desire to love and please one another, and do not need outside influence to help remind us of any responsibilities.

Now notice something remarkable in verse 9 of Romans 8 – “You are not in the flesh, but you are in the Spirit – SINCE indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.”

You are not in the flesh, because the Spirit of the Living God lives in you

Therefore – you are debtors not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh, but you are alive to God through the Spirit.

Now to summarize and maybe help clear up this matter further – I offer the following.

In the Old Testament – God dealt with His people with the terminology “thou shalt not” ie. You should not do this or that, but rather should do this etc.

Why did He treat His people this way?

Because they had to have outside influence in order to know how to live circumspectly before Him. In order to complete the desires of God, they needed rules to live by (laws) and the law of Moses (ceremonial as well as spiritual) were given to them, UNTIL....

And that is the key – Until the SEED should come. Well who was that Seed? Correct, it was Jesus Christ, and the presence of His Holy Spirit now in the life of the believer.

According to **John 7:39**- “those believing in Jesus would receive the Holy Spirit, but He was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified....

You and I do not have to embark in a life without direction, without guidance, without knowing. We have the Holy Spirit within us to lead and guide us.

We do not have to walk according to the dictates of the world around us because there is a new boss in charge. He lives in us to direct our path.

We are not in the flesh – we do not have to walk according to the dictates of the flesh. We can trust the relationship with Him for His promise is to “complete that which He has started in our lives. He is in us to “will and to do, of His good pleasure.”

Once the “seed” came, He now directs our path. Jesus became the end of all the rules to live by, when He chose to live within us.

Outside rules were no longer necessary once this relationship was established.

To walk in the Spirit is a metaphor for practical daily living. He is guiding us in both thought and in deed – according to **Romans 6 -11-14, Colossians 3:16** and **Ephesians 5: 18-20**

God is doing through His Spirit, what the law could not do.

Part of the walk in the Spirit, is setting your mind on things of the Spirit -

If you and I fail to understand this inner working of the Holy Spirit, it will hinder our growth in Him.

THE LAW WAS NOT GIVEN TO THE RIGHTEOUS MAN – WHY? He doesn't need it
1st Timothy 1:9

I must rid myself of the concept of doing something in order to become something. This is the cart before the horse type thinking.....