

## ***How to Walk According to the Spirit (Rom. 8:5)***

### **I. THE REVELATION OF GRACE (ROMANS 3-8)**

- A. In Romans 3-8, Paul teaches the main principles of the grace of God and how to walk in victory over sin, addictions, and depression. It is a “manual” on how the born-again spirit functions. In order to walk in victory over sin, it is essential for our **primary orientation** to life to shift from our **flesh** (physical appetites) to our **spirit** (what the Word says about our spirit).
- B. Paul contrasts two orientations to life that each believer must choose between (Rom. 8:1, 4, 5). Cultivating a new orientation **begins with knowing** the truth about who we are in Christ.  
*<sup>1</sup> Do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit...<sup>4</sup> Do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.<sup>5</sup> 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. (Rom. 8:1-5)*
- C. 2 Corinthians 5:17 summarizes the truths in Romans 3-8. Paul declared that our born-again spirit has become a new creation. All things related to our spirit have become new.  
*<sup>17</sup> If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away...all things have become new...<sup>21</sup> that we [our spirit] might become the righteousness of God. (2 Cor. 5:17-21)*
- D. We become the righteousness of God, first by receiving a **new legal position** of righteousness. God put the free gift of Jesus’ righteousness on us like a garment on the day we were born again. Second, we receive a **new nature** of righteousness in our born-again spirit (v. 21). Throughout all eternity, our spirit will never be more righteous than it is the moment we are born again.
- E. To understand the glory of the new creation, we must first understand that God created humans with three parts—spirit, soul, and body. Man **is a spirit**, he **has a soul**, and **lives in a body**. Our soul speaks of our personality, consisting of our mind, emotions, and will.  
*<sup>23</sup> May your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless... (1 Thes. 5:23)*
- F. Our body has five senses that enable us to receive information from the physical world, just as our spirit enables us to receive information from the spiritual world.
- G. At the miracle of the new birth, our spirit is joined to the Holy Spirit and filled with supernatural life. We were created with a spirit so that we could relate to God who is spirit. Our spirit is the place where we communicate with God directly and receive revelation from the Spirit.  
*<sup>17</sup> But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. (1 Cor. 6:17)*
- H. There are two Greek words for *life* in the New Testament. The Greek word ***psuche*** speaks of natural life that all humans and animals have. The Greek word ***zoe*** points to the supernatural life of God; it is the quality of life that God has. God breathed ***zoe*** life into Adam’s spirit at creation.

- I. Before Adam sinned, his spirit governed his soul and body. His spirit possessed the *zoe* life of God; thus, his spirit was dominant in his decision-making and thought processes. His physical appetites, five senses, and emotions were subject to his spirit. After Adam sinned, his spirit became devoid of God's *zoe* life and filled with darkness and became spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1). Things reversed as his body (five senses) and soul (emotions) gained power over his spirit.
- J. The challenge is that we do not feel or discern our spirit. Our spirit man is "spirit" and, therefore, it is invisible and indiscernible, even "hidden" from our five senses. We cannot measure our spirit with our five senses. Peter and Paul referred to our true life, or our spirit man in this age, as being "hidden" in Christ. Our born-again spirit is called "the hidden person of the heart."  
<sup>4</sup> *The hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle spirit... (1 Pet. 3:4)*  
<sup>3</sup> *For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (Col. 3:3)*
- K. We only know the truth about our spirit because the Word reveals it to us. Unbelievers only know about their condemnation before God because it is revealed in the Word. This is the same way that we know about our future resurrected body. As Abraham believed what God said about him without being able to see it with his eyes, so we believe (Rom. 4:18-22). Most believers do not know who they are in their spirit. They rarely ever think about their spirit. As we receive training related to our body and soul, we must receive training related to our spirit.

## II. THE MIRACLE OF BECOMING A NEW PERSON IN CHRIST

- A. Ezekiel prophesied that God would put a "new spirit" in a believer as part of the new covenant.  
<sup>26</sup> *I will...put a new spirit within you... (Ezek. 36:26)*
- B. The creation of our new man consists of the combination of two components— our born again spirit and our renewed mind. Our spirit is instantly made new in being made righteous and indwelt by the Spirit. Our mind is progressively renewed as we agree with and confess the Word.  
<sup>24</sup> *Put on the new man which was created...in true righteousness and holiness. (Eph. 4:24)*  
<sup>10</sup> *Put on the new man who is...according to the image of Him who created him... (Col. 3:10)*
1. Our spirit was born again and made righteous (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). The Holy Spirit could not live in our spirit unless our spirit was made new in the righteousness of Jesus. Our spirit has a new nature by becoming righteous and being indwelt by the Holy Spirit.  
<sup>4</sup> *Given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature... (2 Pet. 1:4)*  
<sup>35</sup> *Take heed that the light which is in you is not [does not become] darkness. <sup>36</sup> If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, the whole body will be full of light, as when the bright shining of a lamp gives you light. (Lk. 11:35-36)*
2. We "put on" the new man, first, by understanding what the Word says about the new nature of our born-again spirit, and, second, by choosing righteousness in our lifestyle.

- C. We see ourselves as **alive to God**: enjoyed, indwelt, empowered, commissioned (assignment).  
<sup>11</sup> **Reckon** [see] yourselves to be...**alive to God in Christ**... (Rom. 6:11)
- D. The impulses of sin do not all go away, but now we have power to **effectively challenge** them because of the power of the indwelling Spirit. Our old man speaks of the spiritually dead person we once were when we were devoid of the Spirit, filled with darkness, and powerless in the face of sinful emotions. This spiritually dead and spiritually defenseless person no longer exists. Our benefits are traced back to the spiritual wealth won or secured for us by Jesus' crucifixion.  
<sup>6</sup> **Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.** (Rom. 6:6)
- E. **Body of sin**: After we are born again, **sinful desires** remain in our **body** (body of sin; Rom. 6:6) and in our **memory** of things we have done or seen that stirred up lust. Fleshly physical desires and impulses are also related to the things we eat and drink (food, alcohol, drugs, etc.) or the things we neglect to do because of selfishness or laziness. Lust is also stirred by being in **wrong circumstances**, by peer pressure to do ungodly things to **please people**, and by **demonic attacks**.

### III. WE ARE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF OUR MIND

- A. We are transformed (in our emotions and behavior) by changing our thinking. Sincerity is not enough. A renewed mind consists of **pursuing truth** that enables us to agree with what the Word says about us as a new creation and **resisting darkness** that defiles our mind with impurity.  
<sup>2</sup> **Be transformed by the renewing of your mind**... (Rom. 12:2)
- B. We are set free by the knowledge of the truth.  
<sup>32</sup> **And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.** (Jn. 8:32)
- C. The "spirit of our mind" speaks of a permeating change in the whole atmosphere and mood of our inner life as our thought patterns and emotional processes shift to a spirit orientation.  
<sup>22</sup> **Put off...your former conduct...**<sup>23</sup> **and be renewed in the spirit of your mind.** (Eph. 4:22-23)  
<sup>10</sup> **The new man who is renewed in knowledge**... (Col. 3:10)

### IV. CONFESSION OF THE WORD

- A. The renewing of our mind always includes the **faith confession** of the Word back to God. Our confession is what we say to the indwelling Spirit about who we are in Christ. It expresses how we carry our heart before God and what we believe about our new spirit man in Christ.  
<sup>8</sup> **The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart...that is, the word of faith which we preach...**<sup>10</sup> **with the mouth confession is made unto salvation** [victory]. (Rom. 10:8-10)
- B. We access the wealth in our spiritual bank account, or "write checks" on it by confessing the Word. It only takes thirty seconds to write a check. It is possible to have great wealth without ever accessing it. We can continue to live like a homeless beggar under the bridge.

- C. Our word of testimony includes our confession of what we believe about who we are in Christ.  
<sup>10</sup> *The accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night...<sup>11</sup> They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony... (Rev. 12:10-11)*
- D. Our mind as well as the primary orientation of our inner man follows our confession of faith. We are to hold fast to our confession of the truth by staying with it instead of neglecting it.  
<sup>23</sup> *Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering... He is faithful. (Heb. 10:23)*  
<sup>14</sup> *Let us hold fast our confession...<sup>16</sup> Come boldly to the throne of grace... (Heb. 4:14-16)*  
<sup>12</sup> *Fight the good fight of faith...you...have confessed the good confession... (1 Tim. 6:12)*  
<sup>13</sup> *And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, “I believed and therefore I spoke,” we also believe and therefore speak. (2 Cor. 4:13)*
- E. Jesus, the living Word, confessed the written Word three times when attacked by Satan (Mt. 4:1-10). Our spirit man lives by the Word. This happens most when we confess the Word.  
<sup>4</sup> *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. (Mt. 4:4)*

## V. LIVING ACCORDING TO THE SPIRIT: A NEW ORIENTATION

- A. Spiritual maturity occurs as our primary orientation for life shifts from natural experiences (physical appetites, senses, and emotions) to our 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. (Rom. 8:5)*
- B. *We live according to the Spirit: by living by what the Word says concerning who we are in our spirit in Christ; by living with awareness of our born-again spirit that has been made righteous; by dialoguing with the indwelling Spirit, especially thanking Him for love, joy, peace, patience, and self-control that is in our spirit (Gal. 5:22-23); by confidence that we are enjoyed by God; by using the authority of the name of Jesus to stand against the works of darkness in our life and others; and by being aware of our commission or divine assignment that gives us real purpose.*
- C. We grow in our orientation and awareness of the Spirit the more we speak with Him. It increases as we talk to Him more. A simple prayer: *“Holy Spirit, let me see what You see and feel what You feel about... (put many different subjects here).”* It takes time for this awareness to grow.
- D. *We live according to the flesh: by living in ignorance and unbelief about who we are in Christ; by our primary orientation to life coming from our natural experiences (bodily appetites, five senses, emotions, and circumstances) without any reference to the truths of the Word; by approaching God with condemnation and with a sense of defeat and intimidation when sinful desires rise in us; by filling our mind with immoral things that stir up lust; and by speaking things, going places, and yielding to peer pressure that comes from friends walking in sin.*