

## Romans 30 – Spirit: His Work for Believers

Dr. Leon L. Sanders  
Romans 8:12-17

### Prologue: No Condemnation

- Paul begins closing his discussion in triumphal victory never obtained in History: No Condemnation
  - Condemnation here denotes penal slavery to sin and its consequences of eternal death
  - Life through Messiah releases the believer from penal servitude sentence of death; but, not from the flesh
  - This was the goal from the work begun in Adam after the first sin (Ge 3:15; Ps 1:6)

### Prologue: Righteousness of Law

- We who were sin now fulfill the righteous requirement of the Law only via the Spirit because of Christ
  - Though we retain the body of sinful flesh the death sentence is removed because of the *new covenant*
  - Believer is covered with Christ's righteousness which satisfies the Law; we *never* possess our own righteousness
  - It is never about the believer though all was done for the believer

## Prologue: If the Spirit Indwells You

- Believers are not in the flesh, enslaved to sin, if God's Spirit indwells us; i.e., we belong to God
  - Those in the flesh reveal they do not belong to God because they do not do the things of God as defined by His Moral Law
  - Those who are His naturally keep the Law because of the *new nature's* empowerment by the Spirit

## Therefore Emphasis

- Paul draws to a close the logical argument began in verse one based on the work of the Spirit
  - Greek has two forms of therefore emphasizing the conclusion of his argument
  - Christians are debtors, not to the flesh (σάρξ sarx) not to self
  - But to the Spirit of Life

## Foundation Laid Previously

- Paul laid the foundation that salvation was not because of the effort of the believer but solely because of Christ (Ro 3:10-18, 5:1-11)
  - No one ever searched for Christ but rested in their sin which poisoned everyone, everything; including self
  - Christ came because the flesh was *weak* preventing it from living the Law and controlling sin
  - Thus, we are debtors to Christ and the Spirit of Life

## Paradoxical-like Argument

- Paul borrows from Christ in composing a syllogism that is the opposite of the expected
  - Christ: "Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life" (Jo 12:25)
  - Paul: Live by the flesh, you will die...by the Spirit you put to death the...flesh, you will live
  - Christian cannot control the flesh; only the Spirit can

## Four Ways Spirit Works in Lives

- Paul now gives four ways the Holy Spirit works in the lives of believers showing us *why* we are debtors to Him
  - Jews did not believe in the Spirit as a separate entity of God but as modalism; a separate manifestation of God
  - Spirit in Old Testament came upon and left believers as the need required; there was not continual indwelling (1Sa 10:6, 26:14 [Saul], 16:13 [David])
  - Spirit somehow an element of the New Covenant (Joel 2:28)

## 1. Spirit Controls the Flesh

- Paul has mentioned this previously but includes it again for emphasis
  - Hallmark of the flesh: Weak, cannot control sin; ever
  - Only the Spirit controls the flesh, putting to *death* the sinful impulses, as we so allow
  - Peirasmoi shows us our weaknesses encouraging us to work with the Spirit rather than against Him (Gal 3:5-10)

## Deeds of the Flesh

- Command is to put to death the deeds of the flesh in which believers walked in their *old nature* (Gal 5:19)
- "Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire..."
- "But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth."
- Idolatry never dies: "... covetousness, which is idolatry."

## Spirit's Control of the Flesh

- Only by "putting on the *new nature* can one access the power of the Spirit who does God's will, not ours
- The Spirit is not under our control but responds directly to Christ and to the Father
- His control of the flesh allows us to mature in Christ
- Maturation in Christ is not obtained by wishing but by knowledge (Bible) in the image of Christ (by the Moral Law); this is the life Paul refers to constantly

## 2. Led by the Spirit

- Old Testament saints would have been familiar with this ministry of the Spirit though it was temporary
- Spirit came upon Saul via Samuel; yet, it also left Saul to be replaced by a tormenting spirit from Satan not unlike unrest experienced by rebellious believers today
- Ezekiel ministry was characterized by the guidance of the Spirit; he *saw* the Spirit revive future Israel; valley of dried bones renewed to life (Sinner to Believer)  
(Ez 37:1-14; Ep 2:1)

### 3. Spirit of Adoption

- This was a mystery hidden from Old Testament saints
  - This is why the Sadducees and Pharisees believed Jesus was blasphemous: making Himself equal with God (Jn 5:18)
  - Jesus never put Himself on par with the Father (Jn 2:5-11)
  - Believers are never on par with Christ; adopted sons
  - This comes from having the new nature which is of Christ and no reproduction in new earth; i.e., sons

### Jews Never Envisioned Sonship

- Jews could only envision salvation in the flesh on this present empirical earth (Isa 64:4; 1Co 2:8)
  - The faithful through whom God spoke His prophecies did not fully understand their truths (Heb 11:13-16, 39-40; 1Pe 1:10-12)
  - Concept of dying to purchase life was not envisioned by any of the ancients nor was resurrection believed (Ac 17:29-32)
  - Today sinners twist this into evolutionary scientism phantasms; ancient Gnosticism reborn

### 4. Spirit Bears Witness With Us

- Unlike sinners who reject the Truth relying on scientisms, we have an internal witness to the Truth
  - Indwelling Spirit teaches believers from the Word (1Co 2:14)
  - It is through this teaching believers are confirmed in the truth rather than reliance on fantasy imaginations
  - The truth even of one's salvation is via the Spirit by whom we were sealed, guaranteeing our inheritance until we receive our new body on that day (1Co 15:51-55; Ep 1:13-14)

## Why Do Believers Doubt?

- Believers doubt because they quench God's Spirit depriving themselves of His eternal witness
  - God's Spirit will not continually strive against our unbelief (1Co 6:3)
  - Believer's who refuse the Spirit's peirasmoi quench His guidance, striving against Him to their own harm (Ep 4:30, 1Th 5:19)
  - These remain babes in the Word (1Co 5:11-13)

## Heirs of Christ Provided...

- Another reason believers remain babes in the Word
  - Though heirs with Christ, they will not suffer for Him as He suffered for them (He 5:7-10)
  - The world hates you because it hates Christ (Jo 5:18)
  - Blessed are you when men revile you for Christ (Mt 5:10-12)
  - Peirasmoi from the world are expected since we are the scent of death to them who reject God's truth; yet, we resist only because the Spirit empowers us (2Co 2:16, 1Th 4:12-19)

## Epilogue: Spirit's Control of Flesh

- Only by "putting on the *new nature*" can one access the power of the Spirit who does God's will, not ours
  - The Spirit is not under our control but responds directly to Christ and to the Father
  - His control of the flesh allows us to mature in Christ
  - Maturation in Christ is not obtained by wishing but by knowledge (Bible) in the image of Christ (by the Moral Law); this is the life Paul refers to constantly

## Epilogue: Why Do Believers Doubt?

- Believers doubt because they quench God's Spirit depriving themselves of His eternal witness
  - God's Spirit will not continually strive against our unbelief (1Co 6:3)
  - Believer's who refuse the Spirit's peirasmoi quench His guidance, striving against Him to their own harm (1Pe 4:10, 1Th 5:19)
  - These remain babes in the Word (1Co 5:11-13)

## Epilogue: Heirs of Christ Provided...

- Another reason believers remain babes in the Word
  - Though heirs with Christ, they will not suffer for Him as He suffered for them (1Pe 5:7-10)
  - The world hates you because it hates Christ (Jo 5:18)
  - Blessed are you when men revile you for Christ (Mt 5:10-12)
  - Peirasmoi from the world are expected since we are the scent of death to them who reject God's truth; yet, we resist only because the Spirit empowers us (2Co 2:16, 1Th 4:12-19)

## Yet, Spirit Does More

- Paul has not exhausted his discussion of the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers
  - Yet remember, Spirit does not speak of Himself (Jo 16:13)
  - Like Christ, the Spirit speaks only what He hears
  - He is the invisible power at work in this creation (1Pe 11:3)
  - He is the restraining power holding Satan in check until the appointed time (1Th 2:1-12)
  - Yet, even now we groan with creation for completion