



## HOLY SPIRIT - ROMANS 8:10-13

Part 5

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**<sup>10</sup>And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup>But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.**

We need to make a very simple, yet important statement. **The presence of the Holy Spirit within the believer's life is their guarantee of spiritual life.** It can be rightly said that whether or not a person is indwelt by the Holy Spirit is truly a life and death matter. In these verses, God clearly and unmistakably promises that if his Spirit indwells someone, then, even though their body dies, He will raise it from the dead just like He raised Christ from the dead. So, in beginning these verses, one of the subjects that Paul is dealing with in v10 is how can a "body" that "**is dead because of sin**" be one in which the life of God can exist. And his answer in v11 is that the Holy Spirit actually "**gives life**" to the believer's mortal body, and in doing so, he talks about two subjects - death and resurrection. In today's terms, we could say that he is talking about life and death.

When Paul speaks about the body being "**dead**", what he is intimating is that the body is irrevocably smitten with the consequences of sin which is death. It does not matter what effort someone may give to living longer, the end result will always be the same – death. The forces of death are working in everyone and working against everyone. Apart from the rapture, everyone dies. In a sense, men begin to die the moment that they are born. Why? Because every human being is infected from the womb with an incurable disease called sin and "**the wages of sin is death**" – both physical death and for those who do not accept Christ, eternal death. Paul simply and clearly says that "**the body is dead because of sin**". The reference to the body as being "**dead because of sin**" is clearly a reference to its ultimate destiny by the infliction of the penalty of sin. Paul describes it this way in [2 Corinthians 4:16](#).

**<sup>16</sup>Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.**

Sin is the underlying root cause of death that every individual has inherited from Adam, and by its very nature it causes everyone's physical body to breakdown and to eventually die. No one escapes, and it is clear that no one escapes. I laugh sometimes when I see Bob Barker on TV. He is really fairly old, but has tried to reverse the process, and in the process he looks plastic. He has big white teeth that I am sure he has spent thousands of dollars on, silver gray hair, extremely tanned skin, and dresses fit for a king. However, in reality he is very old and his days are coming to a close. So, even though sin and death have been defeated by Christ, they still have a claim on people's mortal bodies until their bodies are redeemed. Paul will talk about this in [Romans 8:23](#) which says,

**<sup>23</sup>Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.**



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All physical bodies are under a sentence of death. They have been appointed to die – and there is nothing that anyone can do to prevent that from happening. Even though right now someone’s body may be seem strong and healthy and handsome, they are still as good as dead. In fact, that is exactly the way that [Hebrews 11:12](#) stated it when talking about Abraham. It says,

**<sup>12</sup>Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude - innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.**

It can be accurately stated that sin has killed us, but that God has made us alive and overcome death. Sin took away everything that was related to life and to living and placed everyone on an unrecoverable path towards physical death. However, God through the work of the Holy Spirit and the calling of sinners by His grace, brings them into the realm of life and living that has the greater power to overcome death, to overcome sin, and to overcome dying.

This is really a remarkable and tremendous truth here. It can be described this way. There are two very distinct and opposite processes going on in the believer’s body at the same time. One is death and the other is life. On one hand each believer is getting closer and closer to physical death, and on the other hand they are getting closer and closer to eternal life. The results of both are completely opposite from one another – diametrically opposed. The believer’s body keeps withering away, but their spirit keeps getting stronger and stronger in the Lord. Their bodies keep decaying and dying and losing their strength, and their spirits are being constantly renewed and strengthened and made stronger and stronger in the Lord. I.e., the final result of the believer’s body’s decay is the release of their spirit into the ultimate life of God. Then, at the rapture, their spirit will be reunited with their body which from that point on shall never die, shall never fatigue, shall never grow old, and shall never be sick or experience pain in any way. It will be a glorified body just like that of Christ. This is an incredible truth. As Paul put it in [1 Corinthians 15:51-55](#),

**<sup>51</sup>Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—<sup>52</sup>in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. <sup>53</sup>For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. <sup>54</sup>So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” <sup>55</sup>“O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?”**

Now, the point that Paul is clearly making here is that even though the body is dying because of the effect of sin on it, the Spirit of Christ which is in the believer is the Spirit of life who is very much present in them and is producing His life and His righteousness in their life – and ultimately eternal life and the redemption of their bodies. He clearly says it in v11 when he says that “**He gives life to our mortal bodies**”.

There has always been a debate as to whether the word “**Spirit**” in v10 should be with a small “s” or a capital “S”, and the translators are fairly evenly divided on which letter they use. For instance, Charles Hodge writes this in favor of a small “s”.



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*“By ‘spirit’ here Paul does not mean the Holy Spirit, but the human spirit, since it is contrasted with body in the former clause. The body is dead, but the spirit is alive. It should not therefore be printed with a capital S, as in the KJV. The sense in which the spirit is life is antithetical to that in which the body is dead. As the body is infected with a principle of decay which renders its dissolution inevitable, so the soul in which the Holy Spirit dwells has a principle of life which secures its immortal and blessed existence.”*

Personally, I do not think that it is critical to properly understanding the meaning of the passage, even though I prefer the capital “S” interpretation. Why? It is because if you look at [Romans 8:8-9](#) and v11, in each case the word “**S**pirit” is referring to the Holy Spirit. It speaks of the “**S**pirit of God”, the “**S**pirit of Christ”, and the “**S**pirit of Him who raised Christ from the dead”. There has been no place in [Romans 8](#) where Paul has previously talked about the believer’s **s**pirit, and no place later where he talks about it. Everything in this passage is about the work of the Holy Spirit within the believer. However, no matter which position one takes – little “s” or capital “S”, all would agree that the Holy Spirit is the One who greatly impacts the believer’s spirit. We have no spiritual life within our spirit apart from the indwelling Holy Spirit. He is every believer’s life source. He is clearly the one who has life and gives life to the believer’s mortal body and to their spirit. Christians are merely recipients and receivers.

In all of this it is important to appreciate that believers have spiritual life – right now, this very moment. It is their very nature, it is what makes them a new creation, and it is what causes them to cry out “**Abba, Father**”. It is God-begotten, it is God sustained, it is God initiated, it is God ordained, and it is God protected – and every believer has that life in them. It is working in them, working for them, and working through them. [Ephesians 2:5](#) says,

**<sup>5</sup>even when we were dead in trespasses, (God) made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),**

Now, notice that there are two major “**if**”s in this passage, and that the word “**if**” can be translated as “**because**”. It is not a word of speculation, but a word of confirmation. The word “**if**” can be a little misleading and can technically be translated as “**because**” or “**since**”. It is a word that expresses something that is assumed to be true. So what Paul is saying is that Christ is actually “**in you**”, and He is in you through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Once again, this entire chapter is all about eternal security – helping the believer to know that they are saved and a part of God’s kingdom. Every part of this chapter is designed to give every believer great comfort and encouragement regarding the reality of their salvation. [Ephesians 3:16-17](#) says this,

**<sup>16</sup>that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, <sup>17</sup>that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith;**

[Galatians 2:20](#) says,



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**<sup>20</sup>I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.**

The first “if” relates to a person’s salvation, to their conversion – “if Christ is in you”. I.e., have they been saved, have they been born again, and is the Spirit of God actually indwelling their life? That is the first “if”. The second “if” has to do with the resurrection of Christ. Was Christ actually raised from the dead?

If the word “because” or “since” is substituted for the word “if”, the meaning of the passage does not change. Why? It is because in reality Paul is simply making a rhetorical comment – one for which he already knows the answer. He is speaking to believers, and he knows that Christ has been resurrected. He knows that.

Now, if either one of these two “if’s” is untrue, then the promise of Christ giving life to the believer’s mortal body would be in vain, and our mortal body would not be raised unto life, but unto a very fearful judgment. So the two questions that Paul asks are (1) Are you sure that God raised Christ from the dead, and (2) Are you sure that the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead actually dwells in you? In order for the resurrection of Christ to do anyone any good, they have to be saved and in that saving event they receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit into their life. If someone has been saved, then they have the Holy Spirit. From a very practical perspective there are four distinct evidences as to whether someone is actually indwelt by the Holy Spirit – which in turn means that they have actually been saved. This can be determined entirely from [Romans 8:13-16](#).

First, [Romans 8:13](#) says,

**<sup>13</sup>For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.**

I.e., if when a believer is faced with sin in their life, faced with temptations to do those things that they know violate the will of God, and faced with personal struggles against that sin, do they seek the help of the Holy Spirit in an effort to overcome those sins? This is not saying that every time that someone has a difficulty that they are on their knees. However, by the same token, they can never overcome sin without the help of the Holy Spirit, and so, if the believer finds themselves crying out to God in their heart when they begin to face these things, it is an evidence that the Holy Spirit is living within them.

Secondly, [Romans 8:14](#) says,

**<sup>14</sup>For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.**

This should be a very encouraging verse to each believer. Are they looking to the Word of God for guidance in their life? Are they calling on the Holy Spirit to give direction in their life and in their daily decisions? Do they sense their need for His guidance and for His input into their life? Are they hearing the Holy Spirit when He prompts them and encourages them and comes to them in a way that only He can? If so, then the Holy Spirit dwells in them.



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Thirdly, [Romans 8:15](#) says,

**<sup>15</sup>For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.”**

A true believer loves God and they just cry out to God because they know that He is their Father. Here, the Holy Spirit is called the “**Spirit of adoption**”, and in that work of adopting sinners into His family, they have been given this incredible sonship and brought into this staggering relationship to God the Father by the new birth that is very real to them. And so, in all that life brings before them, they are always crying out “**Abba, Father**”.

And then fourthly, in [Romans 8:16](#) Paul says,

**<sup>16</sup>The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,**

Once again, this should be a great encouragement. In a sense it is both objective and subjective. Objectively, it is something that God the Holy Spirit does in the believer and to the believer. He is constantly reaffirming that the believer is one of His. The Christian reads His Word and it strengthens them, it encourages them, it speaks to them. He is constantly bearing witness to the life that He has given to the believer. If someone is saved, then this verse tells them that He **MUST** witness to their spirit that they are His. That is the objective side. The subjective side is that the believer senses that, they know that, and they can perceive in their spirit that God actually indwells them. It is very important to be very careful in using a non-academic word like “feel”, but in reality a believer does sense the Holy Spirit’s presence. Why? It is because it is a powerful, life transforming work that He has done within them. It is operating, functioning, and working in the believer. It is a spiritual fact and an objective reality. This is not “wishful thinking”. This is not hoping that the Holy Spirit is at work in the believer. He has made each believer a “**new creature**” in Christ, and that “**new creature**” knows that that change has taken place.

So, at a personal level if we take all four of these works of the Holy Spirit that He does in the life of a believer, and we know that they are true of our life, then we can have great assurance that the Holy Spirit is indwelling our life and that we are saved. Obviously, for each one of these every believer may experience them at different levels - and that is perfectly okay. One may be stronger in one believer than in another believer, but the works of the Holy Spirit are actively present in the believer’s life.

So, what is being looked at in these verses is the simple fact that if the Holy Spirit indwells a believer, then God is going to raise their mortal body from the dead. It is a done deal and nothing can stop it from happening. “**This mortal will put on immortality and this corruptible will put on incorruption.**” [1 Corinthians 6:13-14](#) says,

**<sup>13</sup>Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. <sup>14</sup>And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power.**

V13 makes two amazing statements when it declares that our “**body**” is “**for the Lord, and the Lord for the body**”. In fact, [1 Corinthians 6:19-20](#) puts it this way,



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**<sup>19</sup>Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? <sup>20</sup>For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.**

I.e., every believer's body exists as an entity designed to bring glory to God. They can dishonor God with their body, or they can glorify God with their body. They can live for themselves, or they can live for Christ. In reading the last part of that verse, it states that God is actually for our body. I.e., He is not against the believer's body. It is not that Christians have to live like monks or be ascetic in everything that they do. Throughout the history of the church, there have always been false teachings saying that the body is evil, and in some cases taking that doctrine to the extreme where the body can indulge itself in anything that it wants. Obviously, life has spiritual and moral limitations and every believer should fully understand that. However, God has given believers a body so that they can enjoy the things of this life. I love to play golf and to eat a meal with my friends and to be with my wife and to come to church and to visit places that I have never been before. I love watching a good baseball game or walking around my field for some exercise. I love listening to good messages by other people or studying a passage like this one, and the vehicle for all of these activities is my body.

As long as believers' appetites and drives do not dishonor God, then they can enjoy what God has given to them to enjoy – and not do it in a condemning way. Some people love to fish. For them it is a part of enjoying God's creation. Some people love to hunt. Someone else loves to carve birds. Those are all good things and each believer should rejoice that they can enjoy such things. The world is a beautiful place and an incredible creation that God has given for both lost and saved to enjoy. In fact, [Psalm 139:14](#) says that all are “**fearfully and wonderfully made**”, and He is talking there about our bodies. [1 Timothy 6:17](#) says that God is the one who “**gives us richly all things to enjoy**”, and the believer's body is a part of that process of enjoying what God has given to them. As Paul has said here, the Holy Spirit “**gives life to our bodies**”. So, when looking at [Romans 8:10-11](#), it should be clear that the presence of the Holy Spirit within the believer's life is their guarantee of spiritual life.

### ROMANS 8:12-13

Next, we want to look at [Romans 8:12-13](#).

**<sup>12</sup>Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. <sup>13</sup>For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.**

For the first eleven verses, Paul has been stating over and over that the Holy Spirit is the One who gives spiritual life, and because of that he says in [Romans 8:12](#) that believers are no longer “**debtors**” to the flesh. To the contrary, his point is that they are now debtors to the Spirit who has given them this new life in Christ. It can be said that believers are now under “new management”.

All biblical exhortations and commands that God provides are based on His promises and His covenants. Peter puts it this way in [2 Peter 1:3-4](#),



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**<sup>3</sup>as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, <sup>4</sup>by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.**

Without these provisions that God graciously provides, believers would be unable to fulfill God's commands. The point is that by ourselves that we cannot live a supernatural Christian life. God never said believers could. However, God can and He said that He would live in and through every believer, and He does that through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

In these two verses Paul provides a great encouragement. The encouragement is that the Holy Spirit by His power is able to give the believer victory over their flesh. In reality, each believer needs all of the help that they can get. We want to state what we have been studying in a similar way. It is the simplicity of the truths that we are studying that is so amazing. **If someone has the Holy Spirit, then they have spiritual life**. I.e., a believer cannot have the Holy Spirit indwelling them and NOT have spiritual life. He is that life. [John 6:63](#) puts it this way,

**<sup>63</sup>It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.**

[2 Corinthians 3:4-6](#) says,

**<sup>4</sup>And we have such trust through Christ toward God. <sup>5</sup>Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, <sup>6</sup>who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the <sup>4</sup>Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.**

Paul has made it more than clear that the Holy Spirit gives spiritual life to believers, and so in these two verses he brings out some of the implications of that fact. Obviously, those who have Christ should live as those who are Christ's. That should be evident, obvious, and clearly apparent. Without any question or argument, because a believer belongs to Christ they have **spiritual obligations** that are an integral part of their spiritual life. No believer can possess a spiritual life that is depleted of spiritual obligations, responsibilities, and duties. In reality, believers are said to be "**debtors**". It is a mark of gross ingratitude to Christ for a believer to deny their clear spiritual obligations.

However, the problem that each believer experiences is really very simple. **They have a redeemed spirit in an unredeemed body**. It is that simple. Believers are confined to their bodies. Their nature has been completely and totally transformed. In fact, God actually calls them "**new creatures**", and He does so simply because they have been given a new nature. It was not that the old nature was renovated – not at all. Rather, each believer has been given a new nature. Unfortunately that new nature is housed in an old body, and that presents a daily battle with what is called the "**flesh**". When someone is saved, they undergo a very real spiritual transformation, and that transformation involves great changes **to** them, **for** them, and **within** them. It is clear from [Romans 6 and 7](#) that there is still this great battle that rages within each believer because of their redeemed spirit being housed in an unredeemed body.



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Now, it is important to realize that no believer is a match for the flesh. It is strong and unyielding in its efforts to destroy the believer's spiritual life. It will never lead a believer into the things of God. So, if Christians are going to be victorious over the flesh, then they must have a supernatural power that is able to empower them for that victory – and that power comes from the Holy Spirit.

Notice what the second part of [Romans 8:13](#) says,

**...but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.**

This verse focuses directly on what the Holy Spirit does in the believer and for the believer on a daily basis because of the constant struggle that each has with their unredeemed bodies. The key to understanding this work is the phrase “**by the Spirit**”. If someone leaves the Holy Spirit out of this conflict, out of this daily battle, and out of this ongoing struggle, they can be assured that they will not win this battle with the flesh. John MacArthur clearly understood this when he said that “*flesh cannot overcome flesh*”. Paul explained this in [Romans 7:18a](#),

**<sup>18</sup>For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells....**

In [Romans 7:23](#) he actually calls it a “law”,

**<sup>23</sup>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.**

And [Romans 7:25](#) reiterates it once again when it says,

**So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.**

In [Romans 8:2](#), Paul said this,

**<sup>2</sup>For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.**

It is no coincidence that in [Romans 7](#) Paul describes the conflict that each believer faces, and then in [Romans 8](#) he launches out into a discussion of the work of the Holy Spirit and His overcoming power resident within the believer. In simple terms, **THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE SOURCE OF VICTORY FOR THE BELIEVER'S LIFE**. There is no other source for victory apart from the Holy Spirit.

Unbelievers have no power to overcome sin in their life. In fact, to them sin is what makes life enjoyable – the very opposite of what God says. Ultimately the world and the flesh cannot deliver on the fulfillment for which they are looking. People just go from one meaningless experience to another, from one disheartening relationship to another, and from one level of hopelessness and despair to another. The cycle never ends, and it never gets any better. Why? It is because they have no source of power to be victorious in their life. All they have is their flesh.

We know from the previous verses in [Romans 8](#) that Paul has made the point that if someone is habitually living according to the flesh, then they do not have the Spirit and are not saved. He has made it very simple to understand. For every Christian there may be lapses back into sin of some sort,





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but it will not be the overriding pattern of their life – not at all. Why? It is because they are “**of the Spirit**”. So, if a believer wants victory over sin, then they first have to realize that they are not after the flesh and that they no longer mind the things of the flesh. That is what God has done for the believer in the new birth. Someone may ask “*How can I know that I am no longer after the flesh and no longer living according to the flesh?*” Well [Galatians 5:19-21](#) gives some evidences of that when it says,

**<sup>19</sup>Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, <sup>20</sup>idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, <sup>21</sup>envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.**

At a personal level, just look at that list and evaluate whether or not you are habitually practicing any of those things, or things similar to them. If you are not, then you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, and should have assurance that you are saved. It is really a very simple place to start in evaluating the reality of whether or not someone is saved. So, no wonder Paul says in [Romans 8:12](#),

**“...we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.”**

Believers are no longer obligated to the flesh. They owe the flesh nothing. The unsaved man thinks that he owes it to his flesh to satisfy the desires of the flesh. His flesh prompts him to do something, and so he just does it. However, the believer does not have to live the way that they used to live simply because the Holy Spirit lives within them and has given to them the power to overcome the flesh.

Why does a believer not owe anything to the flesh? It is because they have been set free from the power of the flesh. They are no longer “**in the flesh**”, but “**in the Spirit**”. To live “**according to the flesh**” is to be ruled and controlled by the flesh. The flesh does the believer no good. It tempts each to do evil. It pulls them away from God and it wars continually against the Holy Spirit. If Christ had not saved us, the flesh would have dragged us down to the deepest, darkest, hottest places in hell. So, why should a believer in any way feel obligated to the flesh? Peter expresses this in [1 Peter 4:3](#),

**<sup>3</sup>For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.**

The believer’s clear obligation is to the Holy Spirit. [Titus 2:11-14](#) says,

**<sup>11</sup>For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, <sup>12</sup>teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, <sup>13</sup>looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, <sup>14</sup>who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.**

It was the Holy Spirit who convicted us and showed us our need of salvation. It was the Holy Spirit who imparted saving faith, who implanted His nature within us, and who daily witnesses to us and in



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us that we are God's children. What a great debt is owed to the Holy Spirit! Every day He endures our selfishness; every day He is grieved by our sin; and yet He loves us and remains in us as the seal of God and as the "down payment" of the blessings that are waiting for us in eternity. So, we simply have to recognize who we are in Christ and what we have in Christ.

Now, in [Romans 8:13](#), the first thing that Paul says is really very significant. He says this,

**<sup>13</sup>For if you live according to the flesh you will die;**

The word "live" is in the present tense and means that the individual is **continually and habitually** having their life **dominated and directed by the flesh**. If a "professing" Christian habitually lives in sin and shows no concern for repentance, forgiveness, worship, or fellowship with other believers, then they are simply validating that their claim to salvation is in vain. Unfortunately, the consequence of living "according to the flesh" is that the individual "will die". This is a very serious statement. Some of the translations actually translate the word "will" as "must" (NASB, ASV). The Greek Interlinear translates it as "you are destined". I.e., you are destined to die. The Greek word for "will" is "mello" and means to occur at a point in time in the future that is subsequent or later to another event and closely related to it (in this case death). In this particular context "mello" clearly denotes not merely the future aspect, but the certainty of its coming to pass.

The word "die" is the Greek word "apothnesko" and as used in v13, it is a reference not to literal physical death, but to spiritual death and ultimately eternal death. So in this case the spiritual dying results in the separation of the soul from God and this equates with eternal death. So, this part of the verse is not speaking about a believer, but an unbeliever. The word "die" clearly refers not to physical death, but ultimately to spiritual death. A person who is habitually living according to the flesh is giving clear and replete evidence that they are not saved. If they are always living according to the desires and impulses of the flesh, then they do not have the Holy Spirit and will eventually die an eternal death.

Paul constantly reminds us that when someone lives after the impulses and desires of the flesh that it eventually ends in spiritual death. The flesh has a way of deceiving people into thinking that what the flesh desires and wants offers "real life". However, from a spiritual perspective what a habitual lifestyle of living in sin does is offer a short term gain which eventually brings a long term loss - the loss of eternal life! This is certainly not the first time that Paul has contrasted the lost and the saved. In fact, he has consistently been doing that in this chapter. Once again, this is a phrase of contrast designed to give security to the believer.

The point that Paul is making is that if an individual has a lifestyle that is continually controlled by the desires of the flesh, how can that person ever make the claim that he was a believer in the first place? He will die as he lived - in his sins. He lived habitually like an unbeliever simply because he always was an unbeliever. The individual who lives in sin habitually, continually, and as a habit of their life is an unsaved person. [1 John 3](#) is the classic passage on this. In contrast, the person who by the Holy Spirit habitually puts to death the deeds of the body is a saved person and will live.



## HOLY SPIRIT - ROMANS 8:10-13

Part 5

Now, someone is going to ask the question at this point as to whether or not a genuine believer can lose their salvation and be condemned at a later time to an eternal death because of some difficult sin in their life with which they may always seem to struggle. And the answer to that is an emphatic “No”. Why? It is because in [Romans 8:1](#) Paul clearly stated that,

**<sup>1</sup>There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.**

That verse is a clear and decisive definition of a Christian – someone who is not condemned, and someone who is NOT continually walking according to the flesh, but is walking according to the Holy Spirit. This ought to give great comfort and assurance to every believer. If I were to ask you the question, “*Are you continually living in disobedience and disrespect to the Word of God?*”, you ought to be able to honestly and transparently say “*No!*”. Paul is not saying believers will never sin or from time to time will not fall back into patterns of sin they had before they were saved. There will be times in a believer's life when a snapshot in time might show that they were living “**according to the flesh**”. However, over time they will exhibit evidence of growing in both the grace and knowledge of God. Saying this in a very positive way, and this should encourage you as a believer, the assurance of a believers’ salvation is validated or demonstrated by their godly lifestyle. It is really very simple to understand. So, what Paul is clearly saying in v1 and v13 is that a person whose life is characterized by the things of the flesh is not a true Christian and is spiritually dead - no matter what his religious assertions may be.

In [Romans 8:13](#), Paul says that a believer has to act on what they know - **if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live**. Every Christian should be enjoying some level of victory over sin in their life, and they should be growing in that victory. That is the process of sanctification – growing in holiness. We are never winning like we may want to win, but still we are winning in the battle against our flesh because of the Holy Spirit’s power and presence in our life.

The verb “**put to death**” is a present tense verb which simply means that it is something that has to be done constantly. It is a continuing, constant part of the believer’s daily life. It is something that they have to do. They cannot just be passive in all of this. It is not the idea of just “let go and let God”. To the contrary, believers are responsible for allowing the Holy Spirit to help them to “**put to death**” the deeds of their flesh. It is only through the Spirit, for He is the One who gives the desire, the determination, and the discipline to reject the promptings of the flesh. The key to freedom from living according to the flesh is constantly relying on the active power and presence of the Holy Spirit in our life. As stated earlier, **THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE SOURCE OF VICTORY FOR THE BELIEVER’S LIFE**, and each believer must depend on Him for that victory over sin. Listen to how John MacArthur has stated this in an article on “The Mortification of Sin”:

*“Christians obey God's command to mortify sin by living a life in the Spirit and not acknowledging any obligation to the flesh. Consistent effort to mortify sin in the body comes through a life lived in the Spirit. Mortification is the believer's responsibility and includes such responsibilities as abstaining from fleshly lusts, making no provision for the flesh, fixing one's heart on Christ,*



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*meditating on God's Word, praying incessantly, exercising self-control, and being filled with the Spirit."*

In short, it is not enough for the believer to have the Holy Spirit. Paul is teaching that it is mandatory that **the Spirit must have the believer as well**. Only then can the Spirit share with the believer the abundant, victorious life that is possible in Christ.