



LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

A Three-Day Journey through God's Word

Day 1: New Law, New Life

Begin

Quiet your heart and ask God to take all your worries and distractions, trusting him to teach and encourage you through his Word. Pray and ask him to open your eyes to the lessons he has for you today!

Read: Romans 8:1–17

¹Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ²because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.

³For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

⁵Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. ⁶The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. ⁸Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.

⁹You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. ¹⁰But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. ¹¹And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.

¹²Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. ¹³For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

¹⁴For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. ¹⁵The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. ¹⁷Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Reflect

The Bible tells us that we're all living under one of two laws.

One is the law under which every person is born (**Romans 3:23**). According to this law, we consistently fall short of God's standard of perfection. We're enslaved to the passions and desires

of our flesh. We're unable to break free from cycles of sin. Even at our best moments, our sin ruins our righteous works in the eyes of a holy God ([Isaiah 64:6](#)). Think about the most difficult moments of your life—the times that fill you with discouragement, shame, or despair. Think about the weight you felt when you knew you had done something wrong and deserved judgment. Without Christ, death is the natural end of everyone living under the old law ([Romans 6:23](#)).

But in Romans 8, Paul points us to a second law—a new law that brings new life through the Holy Spirit.

Paul begins with a bold statement: “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (verse 1). What does it mean to be “in Christ Jesus” if not, at the very least, to be baptized into his death? This, of course, sets us up to experience a new life because of his resurrection ([Romans 6:3–4](#)).

This transformation is not a casual change. Our Savior compares it to his own resurrection from the dead: “Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life” ([John 5:24](#)). Through the Spirit's work, our hearts are softened and begin to desire God's ways instead of our own ([Ezekiel 36:26–27](#)). And under the new law of the Spirit, we are set free from the punishment of sin and called to walk a different path.

This journey will not be easy. In fact, Paul is quick to remind us that we're still trapped in a “body of death” and fighting against the sin that resides in us ([Romans 7:20–25](#)). But we can see evidence of the Holy Spirit's influence over the course of our personal transformation. Think about your journey with the Lord. When you first began, was your heart as tender to the Spirit's prompting as it is today? Did you value the gift of prayer as much as you do now? Did you find it more difficult to forgive? Did you hunger for God's Word and value his wisdom above every other kind of advice?

While this life will always involve a fight with sin, we can find encouragement in this evidence of new life. And Paul reminds us that we can look forward to the future with hope as we keep in step with the Spirit.

Because of Jesus and through the work of the Spirit, we are part of God's family. God has promised to complete the work he began in our lives ([Philippians 1:6](#)). And as we grow in faith, we anticipate the day when we will share in Christ's ultimate victory over sin and death.

Consider

- ❖ Think back to the earliest days of your Christian walk. What was your experience of the Holy Spirit like then? What differences did you notice in your life once you began to follow Christ? How has the Spirit grown you in faith since that day?
- ❖ Choose one verse from today's reading and meditate on it for several minutes now. What truth stands out to you in this verse? What does it tell you about God? Write the verse out and put it somewhere visible so that you can continue to dwell on God's Word throughout your day.

Meditate

Spend a few moments reading and considering how this Scripture relates to the other truths you encountered today. What connections can you make?

The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

John 14:26

Day 2: Strength in Suffering

Begin

Quiet your heart and ask God to take all your worries and distractions, trusting him to teach and encourage you through his Word. Pray and ask him to open your eyes to the lessons he has for you today!

Read: Romans 8:18–30

¹⁸ I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

²⁶ In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. ²⁷ And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

²⁸ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

Reflect

How does life in the Spirit change the way we endure suffering?

Paul doesn't deny the reality of present suffering. He led a life marked by pain and persecution, but his response is to point us to the Holy Spirit as our source of strength and comfort in our darkest moments.

Our whole world is marked by the brokenness Paul describes in Romans 8. We see creation groaning as it waits for redemption God has promised (verse 22). But we also feel that brokenness in our own hearts and lives. We, like Paul, may endure a "thorn in the flesh"—something that causes us continuous suffering. We may experience deep emotional turmoil: the deaths of loved ones; the heavy burden of unsaved friends and family members; the loneliness of a broken

relationship. Or we might feel overwhelmed by the sum of suffering in our world that we see playing across our phone screens and TVs. In these moments, when your heart breaks and your soul longs for everything to be made right, you might feel like groaning, too. You might ask God, “How long?” And sometimes, it feels like you’ll wait forever for an answer.

This is where Paul reminds us that we do not wait or suffer alone. During his earthly ministry, Jesus promised that a Comforter would come to his people (**John 14:16**). His presence in our lives is a guarantee from God of all that is to come (**2 Corinthians 5:5**).

With this confidence, Paul encourages us to adopt a new perspective in our suffering. First, he tells us to weigh our suffering with God’s promise of glory in Christ Jesus (verse 18). Paul does not say this lightly or to dismiss the burden of pain and heartbreak we endure. Instead, he reminds us that suffering is not the end of our story. And when the fullness of Christ’s glory is revealed, even unspeakable suffering will seem like distant shadows.

Second, Paul highlights the Spirit’s role in our suffering. When we are at our weakest, his Spirit translates our wordless cries to our loving heavenly Father (verse 26). Even when we don’t know what to say, God understands our pain. He draws near to us with the promise of ever-present comfort and invites us to pour out our hearts to him.

Finally, Paul refocuses our attention on the God who can turn our hardest experiences into monuments to his grace (verse 28). In this world, suffering is guaranteed. We won’t experience this life without it. But the wonderful truth is that God can use even suffering to grow us in faith and make us more like Jesus. Not one moment of our lives is wasted in our Father’s ultimate plan for us.

With this fresh perspective, we can walk through valleys of suffering with confidence, knowing that the Spirit is with us, that God can redeem our pain for his purposes, and that our journey ends with glory that will outshine even our darkest moments.

Consider

- ❖ Consider **Romans 8:26–27**. How does the knowledge that God searches your heart and that the Spirit intercedes for your wordless prayers change the way you will approach prayer in difficult moments?
- ❖ Read **Romans 8:28** again. Consider the word “good” from an eternal perspective. What “good” things have you seen come from your most difficult moments? Has God grown you in grace, faith, patience, love, or kindness? Have you had the opportunity to share the gospel with others? Make a list of ways God used suffering to work his purposes in your life.

Meditate

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13

Day 3: Eternal Assurance

Begin

Quiet your heart and ask God to take all your worries and distractions, trusting him to teach and encourage you through his Word. Pray and ask him to open your eyes to the lessons he has for you today!

Read: Romans 8:31-39

³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written:

“For your sake we face death all day long;

we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Reflect

Where do you find your confidence?

There are certain things in life that might feel guaranteed: waking up in the morning; a car that starts with no issue; food in the refrigerator; stable finances; your family members around the table each holiday.

But you quickly learn that we cannot take anything in our lives for granted. Material possessions and financial stability can disappear overnight. Relationships that lasted years can be broken with a few simple words. And death can steal loved ones away without warning.

This is the world we live in. But Paul claims that we can find confidence, even in this unpredictable life, through our relationship with God, made possible by Jesus, and grown in faith by the Spirit. In every circumstance, the Lord is our helper (**Hebrews 13:6**). This is our ultimate assurance.

In addition to freeing us from condemnation and giving us hope in our suffering, our life in the Spirit gives us ultimate confidence that God’s promises are true and that if he is on our side, nothing can stand against us. It’s a case Paul builds on the work God has already done for us through Christ. He willingly gave his only Son to save us (verse 32). Jesus suffered and died for our salvation. The Spirit was poured out to conform us to Christ and carry us through many trials. If God has already done this, could he ever abandon us?

When life feels unstable and the things we take for granted are gone, we might feel like God has forgotten us. Or when we stumble and sin, we might begin to believe that God will distance himself from us. But Paul reminds us that we are not the ones holding onto God. Instead, we are safe because Christ is constantly interceding for us, and because our heavenly Father will not let us go.

To put this truth to the test, Paul lists the evils we face: trouble, hardship, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, or sword (verse 35). These things threaten our lives. They can inflict terrible harm and suffering. And yet, because of our life through the Spirit and because of Jesus, we are guaranteed victory.

There's only one question left—one that you can ask daily as you walk with the Spirit and grow in faith: “What can separate us from God?” Think about the trials you've considered in Romans 8 on this journey. The old law. The curse of sin and death. The wrongs you have done. The times you've failed. The temptations you've faced. The suffering you have endured.

Can anything come between you and God?

Through the Spirit, Paul has his answer: “For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers... will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (verses 38–39).

The work of Christ is sealed in your heart by the Spirit—your ever-present companion ([Ephesians 1:13–14](#)). It cannot be changed by circumstances, good deeds, or emotions. It's been rooted in God's eternal plan for you and paid for by the sacrifice of Jesus.

This is our deepest assurance. It's why we can believe these truths and trust God to care for us as his own children. Through your walk of faith, the Spirit will continue to build on the foundation of salvation in your heart and carry out God's work as you walk in his ways. Thanks be to God!

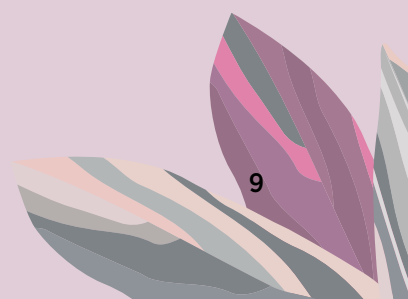
Consider

- ❖ Have there been seasons in your life when you questioned whether God was still “for you”? What fears, struggles, or trials have made you feel distant from him? Look at them again in light of today's verses. How do Paul's words challenge your perception? How does the Spirit assure you of God's care for you?
- ❖ Meditate on verse 32. What did it mean for God to give up his own Son? What does this action tell you about the way God feels toward you? How does that inform your eternal assurance?
- ❖ As you end this journey, think about someone in your life who needs the encouragement of Romans 8 and life in the Spirit. How can you share what you've learned with them?

Meditate

“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.”

John 10:27–28



Romans 8 (NIV)

Life Through the Spirit

¹Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ²because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.

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Present Suffering and Future Glory

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More Than Conquerors

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