

Life in the Spirit

Study #1: CONDEMNED (Man's Problem) - Romans 1:18-32; 3:9-20, 23

1. Why did God create mankind? What is God's purpose for mankind (men and women)? (1:19-21, 25, 28; 3:10-11)

2. What have people done rather than fulfill God's purposes for them? (How have people failed to fulfill God's purposes for them?)

3. What has been the result? How would you define man's basic problem?

4. Who is under the wrath of God (3:9-10, 19-20, 23)?

5. In what ways are you personally guilty of failing to glorify and worship and serve God your Creator?

6. Can people solve this basic problem (i.e., can they be justified or righteous in God's sight) by their works? (3:19-20, 23) Why not?

Study #2: JUSTIFIED (God's Solution) - Romans 3:19-28, 5:1-11

1. We can define grace as what God has done for us in Christ despite what we deserved (i.e., undeserved favor).
 - 1st. What did we deserve from God based on what we have done (3:19-23)?
 - 2nd. What has God given us instead (3:21-25; 5:1-2)? (What is God's solution to the problem of sin?)
 - 1) What does the word justified say about our relationship with God (3:24, 30; 5:1)?
 - 2) On what basis has God justified us, or declared us righteous and acceptable to him (3:22, 24-25; 5:6, 8, 10)? What did God do with our sin (3:25)?
 - 3) What does the word reconciliation say about our relationship with God (5:10-11)? What has happened to it (our relationship with God) (5:1)?
 - 4) Why has God given us these things? (John 3:16)

2. From this portion of scripture we can see that God (the Father) was motivated to give us these things through Jesus Christ because of His love for us (Rom. 5:5).
 - 1st. How do we know that God loves us (5:6-8)?

- 2nd. Is this knowledge based on our circumstances (5:3-5)? How does faith fit in (5:2; 3:22, 25)?
- 3rd. How does keeping our justification and our reconciliation to God in the forefront of our mind, affect our attitude towards (and during) trials and suffering (5:1-5, 8-11)?
- 4th. What does God desire to accomplish in our lives through tribulation (5:3-4)? How will this happen? What role does hope play (5:2, 5)?
- 5th. Have you been justified by faith (5:1), reconciled to God by trusting the work of Jesus (5:10-11)? Are you standing in God's grace, by faith (5:2)? Do you know (are you sure of) the love of God for you (5:5, 8)?
3. Look at 2 Cor. 5:14, 15.
- 1st. How should God's grace in salvation affect us? Who are you living for?
- 2nd. Galatians 5:13. The choice is to live for our own selfish interests (our flesh), or to use our life to serve others. What motivates your service (guilt, obligation, self, love)?
- 3rd. Do motives matter to God? (Cf. 1 Cor. 3:10-15; 4:5).
- 1) What should you do with motives other than love?
- 2) How are you progressing in this?

Study #3: JUSTIFIED (cont.) - Romans 5:12-21

1. Who is the one man who brought sin into the world?
- 1st. How did he bring it in?
- 2nd. Who is guilty of sin? (v. 12; cf. 3:23)
- 3rd. What are the consequences of sin? (v. 12, 16, 18)
- 4th. What is the evidence of the presence of sin in the world in our day and age?
- 5th. Summarize in your own words what it means that sin entered the world through one man. (See also 1 Cor. 15:21, 22, 45-49)
- 6th. Are you a sinner? What evidence do you see in your own life, that you are a sinner?
2. What did the second Adam, Jesus Christ, bring into the world? (Cf. Rom. 3:21-25; 5:1, 6-11, as well as 2 Cor. 5:14-16, 21)
- 1st. How did He bring this into the world?
- 2nd. How does a person receive the free gift of God's righteousness? (Cf. 3:22, 26-27; 5:1-2)
- 3rd. Just as being born in Adam has its consequences, so being born again in Christ has its consequences. Make a list of the consequences from what you have learned in the lesson thus far, of being:

in ADAM

in CHRIST

4th. Have you received the free gift of God? Are you "in Christ"? What evidence do you see of this? (More on this in the next study.)

Study #4: IDENTIFIED WITH CHRIST - Romans 6:1-14

At the end of our last study one might conclude that we who have been justified in Christ are now free to sin, since more sin means more grace (5:20). This chapter centers around this question and addresses it from the point of view of who we are in Christ. This idea takes fully three chapters to develop, and thus Romans 6-8 describe what is true of those who truly are IN CHRIST.

1. What does it mean that we "died to sin" (v. 2, 3, 4, 6, 7)? (You might compare this to Col. 3:1-3.)
 - 1st. What does baptism signify?
 - 2nd. Who died to sin? How? When?
 - 3rd. What does it mean to be united with Jesus in his death and resurrection? How does it affect our affections (and our lives)?
 - 4th. Have you been united with Christ? If you have been united with Christ, what then is true of you?
2. What are some of the practical consequences of the fact that we have been united with Christ, and died to sin (v. 2, 4, 6, 11, 12, 14)? (Cf. Col. 3:1-5)
 - 1st. What did Jesus die to? What does he now live for? How is Jesus an example for us?
 - 2nd. Does the fact that we died to sin mean we are no longer tempted by sin? (Cf. Col. 3:5)
 - 3rd. Why do we continue to have this problem with temptation?
 - 4th. What should be our attitude toward sin (v. 2, 11-13)?
 - 5th. What is the choice we are faced with (v. 12, 13)?
 - 6th. How can understanding our position in Christ (what is true of us in Jesus) help us overcome sin (cf. Col. 3:1-5)?
3. Are you experiencing newness of life in Christ, flowing from the fact that you have been united with Christ in his death (to sin) and resurrection (to life in God)?
4. Go through these verses and use your name wherever the pronoun "you," "we" or "he" appears (you may have to change the plurals to singular to maintain the sense), and the individual sin you may be struggling with in place of the word "sin." Pray this through that you might know who you are in Christ and live accordingly.

Study #5: ENSLAVED - Romans 6:14-23

Study #: Four focused on the provision that God has made for us in Christ to deliver us from the experience of bondage to sin. Paul is describing what is true of those who have been justified in Christ in as much as justification places us "in Christ" (8:1), with consequential changes in our very being as a result of this regeneration. But the provision of being placed "in Christ" brings responsibility with it. This section focuses on the responsibility we have by virtue of being in Christ.

1. Looking at all of chapter 6, make a list of things which are true of who you were in Adam and who you now are in Christ. Remember these are changes, which reach the deepest part of your being.

in ADAM

in CHRIST

I was dead

I am alive

2. Is it possible for a Christian, one who is justified by faith in Christ, to sin? What will be the consequence of ongoing sin in the life of a Christian?

1st. Can a Christian become re-enslaved to sin? How?

2nd. How can we become free from enslavement to sin?

3rd. What is our responsibility, in order to remain free from sin?

3. It seems that man must always be enslaved. But we have a choice of which master we will serve. What are the two masters we have to choose from?

4. What are the consequences of each choice? (See also 2 Cor. 5:14, 15; and Gal 5:13). What is the danger of choosing sin (i.e., "sinning that grace may abound") (v. 1, 15)? (Cf. Heb. 10:26-31; 1 Jn. 3:4-10; Mt. 7:21-27.)

5. What choice are you making daily (between sin and righteousness)? Have you truly become enslaved to God? What is the evidence? Are you experiencing freedom from sin, a life of "slavery to righteousness leading to holiness" (v. 19)?

6. Pray point-by-point through the list in #1 above, thanking God for all that is true of you in Christ, and asking Him to help you embrace and live according to these truths. Mention by name any sin you are especially struggling with, and claim the power of the blood of Christ over that sin. Offer the members of your body to God, in prayer, as instruments of righteousness.

Study #6: THE LAW - Romans 7:1-13

The last study focused on our responsibility in remaining free from sin. But we are left with the question of how we are to do this. Is it by our effort to keep the Law (the natural Jewish response)? Paul has hinted at this in 6:14 but now develops it further in this chapter.

1. What is the Law?

1st. The Apostle Paul, being a good Pharisee (i.e., a religious person, trained in the Law of Moses), tried to please God, i.e., to be justified (made right with God), by keeping the Law. Did he succeed? Why not? What did his attempts lead to?

2nd. Is it possible to achieve righteousness by keeping the Law? (Cf. Romans 3:20)

3rd. What does attempting to achieve righteousness by keeping the Law lead to? (Cf. 7:7-12) Have you ever had this experience?

2. What effect did the law have on us before we were saved?

1st. In verses 7-12 there is debate on whether this record is Paul's initial salvation experience (which is quite possible, since Paul was a Pharisee) or his experience as a youth. Which do you believe?

2nd. Why does the Law affect us this way?

3. What is the solution to this response to the Law (v. 4)? What does this mean?

4. How was this accomplished?

5. Does this mean the Law is evil (v. 13)? What is evil (cf. 8:3)?

Study #7: THE BATTLE WITHIN - Romans 7:13-25

Whereas Romans 6 focuses on the provisions of God in Christ for us to experience freedom from sin, chapter 7 focuses on the ongoing battle of the believer to fully enter into this experience. Notice the verb tenses shift to the present tense from verse 14 to the end of the chapter. This is Paul's present testimony of the inner, agonizing, ongoing battle against sin, which he was constantly experiencing. The solution is in chapter 8. [It would be helpful not to use the NIV (English) translation for chapters 7 and 8 since it regularly translates "flesh" as "sin nature" - a distinction that can confuse some of the questions below. (If you have an NIV simply realize this and make the appropriate changes as you read.)]

1. What is the purpose of the Law (v. 13)? (Cf. Gal. 3:19-24)

2. What is the problem Paul and every Christian has to grapple with?

1st. Where specifically is the problem (v. 17, 18, 20, 23)? (See also 6:12)

1) What is "the flesh"?

2) Do Christians still have "flesh"? Does the flesh of a believer in Christ influence him? How? What is the influence of the flesh? Did the Apostle Paul struggle with his flesh?

2nd. What is the contradicting principle (law) that is warring against this problem of sin (v. 21-22)?

3rd. Where specifically does Paul locate this principle (v. 22-23)?

4th. Paul seems very consistent in locating these two principles in different places (cf. v. 18, 23, 24, 25; also 6:12; 2 Cor. 4:16; Gal. 5:17). Why is this significant?

5th. Have you experienced this struggle between the flesh and the spirit?

- 6th. How would you describe man with these two elements of flesh and spirit? Are they equal and opposite? What is the difference between a Christian struggling with sin, and an unbeliever?
3. Does the solution to the power of sin warring in our members lie in our will power? (see v. 18, 19)
4. Where does the solution lie (v. 25)? (Cf. 6:11 as a hint to get you started; also 8:2, 3)
5. Where does our will fit in?
6. Read Galatians 5:13-18. What is the choice you face? What are the consequences of this choice (see Gal. 6:7-8)? How easy is it to remain "walking (or living) by the Spirit" (v. 16)? What opposes you (v. 13, 17)? What is the evidence one is living by the Spirit (v. 13, 14)?

Study #8: THE SPIRIT WALK - Romans 8:1-17

Last time we studied the ongoing spiritual battle within every true believer in Christ. We ended asking what is the solution to the problem. An initial solution is given in 7:25, which is a summary statement of what Paul has already given in Ch. 6 and which he will practically apply in ch. 8.

1. What is the ultimate solution to the spiritual battle in Romans 7? (Compare 7:24 with 8:18-23.) Why does this have to be the ultimate solution?
2. What is the immediate solution to the warfare in ch. 7? (v. 2)
- 1st. Why is the Law unable to make us holy? Is this in keeping with the thought in chapter 7?
- 2nd. Why is this solution only temporary in the sense that it can be lost and must be appropriated moment by moment? (see Romans 6:13, 17f.)
3. Who is able to make us holy? How does He do this? (v. 12, 13)
4. Sanctification is a matter of power, not will. Specifically it is the powerful working of the Holy Spirit in our innermost being. Sanctification is the transforming of our character by the renewing of our mind (see 12:2).
- 1st. Look at verses 5-8. What would the mind set on the flesh be like?
- 2nd. In what ways would this be different from mind set on the spirit?
- 3rd. One commentator has likened the "mind set" to the "bent of the mind". What determines the bent of mind?
- 4th. Where is the bent of your mind? What is the evidence?
5. Make a list of all of the ways in which God wants to work in your life by the Holy Spirit, according to these verses. Are you experiencing the life-giving, transforming, freeing work of God's Spirit in your life? What

aspects of the Spirit's work in your life do you need to grow in? Is anything in your life keeping you from experiencing the work of God's Spirit?

6. If one becomes deceived and his mind becomes fixed on flesh, what is the way out? Be certain you practice the pattern necessary to be transformed from one stage of glory to another (2 Cor. 3:18). [See the next study, on the Pattern of RENEWAL: Revelation, Repentance, and Restitution (new patterns put on).] Take some time for reflection and repentance, and asking God to renew and strengthen the ministry of His Spirit in your life.

Study #9: THE CYCLE OF RENEWAL: REVELATION-REPENTANCE-RIGHTEOUS DEEDS

The way out of enslavement to sin is repentance, a change of mind brought about by the supernatural work of God (i.e., revelation - God shining His light into our darkness, allowing us to see things in His perspective). Repentance is characterized by seeing things as they really are (i.e., from God's point of view), standing with God in judgment against yourself, and making a 180 degree turn from your (sinful) way to God's (righteous) way. Renewal results as our minds are transformed by the truth of God, and as the works of the flesh are put off, and righteous deeds ("fruit in keeping with repentance," Mt. 3:8) are put in their place, resulting in new, godly patterns of living. In this study, we will look in depth at this process.

1. The basic pattern is found in Eph. 4:17-24, verses which are a summary statement of Romans 5-8. What are the (three) steps outlined for transformation of life in v. 22-24? What is the role of the mind in this transformation? What is the role of the Word of God in this?

2. The example of King David.

1st. 2 Samuel 11.1-27 How did King David sin (v. 1-13)? What did he try to do to cover his sin? Since his first cover-up plan didn't work, he came up with another (v. 14-27). What was it? Was it successful? In what way did it fail?

2nd. Psalm 32 This Psalm was written by David about the time of his sin with Bathsheba. How was David's walk with the Lord when he covered his sin (v. 3, 4)? Do you think he tried to fool himself that he was godly (maybe going to the temple as usual and offering sacrifices as usual)? Did he fool God? How did David receive forgiveness, and release from the guilt (and burden) of his sin? (Cf. Prov. 18:13)

3rd. 2 Sam. 12.1-9 How did God choose to reveal King David's sin? How do you think the Prophet Nathan felt? Why do you suppose he went to David? How did Nathan reveal David's sin to him? Did he soften the blow? Why not? Who had David sinned against? What was his basic (essential) sin (v. 7-9)? How did God view David's sin? Why did he send Nathan to him? Does God use people today to help others to see their sin?

4th. Psalm 51 This is a great Psalm of repentance. What do you notice about David (i.e., his attitude toward his sin) (v. 1-6)? What is the evidence that he "owns" (takes responsibility for) his sin? Do you see any excuses here (justifying himself, or blaming someone else)? What does David request (v. 7-12)? Do you think he felt he deserved this? How are repentance and humility linked together? What does David commit himself to do (v. 13-19)? This could be called restitution--making right what we made wrong (the "fruit in keeping with repentance" spoken of in Matt. 3:8). Are repentance and works (righteous deeds) linked? How (cf. Acts 26:20)? What were David's motives?

5th. 2 Sam. 12.10-23 What were the consequences of David's sin (v. 10-14)? What was David's attitude toward the pronouncements of Nathan? Why did David fast (v. 15-23)? Was he willing to live with the consequences of his sin? How is this evidence of genuine repentance? How should repentance and restitution be part of every believer's life?

3. Read 1 John 1:5-10. How would you define "walking in the darkness" and "walking in the light" (cf. Eph. 5:3-14)? Is it possible to live free from sin? What is the key to "walking in the light" (v. 9)?

4. Are you living the life of renewal, experiencing revelation, repentance, and righteous deeds (i.e., "fruit in keeping with repentance," Mt. 3:8; cf. Acts 26:20)? Is there any sin currently in your life, which you need to

repent of and forsake? If so, what righteous deeds should you bring in its place? Share this with one or more other believers, who can help you follow through on the changes God wants to bring in your life.

Study #10: THE SPIRIT WALK (cont.) - Romans 8:18-39

In study eight we studied the immediate and ultimate solution (provision) to the spiritual warfare of Ch. 7. This week we will study the responsibilities that come with God's provision.

1. Looking back over chapter 8, what are the marks of a truly regenerate person (born of God's Spirit)? How are these fundamentally different from the unregenerate?

MARKS OF A REGENERATE

MARKS OF A DEGENERATE

2. (v. 18-27) What is our condition in this world; i.e., what is our life characterized by? What is our hope? How should we face suffering and trials? How does the Spirit of God help us?

3. (v. 28-39) How can we be certain that we will ultimately be delivered from this sinful world?

1st. What is the purpose of all this suffering? (Cf. 5:3-5) How can suffering bring revelation (illumination of our flesh and God's grace)? What are some things it might reveal? (See also 1 Peter 1:6-9) What is God's ultimate goal for all believers in Christ?

2nd. How can we determine if all this suffering will lead to good? How can we block God's plans in suffering?

4. This section (8:31-39) ends in the same way it began (5:1-3): namely, that we ought to exult in our tribulation. Looking back over your studies, summarize a number of reasons why we ought to exult in the tribulation, which is promised to all believers (see 2 Timothy 3:12, Acts 14:22).

5. Have you been experiencing persecution, suffering, trials, or tribulations of various kinds? Are you truly regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit? Are you presently experiencing victory over sin? Go through Romans 6:1-14 once again and use your name wherever the pronoun "you," "we" or "he" appears (you may have to change the plurals to singular to maintain the sense), and the individual sin you may be struggling with in place of the word "sin." Pray this through that you might know who you are in Christ and live accordingly.

Study #11: THE SPIRIT WALK IN COMMUNITY: SPIRITUAL GIFTS - Rom. 1:11-12; 12:1-8

1. Read Rom. 1:11-12

1st. To what end did Paul want to use his spiritual gift among the believers in Rome? What is the purpose of spiritual gifts?

2nd. What is the relationship of spiritual gifts to faith?

2. Read Rom. 12:1-8

1st. What is the source and basis of ministry and the use of spiritual gifts (v. 3, 6)?

2nd. What is the relationship of spiritual gifts to grace? To faith?

3rd. What is the purpose of spiritual gifts? For whose good are they given?

4th. Do you think it is possible to walk with Christ in isolation from other believers? Why not? Why is the body an important part of Christ's plan for believers?

Study #12: THE SPIRIT WALK IN COMMUNITY: BODY LIFE - Rom. 12:9-18; 13:8-10; 14:1-15:7, 13-14

1. Read Rom. 12:9-18; 13:8-10

1st. What should characterize the relationships between members of Christ's family (body)?

2nd. Spend some time thinking about/discussing the "one anothers" in these passages:

- be devoted to one another in brotherly love (12.10)
- honor one another (12.10)
- encourage & stir up one another (12.11)
- share with one another (12.13)
- offer hospitality to one another (12.13)
- bless one another (12.14)
- rejoice & mourn with one another (12.15)
- live in harmony with one another (12.16)
- live in humility with one another (12.16)
- live in peace with one another (12.18)
- love one another (13.8-10)

3rd. What are some of the practical applications and outworkings of these principles? In what areas do you (as an individual, and especially as a community) need to grow? How might you work on these areas (practical steps)?

2. Read Rom. 14:1-15:7, 13-14

1st. What should characterize the relationships between members of Christ's family (body)?

2nd. Spend some time thinking about/discussing the "one anothers" in these passages:

- accept one another (14:1; 15:7)
- do not judge one another (14:1, 4, 10, 13)
- do not put stumbling blocks in one another's way (14:13-15, 20-21)
- build up one another; edify one another (14:19; 15:2)
- instruct (counsel) one another (15:14)

3rd. What are some of the practical applications and outworkings of these principles? In what areas do you (as an individual, and especially as a community) need to grow? How might you work on these areas (practical steps)?