**LESSON 7**
**May 15, 2016**

# LIFE ACCORDING THE SPIRIT

## GOLDEN TEXT

"The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children" (Romans 8:16).

## USEFUL PRACTICE

Living according to the Holy Spirit means to be under his dominion and follow his guidance.

**SCRIPTURE READING**
**Romans 8:1-17 (NIV)**

1 - Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

2 - because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.

3 - For 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,

4 - in 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.

5 - Those 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.

6 - The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.

7- The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

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8 - Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.

9 - You, 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.

10 - But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness.

11- And 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.

12- Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it.

13 - For 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.

14 - For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.

15 - The 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."

16 - The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

17 - Now 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.

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## GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To show that those, who by faith in Jesus Christ were saved by grace, need to live according to the Holy Spirit.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

**I To know** that life in the Spirit presupposes the law of sin;

**II. To show** that life in the Spirit presupposes opposition to the Adamic nature;

**III. To explain** that life in the Spirit presupposes opposition between the new order and the old one.

## INTRODUCTION

In chapter seven of the Epistle to the Romans, the apostle Paul presents a small outline of what he would deal with in the following chapter. Throughout chapter eight, the apostle makes a contrast between the old life, marked by sin and unable to free itself, and the new life in the power of the Holy Spirit, which Christ has given us. What was impossible for the old covenant, governed by the Law, has now become possible thanks to a new law - the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Through the Holy Spirit we already have a preview of the joy that, one day, we will live with the Lord in heaven. We also have the assurance that, in the future, we will enjoy the fullness of salvation.

### I - LIFE IN THE SPIRIT PRESUPPOSES OPPOSITION TO THE LAW OF SIN (Romans 8:1-4)

**1. The disease of the law.** As we could see in chapter seven, Paul exclaimed in a hopeless tone when he sees before him (and all Christians) the merciless yoke of sin (Romans 7:24). This cry belongs to all of us. But what was the reason for this despair? It is necessary to understand the apostle's argument about this subject. He had said that all men, whether Gentiles or Greeks, were under the condemnation of sin. Even the Jews, who the Mosaic Law was entrusted to, could not escape from this bondage. And why not? Because the law, which was given to warn men about the sinfulness of sin, ended up serving as an instrument to sharpen the desire to sin. Thus, the law, which was good, turned out to be dead before another law - the law of sin and death. So the law became ill.

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**2. The healing from the cross.** Still in the same chapter seven, nearing his end, Paul gives another cry, no longer of despair, but of victory by the grace of God revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. His cry of victory is also our cry (Romans 7:25). The same argument can now be presented in the opposite direction. Instead of the cry of despair, Paul gives a cry of victory. But what caused the cry of victory? The answer lies in the life according to the Spirit reported in Romans chapter eight.

**3. The law of sin is abolished.** The law of sin and death, which had neutralized or made the law ineffective, now were repealed by the law of the Spirit of life. This new law, much more powerful, because did not operate based on the works of the flesh, but in the sacrifice of Jesus, the sinless Lamb of God, has made it possible to break the yoke of slavery that the law of sin produced. Now all of God's children can enjoy the

freedom that comes from life according to the Spirit.

## II - LIFE IN THE SPIRIT PRESUPPOSES OPPOSITION TO THE ADAMIC NATURE (Romans 8:5-17)

**1. The old mind.** Paul uses the Greek verb *phroneo* (**φρονὲω** ), translated here as inclining, in the sense of putting the mind to something. The Adamic nature, even dethroned, still requires its old place. In the letter to the Galatians, Paul shows that the flesh lusts, or is in conflict with the Spirit (Gal 5:17). This battle takes place in the sphere of the mind, when it desires (Gr. *Epithymeo* - ***ἐπιθυμία***) against the Spirit. Still in the epistle to the Christians of Galatia, the apostle explains that the flesh and the Spirit are two forces that oppose each other (Galatians 5:16,17). All saved believers, whether they are new converts or not, are objects of this mind of the old nature. To yield to this mind is to give in to death (Rom 8:6). In this inner mind of the old nature, the flesh is in charge. When the flesh takes over, the spirit stays out.

**2. The new mind.** As opposed to the old Adamic nature, also called sinful nature, or even "old man", Paul shows the mind of the Spirit. He says that the mind of the Spirit produces life (Romans 8:6). The Greek word “mind”, used here by Paul, is *phronema* (***φρόνημα***), whose root comes from phroneo, “thought”. The participation of the believer in the process of salvation is quite clear. He must walk in the realm of the Spirit in order to not give in to the desires of the flesh. Just as the believer has a role in the process of salvation, choosing whether or not to receive the grace of God, the same way, as regenerated in Christ, now he also has the choice to walk, or not, in the Spirit. As we respond to God's call to salvation, we must likewise respond to God's call to holiness. In this mind of the new creation in Christ, the Spirit is inside, that is, in charge, and the flesh is outside. It is no longer in charge, because it was dethroned.

**3. The new sonship**. This new mind, which the apostle referred to, was only possible because those justified in Christ Jesus came to be led by the Spirit of God: "For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God" (Romans 8:14). This privilege, which made it possible for the believer to be guided or led by the Spirit, happened because God has given us the adoption to sonship, "The 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" (Romans 8:15). As children, we are now the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, who within us testifies to this new received sonship (Romans 8:16).

## III - LIFE IN THE SPIRIT PRESUPPOSES OPPOSITION BETWEEN THE NEW ORDER AND THE OLD ONE (Rom 8:18-39)

**1. The manifestation of God's children.** Verses 18-30 of Romans 8 show the certainty of believers about the future: "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us" (Rom 8:18). It is pretty clear that when the apostle spoke of the future, he also contemplated the past. The current state of affairs shows the signs of the old order. They are the marks that make the creation groan for not being able to remove them. That is why it groans: "We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time" (Romans 8:22). But not only it, we who also have the firstfruits of the Spirit groan inwardly (Rom 8:23). The creation wants to return to its original state and so do we. The Holy Spirit feels our drama, feels our anguish and also groans for us (Rom 8:26,27). The best thing is to know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8:28). The Greek word *sunergeó* **συνεργέω** (where **synergism** comes from), translated in Romans 8:28 as “cooperates”, “shows that God works with those who love him”, toward his purpose.

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**2. Evidence of the great love of God.** Verses 31-39 of Romans 8 are actually the closure of all that the apostle argued from chapter five. From lost and hopeless sinners we became children of God through justification by faith. From slaves of sin we have passed to the status of freed children through the work of the Holy Spirit. From members of an old order, we have become participants of a new order in the Spirit.

**3. God is with us**. God loves us, he redeemed us in Jesus Christ from the yoke of sin and is with us. Paul states, "What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31). Paul shows that in this life, as long as we remain in Christ, nothing can separate us from the love of God. We are the object of his great love.

## CONCLUSION

Today's lesson helps us understand that God's grace is truly amazing. It has turned wicked people into holy ones and put us on a level of relationship with God never imagined by his ancient people, and given the grace of having the Holy Spirit dwelling within us and the privilege of being guided by Him. But not only that, now we are also heirs of God and coheirs with Christ. This all is called grace

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