

The seventh chapter ends with a desperate cry for help, and a victorious cry of thanksgiving for being answered. The answer didn't come through an angel from heaven or a mere man such as Ananias of Damascus who was sent by the Lord with a message to blind praying Saul, Acts 9.

This answer came by the Holy Spirit directly to Paul. Another Person comes to the fore. The Holy Spirit. It is His law, His control that releases me from the "law of sin and death" that had ruled me or, at least, competed for rule over me. The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus now has rule over me. It is no longer the new man alone contending with the old man, the man ruled by sin and death. It is the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus ruling the new man, thereby excluding the old man and all he holds dear. The law of Moses (or any resolutions I might make to attempt to rule my old me) is weak in the flesh. These rules are shown to be weak in the flesh because the flesh rebels against any attempts to control it. But God justly has condemned all sin in the flesh. How so? Because one Man (Jesus) sent in the likeness of sinful flesh never sinned. (God doesn't grade on the curve, and even if He did, One Man passed at 100% thereby condemning all others to failing grades.) Not only that, that same Man is said to have been sent for sin. A sacrifice relating to sin. Christ died for our sins. His sacrifice paid the penalty for our sins. And His death and resurrection

conquered death and is the basis for delivering each believer from the power of sin in the flesh. "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin." It is of no use and is an opponent, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness, Christ's righteousness.

I am alive now. God, having thereby condemned the rule of sin in the flesh, clears the way for me, the believer, to walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. To be guided and empowered by One more powerful than the new man, the new, born-again me. The me that wants to do good and can't without the Spirit's power. Now the righteousness (requirement) of the Mosaic Law can actually be fulfilled in me without me having to attempt to keep that Law as a rule of life. How? By my walk being not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Note that He is the "Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." He does not act on His own or on His own behalf, but on behalf of Christ Jesus and under the direction of Christ Jesus the risen Man now in the Glory. It is He, Christ through the Spirit, that now sustains and leads me in my walk with Him. Two distinct Persons of the Godhead partner to do this with me. What superabundant grace! What a life is mine, is each of ours!

Paul goes on to point up some sharp distinctions between the walk in the Spirit and the walk in the flesh.

they that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh	they that are after the Spirit [mind] the things of the Spirit
to be carnally minded [the mind of the flesh] is death	to be spiritually minded [mind of the Spirit] is life and peace.
the carnal mind is enmity [hostile] against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.	
they that are in the flesh cannot please God.	But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.

Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his [not of Him, does not belong to Him].

And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

All depends upon "Christ in me" through the Spirit of Christ, (the Holy Spirit) dwelling in me. If a person isn't a believer the Spirit has no residence in him or her. There is neither desire nor power to live for God. But because Christ is in each of us the Spirit does inhabit the body of each believer. I am in Christ. Christ is in me! Marvelous mystery! Marvelous truth! Believe it! Faith believes it. Even if we don't understand it, believe it. Believe it, and

the understanding will come. Believe it and the enabling will come.

But there more to life than simply walking in the Spirit, walking in a way pleasing to God, blessed as that is. There is a larger prospect. A hope, a hope as sure as the Spirit who dwells in me. The life we now live is temporary. The end is in sight. A better end, really another beginning.

**But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you,
he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies
by his Spirit that dwelleth in you**

Our mortal bodies die, if not through disease or injury, through ageing. But we are here promised our mortal body will be quickened, brought to life. Quickened by the very Holy Spirit Who dwells in me. The same Spirit of Him Who raised up Christ, His Anointed, from the dead. Who? The Father. Christ was raised by the glory of the Father, Romans 6:4. The whole Trinity is involved in my salvation, my deliverance from the power and domination of sin and in the quickening and changing of my present mortal body (dead or alive) into an eternal body like Christ's.

1Corinthians 15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1John 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

But if my body of sin (inherited from Adam) is going to be changed upon my resurrection (or rapture) then I do not owe it my obedience to it's lusts. I'm not its debtor. There is no reason to live after the flesh. If I should take up living after the flesh I will simply die and be buried in a grave. It will no longer be around to dominate me. But I don't need to wait until I die to be free from its power. If I mortify [consider to have been put to death] the deeds of the body I shall live. Really live. Live life abundantly.

John 10:10 I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

But it must be through the Spirit that I mortify the deeds of the body, not simply reckoning **myself** dead to sin and alive to God. Sin indeed has no more dominion over me, as Romans 6 teaches, but I have no power over sin except through the Holy Spirit dwelling in me. Then I really live life as it should be.

(What a full chapter! Full of blessings. No wonder so many believers love it and memorize it. Did we really need the complicated dissertation about our dominating sinful

roots presented in chapter 5:12 through chapter 7? Yes, we need to know everything that God has revealed about ourselves in order to have a properly formed view of ourselves. See ourselves as God sees us, unpleasant as that may be.)

Yet there is MORE. We are actually led by the Spirit. And that is proof we are the **sons** of God. We are so led because we are sons. We don't become sons by being led by the Spirit. Being sons (gender is beside the point here) we can do some things sons can do that lost sinners can't do. This is not a spirit of bondage. We have a relationship deeper than that of a servant or a slave or an animal or a robot. We confide in our Father, and He confides in us. We have fellowship as sons with a father, God the Father! We have privileges, Favor, Blessings, Knowledge, Expectations. We are not merely saved from hell but saved to become and remain sons forever. We learn that the Spirit we received is the Spirit of Adoption. We have been inducted into a new standing, "**son.**" Praise God!

NOTE. Adoption is an old ritual common among the Romans and other Gentiles whereby upon reaching an adult age a child is formally declared to be son of the father. Not all children were accorded this privilege, only those who had matured with the mind and goals of the father. Prodigal sons were not eligible. See Galatians 4:1-7 for a fuller explanation.

But there is MORE. Having been named sons we cry Abba Father. [Papa Father, Daddy Father or a similar term of endearment as used by all children in the world.] It expresses Affection and Familiarity, not formality and distance. We don't need to address Him as "God Almighty" or even as "Heavenly Father" but simply as "Father" or "our God and Father," or even a reverent, not flippant, "Daddy," "Abba," or "Papa" in private.

And there is MORE. The Holy Spirit dwelling in our body witnesses to our human spirit there that we are the **children** of God. We are God's children. Both sons and children. As children we are heirs. Whose heirs? Heirs of God. Heirs because we are in Christ and thereby joint heirs with Him. And His inheritance is vast – infinite and eternal. But as joint heirs we suffer with Him and as joint heirs we will all be glorified together with Him. What a prospect!

More on the suffering and the glory, and the meanwhile, next.

By Ron Canner, October 31, 2007