

The first chapters of the book of Romans present a picture of man's moral condition that may be likened to a dirty, dark, cramped prison cell. Most men are indifferent to the dirt or wallow in it. Some try to brush off the dirt but having nowhere to go it settles back on them. A window set high in the wall of the cell serves only to make the squalid state more apparent, and gives no hope of escape or relief.

That cell is the flesh – our sinful inheritance from Adam.

But chapter 8 is like the door opening and the walls falling away as sunlight streams in and a fresh breeze blows the dirt away. What has happened? Well, the same Greek word *pneuma* means both **wind** and **spirit**. The

Holy Spirit – mentioned only four times before this chapter but nineteen times here – is the life giving breath that pervades the cell of a prisoner when he believes.

Paul seems almost to burst with phrases attempting to describe the renewing work of the Spirit: "set you free," "life and peace," "life to your mortal bodies," "you will live," "glorified with Him," "firstfruits of the Spirit."

"If Christ is in you, ... the Spirit is life because of righteousness." "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3:18). Look up at the sunshine. Feel the breeze.

Questions:

1. Are verses 5 and 6 contrasting believers with unbelievers, or comparing two different conditions of believers?
2. Verse 5 speaks of setting your mind on the things of the flesh. Does this mean indulging the flesh or struggling with the flesh?
3. How does setting your mind on the Spirit give you life and peace?
4. What does it mean in verse 10 that my body is dead? What does verse 11 say about life?

5. What does verse 13 mean?

6. See verse 15. In the Roman world, adoption did not have the modern meaning but was a ceremony where the father declared that his son (natural or not) met his approval and was his heir. In light of this, how does the Spirit of adoption make one think or act differently than a servant or slave?

7. *Abba* (verse 15) is a Hebrew (or Aramaic word) meaning father, imitating baby sounds. *Father* here is from the Greek *pater*. What does this tell us about our relation with the Father through His Son Jesus Christ? (FWIW, God is rarely called “father” in the Old Testament and never directly addressed as Father.)

8. What does the Spirit testify to in verse 16, and how?

9. As heirs with Christ, what do we inherit?