



Relentless Grace: How the Gospel Changes Everything

Paul's Letter to the Romans

Session 9 – New Life in the Spirit | Romans Chapter 8:1–17

We are halfway through our study! This week we step into a favorite chapter, not only in Romans but in the Bible. For some of us, it will be a first-time read and more familiar for others. Either way, get ready for what's new. Not in the sacred page, but how it will speak to you amidst all the stuff and substance of your life and whatever is trending in your heart.

Icebreaker

What change is your favorite?

Change of scenery Change of habit Change of mind Change of clothes

Goals for this Session:

- Discover that “no condemnation” means so much more than *don't feel bad about yourself*.
- Consider why “try harder” is different than *trust and obey*.
- Pray for strength to grow and relentless grace through the process.

The Spirit of Life

Romans 8:1–11

In chapter seven, Paul’s self-description illustrates the futility of trying to live the Christian life without the Spirit of God. “Who (not *what*) will deliver me from this body of death?” Paul answers his own question in these verses.

1. **Life in the Spirit** (verses 1–4). Paul makes a striking declaration about *every single Christian*. Finish the following sentence with the correct answer.

“So now, those who belong to Christ Jesus will never . . .”

- Make mistakes or do the wrong thing.
- Fail or neglect to do the right thing.
- Deliberately choose to sin.
- Be condemned and rejected by God.

#wordstoknow

Greek words/terms at a glance.

condemnation (katákrima) Life in a perpetual cycle of judgment and rejection.

freedom (eleutheró) Liberation from the power/punishment of sin and condemnation.

For this to be true, what had to happen, and why? Use verses 2–4 for your answer.

2. **A New Mindset** (verses 5–8). Paul draws a clear contrast between those who live according to the flesh and those who live according to the Spirit.*

- a. What does it mean to “live according to the flesh”? Explain this as best you can. Give one or two examples of what it might look like in everyday life.
- b. What does it mean to “live according to the Spirit”? Give some general examples of what this looks like in everyday life.

Good to Know

In verse 2, *law* refers to a principle or driving force. In verses 3-4, *law* refers to the Mosaic Law.

☞ ☞
“Set their minds” involves a person’s will, thoughts, emotions. It also includes a person’s values, desires, and motivation. Whatever preoccupies the mind will govern us.

☞ ☞
“In the flesh” is different from “walking according to flesh.” Being “in the flesh” (vs. 8) means being unregenerate.

The Nelson Study Bible

- c. What are some practical ways to set your mind on the things of the Spirit?

*Who, specifically, is Paul talking about in these verses? Some say Paul is contrasting the saved and unsaved. Others say this describes “spiritual” and “carnal” Christians. So which is it? Can it be both? If Paul was here, his answer might be, *you’re missing the point*. The focus is that a new life is only possible because of the power and presence of the Holy Spirit living in us.

3. **A New Power Source** (verses 9–11). If we asked for a quick show of hands between living according to the flesh or according to the Spirit, which would you choose? (We'll assume you prefer the Spirit.) Great! Now go do it. *But how?* That's what these verses speak to. You see, the choice is ours—but we can't do it alone.

a. The Spirit of God lives in every believer. Paul uses the phrase “in you” four times in these verses. What can you always count on the Holy Spirit to do for you?

John 14:16–17

John 16:13–15

1 Corinthians 2:12

Galatians 5:16–18

b. Paul uses the same phrase twice in one sentence to describe how powerful the Holy Spirit is (verse 11). Some say this refers to the promised resurrection after death—but it makes more sense that Paul is reminding them of the Spirit's *resurrection power* available to them—and us—*right now*.

We all have room for self-examination on this point. Ask the Lord to identify areas to relinquish your own efforts (trying harder) and actively lean into His strength (trust/obey).

Zechariah 4:6

Philippians 3:10–14

2 Corinthians 12:9–10

“We need to understand that when our life feels lacking in power, it's not because we haven't actualized our innate potential. When our life is lacking in power, it's typically because we are working in our own strength too much!”

Jared C. Wilson
*Supernatural Power for
Everyday People*

Memory Verse

As you memorize this verse, let it sink in and make it part of your prayers. Ask the Holy Spirit to examine your heart and increase your understanding.

“The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.”
Romans 8:2 NKJV

Think About It . . .

Does this verse give you a reason to hope? How and in what way?

Life in the Spirit

Romans 8:12–17

Paul packs a boatload of truth into two main points!

1. **No Obligation to Your Sin Nature** (verses 12–14). Take a few minutes to think about it and list what is significant to you.

- a. In simple terms, how would you share this with someone who needs to hear it?

2. **A New Identification** (verses 15–17). What is most significant or encouraging to you?

- a. How would you share it with someone who needs to hear it?

“When we come to Christ, God not only forgives us, He also adopts us. Through a dramatic series of events, we go from condemned orphans with no hope to adopted children with no fear.”

Max Lucado
The Great House of God

3. *How the gospel changes everything.* Because of Jesus, we have victory over sin. The black cloud of condemnation is blown away. When we exercise our freedom to walk according to the Spirit, the power of the gospel is good news all over again.

- a. **The gospel is incentive to live an overcoming life.** As one old saint put it, “The flesh is incurably bad—it is no use trying to improve the flesh. Its nature will always be incorrigibly the same. God does not improve it—He crucifies the old life with Christ and creates a new man in Christ Jesus.”* No matter what lies or temptations come our way, what will *always* be true? For help with your answer, read 1 John 4:1–4.

- b. **The gospel is incentive to live a shame-free life.** Regrets, fears, and failures can dog us, just as they did the apostle Paul in Romans 7. We can lift our head and stand on truth. What will *always* be true? Read Romans 8:31–39.

* A. B. Simpson, *Days of Heaven on Earth*, Christian Publishers Inc., ©1886, 1945



Gospel at a Glance: Inner Conviction | “The Holy Spirit personally gives us the assurance that Christ has come into our lives—a wonderful inner conviction. You just know that you know. It is hard to explain, but it is as real as the breath you are drawing right now. The Holy Spirit delights to give you that inner witness that, yes, you are a child of God. And as part of this wonderful miracle of conversion, the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit indwells us. When you become a Christian, the Spirit comes to live inside you.” Greg Laurie¹

Adoration **C**onfession **T**hankfulness **S**upplication

“Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.” Ephesians 6:18 NIV

In each session, we will pray—for ourselves, for others, for our church, and for our nation. As a focus for prayer, use the memory verse, another scripture, or what the Lord has impressed on you from the chapter. No need to be profound or elaborate, just authentic.

Write a simple prayer, including each element here.

A _____

C _____

T _____

S _____

¹ Greg Laurie, *Start! The Bible for New Believers*, Holy Bible, New King James Version, ©1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

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