

## The Essence of Romans

The Book of Romans gives us a clear guide of how to live a Spirit-filled life in Christ.

It gives the Biblical concept of a human and a clear picture of the human soul.

Christian's ultimate goal is to please the Lord as Adam received a special human soul from God, which is God's likeness.

The following are the essential points of Romans.

- A. Understanding of a human being
- B. Who are those in Christ Jesus?
- C. What is "live according to the Spirit"?
  - a. How can I know for sure that I live according to the Spirit, not living according to the flesh?
  - b. What should we do to live according to the Spirit in our bodily life on earth?
- D. What is the new relationship with God the Father in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit?
- E. Our life as adopted sons to the same Father who is in heaven.

### A. Understanding of a human being

#### 1. Understanding "Two kinds of law (principle)" within me:

- **the law of my inner being vs. the law of the flesh**

- Romans 7:21-24

*"<sup>21</sup> So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. <sup>22</sup> For in my inner being I delight in God's law; <sup>23</sup> but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. <sup>24</sup> What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?"*

#### 2. What are the characteristics of a human being?

- Limitation of a human being
  - a. Natural limits: Our birth, getting old, death
  - b. Depravity: A wicked, sinful, and selfish nature

*Because of this limitation, a man becomes desperate and feels like there is 'no way out,' so that he cannot help crying out, "What shall I do?"*

#### 3. Is there any way to overcome the limitation?

- As in 1 Peter 2:11, we have to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against our soul. We cannot avoid struggling against sinful desires as in Romans 7:24, "Wretched man that I am!" No one can set me free from them. It is only possible through Jesus Christ (Rom. 7:25a, "Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!")
- We can try to understand this struggling through "Christian existentialism."

*From the Christian existentialism, Kierkegaard argued that the universe's greatest paradox is the transcendent union of God and humans in Jesus Christ. He said, "Each person suffers from the anguish of indecision until they commit to a particular choice about the way to live," which is through Jesus Christ.*

*In other words, there is 'no way' I can make a valid decision until I commit my life to Christ.*

#### 4. Through struggling, finally, we understand the essence of the Gospel

- Romans 7:25-8:1 shows, 'My mind serves the law of God, but my flesh the law of sin.' Now, Christ is in my mind. "Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

### B. Who are those in Christ Jesus?

#### 1. Christians who believe in Christ will not be under condemnation

- a. "because the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and of death." (Romans 8:2)
- b. What is the meaning of "being in Christ"?

- John 14:8-14 shows that whoever believes in Jesus Christ is “in Christ”
- Being in union with Christ, “... consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God *in Christ Jesus*.” (Rom. 6:11)  
Abiding in Christ (Jn 15:1-8), Grafted to Christ (Rom 11:18-25), In control of Christ (Gal 2:19-21), In Christ’s perspective (2 Co 5:13-19) – Being in Christ = yielding Christ

## 2. How can we be in Christ?

- Only God can do it, not us: 1 Cor 1:30-31, “Because of Him, you are in Christ Jesus...”
- John 6:56, “He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.”

## 3. God saved me from the miserable condition of my slavery to the law of sin and death

- Rom 8:3-4, Jesus died as a sin offering for all sinners
- For everyone who lives according to the Spirit, He condemned sin in the flesh to fulfill the righteous requirement of the law

## C. What is “live according to the Spirit”?

### 1. Which law is more powerful, the law of sin and death or the law of the Spirit who gives life?

- The power of the Spirit is greater than the power of the flesh.

### 2. One mind with two desires/masters in our life on earth

- Our mind can choose one desire over the other based on Rom. 8:5
- *The desires of the flesh* follow the **master of sin**, which is *hostile to God*; it does not submit to God's law (Rom. 8:7)
- *The desires of the Spirit* follow the **master of grace**, which is to follow the Holy Spirit

### 3. We have the freedom to choose either one or the other

- No need to fight against anyone of two masters, because you are not powerful enough to fight.
- Instead, choose to obey one master that is ready to be the master of your life while you are on earth with your body.
- Solution: Walk by the Spirit that will not gratify the desires of the flesh, and you are not under the law. (Gal 5:16-18)  
Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

### 4. How can I know for sure that I live according to the Spirit, not living according to the flesh?

- The Spirit of God-the Spirit of Christ-the risen Christ-the Holy Spirit who lives in my mind/heart. (Rom. 8:9-11)
- If indeed the Spirit of God lives in you, you are in the realm of the Spirit, (Rom. 8:9)
- If Christ and the Spirit of Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. (Rom. 8:9-11)
- *The ministry of the Holy Spirit in us (Rom. 8:2-26)*
  - v2, 10: Gives us Victorious life
  - V 6: Heavenly peace in our heart
  - V11: Will be giving the resurrected body
  - V13: Giving us new living life by putting the body to death
  - V14: Giving us guidance in life like the shepherd and guardian of our souls
  - V16: Guaranteeing us to enter the dynamic relationship with Abba Father
  - V17: Witnessing of our spirit as children of God
  - V 26: Interceding for us in times of our incompetence in prayer
- God anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit guaranteeing what is to come. (2 Cor. 1:21-22; Eph 1:13-14)

### 5. What should we do to live according to the Spirit in our bodily life on earth?

- As we are led by the Holy Spirit and put to death the deeds of the body, we are children of God. (Rom. 8:13-14)
- With the freedom of choice, we offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, which is our true and acceptable to God. And, do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is---his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Rom. 12:1-2)

- It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm and not to take a yoke of slavery. In Christ Jesus, the only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love. (Gal. 5:1,6)
- Jesus promised, "No one can snatch you out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one." Amen! (John 10:29-30)
- His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life (1 Pet. 1:3)
- I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Gal. 2:20)
- "Sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace." (Rom. 6:14)

6. The eternal facts of the Gospel truth that are ours in Christ Jesus

- "The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God."(Rom. 6:10-14)

Three steps to freedom in the Holy Spirit

1. "count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus."(11)
2. "do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires."(12)
3. "offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness."(13)

The glorious results: "For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace."(14)

**D. What is the new relationship with God the Father in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit?**

- *Fellowship with the HS:* 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." (Rom. 8:15-16)
- *He lives with you:* Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me. (Rev. 3: 20)
- HS convicts the world of sins:: When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment. He, the Spirit of truth, will guide you into all the truth. (John 14:16-17)
- *Concerning the witness of the Holy Spirit within us:* So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir. (Gal. 4:7)
- Witnessing ministry of the Holy Spirit
  1. During our spiritual prayer
  2. The fellowship of the Holy Spirit within our inner being: through a prompt or an impression or an image or a vision or an inner voice—usually a small still voice, but sometimes a thundering voice...

**E. Our life as adopted sons to the same Father who is in heaven.**

- We are adopted children and inherit everything, including present suffering or future glory, in Christ. (Rom. 8:17-18)
- The already and not yet dimension in the kingdom of God – just like a runner. (1 Cor. 9:24-27)
- As Christ suffered, we will be healed (Isa. 53:5-6; 1 Pet. 2:18-25)
- Through Christ, the Lord gives us new birth into a living hope. (1 Pet. 1:3-9)  
Present suffering is connected to the future glory
  - 1 step: Death to sin
  - 2 step: Alive to Christ
  - 3 step: Having freedom in the HS
- Join together in following my example and just as you have us as a model (Phil. 3:15-21)