

“Grace & Peace to You”

A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Voice of China and Asia

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ROMANS LESSON 51 PART 1: “ARE YOU LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD”

ROMANS 8:12-17 *So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. ¹³ For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the SPIRIT you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

¹⁴ *For all who are led by the SPIRIT OF GOD are sons of GOD. ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the SPIRIT of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “ABBA! FATHER!” ¹⁶ The SPIRIT himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of GOD and fellow heirs with CHRIST, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.*

Paul has already confirmed that **IF** we are *“in Christ,”* **THEN** we are also *“in the Spirit.”* That reality assures us that the Holy Spirit has been made to *“dwell”* in us. HE is our *Helper: our teacher; our guide; our encourager; our COACH.* That brings great comfort and assurance to us.

BUT the Holy Spirit’s presence doesn’t help us live above the temptations of the *“flesh”* **IF** we don’t Learn, Follow, Receive, and Listen. We NEED to allow ourselves to be LED by the Spirit.

DOES THE SPIRIT HAVE YOU?

A question presented in several of my Commentaries on **ROMANS** regarding this section of **ROMANS 8** is:

“YOU have the SPIRIT, but does the SPIRIT have YOU?”

That is a valid question for every Believer to consider. And it is reflected in several other passages from the Apostle Paul’s Letters.

GAL 5:16 *But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.*

COL 3:5) *Put to death therefore what is earthly in you...*

9) *seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices...*

10) *and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator...*

12) *Put on then, as God’s chosen ones...*

1 THS 4:1 *Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more...*

12) *Therefore, whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you. In order to better present this passage, I am going to use both ESV and The Passion Translation in a Parallel format.*

8:12) *So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.*

So then, beloved ones, the flesh has no claims on us at all, and we have no further obligation to live in obedience to it.

➤ **Debtors NOT to the flesh...** – A strange construction in our language, but very effective for Paul in highlighting that We are NOT under controlling obligation to the *“Old-Self”* to offer ourselves

ROMANS LESSON 51 PART 2: “ARE YOU LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD”

8:13) For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the SPIRIT you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

For when you live controlled by the flesh, you are about to die. But if by [the life of] the Spirit we put to death the corrupt ways of the flesh, we then taste his abundant life.

- **Controlled by the flesh** – One who has been totally given over to living by the former ways of life – the former Nature... There WILL BE death involved...
- This WAS our former Life...
John’s warning regarding the “*sin unto death*” - [1 JN 5:16-17](#)
Paul “*turned over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh...*” [1 TIM 1:19B-20](#)
- “*Put to death...deeds of the body...*” -
[GAL 5:24](#) “*...those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires*”
- **IF... BY the Spirit** – This is not “self-effort” but engaging the help of the Holy Spirit...

8:14) For all who are led by the SPIRIT OF GOD are sons of GOD.

The mature children of God are those who are moved by the impulses of the Holy Spirit.

- **Willing to be Led...** – **PresPass** – “allowing themselves to be led” –
- **Sons of God** – **Huiois** – Son as designated by “maturity” –
 - One to whom the “father’s business may be committed and entrusted –
 - This is the “condition” in which Believers are placed AT New Birth -
- **Sons / Children / / Sonship / Slaves (?)** –
 - **Sons** - in [VERSE 14](#) the Holy Spirit’s control and direction attests the believer’s privileges in God’s family as a “son” - **Huiois** *a child mature enough to take on adult family privileges and responsibilities*
 - **Children** - in [VERSE 16](#) the Holy Spirit’s indwelling presence attests the believer’s “*birth relationship*” to God - **Tekna**, “*children,*” (lit., “*born ones*”).
 - **Sonship** - The word translated “*sonship*” (**Huiiothesias**) [VERSE 15](#) means “*placing as a son*” and is frequently translated “*adoption*” (see also [v. 23](#)).
Believers are “*adopted sons*” ([GAL. 4:5](#); [EPH. 1:5](#)), not slaves ([GAL. 4:7](#)) in relationship to God
 - **Slaves of Righteousness / Slave of God; Jesus Christ** – (As used by Paul) – **Doulos** – Used to designate a position of “*service / obedience / surrender of the will*”

8:15) For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the SPIRIT of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “ABBA! FATHER!”

And you did not receive the “spirit of religious duty,” leading you back into the fear of never being good enough. But you have received the “Spirit of full acceptance,” enfolding you into the family of God.

And you will never feel orphaned, for as he rises up within us, our spirits join him in saying the words of tender affection, “Beloved Father!”

- **Spirit of Slavery** – the Holy Spirit does NOT place us into “slavery to God” as we were to sin

➤ This is a distinctly Pauline construction used to present the contrast between the Believers life and that of the Unbeliever.

➤ Compare with:

8:15 “*you did not receive the spirit of slavery ... but you have received the SPIRIT of adoption as sons*”

1 COR 2:12 “*we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God.*”

2 TIM 1:7 “*God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control.*”

This chain of practical verses follows the same pattern. ,

- All built upon the same pattern, with the negative first and the positive second.
- On one side bondage, worldliness, and fear...
- On the other sonship, spiritual gifts, power, love, and sanctified common-sense.

➤ *Spirit of Adoption* –

➤ *Abba Father* – “**ABBA**” - a Greek and English transliteration of the Aramaic word for father (used elsewhere in the NT only in MARK 14:36; LUKE 11:12; GAL. 4:6 – The word traditionally used by the Jews was a more classic and NOT this intimate form – “Papa”-

8:16) *The SPIRIT himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God...*

For the Holy Spirit makes God's fatherhood real to us as he whispers into our innermost being, “You are God's beloved child!”

➤ *Testifies together... **TO** our spirits... –*

8:17) *and if children, then heirs—heirs of GOD and fellow heirs with CHRIST, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.*

And since we are his true children, we qualify to share all his treasures, for indeed, we are heirs of God himself. And since we are joined to Christ, we also inherit all that he is and all that he has. We will experience being co-glorified with him provided that we accept his sufferings as our own.

➤ *Heirs... Fellow-Heirs* – We are NOT held in a “lower category” of inheritance...

- We are ALL 1st-Born” Sons... with the Full Blessing and Full Benefit

➤ *IF... – 1st Cond.* – “*IF as a fact...*” / “*if indeed...*” / “*SINCE as the case may be...*” –

- ACTS 14:22 “*...strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.*”
- What appears to be a condition on this promised inheritance is actually a simple statement of fact. Sharing the sufferings of Christ leads to sharing his glory.
- Of course, we do not share the redemptive suffering of Christ, but we do share the consequences in terms of opposition from the world he came to save

PHIL 3:10 “*...that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings...*”

1 PET 4:13 *But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.*

2 COR 1:5 *For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.*

- As members of the same family, we share in the trials of life as well as the benefits.