

The Book of Romans

The Gospel of God

"However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him."

(Romans 8:9)

¹² So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—

¹³ for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

(Romans 8:12-13)

We are Debtors...Not

1. Implication

- as those indwelt by the Spirit, we have no obligation to live according to the flesh
- implies that the flesh is still a real and present danger and influence for the Christian

We are Debtors...Not

Q: *What is "the flesh?"*

- the fallen, human condition apart from and hostile to God; consists of the values, beliefs and principles of "this world" in opposition to God
- inseparable from our "embodied" state – the whole of our humanness as corrupt
- as Christians, we continue to exist "in the flesh" but are not "in the flesh" (controlled by this condition)

We are Debtors...Not

2. Warning

- Paul clearly affirms that his readers will be eternally lost ("die") if they live by the dictates of the flesh
- Paul insists on the indispensability of "holy living" as a precondition for attaining life (cf. Heb. 12:14)

We are Debtors...Not

- What Paul is not teaching:
 - 1) A person indwelt by the Spirit of God (a Christian) can lose their salvation by living according to the flesh
 - 2) Putting sin to death (holiness) is the *cause* of attaining eternal life

We are Debtors...Not

- What Paul is teaching:
 - 1) Putting sin to death by the Spirit is the *manner* of gaining life – the necessary mark of a Christian
 - 2) If you are not putting sin to death by the Spirit, there is no compelling reason for thinking that you are united to Christ by faith and indwelt by the Spirit

¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

¹⁷ For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

¹⁹ Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality,

²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,

²¹ envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

(Galatians 5:16-21)

What does it mean to put sin to death by the Spirit and how do we do this?