

In step with Jesus 174

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Key Text: 1 John; 4 12-14 ¹² No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. ¹³ By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son *as* Saviour of the world. ¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

Introduction

When we ended reading Chapter 7 Paul, was struggling with his desire to keep the law, to do what was good, but through his human sinful nature was not doing what was right **7: 23** *"In my mind I want to be God's willing servant, but instead I find myself still enslaved to sin. So you see how it is: my new life tells me to do right, but the old nature that is still inside me loves to sin. Oh, what a terrible predicament I'm in! Who will free me from my slavery to this deadly lower nature?"* As we read on we find the beginning of the answer to Paul's question. The condemnation is gone, and is replaced with freedom and victory through Jesus Christ, knowing that the Law was never designed to save us, but to point out where we have erred, and lead us in the direction of the One who can save us. By understanding this we can have freedom. Let us read on

Romans 8: 1-17 8. There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. ³ For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶ For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. ⁷ Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. ⁸ So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹ But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. ¹⁰ And if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. ¹¹ But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you

¹² Therefore, brethren, 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 as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “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 joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.

Reflection: This chapter in my bible is entitled “The Holy Spirit frees us from sin”. After Pauls desperate cries ending Chapter 7 we see a renewed hope and life in Chapter 8. We read that mankind is freed from sin through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. By ourselves we are destined to repeat our errors and fall into worship of the Law, knowing that we have no hope of keeping it. Works will never save us, neither will strict obedience to the law. There is no “Keeping the law” well enough to earn us salvation. It is only by accepting Christs death for us, that we receive salvation. When we surrender to Jesus, we are changed. We can stand before God, perfect in His sight. We are no longer convicted law breakers, but are counted as sin-free through the faultless blood of Jesus. There is no more condemnation. Not because **we** are faultless, sinless, or worthy of eternal life, but because Christ is.

It is only through the help of the Holy Spirit that we can meet the righteous requirements of the law. Only in Christ Jesus is there freedom to do what the law requires. Apart from Him there is no freedom. As we accept Jesus Christ as our redeemer, and by the leading and help of the Holy Spirit, we become sons and daughters of God, joint heirs with Christ. We do not obey out of fear, no longer slaves, but out of love, as children to their parents. We can call God Abba- Daddy.