

“8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. 10 And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. 12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.” (Ro 8:8-17)

This is the fifth message in which we are considering the work of God in the souls of the elect. The text for the whole series is Titus 1:1-3, in which Paul speaks of the “faith of God’s elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began....”

We spoke about this hope of eternal life in the first message. From the beginning of the world, God promised to bring His people safe to the eternal city, whose builder and maker is God. It is a place prepared in heaven for us, and we shall enter through the gate of that city with joy and gladness and a cry of triumph, for God will certainly fulfill His promises to us. That was the first message about heaven and eternal life, given on April 15. Then on April 22, we looked at what must take place before we can enter heaven, which is the resurrection from the dead and glorification. Flesh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of God, so we must be changed, and at the Second Coming of Christ, we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, we shall receive our new bodies prepared for us and we shall be raised from the dead to be forever with the Lord. That was the second message.

On April 29, we spoke of God promise of preservation of our souls until the resurrection from the dead. We are secure in Christ. We will attain unto the resurrection of the dead because we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. That was the third message.

Last week, May 5, we looked at the means of our preservation, the sanctification of the Spirit. We saw its certainty and examined the experience of it in the life of the believer. It is God that works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. We do not obtain perfection in this life, but we do “follow after,” and press toward the mark, looking unto Jesus, who is the author and the finisher of our faith. It is a certainty, but we are called to strive earnestly.

Today, we will look at the work of the Spirit of Adoption who makes it possible for us to strive after holiness of life and sanctification. This is the Fifth Message and I titled it the Death of

Guilt because of the way I will examine the passage before us. Therefore we will be considering three things from the text this morning: **1. The Body is Dead. 2. The Spirit is Life 3. The Spirit of Adoption.**

- I. **The Body is Dead.** Let us consider several things about Paul's statement in verse 17.
- A. What does he mean "body" It is not the physical body, because Paul was not writing to those in the grave.
 - B. It means the same thing that Paul means when he speaks of "the flesh" in Romans. It means the nature of Adam, in whose likeness we are all born. It is also called the old man. It brings forth the horrible works described in Galatians 5:
 "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. . . . Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."
 - C. How is the "body" dead? Verse 10. Christ in you means, "faith in you." You have believed the Gospel and Christ's death is your death. Christ died because of sin. We will speak of this more next week when we speak of justification; but now it is sufficient to say this: Christ's death on the cross was a real, physical death. He was made in the likeness of sin, and suffered for all of His people. This was our legal death and delivered us from the wrath of God and the curse of God.
 - D. Therefore you are no longer considered as a son of Adam, for you are now in Christ. You have been delivered from the principle of sin and death that works in all the sons of Adam because of the curse of God. I will unpack this more next week.
 - E. Your old man is therefore crucified with Christ. This happened as a historical event in Jerusalem some two thousand years ago. You were in Christ by the eternal election of God, but you did not understand or know this until you came to Christ and confessed the Gospel that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; that he was dead and buried, and on the third day rose up again to life, according to the Scriptures.
 - F. Thus: Ro 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.
- II. **The Spirit of Life.** Vs. 10, 11.
- A. Because of Christ, you now live under a new principle, the principle of life in Christ Jesus. The principle of sin and death, no longer applies; for your sin is not imputed to you.
 - B. The new principle is Christ's righteousness is imputed to you and that means life for you. Adam's sin brings death to you; Christ's righteousness brings life to you.
 - C. This means that sanctification can begin in you. It is necessary for you to believe this great truth. That is way we read that we must "reckon or consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God." This does not mean that we put ourselves to death, morally, spiritually, psychically, emotionally, or any other way. We mortify the deeds of the "body," but the body is already legally dead by the death of Christ. We must believe the gospel and

believe that He died for our sins and that we are no more under the curse of sin and death because of the righteousness of Christ.

- D. By the Spirit of God we have been engrafted into Christ, as Paul asks in chapter three: "Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:" To put it another way, we have been adopted, and become sons of God in Jesus Christ. We are now in the vine, included among the natural branches with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Daniel, David and we are all one in Jesus Christ. This brings us to our third point:

III. **Sons of God.** Verse 12-15. We are sons of God by faith in Jesus Christ.

- A. Our new life is of the Spirit, not of the flesh. Death is by the old man; life is of the new man. We are to put off the old and put on the new if we are to know the fullness of the life of Christ. We have been adopted, the Spirit is the seal of the adoption, and now we are commanded to live like it: as children of faith, of righteousness, of holiness.
- B. Eph 1:5 "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will...."
- C. Galatians 4:4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.
- D. We receive the Spirit, because we have been adopted into the family of God. Israel had received this adoption before, for God only has one natural Son, His Only Begotten Son, who came forth from His Father from eternity. The adoption of Israel is cited in Romans 9:
- "4 Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; 5 Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen." [Note: Christ was made under the law in the likeness of sinful flesh, born of Israel in this respect, but in terms of his divine nature, God blessed forever.]

Review and application: Christ's death on the cross was the legal death of Adam with respect to the curse that is on our old man, and we are therefore adopted into the family of God, and receive the Spirit whose presence with us is the certification that we are adopted into the family of God. Hence,

1. We are engrafted into Christ, made one with Him, so that His death on the cross is counted by God as our death—legally, but not yet actually. When we go into the grave, or behold Christ at His Coming, that will be our actual death and deliverance from sin, for until then we carry the old man with us.
2. If we did not carry him with us, we would not be commanded to put him off or to mortify his works. But because we are counted dead to sin by God, we also are to count ourselves dead to sin, and begin to put off the old and put on the new. We can do this, because we are not slaves to sin as we used to be, we have received the Spir-

- it of Life, who makes us free from the principle of sin and death that holds the unbeliever in bondage. We are not in that bondage.
3. Because we are counted dead to sin by God, He has sent us His gracious Holy Spirit to bring to us all the gift that God purchased for his children, which describe the newness of life that we have in Christ: These fruits of the Spirit of Life are set forth in Gal. 5 also, as the fruit of the Spirit—this fruit that begins to be seen in us instead of the fruit of the flesh that we listed a moment ago. This fruit of the Spirit is: “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”
 4. Hence, we are to put off the old man, for we have been adopted as new men by God through faith in Christ. If you are Christ’s you have His Spirit who has begun the work of sanctification. The way of the flesh is death; the way of the Spirit is life.

As Gal 6 tells us: “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”

5. Let us, therefore, put off doubts and fears, unbelief, rebellions, self-will, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” And such like: there are a whole host of things, a “world of iniquity” even in the tongue—more sins and abominations that we could imagine, though Hollywood tries its best to imagine more and more perverse and corrupt things, and the people love to have it so.
6. Let us, also, put ON the new man, who is renewed in knowledge after the image of Jesus Christ. As Colossians 3 tells us: “And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

You and I are sons of God, by faith in Jesus Christ; our guilt is dead before God; we are free to walk in newness of life because we have been given the Spirit of God. You and I are sons of God; let us walk and talk like it. Amen and Amen. God bless you.