

Leader's Guide

LESSON 11

Dr. Jerry Nelson

In response to the sermon on November 18th.

Romans 8:1-14 **Life “in the Spirit”**

Key Points

At last we get to Romans 8, a chapter of hope, of liberation and life, of the work of the Spirit within us. In this chapter we will gain greater clarity regarding the benefits of what God *has done* and what he *is doing* through his Spirit:

- No condemnation
- The righteous requirements of the law fulfilled
- Life controlled by the Spirit
- Children and heirs of God

As we study the benefits of a life controlled by the Spirit, one wonders why it is that we do not choose to cooperate more fully with the Spirit of God as he directs. Life controlled by our sinful nature leads to death. Always. Our pleasures may feel like life for a very short season, but they lead to death. Life controlled by the Spirit leads to life. Always. Life in the Spirit can feel like death at times, and it is...death to selfishness, sinful pleasures, insatiable appetites. But life, vitality, purpose, and the blessing of our relationship with God truly offer the greatest joys of life, and they are eternal. This passage, along with the basis of it in Romans 6, is fundamental to our Christian walk.

Personal Reflection

As leaders, we recognize that, apart from Spirit of God, our study can easily remain academic. Pray especially for the anointing of the Spirit this week, that he will place a deep desire in our hearts to follow him more readily rather than the passions of our sin nature.

Discussion Questions

1. Paul says that we, who are Christians, are "in Christ." Considering Romans 6, what does "in Christ" mean?
2. What difference does it make in our lives that we are no longer under condemnation?
3. Romans 7:21-23 describes two powerful influences in the life of the Christian. What does the "law of the Spirit of life" (v2) or living "according to the Spirit" (v4) look like in your life and what does "the law of sin and death" (v2) or living "according to the sinful nature" (v4) look like in your life?
4. How do you recognize, in yourself, the "sinful nature" as sinful? What do you do when you are made aware of the manifestation of the "sinful nature"?
5. Describe from your own experience, "a mind set on what that (sinful) nature desires" and "a mind set on what the Spirit desires."
6. What affirmations should we take from verses 9-11? (*We are not uncontrollably controlled by the sinful nature; we have the Spirit of God; though our bodies will die because of sin, they will be resurrected and free from the sinful nature by the Spirit who lives in us.*)
7. Attempt to reconcile Paul's statement in 7:25b ("*So then, I myself...am...in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin*") with 8:2 ("*the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.*").
8. Give practical examples of how you or others you know have "put to death the misdeeds of the body"(v13) AND "are led by the Spirit of God." (v14)
9. Compare and contrast justification and sanctification and describe how they are yet inseparable.