

Introduction

In John Feinstein's book, *A Good Walk Spoiled*, on page ninety-seven he has a story about me that happened in 1993 at the PGA Tour Qualifying School. I had a triple-bogey on the final hole of the final round, and I ended up missing my PGA Tour card by one shot that year. The world thinks that a good walk is characterized by success in a worldly perspective, and to the world, this was a good walk spoiled. When the Bible talks about a good walk, it is talking about walking in the paths of righteousness. Adam had a good walk spoiled. God tells us throughout the Old and New Testament that there are two paths. Proverbs was written to help us walk in the paths of good men, and to avoid the paths of the wicked. Solomon wrote that the paths of the righteous is like the light of dawn, that shines brighter until the full day. The truth about my life is that before I came to Christ I was walking on the paths of darkness; I was walking according to the flesh. A year after I became a Christian, a man named Jim shared with me that I needed to read my Bible every day. It was when I began to read my Bible and apply those truths in my life that my path began to shine brighter and brighter. I learned that there are two paths in life, and that I was not to walk after my flesh, but to walk in the Spirit. The true testimony of my life is *A Bad Walk Redeemed*.

(Pr 2:12-13) "To deliver you from the way of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things; {13} from those who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness;"

(Pr 2:20) "So you will walk in the way of good men and keep to the paths of the righteous."

(Pr 4:18) "But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, that shines brighter and brighter until the full day."

Our passage today is Romans 8:1-17, and it is about walking in the Spirit. In Romans 6, Paul told us that when we become followers of Christ and identify with Him in His death, we have died to sin and it is no longer a master over us. God sets us free from the bondage of sin so that we can be raised up with Him and walk in newness of life. In Romans 7, Paul taught us that we have also been freed from the law. Even though we have been freed from sin and freed from the law of sin and death, there is still a battle going on inside of us. Our mind tells us one thing and our fleshly desires tell us something different. He ended the chapter by saying, "Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?" Paul did not stop there; he gave the answer, "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

(Rom 7:24-25) "Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? {25} Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin."

In Romans 8, Paul is going to tell us how we can live a victorious life by walking in the Spirit. We will look at three principles of walking in the Spirit. We will see that a believer does not walk in the flesh, sets his mind on the things of the Spirit, and is led by the Spirit. Finally, we will look at the results of walking in the Spirit.

Walking in the Spirit (Victorious Christian Life)

1. Believers Do Not Walk in the Flesh
2. Believers Set Their Minds on the Things of the Spirit
3. Believers Are Led by the Spirit
4. Results of Walking in the Spirit (Conclusion)

(Rom 8:1-17) “Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. {2} For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. {3} For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God *did*: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and *as an offering* for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, {4} so that the 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 are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. {6} For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, {7} because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able *to do so*, {8} and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. {9} 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. {10} If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. {11} But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. {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. {14} For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. {15} For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” {16} The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, {17} and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*.”

1. Believers Do Not Walk in the Flesh

Our passage today uses the word, flesh, twelve times, and the word, Spirit, seventeen times. Our passage is a comparison between those who walk according to the flesh and those who walk according to the Spirit, with the emphasis on how believers are to walk in the Spirit.

What does Paul mean by the flesh? The Greek word is *sarx* (Strong’s G4561), which means flesh or body. Paul is not talking about the physical flesh, but it is representative of our sinful desires and passions. In Romans 7:14, he said that he was of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. In Romans 7:17-18, he was no longer the one sinning it, “but sin which dwells in me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh.” In our text today, in verse three, the Father sent the Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and that He condemned sin in the flesh. Jesus was without sin, so he came in the likeness of sinful flesh, but He was without sin in His flesh. The rest of us have been born of sin, and for us, sin and flesh are tied together. In our text, when we are looking at the desires of the flesh, we are talking about sinful fleshly desires and passions. A desire or craving for food when you are hungry is not sinful, even though it is a physical desire. In our passage, fleshly desires are talking about sinful desires.

(Rom 7:14) “For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin.”

(Rom 7:17-18) “So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. {18} For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good *is not*.”

(Rom 8:3) “For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God *did*: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and *as an offering* for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh,”

When we look at the victorious Christian life and how we walk in the Spirit, the first principle is that we do not walk in the flesh. In Romans 6, Paul said we are to consider ourselves dead to sin; we have been freed from the bondage of sin. If we have died with Christ and been buried with Christ, then we are dead to sin. Therefore, when tempted, we are to reckon our flesh as dead to sin.

(Rom 6:10-11) “For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. {11} Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.”

Paul begins our text today by saying that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. He has died for our sins and paid the price for our sins. Jesus has justified us, which means that He has declared us innocent and righteous. God makes no distinction between our righteousness and Jesus’ righteousness. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set us free from the Law of sin and death. Therefore, there is no condemnation for those of us who are in Christ Jesus. The first truth about the Christian and sin is that we have been set free from the law of sin and death and there is no condemnation. We should walk in freedom from the burden and condemnation of sin.

(Rom 8:1-2) “Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. {2} For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.”

If you are sensing or feeling condemnation, it is not from God, for there is no condemnation for us in Christ. That does not mean that the Holy Spirit will not convict us of sin. We should feel remorse and have a spirit of contrition when we are convicted of our sins, but we should not feel a judgment. The Greek word is *katakrima*, (Strong’s G2631), which means judgment or penalty. In the seventies and eighties, we sang a lot of Scripture songs. Romans 8:1 is one of the songs we sang, and it is a great song to have in your heart when you are feeling judged and condemned.

Paul gives some details about how Christians have been freed from condemnation. The Law could not do it; it made us aware of sin, but could not free us from sin. God sent His own Son, Jesus, in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, and condemned sin in the flesh. Jesus paid the price for our sins; He was the Passover Lamb that was slaughtered for our sins. In doing so, He condemned sin, and took away the condemnation of sin for those of us who are in Christ. Jesus fulfilled the requirement of the Law, which condemned us as sinful, so that we are freed from the Law of sin and death.

(Rom 8:3-4) “For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God *did*: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and *as an offering* for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, {4} so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”

I believe the next phrase is the key thought of the entire passage. Paul that that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, “**who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.**” This passage is about walking in the Spirit, not walking according to the flesh.

2. Believers Set Their Minds on the Things of the Spirit

The second thing Paul says about walking in the Spirit is that we do not set our minds on the things of the flesh, but on the things of the Spirit. He said the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.

(Rom 8:5-6) “For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. {6} For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,”

Many years ago, the Lord gave me a song out of Colossians 3:2 and Romans 8:6. It is an exhortation to “set your mind on the things above, not on things that are on the earth, for the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.” The second verse is a practical application of the Scripture. It goes, “how do we set our minds above, what are some things that we can do? The word is one, prayer is another, but the best of all is to worship our Lord and God.” How do we set our minds above? Spending time in God’s word is a great way. There are lots of ways to do this. Karen likes to listen to the Word of God in her ear buds. I am not primarily an auditory learner, so that is not my favorite way, but it is an effective way.

(Col 3:2) “Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.”

Meditating on God’s word is a great way to set your mind on things above. I like to read the passage that I am preaching every night before going to bed. In the night and early hours when I wake up I meditate on the passage. I get insights, outlines, examples and illustrations, applications and all kinds of things in these times of meditation. I try and write everything down after my quiet time in the morning so that I don’t forget everything that I gleaned from God’s word.

Another helpful way to set your minds above is to memorize Scripture. By hiding God’s word in your heart, it helps you to meditate on it at other times. In Psalm 119, the psalmist, who many people believe was David, said, “My eyes anticipate the night watches, that I may meditate on Your word.” I believe he was reading and memorizing Scripture so that he could meditate on it in the night watches. This was a memory verse of mine many years ago, and is probably where I developed this habit.

(Ps 119:148) “My eyes anticipate the night watches, That I may meditate on Your word.”

Studying the word is a great way to set your mind on things above, but you need to have time set aside to study. It helps to have a quiet place and to have some tools available. I can meditate without my Bible or computer, but it is nearly impossible to study without my Bible and computer. In the past, we had commentaries and all kinds of hard copies of reference books, but now they are available electronically, so most of us use our computers.

Singing the word of God is another great way of setting our minds above. You can be in your car or anywhere and sing God’s word. That is what I miss about the Scripture songs that we used to sing. I encourage you to sing new songs to the Lord. Take a verse and just begin to sing it, making up your melody as you go. You may be surprised that the Holy Spirit will birth new songs in you. One of the primary ways that God fills us with the Holy Spirit is by singing to Him. Notice what Ephesians 5:18-20 says. We are not to be drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but we are to be filled with the Spirit. How? We are to speak to one another in

psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with our hearts to the Lord, always giving thanks for all things. Spiritual songs are songs birthed by the Spirit, i.e. new songs.

(Eph 5:18-20) “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, {19} speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; {20} always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;”

In my song about how to set our minds above, I have just given you one way, setting your mind on the Scriptures. But, prayer is another way. The Lord’s prayer is a great model prayer. It is not the only way or outline for prayer, but it is one that I use. We begin by hallowing God’s name. We need to know the names of God so that we can hallow His names. His names reveal His character and nature. Because I am pretty structured in my thinking, I like to go alphabetically when hallowing God’s names. I start with A. God is the Author and Perfecter of our faith (Heb 12:2). He is the Alpha and Omega (Rev 1:8), the Beginning and the End. He is the Chief Apostle (Heb 3:1). He is the Anointed One, or Christ. He is the Appointer (John 15:16); He chose and appointed us to bear fruit. He is our Advocate (1 John 2:1). These are just the A’s. Then I start going to the B’s. He is the Baptizer of the Holy Spirit (Matt 3:11). He is the Bridegroom. He is the Bread of Life (John 6:33). He is our Banner, or Jehovah Nissi. These are just a start of the names of God. I spend a lot of time giving thanks to God. We are to enter His gates with thanksgiving. Many times a large part of the time that Karen and I spend together in prayer is in thanksgiving and praises, the first part of the Lord’s prayer, and there are other parts. We can pray about His kingdom coming and His will being done. We can confess our sins, and ask Him to forgive us of our sins. We can offer up our petitions. We can intercede for others. There are many ways to set our minds on things above by praying.

Another way to set our minds above is to worship. In addition to singing God’s word, we can sing other songs of worship and praise. I like singing with my guitar. Others may want to worship using another instrument, or with a stereo, computer, or phone. Worship is one of the best ways to set our minds on things above. One of my favorite passages about this is in Acts 16:25-26. Paul and Silas were in Philippi and had been arrested and put into prison. At midnight, they were praying and singing hymns of praise to God. The foundations of the prison house were shaken and they were all freed from their chains. God is moved when we worship Him, and we are filled with His Spirit. Praying and singing are also called the harp and bowls in Revelations. Our prayers are bowls of incense and are a pleasing aroma to God. Praying and singing are excellent ways of setting our minds on things above and walking in the Spirit.

(Acts 16:25-26) “But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them; {26} and suddenly there came a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened.”

Paul makes a distinction between the unbeliever and the believer. Those that do not have the Spirit of God do not belong to God. Those of us who have received Christ have the Spirit of God. We are sealed with His Spirit when we place our faith in Christ. Those of the world set their minds on the flesh, and that mind is hostile toward God. They cannot set their mind on the Spirit because they do not have the Spirit of God. The mind set on the flesh cannot please God. On the other hand, when we set our minds on the Spirit, it is pleasing to God.

(Rom 8:7-9) “because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able *to do so*, {8} and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. {9} 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.”

3. Believers are Led by the Spirit

The third way that a believer walks in the Spirit is to be led by the Spirit. In verses twelve and thirteen, Paul said that the believer is under obligation to not to live according to the flesh. In other words, a believer is under obligation to live according to the Spirit. Paul tells us what this looks like. If we are living by the Spirit, we will put to death the deeds of the body. In verse fourteen Paul says, “for all who are being led by the Spirit are sons of God.” All who are being led by the Spirit will put to death the deeds of the body.

(Rom 8:12-14) “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. {14} For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”

Jesus said that if anyone wants to follow Him, we must take up our cross, deny ourselves, and follow Him. Taking up our cross effectively means that we are putting to death our flesh. Following Christ means that we must deny ourselves. There is no room in the Christian life for selfishness, dishonesty, or immorality. Christians are called to deny themselves. If we are going to walk in the Spirit, we must learn to say no to ourselves and yes to the Spirit of God.

(Luke 9:23) “And He was saying to *them* all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.”

The Apostle Paul said it slightly different in his letter to the Galatians. He said, “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.” Paul had not physically been crucified, but he had crucified his sinful desires, and sinful passions, known as the flesh. He said that the life he now lives in the flesh, he lives by faith. You and I still have this body of flesh, but we are under obligation NOT to live according to the flesh. We are under obligation to set our minds on things above and put the deeds of the body to death. The church would look radically different today if believers were walking in the Spirit by setting their minds on things above and putting to death the deeds of the flesh. We would not have the rampant sexual immorality and other sins in the church.

(Gal 2:20) “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”

When we set our minds on the Spirit, and are looking for the Lord to guide us, we can be confident that He will lead us. How does the Lord lead us? The Holy Spirit speaks in many ways, and one of the primary ways is through the Word of God. Joe Warner says, “Little word, little prophecy.” The Holy Spirit uses prayer, which is not a one-way conversation. The Holy Spirit gives thoughts, impressions, dreams, and visions to us. When we seek God’s direction, do not lean on our own understanding, and trust in Him, He will lead us and make our paths straight.

(Pr 3:5-6) “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. {6} In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”

When we think about being led by the Spirit, our thoughts are often about decisions that we need to make about a job, a move, or a purchase. However, in the context of this passage, Paul is talking about putting to death the deeds of the flesh, dying to sin, and living righteously. God is very interested in those other decisions and in every detail of our life, but He really wants us to be led by the Spirit to live lives that glorify and honor Him. Being led by the Spirit means that we are putting to death the deeds of the flesh, and walking in the paths of righteousness. In Psalm 23, the Lord our Shepherd, guides us in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all one, and so the Holy Spirit is leading and guiding us in the paths of righteousness.

(Ps 23:3) “He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.”

In the Lord’s Prayer, we pray that God will not lead us into temptation, but to deliver us from evil. We are asking God to lead us into righteousness, and not to put us in situations where we would be tempted to do evil. We often think that the evil we are praying about is something on the outside coming against us, and there are evil spirits and forces waging war with us. But, Paul said that nothing good dwells in our flesh; it is evil. We need to pray and also to be led against following the evil desires of our flesh.

(Matt 6:13) “And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]”

(Rom 7:18-21) “For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh... {21} I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good.”

4. Results of Walking in the Spirit (Conclusion)

a. Believers will bear Fruit

What are the results of walking in the Spirit? When we set our minds on the things of the Spirit and put to death the deeds of the flesh, what will be the results? In verse six, Paul said the fruit of an unbeliever is death, but the fruit of those who set their minds on the Spirit is life and peace. In verse eleven, Paul said that if we have the Spirit of God in us, He will give life to our mortal bodies. God promises life and peace for believers. People look for fulfillment in life and for peace, but they don’t look in the right places. God promises these two very nice rewards for those who walk in the Spirit.

(Rom 8:6-11) “For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.... {11} But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.”

A few weeks ago we saw that eternal life is knowing God; it is a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. When we receive Jesus into our life, He puts His Spirit inside of us, and we are reconciled to God. We have a relationship with Him, which Jesus referred to as eternal life.

(John 17:3) “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

Jesus said in John 10:10 that He had come so that we might have life, and have it abundantly. Many Christians are not living this abundant life that God wants for them. Why? I believe that they are not walking in the Spirit, so they are missing out on the abundant life that Jesus promised. When we walk in the flesh, or in sin, we open ourselves up to the enemy, who comes only to steal, kill, and destroy. We must receive Christ, and we must walk in the Spirit so that we have life and peace.

(John 10:10) “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have *it* abundantly.”

One of things that I have heard many people in the church tell me is that they don't have purpose in their life and don't know what God has called them to do. I believe it is important for us to find our place in the body and to serve. I believe we need to look at the gifts, abilities, and desires that God has given us. I also believe that it is difficult to steer a parked car. In Matthew 16:25, Jesus said that whoever loses his life for His sake will find it. We find life and purpose when we lose our lives for Him. I do not think that Jesus is speaking literally, but we must live our lives for Christ. Many people are parked and waiting for a big revelation of what to do instead of finding ways to serve God. When we begin to look for opportunities and step out in faith, we will find purpose and life. We will discover the things that we are gifted and anointed in, and the things that we are fruitful in.

(Matt 16:25) “For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.”

I know that I am called to be a teacher. I know that I am to study the Scriptures, apply them in my life, and teach them to others. I look for opportunities to do that. At the same time, there have been many times in my life that I have said to the pastors of the churches we have served in, “Is there anything that you need to have done? Are there any ministries that you need help with?” I have served with children's ministry, ushering, greeting, leading life groups, training life group leaders, evangelistic outreach, prayer ministry, men's ministry, newsletters, and helps ministry. When I have a choice, I choose the things that I know that I am called and anointed to do. There are times that I just lose my life for His sake, knowing that I will find life when I do it.

I want to make a couple of quick comments about peace. When we are living in the flesh, we have no peace. When we are walking in the Spirit, we have peace. Paul wrote in Romans 14:17 that the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. There is a connection between these. When there is righteousness, there is peace. When there is peace, there is joy. When there is unrighteousness, there is no peace, and when there is no peace, there is no joy. When we walk in the Spirit, we find righteousness, peace and joy in the Spirit.

(Rom 14:17) “for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”

The second comment about peace is about setting our minds on the Spirit, on things above. When we set our minds on the word of God, we have great peace. In Psalm 119:165, God tells us that those who love His law have great peace and nothing causes them to stumble.

(Ps 119:165) “Those who love Your law have great peace, and nothing causes them to stumble.”

In Isaiah 26:3, we are told that those who trust in God with a steadfast mind will have perfect peace. When you worship and pray and set your mind on God, He will give peace.

(Is 26:3) “The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in You.”

In Philippians 4:6-8, God tells us not to be anxious about anything, but to pray with thanksgivings. When we set our minds on the Spirit by worshiping and praying, the anxieties go away and we have peace. Paul goes on to tell us to set our minds on things that are true, honorable, right, pure, lovely, of good repute, and excellent. He tells us to dwell on those. When we have our minds dwelling on things above, God gives peace. When we walk in the Spirit, we have life and peace.

(Phil 4:6-8) “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. {7} And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. {8} Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.”

b. Believers Are Adopted by God

The second result of walking in the Spirit is a confirmation that of our adoption into God’s family. Unbelievers, or those that walk according to the flesh have death – spiritual separation from God. They have their minds set on the flesh, which is hostile towards God. They are not subject to God’s law, and they are not pleasing to God. They do not have the Spirit of God because they do not belong to God. What a contrast that is to believers. Believers have set their minds on the Spirit. They have been reconciled to God and are at peace with God. They are not hostile toward God.

(Rom 8:6-9) “For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, {7} because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able *to do so*, {8} and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. {9} 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.”

Believers have God’s Spirit and belong to Him. They are in the family of God. In verses fourteen through seventeen, Paul makes this very clear. All who are being led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. A son relationship is a family relationship. Paul goes on to say that we have received a spirit of adoption as son by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” Those that have received Christ and are walking in the Spirit are part of God’s family. I love being part of the family of God. I love the fact that I can go to my Father, who art in heaven, at any time about anything and cast all my cares upon Him because He cares for me.

(Rom 8:14-16) “For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. {15} For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have

received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" {16} The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,"

In Mark 3:33-35, Jesus' mother and brothers came to Him, and the people around Him told Him that they were there. Looking around at those around Him, He said, "Behold My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother." When you and I are not walking according to the flesh, but are walking in the Spirit, doing the will of God, we are sons of God; we are part of the family of God. We are not family members because we do things; we cannot earn our way to heaven. We become family members by placing our faith in Christ, not by works. But, family members do the will of God and walk in the Spirit.

(Mark 3:33-35) "Answering them, He said, 'Who are My mother and My brothers?' {34} Looking about at those who were sitting around Him, He said, 'Behold My mother and My brothers! {35} For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother.'"

c. Believers Please God

In verse eight, Paul said that those who are in the flesh cannot please God. The opposite of that is that believers have the ability to please God. When we walk in the Spirit, it is pleasing to God. When we put to death the deeds of the flesh and walk uprightly, it pleases God.

(Rom 8:8-9) "and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. {9} 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."

While unbelievers cannot please God, believers walk by faith, and we know faith pleases God. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. When we set our minds on the word, our faith is increased, and it pleases God. When we fast and pray, our faith is built up, and it pleases God. When we cling to God's promises in faith, it pleases God.

(Heb 11:6) "And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him."

d. Believers have a Wonderful Future

The fourth result of walking in the Spirit is that we have a future. In verse seventeen, we see two exciting things to look forward to. First, since we have been adopted by God and are sons of God, we are heirs and fellow heirs with Christ. An heir receives an inheritance, and we have a wonderful inheritance to look forward to.

(Rom 8:17) "and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*."

Those who walk after their flesh are not part of the family of God and are not heirs of God. In Ephesians 5:5, Paul makes it very clear. He said, "For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God." Those who are sons of God, who have died with Christ and been raised up with Him to a new life are heirs of God.

(Eph 5:5) "For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God."

When people receive Christ, He not only promises an inheritance, but He also gives them a pledge of their inheritance – the Holy Spirit of promise. In Ephesians 1:10-11, we find that in Christ we have obtained an inheritance. In Ephesians 1:13-14, we find that those who have listened to the gospel and believed are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance. We are given the Holy Spirit as a pledge, and we are to be led by the Spirit, and are to walk in the Spirit. Those who walk in the Spirit are joint-heirs with Christ.

(Eph 1:10-14) "...In Him {11} also we have obtained an inheritance... {13} In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation-- having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, {14} who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory."

The second thing that Paul says about the future of those who walk in the Spirit is that they will be glorified with Christ. Our glory is not in the flesh or in fleshly things. As believers, who have set their minds on things above, we seek the glory of God, and as a result, we will be glorified with Him.

(Rom 8:17) "and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*."

Q & A

What is the main hindrance to believers walking in the Spirit? What is something that you have found to be effective in your life for setting your mind on the things of the Spirit?

What is something in your flesh that you have had to put to death in order to follow and serve the Lord? For me, I had to put to death my selfishness. I was formerly concerned only about me, but I soon learned to look out for the interests of others. It was a process of learning to lay my life down for others.

What are some additional ways to gain mastery over the flesh? (Fasting is a way to overcome the flesh.)

For more study on inheritance, Paul prayed that we would be enlightened about our inheritance (Ephesians 1:18-19). Peter gives four characteristics of our inheritance (1 Peter 1:3-5).

Introduction (Pr 2:12-13, 2:20, 4:18, Rom 7:24-25, 8:1-17)

1. **Believers Do Not Walk in the Flesh** (Rom 7:14, 7:17-18, 8:3, 6:10-11, 8:1-4)

2. **Believers Set Their Minds on the Things of the Spirit** (Rom 8:5-6, Col 3:2, Ps 119:148, Eph 5:18-20, Heb 12:2, Rev 1:8, Heb 3:1, John 15:16, 1 John 2:1, Matt 3:11, John 6:33, Acts 16:25-26, Rom 8:7-9)

3. **Believers are Led by the Spirit** (Rom 8:12-14, Luke 9:23, Gal 2:20, Pr 3:5-6, Ps 23:3, Matt 6:13, Rom 7:18-21)

4. **Results of Walking in the Spirit (Conclusion)**
 - a. **Believers will bear Fruit** (Rom 8:6-11, John 17:3, 10:10, Matt 16:25, Rom 14:17, Ps 119:165, Is 26:3, Phil 4:6-8)

 - b. **Believers Are Adopted by God** (Rom 8:6-9, Heb 11:6, Rom 8:14-16, Mark 3:33-35)

 - c. **Believers have a Wonderful Future** (Rom 8:17, Eph 5:5, Eph 1:10-14, Rom 8:17)