

• Paul explains more of what it means to have the Spirit

In Romans 8:5–11 Paul picks up the last phrase in Romans 8:4 and develops it. Our godliness does not come by being under the law; it comes by release from condemnation and by the presence of the Holy Spirit. Now he has a paragraph<sup>¶1</sup> in which he explains more of what it means to have the Spirit. It is speaking of all Christians. Paul explains how it is that the Christian is able to fulfil the law by walking according to the Spirit. <sup>5</sup>*For those who are under the dominance of the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh but those who are under the dominance of the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.*

¶1 8:5-11

### 1. Everyone is in one of two positions

• Either 'in the flesh' or 'in the Holy Spirit'

• Christians are people 'under the dominance of the Spirit'

1. **Everyone is in one of two positions.** Every person in the human race is either 'in the flesh' or 'in the Holy Spirit'. The unconverted person is a person 'under the dominance of the flesh'. Here the word 'flesh' means our sinfulness, as in Galatians 5:16, 17, 19, 24 and 1 John 2:16. Every person is either saved or lost, either dominated by the flesh or dominated by the Spirit. The unconverted person has **only** a sinful nature.

Christians are people 'under the dominance of the Spirit'. For that reason they 'set their minds on the things of the Spirit'. God the Holy Spirit has come into your heart and life and has given you a new nature, made you a new person. It means that you have a new principle governing your life. You have new desires, new purposes, a wish to obey God that you never had before you were given this newness within your personality. You are disposed to respond to God.

### 2. Everyone is moving in one of two directions

(i) The mentality of the flesh is death

(ii) The mentality of the Spirit is life and peace

2. **Everyone is moving in one of two directions.** Romans 8:6 explains the destinies and end-products of these two mentalities. *For the mentality of the flesh is death, but the mentality of the Spirit is life and peace.* (i) The mentality of the flesh is death. Although the unconverted person may lead a reasonably pleasurable life, such a person is actually in the midst of spiritual death. (ii) The mentality of the Spirit is life. True life is to know God. It is to have fellowship and friendship with God. It is to enjoy a life of stimulus and energy within that comes only from God. This 'life' which is endlessly springing up within ( John 4:14) affects the whole personality. The mentality of the Spirit is peace, reconciliation with God and the tranquillity that comes as a result. Peace is being in the will of God and knowing it. Out of such an inner life comes the kind of love towards God and towards people that fulfils the original law of God. But the outlook of the flesh is death, says Paul. <sup>7</sup>*Because the mentality of the flesh is enmity towards God. For it does not submit to the law of God for it cannot do so . . .* The reason for spiritual death is that 'the mentality of the flesh is enmity towards God'. Such a person hates God's authority and wants to have total freedom to follow his or her own inclinations. There is a powerful, but often secret hostility towards the God of the Bible as he really is.

(iii) The unconverted person is spiritually dead, quite unable to please God

(iii) Romans 8:7–8 develops Romans 8:5a and 6a. Paul says, <sup>8</sup> . . . *and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.* The plight of the unconverted person is a very serious one. He is spiritually dead, quite unable to please God. Romans 8:9–11 explains Romans 8:5b and 6b which refer to life in the Holy Spirit. In verses 1 and 8 he used the words 'those – not the readers – who are in the flesh'. Now he is able to use the word 'you', because he is writing to Christians. So instead of saying 'those who are in the Spirit'<sup>¶1</sup> he can now address them directly. <sup>9</sup>*However, you – the word is plural and emphatic – are not in the flesh, but on the contrary you are in the Spirit. assuming that the Spirit dwells*

¶1 as in 8:5b

• *But you Christians are not 'in the flesh'*

(iv) *Ruled by the Spirit*

**3. The Holy Spirit produces life in us now and for ever**

• *Our bodies are mortal because of sin, yet because we have the Spirit we have life in us*

• *Our spiritually dead bodies are only temporary*

• *He will raise us to resurrection-glory*

in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ that one is not his. Christians are not 'in the flesh'. It is true that they are 'in the body'. But the Christian is not at all 'in the flesh' in the sense of being under the dominion of the sinful nature. They have died to sin. The power of 'the flesh' has **already** been broken.

(iv) He goes on to describe the Christian positively. **They are being ruled by the Holy Spirit.** Paul has three different ways of describing the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. **We are 'in' the Spirit.** The Holy Spirit is tightly joined on to us. We are 'in' him in such a way that he rules over us and has dominion over us. **The Holy Spirit dwells in us.** We are in the Spirit; the Spirit is in us. **We 'have' the Spirit.**

**3. The Holy Spirit produces life in us now and for ever.** Two more aspects of the matter follow. He says: <sup>10</sup>*And if Christ is in you, on the one hand the body is dead because of sin, but on the other hand the Spirit is life because of righteousness.* Although Christ is in us, and we have the Spirit, nevertheless for every Christian 'the body is dead because of sin'. Paul is speaking of our literal material bodies. When we became Christians our salvation did not change the mortality of the body. Our mortality remains in us. We are riddled with physical weakness and we physically deteriorate. But there is something that compensates for the fact that the body is dead. The Spirit is life 'because of righteousness'. Every reference to 'Spirit' in Romans 8:1–9 has referred to the Holy Spirit. Every reference to Spirit in Romans 8:11–17 also refers to the Holy Spirit. We have no reason to think anything is different in Romans 8:10. The Spirit is life! The downward pull of the body is always with us, but the power of the Holy Spirit is greater. The body is dead, but we can rise above the deadness of the body, for the Holy Spirit is life.

The Holy Spirit is the guarantee that we shall be brought all of the way to final resurrection and glory. We shall never be finally condemned. <sup>11</sup>*And 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 the Spirit who dwells in you.* Paul's point here is to give us a word of encouragement. Our **dead** body is temporary. We have a 'drag' on us for the moment. One day it will end. Our spiritually dead bodies are only temporary. **The same Holy Spirit who raised Jesus will raise us also.** The ever-flowing life of the Holy Spirit will continue even beyond the grave and because we belong to Jesus the Spirit will do for us what he did for Jesus. He will raise us to resurrection-glory.



slices.org.uk

Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His *Preaching Through The Bible (PTTB)* books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.



These specially reformatted chapters "Slices of Bread" produced by Sovereign World Trust are available in three categories as set out below

Slices for the Nations	Slices for Sponsors	Slices for Everyone / Slice of the Week
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For pastors, libraries and colleges in those parts of the world <b>where resources are scarce and unaffordable</b></li> <li>In the fullness of time the whole series will be made available <b>free of charge</b></li> <li>Weekly emailings of 3 - 4 Slices or available to download from the <i>Slices</i> web site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For those in more prosperous circumstances who <b>can afford to contribute to the development</b> of this material and its distribution with a <b>small monthly donation</b></li> <li>The same material as <b>Slices for the Nations</b></li> <li>Weekly emailings of 3 - 4 Slices or by download from the <i>Slices</i> web site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For those who wish to <b>sample</b> the material or dip into it from time to time, a <b>proportion</b> of the PTTB series is available <b>free of charge</b></li> <li><b>Slices for Everyone</b> (as a download) or <b>Slice of the Week</b> (attached to a weekly email)</li> <li>The remainder of the PTTB material is available to Sponsors and those eligible to receive <b>Slices for the Nations</b></li> </ul>

To subscribe please contact: [slicesofbread@sovereignworldtrust.org.uk](mailto:slicesofbread@sovereignworldtrust.org.uk) stating which category fits your situation. Further details are at [www.slices.org.uk](http://www.slices.org.uk)  
 Details of the availability of *Preaching Through The Bible* books and how they may be purchased can be found on [www.ibtr.org.uk](http://www.ibtr.org.uk)