

Power for Living

Key Verse: “*As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*”

—**Romans 8:14**

Selected Scripture:
Romans 8:1-16

a new law, which Jesus himself established by his faithfulness, even unto death. Apostle Paul contrasts these two laws, saying, “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” (Rom. 8:2) This statement of Paul emphasizes that the one law leads to life, while the other leads to death. How can this be?

The ‘law of sin and death’ Paul refers to in this lesson is a law according to the flesh. It is a law requiring fleshly obedience in order to attain its reward, everlasting life. It was the law given to Adam in the Garden of Eden, which he disobeyed. This law was further illustrated by Israel’s relationship to God under the Law Covenant. This covenant, made by God with the nation of Israel, and its laws were perfect, and, if followed, would have brought everlasting life; but, as Paul says, it was “weak through the flesh.” (vs. 3) However, Jesus was not ‘weak’ in the ‘flesh,’ and kept this, and all God’s laws, perfectly. (Heb. 7:26) As Paul says, he “condemned sin in the flesh” (vs. 3) by his perfect obedience to all God’s statutes.

TODAY’S LESSON CON-
trasts two laws, both of which have touched the lives of all those striving to follow after God and his son Jesus. Each of us has been subject to the law under which Adam and his entire race have fallen. We are also now subject to another law,

Because Jesus kept all of God's laws perfectly, and also died "the just for the unjust" (1 Pet. 3:18), he not only released Adam and his posterity from the penalty of death, having taken Adam's place in death (I Cor. 15:22), but he also established a new way, a new law, through which one could approach God. This new law was one which did not require actual perfection according to the flesh, but rather the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit under a new arrangement, one in which Jesus' followers were now to be considered "new creatures." (II Cor. 5:17) This law is identified by Paul as "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus."—Rom. 8:2

It is this new law which is to govern the life of a Christian. Our lesson further states, "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. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 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." (vss. 11-13) The Key Verse of this lesson indicates that although the law of the Spirit does not require perfection of the flesh, it does require that the flesh, and every other aspect of our life, be 'led by the Spirit of God.' God's Spirit, influence, power, and will, must be the guiding principle of our life, and must direct our thoughts, words, and deeds to the greatest extent possible. Further, it should lead to a putting away of fleshly tendencies, actions, and desires, as such qualities have no place under the new law. These are to be replaced with higher goals, aspirations, and the development of a noble character based upon the godlike qualities of "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance." (Gal. 5:22,23) This process of putting on the fruits of the Spirit is the lifelong work of every Christian. Only those who are thus led will be found worthy to be called "children of God."—vs. 16 ■