

Life in the Spirit

Key Verse: *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”*
—Romans 8:1

Selected Scripture:
Romans 8:1-14

WE READ IN ROMANS 3:20,

“By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” The law given to Israel through Moses was perfect. However, no one from Adamic stock is perfect, neither Jew nor Gentile. “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me,” the psalmist declares. (Ps. 51:5) It

is by the ransom sacrifice of God’s only begotten son, Jesus, as the only one who was “separate from sinners,” that redemption of the world of mankind from sin and death has been made possible.—John 3:16; Heb. 7:26

Our Key Verse shows us that freedom from present condemnation is the result of Jesus’ sacrifice on our behalf, and our being “in Christ Jesus” by faith. Paul also uses the word “therefore.” This refers to his preceding words, in which he testified, “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. (Rom. 7:25) God has graciously arranged that the merit of Christ’s sacrifice compensates for the unintentional weaknesses and blemishes of the followers of Jesus. There is then “no condemnation” so long as we abide in Christ, and under the merit of his shed blood.

All who have made a consecration and come into Christ during the present age are reckoned as dead to the law of sin, and alive by “the law of the Spirit of life” in Christ. (Rom. 8:2) This new life is spent in the development of a heart, mind, and character, which God will accept. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (II Cor. 5:17) This new mind, or new creature, is in reality, as Paul states, the “mind of Christ.” He further admonishes, “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”—I Cor. 2:16; Phil. 2:5

In another place, the apostle instructs us: “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you.” (II Cor. 13:5) To be “in the faith” implies more than belief, confidence, and trust, although these are of vital importance. It also involves more than mere acceptance of Jesus’ sacrifice on our behalf. Additionally, it means having Jesus’ humility, meekness, and self-sacrificing spirit. Self-examination along all these lines is a very important part of our life in the spirit.

Our growth in the new life we have in Christ also includes the work of transforming our character into his likeness. (Rom. 12:2) This is to be especially along the lines of service, sacrifice, and in the development of the fruits of the spirit—love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance.—Gal. 5:22,23

Our efforts in these holy endeavors will give evidence that we have the spirit of God and are pleasing in his sight. “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 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.—Rom. 8:16,17

