

Victory in Christ  
A Study of Romans 6-8  
by Roger Tuinstra (Revised January 2020)

In my life experience, one of the most important passages of Scripture has been Romans 6-8. I believe that most of us have at least one area in our lives where there are nagging temptations; areas where we have a hard time gaining victory. I believe this passage along with some parallel passages, provide us with the truths that are essential to victory and to receive grace and forgiveness. Perhaps the thoughts and meditation that I will share on this passage will be helpful to you as well.

The key idea here is that we need to know and believe the **truth** about God, and what He has done for us. Then we need to **act** on that truth as if it's really true because it is. And finally, we need to **allow** our **feelings and emotions** to follow. We normally act on our feelings, letting them lead, rather than letting the truth lead.

What I'm going to do is provide the text to this passage beginning in Romans 5:19, and then after each section comment on it, bringing in other passages as necessary to explain how I think these verses can help us to become the kind of men and women God would have us to be. Sin is a fierce foe, and these thoughts are not meant to imply easy steps that immediately solve all of our temptation problems. But if you take time to think through these Scriptures and meditate on them, I think you will find them helpful in the battle.

All of the scripture texts are from the New King James Version.

**Romans 5:19-8:39**

**19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous. Moreover, the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

In Romans 5, Paul explains that Adam's sin was attributed to us because Adam was our representative. His decision to sin was counted as the decision of everyone in the human race, and thus we all were made sinners at that point. We are sinners in our own right, but we were born sinners and guilty because of Adam's position as a representative of the race. In a similar way, Christ serves as a representative for all who are in Him. His obedience is counted as the obedience of His people. What we need to see here is that just as truly as we were made sinners by Adam's sin, those who are in Christ are made righteous through Christ's righteousness. Often we think of the sin side as being more dominant than the righteousness side. Not so. In the passage just quoted, many were made sinners by one man's disobedience, and many will be made righteous by different Man's obedience.

We also learn in this passage that the law entered so that the offense might abound, or increase. Romans 4:15 tells us that where there is no law, there is no transgression, and 5:13 tells us that sin is not imputed against a person when there is no law. So God brought the law to people who were already sinners so that the offense might be increased. But, and that is an important "but," where sin increased, God's grace increased all the more. The result is that just as sin reigns and is triumphant in the death that it causes, grace will reign and be triumphant unto eternal life. Sin cannot gain the upper hand over grace. Grace is always greater.

## **Principle 1: Sin abounds but grace abounds more!**

**6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.**

The question then arises that since, when sin increases, grace increases more, should we sin more so that there will be more grace? The answer in verse 2 is “of course not!” Paul goes on to say, almost with a tone of incredulity, “How could we go on living a life of sin if we died to sin?” The fact is that when we were baptized into Christ at our salvation, we were baptized into Jesus' death. (I don't believe he is talking about water baptism here, but spirit baptism as in 1 Corinthians 12:13.) Being baptized into His death means that Jesus' death counts as our death. We went to the tomb with Him.

The result is that just as Christ was raised from the dead and was at that point free from the temptation and trials that sin brought before His death, we too should view ourselves as having died with Christ, and should look at it as though we are on the other side of the resurrection. The truth of the matter is that we **are** on the other side of the resurrection as far as God is concerned. Ephesians 2:5-6 says, “even when we were dead in trespasses, (God) made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus.” Our identity with Christ is so thorough, that in a sense we are already in Christ in heaven. The goal, then, is to walk in newness of life, just as Christ does, because we too were raised on that day.

## **Principle 2: Our identity is Christ and our position is 'in Christ'.**

**6:5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness of His* resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin.**

Paul then goes on to say that just like we have been united with Jesus in His death, we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection. We were raised spiritually with Christ when He rose again, and our bodies in the future will also be raised.

The crucial point he makes in verse 6 is that when we died with Christ, what he describes as “our old man,” which I take to be the old sin nature, went to the cross with Jesus so that the body of sin might be done away with, with the result that we would no longer be slaves to sin. The phrase “done away with” in some versions is translated as “destroyed.” As an argument in this direction he says in verse 7 that he who has died has been freed from sin. In other words after we die, sin won't be an issue. And we are to see ourselves as having died with Christ when He died. Even though we are actually still in the body and subject to temptation, the truth is that we have died to sin. Having died to sin means that sin has no power and no authority over us any longer to keep us in bondage. The chains have been broken.

Now, unfortunately, it doesn't often feel that way. It feels like sin still has a lot of power over us because of all of the habits we have formed in living our lives. But we should focus on the truth of what God tells us, and not on how we feel at any given moment. Sin is deceptive, and our flesh is vulnerable

to habits and patterns of thinking. Both of these create a situation where we *feel* like sin still has the mastery. But it does not!

**Principle 3: Because we died with Christ, we have been released from sin's power and authority.**

**6:8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Since we died with Christ, we shall also live with Him. It's important to realize that not only will we live with Him sometime in the future, but we live with Him now. Galatians 2:20 says, “<sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ; 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 for me.” Here are a couple of other key passages:

Colossians 3:3, 4 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ *who is* our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. (Christ is our life.)

Romans 5:17 For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:10 And if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness.

So Christ's life and our life are intertwined already. He is our life. We live by His strength and power. He is at work in us, living out His life in us.

Next Paul shows us that since Christ died and rose again, He will not die again. Death no longer has any way of overpowering Him. When He died, He died to sin once for all. Now we know that Jesus didn't sin, but the Bible does tell us that He was tempted in every way like we are yet without succumbing to sin's pull (Hebrews 4:15). So since He died, He died to sin, but now having been raised from the dead, He lives to God. He is not living in the environment where sin is surrounding Him on every side with its pull. Rather, He is living focused on God, and what God has for Him. Now verse 11 gives us an important step in understanding how to have victory. We are to reckon or count ourselves also to be dead to sin. This is not mind over matter, it is a matter of believing the truth that we died with Christ and have been raised with Him. Since these things are true, we are to believe, and live like, and have a mind-set of, having died to the sin-centered focus and are now alive to a God-centered focus. This is to be an active mind-set. We are to count it as true moment by moment. When tempted, we are to remind ourselves that this sin has no power over us, and that we have died to it. It belongs to our old life.

**Principle 4: Based on the truth we should reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to God.**

Other passages in scripture stress this same truth. For example, in Colossians 3:1-5 we read, “If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand

of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ *who is* our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, ....”

Later in verses 9 and 10 we read, “Do not lie to one another, since you have **put off the old man** with his deeds, and **have put on the new man** who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him.” (Emphasis mine)

In Ephesians 4:22-24 Paul writes, “that you put off, ... the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.”

So in the Colossians passage especially, we see that since we died with Christ, and since we have been raised with Christ, we are to behave in a certain way. These things are truths to be believed and acted upon. It's not just a rule out of nowhere that we're supposed to seek those things that are above. That would be an arbitrary law that the flesh is not able to keep. But since we are resurrected people, and our lives are actually on the other side of death and the grave, our sights can be set on heavenly things.

It's also important to note here, that when he tells us to look on things above and not on things of the earth, he is not talking about a far off heavenly gaze that is transfixed on angels, streets of gold, and the like. And when he tells us to turn our gaze away from things of the earth, he is not talking about the normal aspects of earthly living. He is telling us to turn away from sinful things such as fornication, covetousness, and wrath and put our attention on heavenly things such as mercy, kindness, and humility.

In the Ephesians passage, he tells us to put off the old man. In our Romans passage Paul had said that the old man had died with Christ. I don't think this is a contradiction. I think he is telling us to put into practice what is true. The old man was crucified with Christ. Therefore, when we feel those rustlings of the former life that have become habits and ways of thinking, we are to consciously, purposefully, and regularly set that stuff aside. These things are the vestiges of the old life that need to be removed. And we are to consciously and purposefully put on Christ. That means to act on the fact that we are new creatures in Christ and purposefully behave in a Christ-like way, trusting Him to be working in us with His power and strength. These are conscious decisions on our part.

**Principle 5: Consciously take your eyes off of earthly, sinful ways, and focus them on righteous heavenly things, because you died with Christ and have been raised with Him.**

Back to Romans 6

**6:12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.**

Because of these facts, we are not to allow sin to reign in our mortal bodies. We have the power not to allow it to reign because its dominion has actually been broken. It has strong lusts and desires, but we are not to give in to them because we have died to all of that. One of the things I struggle with is the fact that when we reckon these things to be true, we still find ourselves surrounded by sinful

temptations, and the admonition not to let sin reign is easier said than done. So I acknowledge that right from the start. But he goes on with some other principles that help.

In verse 13 he tells us not to present our members as weapons of unrighteousness to sin. In other words, our hands, feet, eyes, etc., are our members, and sin can use them as weapons against us. So we should not be handing these members over to sin to use against us in the battle we're in. In a real war we can see that it would be foolish to give our guns to the enemy so that they could shoot us with them. The same thing is true in our spiritual battle. Instead, we should hand our members over to God as instruments of righteousness. Almost moment by moment through life we can make that choice. And since we have reckoned ourselves to have died to sin, we are free now to use our members as weapons of righteousness.

In verse 14 Paul tells us that the reason we can do this is because of the amazing truth that sin shall not have dominion over us. It's reign has ended. But isn't it true that sometimes it doesn't feel all that much like it has no dominion? That's because sometimes we are in the habit of sin, and we have to acknowledge that some sins we just plain like to do. But the power of sin to dominate us and rule us has been broken. How is it broken? The verse says, "for you are not under law but under grace." The Bible tells us that the law actually increases sin. In a passage that we'll look at a little later, Paul writes, "What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, '*You shall not covet.*' But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all *manner of evil* desire. For apart from the law sin *was* dead." (Romans 7:7,8). And in 1 Corinthians 15:56 he writes, "The sting of death *is* sin, and the **strength** of sin *is* the law." (Emphasis mine) So by removing us from the subjection to the law, God has removed one of the most powerful forces toward sin. I have thought about this a lot, and I still don't have it in my mind how this all works, but that is what this scripture is saying, isn't it?

**Principle 6: Since you have died to sin, do not allow it to reign by giving your members to sin to be used as weapons against you.**

**6:15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!**

Now another question arises. Since we are not under the law, but under grace, should that be a motivation to sin? And the answer is the same as before. Of course not! Then he goes on to explain the implications of that answer.

**Principle 7: You are not under the law but under grace.**

**6:16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of obedience *leading* to righteousness? But God be thanked that *though* you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. I speak in human *terms* because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members *as* slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness *leading* to *more* lawlessness, so now present your members *as* slaves of righteousness for holiness. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things *is* death. But now having been set free from**

**sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.**

First, he points out that even though we have been set free from the dominion of sin, yet to whomever we present ourselves for obedience, we are that person's slave. Verse 16 tells us there are two choices: we can present ourselves to sin leading to death, or we can present ourselves to obedience leading to righteousness. So even though we aren't technically in bondage to sin any longer, by offering ourselves to sin as a servant, we are in effect a slave of sin. Whoever's will we do, we are a servant of that person.

Let's follow those two lines of thought through these verses. First, the train of thought he uses when we present ourselves to sin. In vs. 16 he shows us the end or result: "whether of sin leading to death." In verse 19 he pictures a person presenting his members as slaves of uncleanness and lawlessness with the result that it leads to further lawlessness. In verse 21 he focuses on the end which is death. So it goes like this: self --> sin --> uncleanness --> lawlessness --> death.

What is the alternative? Presenting ourselves to obedience. Beginning in verse 16 we present ourselves to obedience, and then to righteousness in verse 18, and then to holiness in verses 19 and 22, and the end of that line is eternal life. So that sequence goes like this: self --> obedience --> righteousness --> holiness --> eternal life. Reread the Scripture passage with these paragraphs in mind and I think you'll see it laid out for you there.

So there are these two choices – either present ourselves to sin with the result of death or present ourselves to obedience with the result of eternal life. Here again, it's a decision we make moment by moment.

This is similar to Paul's teaching in the book of Galatians where he tells us that when you sow to the flesh you reap corruption, but when you sow to the Spirit, you reap life everlasting (6:8). His warning there reminds us that we reap what we sow. Christian or non-Christian, corruption results from sowing to the flesh.

Now this isn't salvation by obedience and living righteously. That would contradict other passages of Scripture some of which we will be looking at as we go along. But I think it is saying that grace and salvation take us down the obedience, righteousness, holiness path. In other words it's a mistake to think that you can possess salvation and yet be on the path that leads to death. That would be a contradiction.

**Principle 8: In effect you are a slave to who you obey--either sin which leads to death or righteousness which leads to life.**

So that brings us to a familiar verse, Romans 6:23:

**For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

The interesting thing about where this verse fits in the context is that it's just not a statement about sin and the comparison of being lost and saved, although it is that. It is in the context that we just discussed where there are two different paths a person can take in presenting one's self either to righteousness or to sin and the consequences of those choices. This is a verse written to Roman Christians in the middle

of this discussion of which choice we might make as we are faced with opportunities to yield to one or another. So this is a warning that to yield to sin leads to death.

Here's where it gets tricky, and I want to be careful not to contradict other teachings in the Scripture. It is clear to me, that when a person comes to know Christ in a saving way, his behavior cannot undo the justification he has received. In other words, sinful behavior does not cancel the justification we have in Christ. Instead, his behavior will change because if we are in Christ, we are a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). And because we are under the new covenant, we have the new covenant promise of the removal of our old stony heart, the giving of a new heart, and new spirit, the presence of the Holy Spirit of God in our lives, and the motivation to be obedient (Ezekiel 36:26, 27).

But, given these truths, it is also clear that this verse is a warning not to yield to the sin that lurks in our flesh. Yielding our members to sin is a path that ultimately leads to death, so why would a Christian want to venture down that path? Warnings are given to help us avoid the dangers along the way, and we should heed them.

We should not look at promises and warnings as contradictions. In the story of the shipwreck on one of Paul's journeys, Paul was told by God that no one would be lost in the wreck. Later on, however, some of the frightened sailors started to lower lifeboats to escape the doomed ship. Paul warned them that if they took a lifeboat, they would not survive. Was that a true warning given the fact that Paul had already promised no one would be lost? Of course it was. The result was that the sailors did not take the lifeboats, their lives were saved, and God's promise to Paul was fulfilled. Promises and warnings can both be true and valid, and they often work together to accomplish God's purposes. I believe the same thing is true in the passage we are studying.

**Principle 9: Remember yielding to sin leads to ever increasing lawlessness and ultimately to death.**

**Chapter 7:1 – Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to *her* husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of *her* husband. So then if, while *her* husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man.**

Paul is bringing us back now to the discussion of the law as it relates to us as Christians. He had previously told us that we are not under law, but under grace. The law about marriage and adultery applies to a person only while he is living. If a spouse dies, a person is no longer under the law that says she cannot marry another man. So, if a husband dies, the wife is free to marry another man. She is not under that law. It has no jurisdiction over her because it is for a different situation. The law is not gone. It just doesn't apply in this case.

**7:4 Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.**

In the same way, since we have died with Christ when He died on the cross, we have become dead to the law. As far as the law is concerned, we died. The law says that the soul that sins shall die (Ezekiel 18:4). Jesus Christ, having born my sins on the cross, represented me there, and so the law that says I should die was fulfilled way back then. The punishment has been meted out, and the law no longer applies to me. It has already been applied in Christ. The law can't punish the same person twice for the same crime.

The result is, according to verse 4, that now I'm free to be married to Christ so that I can bear fruit for Him. I've died to the old husband, sin, and no longer bear fruit for it. Just as a wife who marries a man can bear his offspring, so I can be married to Christ so that the fruit of His life in me can be born out into the world. It's similar to Jesus' parable of the vine and the branches. We bear fruit by abiding in Christ. Without Him we can do nothing (John 15:5). The idea of bearing His offspring is a hint to the answer to the question: How is it possible to live the Christian life successfully? It is a matter of His bearing His life out through us by His Spirit. Even though this doesn't happen perfectly because of our weaknesses, we can have the confidence that the law that would smack us down, has no jurisdiction in our case because we have died to that phase of life.

**Principle 10: When you died with Christ you died to the jurisdiction of the law and are set free to bear fruit for God.**

**For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death. But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not *in* the oldness of the letter.**

“When we were in the flesh.” When was that? This is an important phrase that I want us to keep track of as we go along, especially when we get to chapter 8. Verse 6 begins with “but now.” That means that being “in the flesh” was our state before we came to Christ, while we were still in our sins. At that time, verse 5 tells us, the law aroused sinful passions in us that worked in the members of our body to bear fruit to death. So, when we were in the flesh, we brought forth fruit for death, but once we are joined to Christ, we bear fruit for God.

But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by. As mentioned earlier when we died with Christ, we died to the law. The law held us in its grip and sinful passions were awakened and brought fruit for death. Before this, we were “in the flesh.” Now we are said to be “in the Spirit.”

Now that we are not under the law anymore, we serve in a new way. This approach Paul calls the newness of the Spirit as in comparison to the old way of the letter. Paul wrote to the Corinthian church to tell them that the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life (2 Corinthians 3:6). This is a contrast he discusses in several places in Scripture. Romans chapter 8 will discuss this newness of the Spirit in greater detail. So let's go on.

**Principle 11: We serve now with the Spirit being the motivator of our actions rather than the external command of the law.**



**7:7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, “You shall not covet.” But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead. I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me. Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.**

You can read this whole section for yourself. In essence, he wants to make sure we understand that the law is not sin, but it did bring death. The law is holy and just and good. What is the problem then? The problem is that sin is deceitful, and in its deceitful way, it took advantage of the commandments, and stirred up all manner of evil desire in Paul. It does the same thing to us. Sin is personified in these verses as though it is an entity in itself. Paul says that apart from the law sin was dead. But when the commandments of the law begin to be understood, sin starts to wake up and brings about death in us. That's why he told the Corinthians that the letter kills. There's no transgression unless there is a law to transgress. And the punishment for transgression is death.

So as the argument here is being developed, we find that God deemed necessary to remove us from the jurisdiction of the law so that sin couldn't use it to have that deadly impact on us anymore.

**Principle 12: The law gives sin its power.**

**7:13 Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not! But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good, so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful.**

Paul reiterates the fact that the law is not the problem per se. It is sin that used the law as the excuse to produce death in me. In so doing sin can be seen for what it is as exceedingly sinful.

**Principle 13: Sin in me is the problem.**

**7:14 For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.**

The problem is that the law is a spiritual thing, but I am a carnal or fleshly being in my natural state. Because of that fact, sin has an advantage in me when the law is brought into contact with my carnal nature. Paul shows how the frustration of this worked its way out in his life. I'm sure that you have faced a similar struggle. The things I want to do to be obedient to God, I don't seem to be able to do. The things that I know I should avoid, those things I end up doing. Why is that?

He makes several points here that are important. First, he says we are sold under sin. In our minds we agree with the law that it is good. But then Paul does something interesting in his analysis of this

problem. He separates himself from “sin” that dwells in him. He says, “It is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.” He says this twice. The real Paul wants to do right, but sin is right there to overcome that good desire. The frustration then is *how* can I perform what is good? How can I overcome this power that sin has in my life? Is he passing the buck, trying to evade responsibility for sinning? No, but as he analyzes how this works, he realizes that there is a sin problem at the core of his being that needs to be dealt with and overcome somehow.

**Principle 14: It is not me but sin in me.**

**7:21 I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? 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.**

**Principle 15: There is a war between me and the sin in my members.**

So he ends the chapter by coming to several conclusions, laws, or principles. First, when I want to do good, evil is right there present with me. 2) There is a law or principle in the members of my body warring against the principle or law of my mind. 3) This brings me into captivity to the law of sin. Later he will describe this as the law of sin and death. It's the law that works death because of sin taking place in our lives. It's a cause and effect principle. Sin works death in us. This state of affairs for Paul and for many of us is the sense of wretchedness because we want so much to have victory, but yet the sin and the flesh seem to have so much sway over us. It makes us almost spiritually schizophrenic because with our mind we desire to do the right thing, but our body or flesh does not cooperate. This discord makes us miserable. Who will deliver us? Our answer should be the same as Paul's, “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!”

**Principle 16: God through Jesus Christ is our deliverer.**

**Chapter 8 *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.***

Now comes the wonderful explanation of victory that we can enjoy. The first thing we need to understand is that if we are in Christ Jesus, there is no condemnation. A person who has trusted in Christ has been justified freely by the grace of God (Romans 3:24). The righteousness of God has been given to us when we come to Christ in faith (Philippians 3:9; 2 Corinthians 5:21). God has removed our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:12). Christ became the curse for us (Galatians 3:13).

I look at it as an umbrella. While we are learning to live by faith and learning to be faithful disciples, we live under the umbrella of no condemnation. There is absolutely no judgment for sin awaiting the believer. All of the punishment that was due us because of our sin was laid on Christ. All of the ways that we fail to do what is required – all those failures were placed on Christ. All of the things we have done against God and against His law have been laid upon Christ. If we are in Christ Jesus, there is no condemnation. That's the first thing we should know. If we are a believer, this is true no matter how difficult a time we have trying to be obedient. It is our protection and our only hope of eternal life.

**Principle 17: There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.**

**8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.**

As he mentioned at the end of the previous chapter, there is a law of sin and death at work and it has taken us captive. We are bound to it because of the warring that takes place between our flesh and our minds. This verse tells us that there is another law or principle that is superior to the law of sin and death. That law is the law of the Spirit of life. Whether we feel it or not, this law has made me free from the law of sin and death.

I don't know if I'm correct or not, but I look at it like the law of gravity. If you step off the roof of a 10-story building, you're going to get hurt. The law of gravity is in place. But there are other laws as well. There are laws of aerodynamics which also apply. If you step off that same building with a parachute or some kind of glider, the law of gravity in its normal way of working on a human body is trumped by a different law. That's what this seems like to me. There is a law of the Spirit of life and this law sets me free from the normal principle of sin and the resulting death that comes from it. This doesn't remove the fact that there are consequences to our sin, but I think the point here is that God, in His saving work for us, has provided not only a way of salvation, but a way of victory. Jesus after all was named "Jesus" for He would save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21). So first, there is no condemnation and second, the law of the Spirit of life has countered the law of sin and death. That cycle is broken. Notice that this principle is based on the Spirit. It is the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus that frees us. Remember, the letter kills but the Spirit gives life.

Paul began this verse with the word "for." There is no condemnation **because** the principle of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has freed me from the death consequences of sin. The Spirit of life that is in Jesus Christ is a powerful person who is at work, freeing us and loosing us from the perpetual cycle of sin and death.

**Principle 18: The Spirit has released me from the law of sin and death.**

**8:3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,**

Again, he starts this verse with the word "for." Can you see the fact that each verse builds upon the truth of the preceding verse? The principle of the life of the Spirit of Christ is able to free us because of what verse 3 says. There are things that the law cannot do. The writer of Hebrews says it this way, "For on the one hand there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, *there is the* bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God" (Hebrews 7:18,19). Here he describes the law as being weak and unprofitable. As we read earlier, the law was brought in that sin might abound.

But the praise here comes from the fact that what the law could not do, God did! He sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. In other words, Christ had a flesh like we have even though He did not sin. He was tempted though, so He knew what that was like. In the process of living this life in the flesh without sinning, He condemned sin in the flesh. He demonstrated its utter weakness to control a human

being. Sin does not have the dominion it once had, and Jesus Christ demonstrated that fact. What the law could not do, Christ did!

But He not only defeated sin in His own flesh, He came as a sin offering. So in addition to condemning sin in the flesh by living a sinless life, He condemned it to death on the cross when He died. So here's what we have. Paul, looking at himself as a human being separated sin from himself. He said, "It's not me, it's sin that is doing these things." He says this without relinquishing responsibility for the sin; he's just saying there are two entities at war with each other. Now here's the point I want to make. If you compare verse 8:1 to 8:3, you see that there is no condemnation for the person, **but**, sin as an entity has been condemned. It has not been condemned out in space somewhere. It has been condemned in the flesh where it normally takes up residence. So, if you are a Christian, you stand uncondemned by God, but the sin in you has been judged and condemned. You died with Christ to the law. Death no longer has dominion. Sin no longer has dominion. Your old man was judged on the cross. You've been given the Spirit of God.

**Principle 19: Sin in the flesh has been condemned even though you are not.**

**8:4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.**

The goal is for the righteous requirement of the law to be fulfilled in us through the Spirit that God has given us and not through attempting to obey external commandments. Granted, the commandments of God reveal His nature and will for us. They are good and righteous and holy. But obedience has to come from the inside, and the only way for that to happen is for us to walk according to the Spirit of God and not according to the flesh. It's like what we were saying earlier about yielding our members to God as weapons for righteousness.

As Paul had said in Romans 7:6, "So that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not *in* the oldness of the letter." For as he says in 2 Corinthians 3:6 "Not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life." The idea is that God's covenant with His people is that He would change their hearts and give them His Spirit. He promised that He would change our motivation and cause us to walk in His ways. He said that He would put His fear in our hearts so that we would not depart from Him (eg., Jeremiah 32:40, Ezekiel 36:26,27). That's completely different from having an external list of laws that we are supposed to try to be motivated to follow. The point of the gospel in the New Testament is that that approach didn't work throughout the whole Old Testament. That's why even in the Old Testament God predicted the coming of the New Covenant.

Think about two of the major life stages of a human being. When a person is a child, his parents put all sorts of fences around him. They make rules about playing in the street or how to act around a swimming pool. They tell him he must eat his vegetables and go to bed at a certain hour. Life is pretty regimented. Once a child reaches adulthood, he doesn't need these rules. He will still follow most of them because it is dangerous even for an adult to play in the street. It's important to eat a balanced diet and get enough sleep. But these choices are his and come from inside of him rather than from the outside. The Bible compares human history to these stages of development. I'll quote the verses for you shortly, but the idea is that under the old covenant, people needed to have laws and regulations as to how to function well in relationship to God. This would be like the childhood stage. They didn't have the changed heart and the presence of God's Spirit in their lives. However, once Christ had come, died, been resurrected, and returned to glory, and the Holy Spirit had come to indwell believers, those

external regulations were no longer needed. Under the new covenant, a man's heart, spirit and motivation are all changed, and he has the resources to live a life pleasing to God. And as our passage says, the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us as we walk according to the Spirit.

Now, as promised, here are the passages where this comparison to childhood and adulthood comes from.

Galatians 3:23-25 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor *to bring us* to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

Galatians 4:1-5 Now I say *that* the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

**Principle 20: The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us as we walk in the Spirit.**

**8:5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.***

So what does it mean to live according to the flesh or the Spirit? It's pretty clearly laid out in this verse. It has to do with where we set our minds. Colossians 3:2 tells us to set our minds on things above and not on things of the earth. So it's a matter of taking control of our thought-life and centering it on God and His principles. I realize that's easier said than done, but that is where we need to start. Paul told the Philippians in 4:8, "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things." Most of our self-talk is usually negative and on things that bring us down. We need to be consciously moving our thoughts to the truth.

**Principle 21: To live according to the Spirit we must set our minds on the things of the Spirit.**

**8:6 For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.**

So we have the principle reiterated that it is an issue of death when we mind fleshly things. Living is found in focusing on spiritual things. As I mentioned earlier, sowing to the flesh reaps corruption. We need to come to the point where we actually believe this. When Adam was told not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he was told that he would die. I imagine that after he disobeyed, he probably thought to himself, "Well, that wasn't so bad. I'm still here." I think we sometimes do the same thing. We spend time focusing on the flesh and earthly, sinful pleasures, and we don't feel any worse as far as life and death is concerned. But we need to challenge ourselves with the question, "Do I believe God in this matter?" To be carnally minded is a destructive, death-producing way to live.

**Principle 22: To be carnally (fleshly) minded is a destructive, death-producing way to live.**

**8:8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.**

Here we have an explanation that clarifies a couple of things. He speaks here of being “in the flesh.” That is different than being carnally or fleshly minded. He very clearly says in verse 9 that if the Spirit of God dwells in us, we are not “in the flesh.” If the Spirit of God dwells in us, we are “in the Spirit.” Then he further goes on to explain that if someone does not have the Spirit of God dwelling in him, then he does not belong to God.

So let's start with this recent information and work backwards. Someone who does not know God through Christ does not have the Spirit of God in him and therefore does not belong to God. Such a person is “in the flesh.” This person cannot please God. This person is separate from God and is on a path to death. Now if I, as a Christian, spend time minding the things of the flesh, I am dabbling in the same kind of thought patterns and focus that a person who does not know God does. The lost person is in it full time. I, when I think this way, am spending time there as well. Paul is telling us that to have that sort of mindset brings us into the arena of death and is somehow bringing the corruption of death into our lives. The more time we spend there, the more damage is done. Even if we are ultimately saved, we will have damaged our lives tremendously compared to what they otherwise might have been.

Here is what J.I. Packer wrote in *Knowing God*:

We are familiar with the thought that our bodies are like machines, needing the right routine of food, rest, and exercise if they are to run efficiently, and liable, if filled up with the wrong fuel -- alcohol, drugs, poison -- to lose their power of healthy functioning and ultimately to 'seize up' entirely in physical death. What we are, perhaps, slower to grasp is that God wishes us to think of our souls in a similar way. As rational persons, we were made to bear God's moral image -- that is, our souls were made to 'run' on the practice of worship, law-keeping, truthfulness, honesty, discipline, self-control, and service to God and our fellows. If we abandon these practices, not only do we incur guilt before God; we also progressively destroy our own souls. Conscience atrophies, the sense of shame dries up, one's capacity for truthfulness, loyalty, and honesty is eaten away, one's character disintegrates. One not only becomes desperately miserable; one is steadily being de-humanized. This is one aspect of spiritual death.

When Paul told the Colossians to put to death sinful behaviors, he warned them that it was because of these things that the wrath of God is coming on the children of disobedience (Colossians 3:6). Why would we want to spend our time doing the very things that will cause the condemnation of those in the flesh?

The key to victory, then, involves setting our minds on the things of the spirit. While we don't do this perfectly, we are under the umbrella of “no condemnation.”

Paul summarizes some of this in Galatians 5:16-18: “I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.”

In this passage he reminds us that we can avoid fulfilling the lust of the flesh by walking in the Spirit. The flesh and the Spirit are against each other and there is a battle going on. My dad used to teach us that the phrase at the end of verse 17 “so that you do not do the things that you wish” really means, “so that you will not do the things you otherwise would have done.” The NASB translates this phrase, “so that you may not do the things that you please.” In other words, this may not be like the Romans passage where Paul laments the fact that he cannot successfully do the right thing. This passage may be saying that the Spirit is victorious. The battle rages, but the Spirit is the victor. He keeps us from doing what we otherwise would. I'm not a Greek scholar and so I don't know if this meaning is accurate or not, but it is worth considering. We should not minimize the capability of the Spirit to be victorious. After Paul's despair of Romans chapter 7, he brings the Spirit into His explanation as a reason for hope and praise. It is the Spirit that gives victory and so it makes sense that if the Spirit is against the flesh, He has the power to be victorious.

**Principle 23: If the Spirit of God dwells in you, then you are in the spirit and not in the flesh. So don't spend time being what you're not.**

**8:10 And if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.**

Even though I'm a Christian, my body is dying and will die because of the consequences of sin. But the fact that the Spirit of God dwells in a believer, there is still real life there. Those who do not know Christ are dead both in their body and their soul. The good news is that even though these bodies are dying now, the same Spirit who raised Christ from the dead is going to give life to our mortal bodies. The Holy Spirit is given to us as a down payment of the fulfillment of our full redemption which ultimately will include our bodies (Ephesians 1:13, 14). Christianity is not concerned only with the soul, but with the body as well.

Here is the way Paul puts it in another place:

1 Corinthians 15:42-47 So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. *The body* is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, “*The first man Adam became a living being.*” The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit.

However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. The first man *was* of the earth, *made* of dust; the second Man *is* the Lord from heaven. As *was* the *man* of dust, so also *are* those *who are made* of dust; and as *is* the heavenly *Man*, so also *are* those *who are* heavenly.

So, the bottom line is that we live in this fleshly body with the Spirit of God dwelling in us as believers. Even though the body is dying, it will be made new in the future. Most of the time a plant seed looks pretty dead. But when you put it into the ground, it seems to miraculously come to life. Of course, there had always been that germ of life inside that dead-looking seed. Sometimes a seed is actually dead. You plant it and nothing happens. To me this illustrates the difference between a person who has the Spirit of God in him and an unbeliever. An unbeliever is like the dead seed. A believer is like the seed that looks dead, but has the spirit of life in him. When he is sown as a natural man, his body will be

raised a spiritual man. In the mean time, here and now, setting our mind on fleshly things somehow brings death into our being. This death will not bring eternal death because we've been set free from the law of sin and death, but it does bring damage and corruption to our lives.

**Principle 24: Even though we struggle with sin and its physical consequences in our bodies, we can be assured that this mortal body will be fully redeemed and raised as a new body.**

**Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.**

So this is the conclusion Paul draws by beginning the verse with the word “therefore.” With all that has gone before in the discussion, and with the most recent comments about our bodies going to be made new, we are debtors, but not to the flesh. We do not owe the flesh anything. The power of God through His Spirit is present in our lives. We've been redeemed and set free from bondage to sin and death. So we are not a debtor. We don't owe sin or the flesh anything. They do not have dominion any longer. Sin has been condemned in the flesh.

In verse 13 he repeats what I have been emphasizing all along, and that is that if we live according to the flesh we will die. Christian or non-Christian, there is death in the flesh and in following the desires of the flesh. What that death is and how it works may be different in different people, but we must not deceive ourselves into thinking nothing is going to happen as a result. The death may come in terms of relationships, it may come in terms of peace and joy. It may come in terms of loss of testimony and effectiveness for God, but it will come.

The verse goes on to say that on the other hand, if we put to death the deeds of the body through the power of the Spirit, we will live. It seems to me that this is a key statement. We have all of the spiritual resources we need, but it is something we need to do.

What does putting to death the deeds of the body mean? We know that the flesh has certain desires and attractions that are typical of all of us. John describes them as the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life. These areas exert tremendous pull. Putting them to death means not to permit them to have their way. It means not making provision for the flesh in any way (Romans 13:14). To make provision means to prepare for it and make accommodations for it. This is what we are to avoid. We are to basically snuff out all of the oxygen for our lusts and fleshly desires. We are to cause the atrophy of our flesh. But the key here is that we are to do this through the power and motivation provided by the Spirit of God within us. The Spirit has been given to provide the motivation, the strength and the supporting intercession to accomplish this. We've been made new creatures in Christ. Our normal human nature is not strong enough to accomplish this. We must take advantage of the power of the Holy Spirit at work.

At this point it appears to me that there is a transition from the key role of the Spirit in our victory over sin to the general work of the Spirit in our lives. This doesn't mean there is a complete break, but the lens zooms out so to speak, and we see a bigger picture. What we see is related to our topic but in a different way. These remaining verses help us see the overall activity of the Spirit on our behalf. Knowing these truths and believing them to be true also helps us to gain the victory we so earnestly long for.



**Principle 25: Use the power of the Spirit to put to death the deeds of the body.**

**8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.**

So we have found that the important thing in our battle against sin is to yield to the Spirit. It means to stop setting our minds on earthly or fleshly things but rather on God and spiritual things. The last thing the previous verse said was that if we through the Spirit put to death the deeds of the body we will live. Now, beginning with the word "for" He explains the deeper truth involved. The sons of God are those who are led by the Spirit. We've seen several expressions involving flesh and spirit. There's the phrase, "mind the flesh," or "mind the spirit." This has to do with where we set the focus of our minds. We've seen the phrase "in the flesh" or "in the Spirit." This has to do with our nature. A Christian is in the Spirit. He doesn't go in and out of the Spirit. He is in the Spirit. And finally, we see the phrase in this verse that speaks of being "led by the Spirit." Here too a person who is truly a Christian is led by the Spirit. So a Christian is led by the Spirit, is in the Spirit, and therefore is expected to mind the things of the Spirit.

So if you've trusted Christ as savior you are led by the Spirit of God. Being led by the Spirit means you have the power of the Spirit available to you, and the Spirit is working in you to give you the motivation and power to do the right thing. Remember from previous discussions that under the new covenant, God's Spirit is given to us to provide the internal motivation and change of heart needed to live out the law of God from inside without needing the outside rules and regulations. As you live the Christian life then you need to yield to the Spirit that is within you. Through the power of the Spirit you then put to death the deeds of the body. It's not a matter of just using your self effort. It is a matter of submitting to the Spirit within you and through His power putting to death the deeds of the flesh. It's a matter of reckoning the old nature to be dead to sin. It's a conscious thing, a moment by moment thing.

**8:15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."**

The Spirit we have received is not the spirit of bondage and fear. God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love and of a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7).

Hebrews 2:14, 15 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

The fear of death is a strong fear. People are in bondage to it. But the gospel frees us from those fears. This is indeed good news. When we go to God, we go to Him not as our judge, but as our Father, or if we may respectfully say so, our Dad.

This Spirit who indwells us is not a spirit to be feared. He loves us and is at work to make us all God would have us to be. This is encouraging because we can go to God and trust that He is not against us but for us.

**Principle 26: Remember that as a Christian you've been adopted into God's family and are a son of God and brother to Jesus Christ.**

**8:16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.**

The Spirit of God within us bears witness with our own spirit that we are the children of God. This is something that the Holy Spirit communicates to us in some way. There is a bond there. Peter tells us we have become partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). There is a oneness between us and God. Paul tells the Corinthians that no one knows a man really. Only the man's own spirit knows himself. But he goes on to say that we have been given the Spirit of God so that basically we can know God. Here is the way he puts it in 1 Corinthians 2:11,12

For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

The culmination of what he writes in verse 17 of Romans 8 is that since we suffered with Christ, we will also be glorified together with Him. And when Christ, *who is our life* shall appear, we shall appear with Him in glory (Colossians 3:4 *Italics added*)

**Principle 27: As a son of God, you are a brother and joint-heir with Jesus and will appear with Him in glory when He returns. (See also 2 Thess 1:10)**

**8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected *it* in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.**

The sufferings that we experience now cannot be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us. Not only to us, but in us. Even creation is waiting in eager expectation for us to be revealed as the sons of God. When God brought a curse to bear on all of creation, He did so with the idea that when man's redemption is complete, creation will be released from the bondage it is in. When we are ultimately set free from all that binds us now, all creation will also be set free. This is God's plan and design for the ages.

**8:23 Not only *that*, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for *it* with perseverance.**

It's not only creation that groans. You and I groan. We know there is something wrong. Things are not as they ought to be. Those of us who know Christ have an eager anticipation for the completion of our adoption as children of God. That adoption is totally complete when not only our souls, but also our body is redeemed and made new. We don't see this right now, but it is a certain hope. It is not an "I hope so" hope. It is a certain expectation. And so we wait with perseverance.

This is the way Paul puts it in 2 Corinthians 5:1-5: “For we know that if our earthly house, *this* tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we who are in *this* tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. Now He who has prepared us for this very thing *is* God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.”

So the Holy Spirit is the guarantee or the firstfruits now, as a promise that God will fulfill the complete work of redemption, including the redemption of the body. The body may be dead and dying now, but the same Spirit of God that raised Christ from the dead is at work in us right now. The internal has changed. We are just waiting for the external change as well.

**Principle 28: We wait with patience for our complete redemption when our body will be made new to match our spirit that was made new when we were saved.**

**8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit *is*, because He makes intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*.**

The Holy Spirit who indwells every believer makes intercession for us. We know that Jesus Christ intercedes for us, but also the Holy Spirit, who lives right within us, intercedes. The intercession he makes is deep and involves “groanings which cannot be uttered.” This is not what some people call speaking in tongues, because speaking in tongues is uttered. These prayers are not uttered. But God, who is listening to our prayers, knows what the mind of the Spirit is. The Spirit always prays according to the will of God, and so even though our prayers may not always be accurate, or we may not even know how or what we should pray for properly, the Holy Spirit makes sure the prayers God hears are according to His will.

This is also encouraging with respect to the struggles that we go through to live a God-honoring life. The Holy Spirit is not dormant. He is active and working and praying for us as we grow in grace. As we work out our salvation, “it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13).

**8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose.**

God is working all things together for good. So many times, that is where people stop the quotation. God is working all things together for good for certain people. It is for those who love God and who are “the called” according to His purpose. God is calling out a people for Himself, and it is for those He works everything together for their good and His glory.

For those people God is at work blending and combining events in such a way that it works good for us. God's view of good does not always match our opinion, but we can be assured that His plan is best for us and for the glory of God.

**Principle 29: God is working all things together for our good.**

**8:29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.**

Paul goes on to explain who those called ones are. He starts out with God's foreknowledge. He is saying that those He foreknew, those are the ones He predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ. The language makes it clear that all those He foreknew He predestined. That is a comforting thought because it means that God won't fail in His plan and effort to conform His people to the image of Christ. If you have trusted Christ as your savior, you can be assured that the conformation process will be successful. God wants Christ to be the firstborn among many brethren. There is to be a family of sons of God-- Christ and all believers.

In addition, all of those He predestined, those He called. Notice the tense of all of this. He called – past tense. Nobody can come to Christ unless God calls them, and so to be certain that His will is accomplished, He specifically calls those whom He intends to conform to the image of His son.

Wait, there's more. He goes on to tell us that those He has called He has justified. He has declared them righteous. When someone comes to Christ by faith, God justifies him; He gives him His own righteousness in place of their sin. If that is true of you, then you are one of these people He is talking about here. The final step is that He has glorified us. Notice again the tense. There is a sense in which our glorification is so certain that in God's eyes it's already accomplished!

So, think about it. If you are a believer, God foreknew you. “Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,” (Ephesians 1:4). If He foreknew you, He predestined, predetermined and provided everything needed so that you would ultimately be conformed to the image of Christ. Having planned all this, He then called you to come to Himself. As Jesus said, “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:44). Notice the success which Jesus promised. “I will raise him up at the last day.” If God calls, He also justifies. That means He declares us righteous, under no condemnation whatsoever. And the final step is the ultimate and certain glorification of everyone God has called to Himself. There is great peace and joy in this truth.

**8:31 What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? *It is* God who justifies. Who *is* he who condemns? *It is* Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: “*For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*” Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

With these glowing words from Scripture we end this short study of Romans chapters 6-8. If God has done all of the things described in these chapters, who is going to be able to bring any charges against us? The answer is, “nobody.” Jesus Christ makes intercession for us, the Holy Spirit makes intercession for us, we've been adopted into His family, we've been given a new spirit and His Spirit. No matter what our struggles and no matter how many times we fall, if we've trusted in Christ, we've been redeemed and rescued from the law of sin and death. With Paul we should be persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities no powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor anything else in all of creation will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Principle 30: Nothing will ever separate us from the love of God in Christ!**

## Principle Summary

**Principle 1: Sin abounds but grace abounds more!**

**Principle 2: Our identity is Christ and our position is 'in Christ'.**

**Principle 3: Because we died with Christ, we have been released from sin's power and authority.**

**Principle 4: Based on the truth we should reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to God.**

**Principle 5: Consciously take your eyes off of earthly, sinful ways and focus them on righteous heavenly things because you died with Christ and have been raised with Him.**

**Principle 6: Since you have died to sin, do not allow it to reign by giving your members to sin to be used as weapons against you.**

**Principle 7: You are not under the law but under grace.**

**Principle 8: In effect you are a slave to who you obey--either sin which leads to death or righteousness which leads to life.**

**Principle 9: Remember yielding to sin leads to ever increasing lawlessness and ultimately to death.**

**Principle 10: When you died with Christ you died to the jurisdiction of the law and are set free to bear fruit for God.**

**Principle 11: We serve now with the Spirit being the motivator of our actions rather than the external command of the law.**

**Principle 12: The law gives sin its power.**

**Principle 13: Sin in me is the problem.**

**Principle 14: It is not me but sin in me.**

**Principle 15: There is a war between me and the sin in my members.**

**Principle 16: God through Jesus Christ is our deliverer.**

**Principle 17: There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.**

**Principle 18: The Spirit has released me from the law of sin and death.**

**Principle 19: Sin in the flesh has been condemned even though you are not.**

**Principle 20: The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us as we walk in the spirit.**

**Principle 21: To live according to the Spirit we must set our minds on the things of the Spirit.**

**Principle 22: To be carnally (fleshly) minded is a destructive, death-producing way to live.**

**Principle 23: If the Spirit of God dwells in you, then you are in the spirit and not in the flesh. So don't spend time being what you're not.**

**Principle 24: Even though we struggle with sin and it's physical consequences in our bodies, we can be assured that this mortal body will be fully redeemed and raised as a new body.**

**Principle 25: Use the power of the Spirit to put to death the deeds of the body.**

**Principle 26: Remember that as a Christian you've been adopted into God's family and are a son of God and brother to Jesus Christ.**

**Principle 27: As a son of God, you are a brother and joint-heir with Jesus and will appear with Him in glory when He returns. (See also 2 Thess 1:10)**

**Principle 28: We wait with patience for our complete redemption when our body will be made new to match our spirit that was made new when we were saved.**

**Principle 29: God is working all things together for our good.**

**Principle 30: Nothing will ever separate us from the love of God in Christ!**