

## **How To Listen To The Holy Spirit?**

### **Romans 8**

**How do we know if you are a Christian?**

**If we feel guilty about disobeying God.**

**Remember that we do sin, which is part of our sinful nature.**

**Sin is always bad for us. It first hurts us. Then it hurts our influence.**

**So how do we sin less often?**

### **What Does The Bible Say?**

21 I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. 22 I love God’s law with all my heart. 23 But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. 24 Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and

death? 25 Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God's law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin. (Romans 7:21–25 NLT)

**We all have a sin problem, but we have help.**

**We have the Holy Spirit.**

17 This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! (2 Corinthians 5:17 NLT)

**Since we are Christians, we are different!**

**So how do we sin less often?**

5 Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. 6 So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. (Romans 8:5–6 NLT)

**Think about the holy things.**

### **How Can You Obey?**

30 And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live. Remember, he has identified you as his own, guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption. (Ephesians 4:30 NLT)

**Understand that we can make the Holy Spirit unhappy.**

7 For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. 8 That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God. (Romans 8:5–8 NLT)

**The root of sin is selfishness—“I will” and not “Your will be done.”**

8 And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and

lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. (Philippians 4:8 NLT)

**Practice thinking about God-honoring thoughts.**

**Through our reading (2 Timothy 2:15).**

**Through our friends (1 Corinthians 15:35).**

**Putting yourself in an environment to hear the Holy Spirit will help you sin less often.**

### **Additional Notes:**

If you would like to use your home to disciple others, check out our training at [www.crosswaveschurch.com/host](http://www.crosswaveschurch.com/host). Cross Waves has produced short videos to train you how to use your home to reach others for Christ. So please check it out.

### **Additional Notes:**

This week's Bible & Science is from Ken Ham and Bodie Hodge, *The New Answers Book 1* (Green Forrest, AR: Master Books, 2006), 259-270.

**Verses used in Bible & Science:**

4 He is the Rock; his deeds are perfect. Everything he does is just and fair. He is a faithful God who does no wrong; how just and upright he is! (Deuteronomy 32:4 NLT)

14 Then the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all animals, domestic and wild. You will crawl on your belly, groveling in the dust as long as you live. (Genesis 3:14 NLT)

16 Then he said to the woman, "I will sharpen the pain of your pregnancy, and in pain you will give birth. And you will desire

to control your husband, but he will rule over you.” (Genesis 3:16 NLT)

17 And to the man he said, “Since you listened to your wife and ate from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat, the ground is cursed because of you. All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it. 18 It will grow thorns and thistles for you, though you will eat of its grains. (Genesis 3:17-18 NLT)

29 Then God said, “Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food.

30 And I have given every green plant as food for all the wild animals, the birds in the sky, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—everything that has life.” And that is what happened. (Genesis 1:29-30 NLT)

2 All the animals of the earth, all the birds of the sky, all the small animals that scurry along the ground, and all the fish in the sea will look on you with fear and terror. I have placed them in your power. 3 I have given them to you for food, just as I have given you grain and vegetables. (Genesis 9:2-3 NLT)

25 The wolf and the lamb will feed together. The lion will eat hay like a cow. But the snakes will eat dust. In those days no one will be hurt or destroyed on my holy mountain. I, the Lord, have spoken!” (Isaiah 65:25 NLT)

4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.” (Revelation 21:4 NLT)

**Explore:**

## **Believers Find Life, Peace, and Power by Living Under the Control of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:1-17)**

The word therefore in verse 1 takes the reader back to the principles taught in chapter 7, culminating in verse 7:24 when Paul asked, who will deliver me? The answer is found in 7:25 as the apostle uttered a great thanksgiving proclamation celebrating the work of Jesus Christ.

Consequently, Paul revealed in chapter 8, verse 1 that through Christ's sacrificial work and the work of the Holy Spirit, the condemnation that sin produces no longer applies to the believer. By definition, condemnation referred to the penalty of death under which all people live. Condemnation can also come in the form of guilt, shame, and punishment. This statement echoes the statement made by the apostle in Romans 5:1. Those who are in Christ Jesus have experienced peace with God through the justification offered by Christ.



No condemnation is further defined in verses 2 through 4. In verse 2, the apostle presents two contrasting laws. The one law (sin and death) leads to bondage while the other (the Spirit of life) leads to freedom, the latter referring to the Holy Spirit who resides in believers. This designation as Spirit of life is appropriate since God is in the business of offering and delivering life to His followers.

Verse 3 expounds on why the Mosaic Law could not provide victory over sin. It was weakened by the flesh, or sinful nature, of humanity. This was not an indictment on the Law, but instead was recognition of the inability of the human sinful nature to obey the Law's demands. What the Law could not produce, however, God provided by sending His Son in human form to accomplish it for sinful man (verses 3-4). See also Galatians 3:21-24.

Verses 5 through 7 consist of more contrasts between these two “laws.” First, the mind-sets are different. The one still living according to the ways of the sinful nature has his mind set on the things of that nature while the one living according to the Spirit has his mind set on the things of the Spirit. Then, the contrast of outcomes for these opposing “laws” is given (verse 6). The “flesh” results in death while “the Spirit” results in life and peace. Finally, the reason for the contrast is revealed in verse 7. The one who still lives according to the sinful nature is hostile to God and refuses to submit to His plans and purposes. Simply stated, those living according to the sinful nature cannot please God (verse 8).

According to verse 9, the follower of Jesus is now ruled by the Spirit who has taken up residence in his or her life. An individual who does not have the Spirit sadly does not belong to God. Verse 10 is a conditional statement in which “if” can be understood as “since” or “because.” The reference to the death

of the body reminds the reader of human mortality and the effects of sin. Even though the body will experience death, by the power of the Holy Spirit the believer will experience new life. This happens because the same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead offers life to those who are in Christ (verses 11-12).

In Christ, we meet the requirements of righteousness. In addition to taking away our condemnation, God provided the Spirit to help us be victorious over our old natures and over sin.

While the Spirit-filled life will not eliminate all sinful acts in our earthly existence, it will enable us to live victoriously as we submit to the Spirit's control and direction.

Paul then focused on our new position in God's family. As God's children, there is an obligation to live in the control and power of the Holy Spirit. This directive is supported in negative terms in verse 12 (not to the flesh or sinful nature) and in positive terms in verse 14 (all who are led by the Spirit are the sons of God).

In verse 13, Paul returned to the repeated themes of this section: living according to the flesh as compared to living according to the Spirit. Living according to the inclinations and desires of the sinful nature, as has already been emphasized, leads to death. To the contrary, living under the influence and control of the Spirit will help us put sinful deeds to death and enjoy the abundant life of which Jesus spoke (John 10:10).

The apostle also emphasized our standing as legal heirs, explaining our adoption into God's family (verses 14-15). The word adoption as used here signified placement as an adult son with full rights of an heir. This position in Christ provides us with an intimate and fulfilling relationship with our Heavenly Father in which we can call out to Him (Abba, Father) at any time. This is in contrast to the spirit of slavery or bondage in which an individual was enslaved to sin and lived his or her life in fear. Paul reminded the reader that it is the Spirit that bears witness or testifies of the new birth to the believer (verse 16).

In addition, we have become recipients of the same blessings and inheritance that has been designated for Christ (verse 17).

We are loved, provided for, and cherished. We are not only heirs of God but even co-heirs with Christ, a reality that spoke to the glories of Heaven but also to the reality of suffering that a believer may share as a result of professing Christ.

### **Explore:**

Adoption is an important component of Romans 8 and is also taught in Galatians chapter 4. Among the Greco-Roman culture, when a man had no son, he was permitted to adopt one, which frequently was a slave. At this point the adopted son took the name of his father and was legally regarded as a son and could even address his former master by the title of “father.” In Paul’s use of the term, the one who came to God by faith was “adopted” as a son and was granted all the rights and privileges

that come with this designation. Because believers are sons and not slaves, they no longer should be subjugated to sin or fear.

### **Explore:**

## **The Holy Spirit Helps Believers Have Hope in the Midst of Suffering (Romans 8:18-30)**

After Paul highlighted the wonderful reality of being the children of God, he was quick to recognize we are still living in a fallen and sinful world. As such we are subject to suffering (verse 18), physical limitations (verse 23), weakness (verse 26), and uncertainties (verse 28). Paul likened these experiences to the “groaning” of a woman in labor. This speaks of a painful and wearisome experience.

The reality of each of these experiences, however, is their temporary nature. This is best portrayed in verse 18 as one considers present suffering as compared to eternal glory. The suffering could consist of things such as sickness, injury, natural

disaster, financial loss, and death, just to name a few. As difficult and debilitating as each of these experiences may be, however, they still do not compare to the glory that is to come. The word “glory” could refer to the eternal transformation that occurred as a result of the resurrection of Christ. See also 2 Corinthians 4:17.

In each of these experiences, Paul declared we are not without hope (verses 24-25). Hope, by definition, is not wishful thinking but is instead a confident expectation of the fulfillment of God’s promises. Paul used verses 26-30 to elaborate on the basis for such hope. We are hopeful because we have the Spirit who lives in us and strengthens us. He enables our communication with our Father by interceding for us (verses 26-27). Just a few verses earlier (verse 23), Paul had spoken of the fact that believers groan along with creation in turmoil. In verse 26, he asserted that the Spirit also groans with Christians who have hope and long for the glory that is to come. This groaning, and the

corresponding intercession for believers, is but one example of how the Lord joins us in our affliction and how the Spirit serves as an advocate for the child of God.

Paul further provided hope in the assurance that God has a good plan for our lives, always at work for our good and to make us more like Christ (verses 28-30). This knowledge of God working all things for good, in verse 28, is known intuitively and scripturally. Paul, however, wanted the child of God enduring difficult times to know this experientially.

### **Explore:**

#### **Nothing Can Separate Believers From God's Great Love (Romans 8:31-39)**

God has given us so much, and He did so despite the fact we didn't deserve it (verses 31-32). He gave up His Son for us. The same concept was demonstrated in Abraham's life in Genesis 22



when God said Abraham had not withheld his son from Him. However, if we did not deserve it and we couldn't pay for it, how do we know the enemy of our souls will not somehow separate us from God and His blessings? After all, we still sin, we face all kinds of struggles, and we still don't have it all figured out (verses 33-36). In the midst of all these things is the reminder that the same Jesus who died for us is now interceding or pleading on our behalf.

So, will God always love us and work on our behalf? Paul provided assurance, confirming that nothing can separate us from God's love (verses 37- 39). This is demonstrated in the terminology of verse 37; we are more than conquerors. This expression literally means we are super conquerors or super victorious. The believer need not fear the difficulties that come his or her way. As believers, nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Our judge and justifier is Christ alone. No other

person or circumstance can sever a person's relationship with God.

### **Question 1 of 5**

Why do evolutionists and atheists believe that Defense/Attack Structures prove that creation does not make sense because a loving God would not create these systems?

### **Question 2 of 5**

How did Defense/Attack Structures come about in this world?

### **Question 3 of 5**

What does it mean to set our minds on the things of the Spirit?

How do we do that?

### **Question 4 of 5**

How is it possible for suffering and difficulty to work out for our good?

### **Question 5 of 5**

What are some things you know about the Holy Spirit?

