

# We Know, Part 3

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[ 0 : 00 ] I was wondering, I wasn't sure that we could handle two Rogers, but we made it, didn't we? They made it too. Thank you. Thank you, fellas. Appreciate your efforts and your input.

There are a couple of red containers in the entryway as you come in or exit either door, and we put those there for the folks who were attending the funerals over the weekend.

We had one Saturday and one Sunday last week. So it was an opportunity to expose a number of people to the gospel who perhaps aren't in church on Sunday or are not familiar with the message. And containers like those, only considerably larger that hold more CDs, are distributed in a half dozen different places in Springfield and in Urbana.

And each month we resupply it, and people take these by the hundreds. And since we've been doing it, there have been several thousand that have gone out, and we are truly grateful for people taking them.

[ 1 : 18 ] And we want you to feel free to take whatever you would like to distribute and help get the word out. And people say, well, who would I give it to? You give it to anybody that would take it, anybody that would accept it.

There are a lot of people who are looking for some answers, and they just may find some in those. The technology is changing, and sometimes that's a little difficult to keep up with.

I can remember wire recorders, and then we went to tape recorders, and then we went to 8-track, and then it was cassettes, and now it's CDs.

CDs are on the way out because late model cars don't even have a CD player in them. So they've got these little thumb drive things, and people are listening on their iPhones.

So I don't know where this technology is going, but it's just getting more and more difficult to keep up with it. Every time you modernize a little bit, they change it and step up to something else.

[ 2 : 23 ] But that's the nature of progress, and that's the way it's going. And by the way, speaking of that, on podcasts, Christianity Clarified is available if you're podcasting.

If you have a smartphone, all you have to do is go to Christianity Clarified, and you'll see it there.

There are 1,200 sessions available, but each one is just three and a half minutes long.

So it makes it convenient, especially for commuters, and that's just one more technological advance that is being realized, and it's difficult to keep up with.

So thanks to all of you who take the CDs and distribute them to whomever we do really appreciate it. And we would ask you to turn, please, to Romans chapter 6.

And what we are currently undertaking is a concept that ought to be common knowledge to all believers. Unfortunately, it isn't.

[ 3 : 27 ] And it wasn't 2,000 years ago when the Apostle Paul spoke of these things. We have labeled it the Know Ye Not series, or We Know series.

And I cannot stress how important it is not only to know, but to know that you know and to be grounded. Because if you do not know the basics of your salvation and what it is that you are really anchored in, you cannot possibly have the joy and the assurance that God intends you to have.

And not only that, but it will definitely thwart any evangelistic opportunity. Because you are not going to try to communicate the gospel to someone and tell them about the richness of salvation and how you can have the assurance of eternal life if you don't have it yourself.

And when you try to explain the gospel to someone and they say, is that what you did? You say, well, I hope so. I think I did. Well, I'm not sure.

And I'm not talking about developing some spirit of cockiness. We ought to be the last people in the world with that attitude. But there is to be locked away in the bosom and heart of every believer, a calmness, an assurance, a stability that the world cannot give and cannot take away.

[ 4 : 59 ] And it comes only from being rooted and grounded in the truth and knowing what you know and knowing that you know. That's the basis for your comfort, assurance, stability, growth, and everything else that ties with it.

So the Apostle Paul is addressing this very issue as he writes to these different churches. And he reminds them, kind of like a rhetorical question. He's saying, you do know, don't you?

Am I assuming too much in taking for granted that you know this? You do know. Know you not?

Because it is the know you not and what we know that we are to be building on.

And this is what he's dealing with in Romans chapter 6. It's just a marvelous chapter. And we're going just to look at verse 11, if you will, because this concludes his first know you not.

Even so, consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore, the upshot of that, as a result of that, because of that, do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lust.

[ 6 : 05 ] This is not a suggestion. It is a command. And it is to be followed by all the faithful who are in Christ Jesus.

What it does is it brings your volition front and center. And we tried to point out in our last session together that we all have this powerful, powerful concept, this thing called human volition.

It's the human will. We are responsible for how we use it. It is a precious possession that God has entrusted to us.

And it becomes the basis for our ultimate accountability to God, the volition, how we use it. The tendency is to think that we are somehow held captive by some unseen power so that we cannot do the things that we would.

And Paul talks about this also in Romans chapter 7, which we'll be developing later on. But it's such a valuable concept. And we've got to have this thing fixed in mind, because if we don't, there is a tendency to use our will as a kind of cop out and say, mine is weak and I can't do that.

[ 7 : 18 ] I just can't resist this or that or the other thing. And Paul is saying nonsense. You can too. You have that ability. If we do not have that ability, then we are shortchanged by God so that we are just constantly in a state of victimhood where we cannot do anything about it.

And this is what he's talking about here. In verse 13, do not go on presenting the members of your body. And he's talking to Gentiles.

He's talking to believers who were formerly pagans, who were accustomed to allowing themselves every vice that came down the pike.

And now he's saying, in Christ, this all comes to a screeching halt. You are a new person now in Christ. You have a new life to live.

And God has given you a new dynamic for living it. And this new dynamic has to do with the spirit of God that indwells you and empowers you and enlightens you.

[ 8 : 27 ] But he does not just overrule you. And we've got a curious thing here. I wish I knew more about it. But the volition that we have, the will that we have, is the same will you had before you came to faith in Christ.

It has not been eliminated. There is some teaching that goes so far as to say that when you become a new person in Christ, you can move on then to a second stage, which they refer to as the second blessing, where you pray through and you receive some new unction and some new power that lifts you above and beyond the ability to sin.

And this leads them to be somewhat confused over some of the thoughts they have and some of the deeds they do because they're not supposed to be doing those things anymore.

Not only are they not supposed to be doing them, but they are not supposed to even have the ability to do them. But as we pointed out in the previous session, when you come to faith in Christ, God does not neutralize your volition.

So that you now have complete power from the Holy Spirit and that he dictates everything and you just operate on the basis of what the Spirit of God reveals to you.

[ 9 : 55 ] And your sinning days are over. You don't have to worry about temptation anymore because that's all beyond you. This is called the second work of grace. Unfortunately, there were a number of people who believed that.

And when they try to make it work and it doesn't work, then confusion and depression sets in and then they start saying, well, I guess maybe I'm not really a Christian at all.

Maybe I'm not saved at all because I have not. It's called the eradication of the old nature where you no longer have the ability to do those things. But I do them. How can I square that? And the only conclusion is, well, I guess maybe I'm not really saved at all. And this becomes the basis for people perpetually going to altar calls. I don't know if you're aware of that or not, but there are certain settings where people go to the altar and they receive supposedly salvation over and over and over again. [11:01] That is as far removed from the scriptures as anything can be. So when you come to faith in Christ, you are infused by the Spirit of God who regenerates you on the inside, but does not eliminate your volition.

You still have an old Adamic nature that wants to rule the roost, even though you are a thoroughgoing believer in Christ. You still have a capacity to disappoint God, to disappoint yourself. You have the ability to sin and so on. So there's a struggle going on. And Paul will be talking about that in Romans chapter 7. Wretched man that I am. Who will deliver me from this body? And I thank God through Jesus Christ he has delivered. And Paul said, this is coming from the Apostle Paul. And he says, I really have a problem with this. Because the things that I want to do and I know I ought to do, that's not what I do. But what I know I shouldn't do, that's what I'm drawn to do. Oh, wretched man that I am. What's wrong with me anyway? This is the struggle that's going on in the heart and mind of every child of God.

[12:14] And you will continue to struggle with that old nature until the time God takes you home. It is a conflict.

It is an inner battle that is going on. And I think I told you before about Dr. Walter Wilson when he was lecturing to an Indian tribe, the Hopi tribe down in Arizona. He would go down there every week and preach for a week. And he remarked about, after he had taught on this, that one of the older Indians came up to him and said, he appreciated the message and he said, he said, I feel like there are two dogs living in me. And Dr. Wilson said, two dogs? And he said, yes, I have a white dog and a black dog living in me. And each one wants to run me. And Dr. Wilson said, well, what do you do? Which one wins? He says, the one wins, I say, sick of them.

[13:26] That's the one that wins. And the point that I'm making here is this, and this is very powerful. You, with your volition, have the ability and the responsibility to say no or to cave in.

It's your decision. And you can't blame it on someone else because we have a volition. And we are responsible for how we use it.

So what Paul is saying in this verse, do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts. I know that before you came to faith in Christ, you were, as he talks to the Corinthians, there were fornicators and adulterers and effeminate and all this thieves and so on. And such were some of you. But you have been washed. You have been cleansed. You have been sanctified. That's behind you now. You don't dabble in those things anymore because you have a new nature.

You have an ability now to rise above that. Before, you didn't. Because you had an old sin nature, but you didn't have the new man to combat it.

[14:44] You were a victim. You were sold into that. But now it's different. There is a change of the game. And that's the whole point that he is making with his therefore, verse 12.

In light of that, do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts. Do you mean I can? Yep. You sure can. And one of the CDs that's back there available now is called How God Uses Our Sin.

And that's a rather daring title. And I suspect that some people might be turned off at it just by seeing it because we tend to think that God can use the right things that we do.

But there's no way God can use the wrong things that we do because those are displeasing to him, etc. Don't you believe it for a moment? The Romans 8, 28 thing.

That God does work all things together for good to those who love him, who are the called according to his purpose, even our sin. That in no way, shape, or form encourages sin.

[15:51] It does not okay sin. It does not somehow legitimize it. It does not let you off by saying, I was weak and I succumbed and I couldn't resist the temptation.

That's nonsense. But what Paul is saying is, God is so committed to those who are in Christ, he will use even your sin to be for your ultimate good.

How can that be? Well, think about it. Actions have consequences. And when we sin, there are repercussions.

There is fallout from that. There is pain associated with that. There is a learning curve that comes with disobedience because when we go against what we know is God's will that we ought not to be doing, there is a cause and effect rule that automatically comes into play and nobody can escape it. And it means divine discipline is going to come upon you as a result of that sin. So God uses even our sin to take us to the woodshed so we will not say, oh boy, I don't want to do that again.

[17:10] I don't want to go there again. I remember the pain. I remember the fallout. I remember the consequences, how negative it was and how hurtful it was. This is how we grow.

This is how we mature. This is how we develop. It's the same way as a little child going through life and he's two, three, four years old. As he's growing up, he soon learns that there are things you just don't do because there's pain, consequences connected with it.

And God will take you to the woodshed anytime he needs to. And whenever he does, it's only because he loves you. God loves you too much to let you get away with it.

So he will see to it that the consequences are there and that they are remedial. That's the whole point of this thing. And do not, verse 13, do not go on presenting the members of your body, your eyes, ears, your hands, your feet, to sin as instruments of unrighteousness.

But present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead. You see this? This is all volition. This is all your will. Do not go on presenting the members of your body.

[18:25] How do you do that? You do it with your will. You decide in your mind that you're going to do thus and so. And you use your eyes, your ears, your hands, and your feet in order to do it.

And Paul's saying, stop it. Stop it now because you can. And before you couldn't. Because you were sold under that.

But now you have a new dynamic within you to power you to combat that evil influence. And that's the struggle that's going on that he will develop in Romans chapter 7.

So the volition is the big item here. But present yourselves to God. You do that with your will as those alive from the dead and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

Because, for sin shall not be master over you. You are not under law, but under grace. And in this new grace context, that's where you have the power and the spirit of God to indwell you and enable you to live above and beyond the things that you didn't have the power to live above and beyond before.

[19:37] It's a whole new ballgame now. You have absolutely no justification for living the kind of lifestyle that you did before you came to faith in Christ. Because Jesus makes a difference.

And yet he does not rob you from the ability to do things that you shouldn't do. You still have that capability. Sin shall not be master over you.

You are not under law, but under grace. What's in? Shall we sin because we're not under law, but under grace? May it never be. Of course, he dealt with that earlier as well.

Do you not know? This is, know you not. You do know this, don't you? You do understand this. That when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey.

Either of sin resulting in death or of obedience resulting in righteousness. But, thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin.

[20:49] When was that? B.C. That was before Christ. We all were. You, you were slaves of sin.

You became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed. And having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

God. Bob Dylan wrote a song years ago. And I don't know. I've never actually heard a personal testimony of his. I do know that he was Jewish or is Jewish and that was his background.

But he wrote a song that was quite fascinating and it's called, Everybody's Gotta Serve Somebody. And a lot of people don't recognize that.

And they think that in serving themselves, they are a master. But in self-serving, you also become a servant.

[21:52] You are not the master that you think you are. This is such critical content. You became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed.

This is, of course, the Christian life and all that accompanies that. And having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. Now, I'm speaking in human terms.

Because of the weakness of your flesh. And we all have the same flesh. This is our fallen, Adamic human nature. This is the part about us that is committed to self-centeredness.

We are all infected with this disease. It is the basis of conflict between humans. It's the basis of conflict between nations.

Because nations are nothing more than a combination of self-centered individuals. And that's what stirs the pot.

[ 23 : 06 ] That's what keeps the globe in the conflict that it is in and has always been in. Having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

And the motto is, everybody's going to serve somebody. And everybody does. I'm speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh.

For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now, here's the game changer, so now, present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.

How do you do that? You do that with the same volition that you earlier submitted to unrighteousness. Your will and volition hasn't gone anywhere. It's still very much intact.

This is part of the mystery and the dynamics of our human personhood. And it is mind-boggling. Now, he's going to say, for when, in verse 20, for when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.

[ 24 : 20 ] Therefore, what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death.

But now, contrast, change. But now, having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, which simply means you're setting apartness, and the outcome, eternal life.

Because the wages, the payoff of sin is death. But the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

And here follows with another, do you not. Or, do you not know, brethren? Forget the chapter division here, because there isn't one, as Paul was writing it. His pen is just continuing to flow.

And he's not saying, now I've just finished chapter 6. I'm going to lay down my pen and take a break for about 20 minutes, and I'll come back and start chapter 6. This is all one continuous document.

[ 25 : 31 ] Or, do you not know, brethren? Know you not? For I am speaking to those who know the law. Now, of course, he's talking to the Jewish element there. That the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives.

This is the only way that you can get out from under the jurisdiction of the law. You die. There's a story in Scotland that I remember reading about years ago, that when someone was executed for a crime that he committed, they would post a sign that says, so-and-so was justified today.

Which is another way of saying the man was executed. And what's the whole purpose of that, and what does that mean? It means that the individual paid for his crime with his life, and now the score is even, and guess what?

The law no longer has any jurisdiction over him, because he's already paid the ultimate price. He has been justified. This is a term they used.

He's been declared righteous because he served his sentence, and the sentence for his crime was death, execution, and he paid it. So the law is satisfied, and the law cannot come against him because he no longer lives.

[ 27 : 00 ] And that's exactly the point that Paul is making here. That's what it means to be dead to sin. It doesn't mean that, I think it was Tozer said, it doesn't mean that the Christian is put into a position where he cannot sin.

I think we all know better than that. But he is put into a position where he need not sin. You don't have to.

You still may choose to, but you do not have to, because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.

And any time I willfully do something I know I ought not to do, I am fully responsible. It is mine.

It is my bad. I didn't have to do it. I cannot cop out and say, but I was so weak and I was so tempted. Baloney. Nonsense. We're just trying to find an escape mechanism for our behavior.

[ 28 : 04 ] The buck stops with me. We are called upon to take responsibility and acknowledge it. And because of what is residing within us, that power of the Spirit of God is there, and we may call upon it, but guess what?

You don't have to. The power of the Spirit of God is at your disposal, but he will not barge into your life and take charge and say, I know this is what you want to do, but I'm going to prevent you from doing that, and I'm going to exercise my will as the Spirit of God, and I'm going to override your volition, so I won't let you do that.

It doesn't work that way. It means you are still in control. You still are under the responsibility for your actions.

And at the same time, God has provided a gracious remedy whereby you do not have to succumb. You may choose to, but you may also choose not to.

You see, an unbeliever doesn't have that ability. He's locked into his sin, locked into the only nature he's got. And it's true that in the flesh, he can even resist certain temptations, but he does not have the power of the Spirit of God residing in him to enable him and to empower him.

[ 29 : 30 ] All he's got is human willpower, and we all know what that's worth, don't we? Not much. So, to whom are you going to exercise your will?

To whom are you going to call into the fray? The flesh is already there, ready, primed, and ready to go. The Spirit of God is available, but he will not come barging in and take charge.

He doesn't work that way. You are still in control of your volition. It's an awesome thing to think about. Actually, what it boils down to is a tremendously important, responsible thing to be a believer in Jesus Christ.

We have more to answer for and more for which to be accountable than the world does because we have more assets and resources available to us that the world knows not of.

To what extent do we draw upon them? That's the issue. And the extent to which we draw upon them determines our growth, our maturity, our development.

[ 30 : 48 ] All of these things are tied together. It's a beautiful, beautiful thing that only God could put together. The illustration that he gives here now in verse 2. The married woman, 7-2.

The married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living. But if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband.

So then, if while her husband is living, she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is free from the law so that she is not an adulteress, though she is joined to another man.

Therefore, the way this plays out, consequently, therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the law through the body of Christ that you might be joined to another to him who was raised from the dead that we might bear fruit for God.

You do know that, don't you? I honestly wonder today how many true, born-again Christians have any idea at all of what we're talking about.

[ 32 : 09 ] And I'll tell you this, any believer who doesn't is forced to live a life of perpetual defeat and discouragement.

Now, that's a sad thing to realize, but it's true. And could it be that so many believers in the corporate body of Christ are languishing, unaware of these things, and it results in our having very little impact upon our culture because the world looks at us and they have real difficulty telling the difference between them and us.

Something to think about soberly. while we were in the flesh, that is, apart from Christ, as unbelievers, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law, how does that work?

Sinful passions aroused by the law. It works this way. You just tell somebody something that they cannot and should not do. And immediately, you get a, oh yeah?

Well, if I want to. That's what the law does. The law incites us to disobedience. And the reason it incites us to disobedience is because we want to call the shots.

[ 33 : 54 ] We want to be our own person. We want to be the decider. Don't tell me what I can't do. That's our human nature.

While we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death.

but now, two of the biggest little words in all of the Bible and they are used repeatedly for the same purpose every time.

They are designed to establish a contrast, a breakthrough, an upsetting, an overturning. But now, as opposed to before, but now, it's a whole new thing.

This is the idea that in Christ, those who are in Christ, a whole new creature, same person, different ball game, whole new dynamic, brand new on the inside.

[ 35 : 07 ] But now, we have been released from the law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter or the old in use.

What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Or may it never be. This is meganoido. On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the law.

For I would not have known about coveting if the law had not said, you shall not covet. But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind.

For or because apart from the law, sin is dead. And I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died.

And I think Paul is here talking about the age of accountability. We talked about this verse a little bit in the past. And it is somewhat enigmatic. But when Paul says he was alive once apart from the law, I think he meant that he was born redeemed.

[ 36 : 25 ] And as one who is born redeemed, you are under the finished work of Christ. And this becomes the basis for children, especially children who die in childhood, as so many have, of being accepted of God, because they were born under the blanket redemption wrought by Christ when he died on that cross.

Because when Jesus died on the cross, God was in Christ, reconciling the world.

Everyone. Not one single person was omitted. The extent to which Adam's sin impacted the entire human race, resulting in physical death and spiritual death separation from God.

So also, the impact of the death and the finished work of Christ completely covered that to the same extent. Jesus did not leave out anyone for whom he died.

Everyone was included in that blanket redemption. That's not universal salvation. That's what it is often mistaken for.

[ 37 : 54 ] No one is saying that everyone is universally saved. We are saying everyone is universally redeemed. and Paul is saying that was true of his case when he was born and when he reached an age that is not revealed here because it may be different with every person.

Sin revived in him and he died spiritually. And when on that Damascus road he was reborn.

That's what I think he's talking about here. I was alive apart from the law but when the commandment came sin became alive and I died.

He died spiritually. He obviously didn't die physically. He's not talking about that. And this commandment which was to result in life proved to result in death for me.

And Paul became a bona fide sinner. He lost his innocence with which he was born under the redemptive umbrella of Christ and he became a sinner in word thought and deed.

[ 39 : 02 ] And this as I said may occur in different people of different ages and only God knows. For sin taking opportunity through the commandment deceived me and through it killed me.

There again is this spiritual death and separation from God. So then the law is holy and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. Therefore did that which is good become a cause of death for me?

May it never be. Another meganoido. Rather it was sin in order that it might be shown to be sin by affecting my death through that which is good that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.

For we know that the law is spiritual but I am of flesh sold into bondage to sin for that which I am doing I do not understand for I am practicing what I am not practicing what I would like to do but I am doing the very thing I hate but if I do the very thing I do not wish to do I agree with the law confessing that it is good.

So now no longer am I the one doing it but sin which dwells in indwells me for I know that nothing good dwells in me that is in my flesh for the wishing is present in me but the doing of the good is not.

[ 40 : 41 ] The good that I wish I do not do but I practice the very evil that I do not wish but if I am doing the very thing I do not wish I am no longer the one doing it but sin which dwells in me this is not the new nature I find then the principle that evil is present in me the one who wishes to do good for I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man but I see a different law in the members of

my body waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members oh wretched man that I am who will set me free from the body of this death there is only one who can and that's the whole point that he's making here Christ alone makes all the difference thanks be to

God through Jesus Christ our Lord so then on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God but on the other with my flesh the law of sin this is the dichotomy that exists in every single one of us and we will not be free of it until we die and are with the Lord then our old nature will be completely eradicated and I'm about to congratulate myself for allowing time for some Q&A; and we've got time so we got a roving microphone and this is the kind of thing that I suspect could generate a lot of questions I want you to feel free to ask them and I cannot promise you I cannot promise you a completely satisfying answer but I can promise you a good faith attempt at least okay just put your hand up if you have questions or comment and

Ethan will get to you microphone now you know I told you in the past when you don't have any questions it always leaves me wondering whether I taught this so completely and so capably and so thoroughly that I've answered all of your questions automatically or I have confused you so deeply that you can't think of a question to ask I wish it were the former but common sense tells me it's probably not so and maybe you have questions that might be a little embarrassing to ask and if that's the case feel free to write out any questions that you may have about any of this and you don't even have to sign it just write out your questions drop it in the offering box and we'll be glad to deal with it next week anyone my this is quite remarkable well there's always chapter eight so we'll just take a couple of little looks at the first two or three verses okay again remembering that this was not written in chapters it was just written as one continuous document and he begins with an excellent place to point out to you that the chapter division like so many of them is unfortunate and there is therefore what does that mean that's a conclusion but if you stop reading with chapter seven turn out the light roll over and go to sleep you miss you miss the consequence you leave the thing lurching in mid air without any conclusion and that's what the meaning of the word therefore is the word therefore means now in light of everything

I've said up to this point here's the conclusion here's the way this thing washes out and that's chapter eight and verse one so there is therefore as a result now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus that's no judgment is past and the reason there's no judgment is because Jesus already took it he suffered the judgment that we deserve on our behalf on that cross no condemnation no judgment for those who are in Christ Jesus because or for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death this is the whole point of this argument that it does not mean you are unable to sin but it does mean you are able not to sin that's the whole contrast for what the law verse 3 for what the law could not do weak as it was through the flesh you've heard the expression have you not the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak that ties in with this very thing that we're talking about the spirit that God has placed within you is willing and available to be called upon but the flesh is weak and the flesh tends to succumb rather than submit to the power of the spirit what the law could not do weak as it was through the flesh that's the human will the human ability the human temptation cycle

God did sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin he condemned sin in the flesh in order that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit because or for those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh that's all they've got that's their whole base of operation but those who are according to the spirit the things of the spirit for the mind set on the flesh is death but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace because this is this dichotomy this struggle that goes on all the way through our life all the way up until the time we die because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward

[ 48 : 09 ] God for it does not subject itself to the law of God for it is not even able to do so and those who are in the flesh and operating in the flesh cannot please God however you are not in the flesh right that's the thing he's making here and trying to clarify you are not in the flesh but in the spirit if indeed the spirit of God dwells in you he does doesn't he that's again a part of the argument if the spirit of God dwells in you but if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ it does not belong to him and Christ is in you though the body is dead because of sin yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness if the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you he who raised

Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his spirit who indwells you so what do you owe to the flesh nothing we are under obligation not to the flesh to live according to the flesh for if you live according to the flesh you must die but if the spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body you will live for all who are being led by the spirit of God these are the sons of God now quickly I want to take you to Galatians chapter 5 because here he sets forth a contrast that is so stark and it's the difference between the flesh and the spirit and we're in Galatians chapter 5 and in verse 13 we'll just have to jump in here somewhere verse 13 you were called to freedom brethren only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh but through love serve one another that's the opposite of the self-centeredness for the whole law is fulfilled in one word in the statement you shall love your neighbors yourself but if you bite and devour one another take care lest you be consumed one of another but I say walk by the spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh you would be surprised how many Christians are eager to say boy I sure wish I could do that but I can't do that that's beyond me I just don't have that ability yes you do that's the whole point listen God does not make any unreasonable demands of you God does not require anything of you that you cannot fulfill he is a reasonable taskmaster God doesn't set unattainable goals oh that's just too much for me I just can't attain to that I can't reach that no yes you can yes you can that's the whole point that he's making here walk by the spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh for the flesh that's our old Adamic nature flesh sets its desire against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh that's the black dog and the white dog for these are in opposition to one another so that you may not do the things that you please but if you were led by the spirit you are not under the law what am I talking about here what's the outplay what are the characteristics of the flesh what happens when the flesh takes over what do you produce when you're walking in the flesh well the deeds of the flesh are immorality impurity sensuality idolatry sorcery enmities strife jealousy outbursts of anger disputes dissensions factions envyings drunkenness carousings and things like these of which

I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice and there is a key word that means those who have adopted these negative principles as an ongoing lifestyle shall not inherit the kingdom of God but contrasting the fruit of the spirit this is the white dog the fruit of the spirit is love and it's a great one to start with that's the ultimate love joy peace patience kindness goodness faithfulness gentleness self-control against such things there is no law you won't find a law against those things the law is against all the former things that we mentioned there those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires so if we live by the spirit and don't you this is a sense since we live by the spirit since it is because the spirit of

God came into your life when you believed on Christ as your savior regenerated you made you a new person on the inside gave you all the riches and promises fulfilled in Christ Jesus since he did that for you what's your response well thanks but no thanks I'm going to do my own thing it's unthinkable we are to be literally overwhelmed with gratitude as to what has been provided for us and all we want to do is be well pleasing to him if we live by the spirit or since we live by the spirit it is the spirit of God that regenerated you and made you a new person on the inside he did not make you perfect in your practice that's why you've got plenty of room to grow and develop because your practice is changing constantly as you grow and mature and develop you are to become less and less like the old you and more and more like the new you like

[ 54 : 57 ] Christ that's what growth and grace is all about but what the spirit of God provided for you is a position a position of perfection you are as perfect as Jesus Christ is in your position now get busy and work at bringing your practice closer closer to your position every believer in Christ has this position it cannot be improved upon it cannot be lessened it cannot be increased it is perfect it means God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself and has given unto us the ministry of reconciliation to wit that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself we preach we beseech you brethren be reconciled to

God for he God has made him Christ who knew no sin that we might become the what the righteousness of Christ in him this is what I mean when I say positionally you are just as righteous as Jesus Christ is how good is that that's your position your practice we all know we are flawed failing human beings none of us none of us lives up in our practice to what our position is but the time is coming when we will do you know what you call that you call that a glorified body when our body is fashioned like unto the body of Jesus Christ the one that he had when he came out of the tomb that's the same body you and I are going to have so if we live by the spirit let us also walk by

the spirit to why why why well because you really have to no you don't you don't have to and do you know what most

Christians don't that's a principal reason why the world is not all that impressed with our brand of Christianity too many of us are walking just like they walk see what I mean when I say it is a serious thing to be a believer in Jesus Christ comes with incredible responsibilities but it also comes with incredible capabilities we can be you can be you can be all that God wants you to be are you only you can answer that think of it God does not make unreasonable demands of us

God expects nothing from us that he has not already enabled us to fulfill as I've said he is a reasonable task master his burden is easy his yoke is light his burden is easy he's not demanding he's not asking us to do some incredible thing he's asking us to step up to to to what we would call the normal Christian life the normal Christian life I think it was Vance Habner said years ago if a Christian is living a normal Christian life the impact would be so significant that people would be asking what is it about you what makes you tick why are you the way you are why do you believe this or why do you follow that and you have an opportunity to tell them so let me ask you the question and I am asking it by myself has anybody become curious because they watch me and my attitude and my actions has anybody become curious enough to ask a question what makes me tick where do

I get my values or ideas or why do I believe this or why do I believe that because if we are living a normal Christian life we're going to pique some interest people are going to wonder about it and you know what this is supposed to be the attractiveness of Jesus Christ manifested through you and through me that's what I mean when I say it's an awesome thing to be a believer tremendous responsibility but it is so exciting and so fulfilling to realize God doesn't ask me to provide anything or do anything that he has not already enabled me to do and the same is true of you it's not just true of preachers it's true of everyone who is in the body of Christ let's pray our father we are once again stunned afresh at all that's been provided for us in Christ and required from us not only because fulfilling these things honors you but fulfilling these things is in our very own best interest it is the way it is the pathway of joy of happiness of fulfillment of satisfaction that the world can never know apart from our Lord

[ 61 : 27 ] Jesus and while we all have many questions and many clarifications that we would like to ask of this we know enough to be responsive in a positive way and we believe that as we do and as we believe in accordance with what we do know you will provide more answers for what we don't know we just need to make ourselves ready for them help us we pray to do that thank you for gracious provision through and in Christ the little we know about it makes us so grateful we want to be all we can be and all we should be for you and that is our prayer in Christ's name amen