

## Walking After the Spirit

(Rom 8:3-4)

- Remember that Rom 8:1-4 is Paul's summary statement on all he has been teaching on justification by faith "in Christ"

### I. Rom 8:4- God has done what the law could never do

A) God has fulfilled the righteousness the law demands of the flesh

B) God has caused man to begin to practice that same righteousness

1. Where the law inflames lost man to sin, God has caused saved man to hunger and thirst after righteousness

2. Ultimately it was "walking after the Spirit" that Adam rejected

C) Rom 8:5-13- Paul will expound upon what he means by "walking" here

### II. Terms

A) "Walk"- General way of living

1. What governs and regulates a man's thoughts, actions, emotions, purposes

i. Acts 21:21- Walking after the customs of the Jews

ii. Eph 2:1-3- Walking according to world

a) "Conversation"- To conduct oneself, behave, manner of life

b) Phil 3:20- Same word

iii. Acts 19:9 & 23- "That way" and also "the way" in other passages

a) This "way" is visible to others and evident

B) "Flesh"

1. 3 basic uses in NT:

i. Mankind

ii. The physical body

iii. Fallen human nature or man as a result of the fall and without the influencing power of the Holy Spirit in regeneration

a) This is obviously Paul's use of the word in Rom 8:4

C) "After"- *kata*- According to as in The Gospel **of** Matthew, etc.

D) "After the flesh"

1. Negative- This doesn't have to mean "in gross sins" or "in filthy and vile sin"

i. Gal 3:3- "Begun in the Spirit" and now returning to former guidance or method of trying to please God

a) The Galatians were not returning to vile sins and filth, but to the leadership of Judaism

ii. Phil 3:1-3- Paul describes his former religious life as "flesh"

- iii. So Paul is not saying, “the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who no longer commit vile sins in the flesh”
    - a) Paul is saying the believer is “no longer led in life by the flesh and it’s methods”
    - b) Rom 10:1-4- The Jews manner of “walking” which would also be Paul’s former manner
      - 1) To “walk in the flesh” – a false view of my relationship to God and the manner of pleasing Him; a contrary view to the gospel; a wrong opinion of both God and self
        - (a) The Jews hated Christ for condemning their “walk in the flesh”
        - (b) To “walk in the flesh” is to view salvation as all men naturally do: by our own power and good works
        - (c) “Walking after the flesh” is called the “law of sin and death” in Rom 8:1-4
- E) “After the Spirit” (Holy Spirit)
- 1. Enlightened by God’s Spirit and led by what God says about me and salvation and life
    - i. The opposite of “I think”
    - ii. Rom 12:1-2- Both walks set against each other here
      - a) To “walk after the Spirit” is to walk according to what the Spirit says and not what the world says
        - 1) 2 Tim 3:16-17- The Spirit leads by His word
        - 2) Psalm 119- The word a lamp unto our feet
  - 2. There are 2 main schools of thought on “walking after the Spirit”:
    - i. This refers to all Christians without exception
    - ii. This refers only to a special class of Christians
      - a) This 2<sup>nd</sup> teaching has led to terms like “spiritual Christians -vs- carnal Christians”; or “Rom 8 Christians -vs- Rom 7 Christians”
        - 1) But if this is true, then Rom 8:1 condemns some Christians???
        - (a) This is what is sometimes taught, and also why the insertion of 8:b is insisted on by them
    - iii. But Rom 8:2 refers to every Christian as 8:1 does to all “in Christ”
      - a) John 3:4-7- Nicodemus can only think “according to the flesh”
        - 1) Christ identifies why and clearly delineates there are only 2 groups:
          - (a) That which is born of the flesh
          - (b) That which is born of the Spirit
        - 2) “Flesh” cannot think spiritually and cannot be “led by the Spirit”
          - (a) 1 Cor 2:10-14- Paul’s teaching on this

- (b) Rom 8:5-11- Paul expounds upon this very point
  - I. V.5- Flesh can only think like flesh (Nicodemus)
  - II. V.6- Carnal (fleshly) mind is death and not simply “a poor Christian” or a “weak Christian”
  - III. V.7- To walk after the flesh is enmity against God
    - A) This cannot be said of anyone “reconciled to God”
  - IV. V.8- Cannot please God by walking in flesh
    - A) Can’t meet His requirements and save self
  - V. V.9- Without the Spirit = No Christian = God not propitiated = Wrath of God abides on you
- 3. “In Adam” = walking after the flesh, and “In Christ” = walking after the Spirit
  - i. 1 Cor 1:30 You cannot separate justification and sanctification in the life of a person
    - a) 1 John 3:8-10
      - 1) “Committeth sin”- Goes on unabated in it, unchanged or still “walks after the flesh”
        - (a) Remember John wrote against the gnostics and antinomian doctrine
        - (b) “Free from the law, oh blessed condition; I can sin all I want, and still have remission”
      - 2) If John refers here to individual acts of sin, then no one is saved, including John (1:8-9)
        - (a) Christians fall into sin, but they can never “walk after the flesh”
        - (b) To do so would mean to be put back “in Adam” and an unregenerate condition, thus Rom 8:1
- F) Paul’s use of “walk” in other passages
  - 1. Gal 5:25- *stoixeo*- this is a completely different word than that used in Rom 8:4
    - i. It means “to walk orderly” or “to march under instruction” or “have each step ordered”
      - a) Also used in Gal 6:16 & Phil 3:16
  - 2. In Rom 8:4- *peripateo*- to carry on ones life, to regulate one’s course of life
    - i. It is this general direction of life that is one of the most evident proofs of salvation for the believer
- III. “The righteousness of the law fulfilled in us”
  - A) Why does Paul add this?
    - 1. God’s will is not thwarted, it will be accomplished, but not by man but by God Himself in man

2. It is assurance of salvation for the believer; we know what leads us
  3. It is assurance of final victory (glory) for the believer (Rom 8:29-30)
  4. It stands as evidence against heresies like Gnostics, or “Carnal Christians” and their “easy believism”
    - i. 1 John 3:22- Proof
      - a) Rom 10:9- This is the battle cry of the antinomian
        - 1) But notice “believe with the heart”
          - (a) When we believe with the heart, the will and life will be changed as well (Rom 6:17)
- B) “**That** the righteousness.....”
1. This shows purpose, and itself disproves the antinomian doctrine
  2. Paul does not say God did all this “That it could become possible for some of the more excellent Christians to walk with Him”
    - i. Matt 1:17- Jesus dies to save us “FROM” our sins