

No Christian, not even an apostle, is exempt from struggles with sin in the flesh. We're looking at God's way to walk as the Christian you are. On to God's solution for sin in the flesh in **8:1-4!** Let's start with "What are your 'flesh patterns/urges'?" How do you respond when you don't rely on God? It's not by the flesh (your human resources/abilities/strength/even your best efforts). It's not by law/performance, because by our flesh we can't carry out its perfect demands! Flesh used 17X in **Rom. 7-8**, equated with 'the physical body' in 6 verses. 'Self-sufficient independence of God' in the other 12 places—depending only on your human resources, abilities, strength, feelings. It's how you respond when you are not depending on the Holy Spirit. Many deeds of the flesh are described in **Rom. 1:21-3:20, Gal. 5:19-21, 2 Tim. 3:1-5**. 'Death' means no life of God evident, the opposite of the fruit of the Spirit (**Gal. 5:22-23**). The flesh shows up in pursuing fame, fortune, power, pleasure, ending with fear, hostility, guilt, emptiness, frustration, confusion, shame.

Law is used 28X in **chapters 7-8**. All humans are under its control, jurisdiction, as long as we're alive. So, **7:4** tells us we as Christians were made to die to the Law through the death of Jesus for us and our sins so we could be joined to the risen Christ, bear fruit for God, and walk in newness of the Spirit.

Sin: to miss God's mark, to fall short. Sin still dwells in every person's body/flesh (**7:17-18,20,21**), even the Christian's, and that's a problem. God's solution for this was to place the Holy Spirit to live within every Christian's body of flesh. God's solution for the Christian living the Christian life is the indwelling Holy Spirit. Spirit is mentioned over 20X, almost all referring to God's Spirit.

To walk in a way that pleases God, we must begin by being born again by faith in the Person and work of Jesus. Then we must learn to walk by the Spirit of God who took up residence in our bodies when we became Christians.

Before we became Christians, we had no choice but to try to walk by the flesh, which revealed itself in anger, sexual immorality, hate, selfishness, unforgiveness, self-pity, pride, worry, living by your senses/feelings, idolatry, jealousy, drunkenness, envy, greed, fear, impatience, strife, slander, murder, no inward joy, no self-control, no kindness or gentleness, and so forth! The flesh is how you even as a Christian respond when you don't rely on God! Sin in our flesh urges us to try to handle things in our strength, with our own twisted thinking, apart from relying on the indwelling Holy Spirit.

As Christians our natures have been changed. We're no longer IN Adam but are now IN Christ; no longer sinners by nature but saints by nature. Yet we still live in these bodies of flesh, where indwelling sin tempts us to try to experience life, even God's life, without relying on or trusting Him. This results in continual frustration, trying to obey but never succeeding, "For the good that I want, I don't do, but I practice the very evil I hate!" Paul calls it the law of sin and death. If we aren't freed from that law, all we will see is ourselves falling short of God's standards, never pleasing Him in our walk.

In **8:1-17a** we see God's solution for walking as the Christians we are. He says that we now have a choice to walk, not by the flesh but by the Holy Spirit who came to live in our fleshly bodies when we became followers of Jesus.

So how do we handle it when our boss yells at us or when we're being tempted to give in to pornography or when watching a program or reading a magazine that is tempting or when you're being slandered or treated wrongly or when your mate or government or employer is treating you unjustly or a fellow Christian is treating you wrongly? I use SCRAT, which we'll learn at the conclusion of this study.

The apostle Peter wrote (**1 Pet. 2:11-12,21-25**), "Abstain from fleshly lusts/urges...Keep your behavior excellent...Copy Jesus' example of entrusting Himself to His Father." But how do I 'do' that? And what about sin in my flesh? How do I walk as the new person I am IN Christ and IN the Spirit?

**8:1-17a** gives God's answer to the dilemma of **Rom. 7:7-25**. Step by step, it's Another's life through ours. The emphasis is a new way of walking, in and by the indwelling Holy Spirit. We found in **7:1-25** that even as Christians, we can't live up to God's holy demands in our own strength. God's Law keeps showing us that truth! The Law has its purposes: to reveal sin, to stimulate sin, to condemn sin, & to drive us to Christ, but it's not a way to/of life. Why? The Law is perfect, but our flesh is not! Sin dwelling in our bodies is too powerful, deceitful, and utterly sinful. Who will set us free from the law of sin and death? **Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord (7:25a)!** Over against indwelling sin in our flesh, Paul now presents the indwelling Holy Spirit. Remember, the believer died to the Law to (1) be joined to Christ, (2) bear fruit for God, and (3) walk according to the Spirit. It's a whole new way of life—not by the Law, not by the flesh, but by the indwelling Spirit.

**Read :1-4. :1 Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Therefore** [responding to "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord" **7:25**; introduces a result, consequence, or conclusion based on what has been established previously], **there is now** NO CONDEMNATION (word only found in **5:16,18, 8:1**) **for those who are IN Christ Jesus**. If you are IN Christ Jesus, you're never condemned—not eternally nor to a present life of sin and death, to the frustrating life of **7:14-25**. It depends on whether a person is IN Christ and IN the Spirit or IN Adam and IN the flesh! You're either one or the other. The emphasis in **7:1-8:30** is the Christian's walk, not only his/her identity. We may think: "Condemnation will inspire improvement and discourage sin," or, "Surely condemnation will come this time!" But there is no condemnation (**5:16,18**). Christ's salvation includes deliverance from both the condemnation of the Law & sin in the flesh. IN Christ, we are secure!

A victorious walk begins with knowing and applying these truths: you're IN Christ! You're never condemned! When you sin/fail, confess your sin, realize God's forgiveness and cleansing, remember He's made you a new person IN Christ and IN the Spirit, and by faith go on in His strength. Review The Forgiveness Cycle. Don't stay down in the dumps; that's not God's plan! He's provided Himself to depend on.

What a secure place to be: IN Christ (**:1**) and to have Christ in us (**:10**)! Set against this truth is 'sin' that is in our flesh that demands gratification. Yet...

**:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the**

**law of sin and of death.** For, the law [a new law or principle] of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free [once and forever] from the law of sin and of death [which we couldn't defeat in our own strength, by the law of our minds]. God's remedy for the law of sin and death was to replace that law with a Life, the Spirit's. God has dealt with the very root of our trouble in our walk: sin in the flesh. See **Gal. 5:17**. In the same way that the law of aerodynamics sets us free from the law of gravity, so the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set us free (past tense with ongoing results) from the law of sin and death. We're no longer the wretched man of **7:24**; we're now IN Christ (**8:1**) and IN the Spirit (**8:9**). God says so! 'You' in **:2** is singular, not plural. We don't have to continue to try to find life by the Law & the flesh. We are no longer what we sometimes 'feel' we are. Consider these truths true because God says they are. Begin to see yourself as God has made you.

This is the reconciled/exchanged life, set free from something for Someone! As Christians, we're not helpless victims of the power of sin in the flesh. We've been set free. The Spirit brings into our lives freedom from the law of sin and death and to walk pleasing to God. Free from sin's power, trying to live up to the Law's demands in our own strength, the law of sin and death. Freedom is sometimes hard to accept, but the Bible says it's true. Know you're free! No condemnation and free—in Christ and by the Spirit. Believe it! **"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly (Jn. 10:10)."**

**:3-4** CONTINUE TO TELL US WHAT THE LORD JESUS HAS DONE FOR US, AND WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL DO IN AND THROUGH US. **:3 For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh.** For what the Law could not do—not because IT was wrong but because WE were weak in our flesh (because sin still resides there)—God did! Yet, because of sin in our flesh, there is continual frustration and failure in trying to obey the Law in our own strength; we can't escape the Law's penalty nor can we walk (thinking/behavior/speech) in a way that pleases God. This is why nagging someone never helps. God knew our problem, and out of His love and grace, He took action. God has made possible a victorious walk!

THROUGH THE WORK OF HIS SON. **Sending Jesus, His own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh** (truly human, like Adam's and Eve's original bodies, temptable yet Jesus was without sin), **and for sin, God condemned sin in the flesh.** If He had not been both fully human and fully sinless (**2 Cor. 5:21**), Jesus could not have been an acceptable sacrifice to God for all the sins of the world.

Jesus was sent to deal with sins and sinners (by nature and heredity), even sin in the flesh! By His death, Jesus condemned sin in the flesh that every Christian (**7:1-25**) struggles with. Jesus has fully satisfied the demands of the Law, both in the keeping of its demands and in the bearing of the punishment for our sins and for us as sinners. This is not a statement of justification (getting right/just with God) but one concerning the Christian's walk (:4). It's like "Who will deliver me from this body of death, with sin still residing in it (7:8-11,17,20)?" God's answer? "I will, and I did it through My Son Jesus

and His death." It's done! It's completed! "Somehow the Lord Jesus, at the hour of darkness, gathered up all the sin [and sinners] of the world, all the terrible, evil, foul, awful injustice, crime, and misery that we've seen throughout history, from every person, gathered it to Himself, and brought it to an end by dying in our place and for our sins." Our 'feelings' must be answered by Biblical 'facts'. And, He will carry out that victory for us through the indwelling Holy Spirit. First the Father sent His Son and then He gave us His Spirit (part of the new covenant). Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the Law, but you are under grace, with its affirmation that God has already made you different (**6:14**). Now choose to believe and act on it! Jesus has even dealt with sin in the flesh!! Amazing!

**:4 so that (hina) the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.** So that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled [passive] in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. Why is there no condemnation (**:1**)? Why have we been freed from the law of sin and death (**:2**)? Why did God send Jesus to condemn sin in the flesh? So that the requirements of those laws of God we so agree with and want to keep might be fulfilled—not by us but in us, by the indwelling Spirit! The Spirit who gave the Law fulfills it through us as we walk by faith. God's abundant provision!

All this becomes real to us when we choose to walk by the Spirit. Being indwelt by the Spirit is not a mark of special maturity or spirituality but is to be a mark of the walk of every true Christian. "Now you have in you My Spirit, whose power will enable you to fulfill My law's otherwise impossible demands." As a believer, you may be trying to keep the Law, loving God with all you are and loving your neighbor as yourself. But trying to do so through your own efforts is legalism; this is a struggle that does not have to go on.

When we understand who we really are, we can say "No" to the flesh and make it stick; then we say "Yes" to the Spirit and discover a whole new walk of life. We came out of Adam, we are now in Christ, and God will never condemn those who are IN Christ and IN the Spirit. There's no rejection by God. He will always treat you as His child and not as His enemy. Though you may condemn yourself, God does not. You are a child in His family, learning to walk. Only this caution: when we deliberately decide to sin, He will discipline us; this is the discipline of a loving Father. But in these four verses, Paul is addressing the times when we want to do good and we're trying to do good but failing.

We may think it's enough to be IN Christ, but we must also learn what it means to be IN the Spirit and walk according to the Spirit (SCRAT sheet). Notice it's a walk—a lifestyle, cultivating the choice to depend upon Him to be all we need. Why would we go back to trying to do it in our own strength? We'll never succeed, and only foolishly place ourselves under the obsolete law of sin and death again. When examining your spiritual walk, don't look to the Law; look to the Spirit and His life. He is where true life (Jesus' life) is found. So we're learning we have died to sin, yet there's the daily struggle

between our flesh and the indwelling Holy Spirit. The Christian is IN Christ and IN the Spirit and can walk by the Spirit. This walk is available to every Christian! This is the normal Christian life, NOT 7:14-25! Where do the Word & the Law fit in all this? We need to know God's truth so it's easy to recognize when we're walking by the Spirit and when we're walking by the flesh.

**Gal. 2:20b and 5:16 (read)** tell us how to walk as the new persons we are IN Christ! It's not by our trying harder, but trusting in what God did in Christ and does through the Spirit. It's a walk of faith. When I encounter temptation to sin or even the strong desire to do the right thing, I say, "Father, through Your Spirit, I can walk in victory in this situation but the Spirit is going to have to do it; I can't do it in my own strength. Spirit, I've presented my mortal body to You. As I walk by faith, thank You for being my strength (**Eph. 3:16, 5:18**). I will go on with my everyday life assuming by faith I'm filled with You until You let me know differently." It's good to begin each day with words like these—reviewing who you are in Christ and how to walk by the Spirit.

**Reflecting on Romans 8:1-4:** What does "No condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" mean in the context of 7:14-25? Why is :1 so meaningful to you at this time in your walk? How have the Father, Jesus, and the Spirit been at work in both your justification (being right/just with God) and in your everyday walk? According to :4, what kind of walk can you experience every moment? What are two practical lessons you will apply?

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1. **Search your life for sin (Ps. 139:23-24).**
  - a. Sin is missing God's mark. It may be in thinking, action, word, power source, or motivation. When you sin, the sweet fellowship with the Father is broken. The relationship remains but the fellowship is absent.
  - b. Be open to God's examination to see if there are any sins that are obstructing your fellowship with the Father. If your sin is the result of something from the past, the Holy Spirit knows the past, and if necessary for your walk, He will bring it to your attention.
2. **Confess any known sin (1 Jn. 1:9, Ps. 32:1-5).**
  - a. Confess means to 'agree with'. You are to 'agree with' God concerning your sin. "Father, I tried to find life or love or meaning in something or someone other than You, and that's wrong. I agree with You that I've missed Your mark." Focus on God, see sin as He sees it, accept responsibility for your sin, repent of it, and confess it.
  - b. If it's a sin you committed from the past or present, when the Holy Spirit brings it to your attention, deal with it, make personal Jesus' forgiveness and cleansing that was accomplished on the cross, and then go on in His strength. When you've fallen, don't stay there. Let go of the whole burden of your sin, rest on the finished work of the Lord Jesus, and resume walking. If that sin again comes to mind, it's an attack by Satan!
  - c. If your sin involved another individual, first confess the sin to the Lord, then go to the person, confess your wrong, and ask his/her forgiveness.
3. **Review who you are in Christ & in the Spirit (Rom. 6:11, 8:1-13, Gal. 3-6).**
  - a. Because your old man IN Adam died with Christ and you're now IN Christ, you are dead to sin and alive to God. You have a new nature, a new identity, a new heart, an alive spirit. Jesus IS your life!
  - b. Because you're no longer IN the flesh but IN the Spirit, you are no longer under law, and, you have no obligation to the flesh. You owe everything to the Spirit. The Spirit gives life to your mortal body. Remember, the flesh is NOT who you are!
  - c. Your thinking, choices, behavior, and speech should reflect the new person you are in Christ and in the Spirit. Jesus has taken up residence in your *spirit*. The Holy Spirit has taken up residence in your *body*.
  - d. When you sin, you can't blame the nature—it's new in Christ. And, you can't blame the flesh—the Spirit dwells there to give you victory in your daily walk. So, when you sin, confess the sin, make personal the Lord's forgiveness, and review who you temporarily forgot or ignored you were (IN Christ and IN the Spirit).

4. **Allow yourself to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18, Gal. 5:16).**
  - a. "Allow yourself to be continually being filled or walk by the Spirit." It's a constant choice to be made, not a one-time act or event.
  - b. Remember, you are always indwelt by the Spirit. But at any moment, you're either filled with the Spirit or you aren't. Sin is what breaks His filling, His control, His strengthening.
5. **Thank Him (1 Th. 5:18, Eph. 5:20)**  
Thank God for: revealing sins in your life, forgiving and cleansing you, making you who you are IN Christ and IN the Spirit, and filling you!

Having gone through the 5 steps, by faith assume you're filled until He lets you know differently. Go about your everyday life, making choices you know are honoring to God and realizing His Spirit is living the life of Jesus through you! You'll see His fruit (**Gal. 5:22-23, Eph. 5:19-21**), His life, through yours!

Cultivate Godly trust, thinking, habits, and choices. You'll find yourself walking according to the Spirit more and more of the *time*. That's what walking is all about!

**Psalm 139:23-24** "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way. God, I've asked You to examine my life for sin, and if You've revealed a sin to me, I'm to '1 John 1:9' it—**If I confess my sins, You are faithful and righteous/just to forgive my sins and to cleanse me from all unrighteousness.** I've confessed any known sin. Then I've reviewed my identity. **Romans 6:11** says I'm to **consider myself to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus** based on the truths of **Romans 6:1-10**. **Romans 8:9** says that since I'm a Christian, **I'm not in the flesh but in the Spirit**. **Romans 8:11** states that **if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in me, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to my mortal body through His Spirit who indwells me.** So I've reviewed who I am in Christ and in the Spirit. **Ephesians 5:18** then says **be filled with the Spirit** and **Galatians 5:16** makes clear I'm to **walk by the Spirit, and I will not carry out the desire of the flesh**. **Galatians 5:25** adds, **Since I live by the Spirit, I should also walk by the Spirit**. I've allowed the Spirit to fill me. Finally, **1 Thess. 5:18** states **in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for me in Christ Jesus**. I thank You, God for Your searching, forgiving, reviewing, filling work. Praise You! Then by faith I understand that I'm walking in the Spirit's strength until He lets me know otherwise. What an abandoned life of freedom! Freedom to live as You intend me to live, a life of worship, love, and service!"

Lord's Supper using Is. 53:1-12 and 1 Cor. 11:23-26.

**1. Search your life for sin (Ps. 139:23-24).**

- a. Sin is missing God's mark. It may be in thinking, action, word, power source, or motivation. When you sin, the sweet fellowship with the Father is broken. The relationship remains but the fellowship is absent.
- b. Be open to God's examination to see if there are any sins that are obstructing your fellowship with the Father. If your sin is the result of something from the past, the Holy Spirit knows the past, and if necessary for your walk, He will bring it to your attention.

**2. Confess any known sin (1 Jn. 1:9, Ps. 32:1-5).**

- a. Confess means to 'agree with'. You are to 'agree with' God concerning your sin. "Father, I tried to find life or love or meaning in something or someone other than You, and that's wrong. I agree with You that I've missed Your mark." Focus on God, see sin as He sees it, accept responsibility for your sin, repent of it, and confess it.
- b. If it's a sin you committed from the past or present, when the Holy Spirit brings it to your attention, deal with it, make personal Jesus' forgiveness and cleansing that was accomplished on the cross, and then go on in His strength. When you've fallen, don't stay there. Let go of the whole burden of your sin, rest on the finished work of the Lord Jesus, and resume walking. If that sin again comes to mind, it's an attack by Satan!
- c. If your sin involved another individual, first confess the sin to the Lord, then go to the person, confess your wrong, and ask his/her forgiveness.

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## Understanding How to Walk as the Christian You Are (SCRAT)

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