

**Four Laws that Govern Our Lives**  
**Part Four**  
**The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus**

- *The laws of God run as a central theme through the book of Romans.*
- *While there are many different laws spoken about in Romans we are going to focus on four laws found in Romans which apply to each one of us on an individual basis. Two laws came into effect at our physical birth and two laws come into effect at our spiritual birth. As Christians we are subject to these four laws and if we apply them correctly the result will be an overcoming life.*
- *The first two laws come into effect at our physical birth: the Law of Sin and Death (Romans 7:23, 25; 8:2), and the Law of the Mind (Romans 7:23). These two laws will either produce bondage and death or freedom and life depending on how we apply them.*
- *The second two laws come into effect at our spiritual birth: the Law of Faith (Romans 3:27), and the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:2). Applying these second two laws to our lives will result in victorious and fruitful lives.*
- *For us to see God's grace, redemption, and victory released in our lives in respect to each of these four laws we need to operate according to another principle—recognizing the power of our tongues and the confession of our mouths.*
- *As we study each of these four laws we will see there are four types of confessions that relate to each of these laws. The appropriate type of confession in relationship to each of these laws will result in the release of God's grace in our lives.*
- *Three weeks ago we studied the Law of Sin and Death. The Law of Sin and Death is neutral because it can be used in a positive or a negative way. If we ignore or disregard this law and choose to sin, we will find ourselves in increasing bondage to sin and experience the destructive consequences of sin in our lives.*
- *However, if we apply the appropriate confession to the Law of Sin and Death, namely the confession of our sins and declaring ourselves crucified with Christ, we will find forgiveness and experience an increasing degree of freedom in our lives.*
- *Two weeks ago we studied the second law—the Law of the Mind. The Law of the Mind, like the Law of Sin and Death, is neutral and can be used in a*

*positive or a negative way. The Law of the Mind basically states that whatever we choose to focus on will ultimately captivate our thoughts and desires.*

- *We may say that some people have addictive personalities but in reality the Law of the Mind states that we all have addictive personalities. Whatever we focus on will increasingly become our obsession. Some people are addicted to drugs, gambling, sex, covetousness, laziness, computer games, etc.*
- *However, if we focus on Jesus we become God-aholics addicted to Jesus. Then our focus will be to share our love for Jesus with everyone around us.*
- *The confession that relates to the Law of the Mind is an honest confession. This operates when we can be honest with those we trust and sincerely share how we are really doing and feeling. When we are discouraged or struggling we can share openly so others can pray for us and encourage us. If we do not have an honest confession we can easily feel isolated and overwhelmed by our circumstances and struggles.*
- *In Romans, Chapter seven, we see Paul making an honest confession about an earlier time in his walk with the Lord when he struggled with sin.*
- *Last week we studied the third law which is the Law of Faith.*
- *The Law of Faith begins to function the moment we receive Jesus Christ and are born again. “Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.” (Romans 3:27-28).*
- *The concept of faith is having a strong and unshakeable confidence in something or someone. As Christians our faith is in Jesus Christ and the Word of God.*
- *Faith in God produces an atmosphere of peace and security in our hearts preventing the enemy from overwhelming us with fear, discouragement, or confusion.*
- *Christians often think of faith as an offensive weapon in our spiritual armor, but the Bible portrays faith as a defensive weapon. Faith is described as both a shield (Ephesians 6:16), and part of the breastplate of righteousness. (1 Thessalonians 5:8).*
- *Faith as a shield protects us from whatever darts of fear, doubt, and discouragement the enemy hurls at us, and the breastplate of righteousness through faith and love protects our hearts from the offenses and bitterness of people’s words and actions so we can love, bless, and pray for those who have hurt or wronged us.*

- *The confession that relates to the Law of Faith is a confession of faith.*
- *Today we are going to study the fourth law—the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus.*
- *Paul summarized the first three laws in the final verses of Romans, Chapter seven before revealing the revelation found in Romans 8:2 which shows us how to overcome and be victorious over the Law of Sin and Death.*
- *Paul described how the Law of Sin and Death was always waging war against him and causing him to act contrary to how he wished to act. “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.” (Romans 7:21-23).*
- *Paul confessed his struggle with sin. “I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good...and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” (verses 21, 23b). (A confession of sins)*
- *Paul next confessed his sense of despair and helplessness to overcome this Law of Sin that was operating in his flesh. “O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?” (Verse 24). (An honest confession)*
- *However, Paul did not allow his feelings of helplessness and despair to defeat him, cause him to give up, or allow shame and condemnation to overtake him. He made a confession that God was with him through his struggles and the inner conflict he was experiencing. “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. (Verse 25). (A confession of faith)*
- *All this leads up to Romans, Chapter eight, where Paul reveals the key to living in freedom and overcoming the Law of Sin and Death.*

#### **Romans 8:1-18 (NASB)**

<sup>1</sup> Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

<sup>2</sup> For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

- *Even though the Law of Faith is essential for us to be saved, it is the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus that sets us free from the Law of Sin and Death and enables us to live a victorious life.*

- *It is the life of Christ in our reborn spirit that empowers us to live an overcoming life. “You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.” (1 John 4:4).*
- *Who is in us? The Spirit of Jesus Christ in our reborn spirit!*
- *Who is in the world that the Spirit of Christ overcomes? Some would say the devil and that is true. But there is someone much closer to us that is in the world and tries to control us and overcome us—our own flesh.*
- *Therefore we can say, “Greater is the Spirit of Jesus Christ in our reborn spirit than our old sinful nature in our flesh.”*
- *Romans 8:1 provides one of the key truths for the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus to operate in our lives. “Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”*
- *Condemnation, shame, and regret hinder us from allowing the life of Christ in our reborn spirit to change our hearts and lives. Condemnation and shame make us feel unworthy and hopeless. Instead of focusing on God, we turn from Him and focus on our struggles and failures.*
- *Condemnation comes from the enemy and points to the problem. Conviction comes from God and points to the solution—a confession of sin.*
- *It is faith that gives us confidence and peace to come before God joyfully knowing that we have been justified by faith and are fully accepted and loved by Him. “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” (Romans 5:1-2).*
- *It is the shield of faith that surrounds us and quenches the enemy’s fiery darts of condemnation and shame so an atmosphere of peace and security fills our hearts.*
- *As we make the confession of faith that we are righteous in Christ, then we are able to approach God with boldness to receive mercy and find grace in time of need. “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” (Hebrews 4:16).*
- *The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus describes the overcoming life of Christ that is in our reborn spirit which is in direct opposition to the Law of Sin and Death that resides in our flesh.*

- *The word “love” best describes the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. Although faith is important, love best expresses the character of Christ. “though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.” (1 Corinthians 13:2b).*
- *The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus enables us to obey His commandments because it produces within us a deep love for Him and His Word. “If you love Me, keep My commandments.” (John 14:15).*
- *In contrast to the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus that stirs up our love for God, the Law of Sin and Death stirs up a carnal love for the things in the world. “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” (1 John 2:15).*
- *Paul continued by explaining why we are unable to overcome the Law of Sin and Death by trying to live righteously through the Law. “For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh.” (Romans 8:3a). The Law, referring to the Law of Moses, was not unreasonable or flawed in itself since it reflected God’s righteous standard. “the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good” (Romans 7:12). However, we were unable to keep it because of our sinful and rebellious nature.*
- *God gave the Mosaic Law not to save us but to reveal our need for a Saviour. The Mosaic Law was not instituted to prevent sin but to reveal sin. “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.”” (Romans 7:7).*
- *Sin actually uses the commandments of God to deceive us and bring death. “For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me.” (Romans 7:11).*
- *Sin can use the commandments to deceive us in two ways:*
  1. *We can be deceived into thinking that we are actually keeping the Law in our own strength when in fact we are not. This produces the sin of self-righteousness and pride which can result in us becoming religious.*
  2. *We can be deceived into thinking that sin is desirable. Whenever the Law says don’t do it, sin tells us to do it.*
- *God’s solution to overcoming sin was not to have us try to keep the Law, but to have Jesus die for our sins so we could be free from the Law of Sin and Death. “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.” (Romans 8:3).*

- *We live righteously not by identifying with the Law, but by identifying with Jesus' sacrificial death and reckoning ourselves dead to sin. "Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:11).*
- *The more we try to fulfil the Law the more frustrated we will become. Trying to live under the Law actually stirs up the Law of Sin and Death because the Law makes us even more sin conscious. "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." (Romans 7:8-9).*
- *"...so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit." (Romans 8:4). This truth seems obvious, but it seems to have been missed by many Christians.*
- *The righteous requirements of the Law cannot be fulfilled in those who walk in the flesh. Why would one think that the very source of our sin nature, our flesh, could enable us to walk in righteousness and fulfill the Law?! How can the source of the problem be the source of the solution?*
- *The only way to live righteously is to walk according to the Spirit—the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus.*
- *"For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit." (Romans 8:5).*
- *The Law of the Mind states that our minds are neutral. However, whatever thoughts we choose to focus on and whatever occupies our mind will determine our future actions. This is why Paul cautions us to "take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:5, NIV). Changing our mind changes our actions.*
- *"For the mind set on the flesh is death." (Romans 8:6a). If our minds are set on the flesh then the Law of Sin and Death will produce death. However, if we set our minds on the Spirit then the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus will produce "life and peace." (Romans 8:6b).*
- *The mind set upon the flesh not only becomes hostile toward God but it is contrary to His Word to the point where even if the person wants to seek God they cannot do so. "the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward 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 cannot please God." (Romans 8:7-8).*

- *This helps explain the inner turmoil that a carnal Christian experiences. He wants to serve God but doesn't want to serve God. One Sunday he comes to church and then once again disappears from fellowship.*
- *In the next verse Paul makes a clear distinction between a carnally minded Christian and someone who is not a Christian. "However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him." (Romans 8:9).*
- *"However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you." — If the Spirit of God is dwelling in us, meaning that we are abiding in Christ and walking in the Spirit, then we are not given over to fleshly impulses. Instead, the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus reigns in our hearts.*
- *"But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him." — Anyone who is not born again does not have the Spirit of Christ. They are not saved and do not belong to Christ.*
- *Having the Spirit of God dwelling in us speaks about sanctification, being spiritually minded, and living righteously. Having the Spirit of Christ speaks about justification and the condition of our spirit—our righteous standing.*
- *Paul then describes the condition of someone who is born again but is not abiding in Christ, who does not allow the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus to reign in their lives. "If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. (Romans 8:10). Our spirit is alive because of Christ's righteousness, but we are still controlled by sin in our bodies and that sin produces destructive behaviours.*
- *However, we don't have to live a defeated life. If we submit to the Spirit of God and allow Him to dwell in us and control our lives then the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus will empower us to live righteous lives even while still living in our mortal bodies. — "But 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 dwells in you." (Romans 8:11).*
- *Paul then reinforces that we are not under any compulsion by the Law of Sin and Death to live defeated lives controlled by the flesh because we have the overcoming resurrection life of Jesus Christ in our reborn spirit. "So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. (Romans 8:12). We are not indebted to the flesh because through Christ's death we are dead to the old man—our old sinful nature.*

- “for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.” (*Romans 8:13*). — *If believers choose to live lives controlled by the Law of Sin and Death it will bring destruction to their lives. However, through the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus we are able to put to death the deeds of the body which will result in a life of righteousness.*
- “For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” (*Romans 8:14*). — *If a Christian is led by the Spirit of God and has the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus fully operating in their lives then these are the “sons” of God.*
- *The Greek word for sons in Romans 8:14 is “huios” which refers to mature sons as opposed to children (Greek teknon) who are still young and immature. “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children (teknon) of God, to those who believe in His name” (John 1:12). Once a person puts their faith in Christ, no matter how immature they are, they immediately become children (teknon) of God. However, God has many more children than He does mature sons.*
- *Every believer is a child (teknon) of God but only those who are led by the Spirit of God are mature sons (huios) of God. Those who are mature sons have learned to operate by the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus.*

#### **Romans 8:15-17**

<sup>15</sup> For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"

<sup>16</sup> The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,

<sup>17</sup> and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.

- *Paul is encouraging us to recognize that God is our Father and to turn to Him with trust and confidence and call out, “Abba! Father!”*
- *We are encouraged to embrace our relationship with God as His children realizing that He wants us to realize that we are called to be joint heirs with Christ!*
- *The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus will transform us and empower us to go through the process of maturing to become full heirs with Christ. — “if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.”*

- *Every son is an heir, but not every son receives a full inheritance. Mature sons who submit to the Spirit of God to transform them into the image of Jesus will receive a greater inheritance. It is God's will for each believer to be conformed fully into the image of His Son Jesus and receive the full inheritance. — “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.” (Romans 8:29).*
- *The confession that relates to the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus is a confession of thanksgiving, praise, and a shout of victory over every circumstance we may face. — “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.” “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?” “Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.” (Romans 8:18, 31-32, 37).*
- *The confession of thanksgiving, praise, and victory is not based on our circumstances or even how we may feel but is solidly founded on the Life of Christ in our reborn spirit!*
- *The story of the healing of the ten lepers found in Luke, Chapter seventeen, provides us with an example of these four laws at work.*

**Luke 17:11-19 NKJV**

<sup>11</sup> Now it happened as He went to Jerusalem that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

<sup>12</sup> Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off.

<sup>13</sup> And they lifted up their voices and said, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”

<sup>14</sup> So when He saw them, He said to them, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.

<sup>15</sup> And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God,

<sup>16</sup> and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.

<sup>17</sup> So Jesus answered and said, “Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?”

<sup>18</sup> Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?”

<sup>19</sup> And He said to him, “Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well.”

- *The story begins with ten lepers standing “afar off,” isolated from both men and God. In the Bible leprosy represents sin. Leprosy affects the flesh, it distorts and scars the body and the afflicted person must be isolated from others so their contagion will not spread.*

- *The Law of Sin and Death originates in the flesh and distorts and scars who we are and it separates us from others and from God.*
- *The lepers turned to Jesus and cried out for mercy. “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” They confessed their lost and hopeless condition and cried for help.*
- *This represents both a confession of sins relating to the Law of Sin and Death but also a honest confession relating to the Law of the Mind as they honestly declared how hopeless and tormented they felt.*
- *“So when He saw them, He said to them, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.” In response to their calls for help Jesus told them to present themselves to the priests and they obeyed. This represents the Law of Faith and a confession of faith. Anyone with leprosy who had been cured from the disease was required to have the priest confirm that they were no longer lepers. (Leviticus 14:2-3).*
- *Of the ten lepers who were healed only one returned to thank Jesus. The one who returned represents the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus and a confession of thanksgiving. “And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.” Through Jesus, he received a new life and a new identity.*
- *We can witness what a confession of thanksgiving and praise and victory looks like by studying the one leper who came back to Jesus to give thanks.*
- *“He returns” – We need to stop everything and drop everything and turn our attention toward God in gratitude.*
- *“With a loud voice” — His thanksgiving and praise was not passive. He was overwhelmed with gratitude and amazement! He was shouting and possibly leaping as he came to Jesus.*
- *“glorified God” — As he was returning to Jesus he proclaimed to everyone he met how great and wonderful God is!*
- *“fell down on his face at His feet” — When we respond to the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus our confession of thanksgiving and praise results in surrendering our lives to God so He can use our lives in whatever way He knows is best.*
- *“giving Him thanks” — Our prayer, our confessions, and our lives are to be punctuated by thanksgiving.*

- *Jesus said something very interesting to the leper who returned to give thanks. “Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well.” All ten were healed from leprosy but only one was made well or complete. Although the other nine received a physical healing, they still continued to carry the scars of their bitter experiences of rejection and shame. But the heart of the one who came back to give thanks was made whole and set free from any resentment or bitterness. Joy and thanksgiving to God flooded his soul.*
- *Many come to Christ and are saved but continue to live lives that are filled with internal turmoil and defeat because they have not yet begun walking in the spirit and living according to the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. They may operate to a certain degree in the Law of Faith but because they lack a confession of thanksgiving, praise, and victory they still face many struggles because of unresolved issues in their hearts.*
- *A confession of thanksgiving, praise and victory does not mean we have arrived at totally victory but that we are submitting to the Spirit of God who leads us on our journey until we do. “Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls—Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer’s feet.” (Habakkuk 3:17-19a).*