

Lesson 5 – Help in the Daily Battle (Chapter 7)

In chapter five we saw how God has delivered us from the realm and the reign of sin through our union with Christ in His death. He died to sin and through Him we died to sin also. Then, in chapter 6, we saw how the sin nature still lives within us, waging its guerilla-type warfare against us through deceit and our desires. Which leaves us with the quandary – what good does it do to be told that the war with sin has been won by Christ and His death on the cross, if I am still harassed and sometimes even defeated by the sin nature still resident in my heart?

To experience practical, everyday holiness we move right to the second point in Romans 6:11 – we are not only *dead to sin*, we are *alive to God*! What is the significance of being alive to God?

We are united with Christ in all of His power – It is a certainty that we cannot live a holy life in our own strength. Christianity is not a do-it-yourself project (but it is a come-as-you-are affair). We have the power of Christ to tap into for strength (Philippians 4:11-13, Colossians 1:11 and Ephesians 3:14-21). Only as we reckon (determine to be true) these twin facts – that I am dead to sin and its reign over me and that I am alive to God – united to Christ who strengthens me – can I keep sin from getting a foothold in my mortal body.

We have the Holy Spirit living within us. The Spirit of God works in us so that we may decide (*will*) to act according to God’s good purpose (Philippians 2:13, I Thessalonians 4:7-8). To *will* is to desire and to resolve to act. That’s why He is called the *Holy* Spirit and He is sent primarily to make us holy and conform us to the character of God (I Corinthians 6:18-19, Romans 8:9, Galatians 5:16). The Holy Spirit strengthens us to holiness:

- By enabling us to see our need for holiness
- Creates in us a desire for holiness
- Causes us to be aware of the sin nature and specific areas of sin
- Gives us the spiritual strength to live a holy life

Therefore, to live by the Spirit is to live both in *obedience to* and *dependence on* the Holy Spirit. There is a balance then between our wills (expressed by obedience) and our faith (expressed by our dependence). We express our dependence on the Holy Spirit for a holy life in two ways:

- **A humble and consistent intake of Scripture.** If we truly desire to live in the realm of the Spirit we must continually feed our minds with His Word and His truth. It is hypocritical to pray for victory over our sin nature and yet be careless or reluctant in our intake of the Word of God (Psalm 19:7-14).
- **Praying continually and earnestly for holiness in our lives.** The apostle Paul prayed continually for the holiness of his own walk with the Lord and for those to whom he had ministered (Ephesians 3:16, Colossians 1:9-10, I Thessalonians 3:12-13 and 5:23).

As we mature in our walk with the Lord, we learn that we are dependent upon the enabling power of the Holy Spirit to attain any degree of holiness. And then, as we look to Him, we will see Him working in us – revealing our sin, creating within us a desire for holiness and giving us the strength to respond to Him in obedience.