

# Easy As 1-2-3



## Romans 8:1-14<sup>1</sup>

### It's As Easy As 1-2-3

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## Overall Understanding

### Chapter 8:1-14<sup>2</sup>

Our original understanding of Romans 8:1-14 was that we needed to strive to live in the Spirit instead of the flesh. “Flesh” to us meant sinful endeavors or simply selfish pursuits. “Spirit” meant upright living or being entuned to the Holy Spirit. How wrong we were.

Now that we have studied this chapter in context, we can no longer support our former views. In the context of the previous chapters in which Paul has repeatedly taught that we are made righteous by faith and not by the works of the law, we now see its true meaning.

You will be delighted and liberated as you also begin to see what Paul means in these fourteen verses.

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<sup>1</sup> © C. D. Hildebrand

<sup>2</sup> Scripture taken from KJV, Public Domain, by the time I realized this was in KJV, it would have been too difficult to change it, so I kept it.

**To help you better understand this section, let's first look at verse 9, which clarifies what is being said in verses 1-14. It reads:**

9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

As we read these verses 1-14, we need to understand verse nine. The ones "in the Spirit" are those in whom the Spirit of Christ lives—**Christians** are the ones "in the Spirit." If someone doesn't have the Spirit, he is not his. That person is in the flesh.

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

"Condemnation" does not mean a sense of guilt. It means a judgment against some as in a negative sentence for a crime. Believers are those who are "in Christ Jesus." For us, there is no judgment.

Some have falsely pointed out that this lack of condemnation comes from walking according to the Spirit, which is incorrectly interpreted to mean those who live a godly life led by the Spirit versus those who live a selfish or sinful life.

But in context, "those who walk according to the flesh" are those who live by justification by law. Those who "walk according to the Spirit" are those who walk by justification by faith in Christ.

We know this by the context and by the verses that follow.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

"The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" is righteousness by faith. "The law of sin and death" is the law of Moses.

We know this from context and the next verse, where he clearly refers to it as "the law."

3 For what **the law could not do** in that it was **weak** through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, 4 that the righteous

requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

The law could not make us righteous because it was weak. What it could not do—which was make us righteous/justified—God did. How? He sent His own Son in the flesh (he is not saying Jesus' flesh was sinful, but that human flesh is, which Jesus took on). The righteous requirement for sin was death. Jesus fulfilled the law of death for sin FOR us.

“Us” refers to believers, not to those who live a spiritual life. He is calling believers those “who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit—those who walk by grace through faith and not by the law. As Paul said, “By the deeds of the law, not flesh shall be justified/made righteous.”

5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

Again, this is not talking about two types of Christians—those who live according to their flesh and those who live in the Spirit.

“Those who live according to the flesh”—according to the law, set their mind on things of the flesh, of keeping the law.

“Those who live according to the Spirit—those who are born again—set their mind on the things of the Spirit.

Not convinced yet? Read on. It becomes crystal clear very soon.

6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.  
Those who are carnally minded live in death.  
Those who are carnally minded are not subject to the law of God.  
In fact, they cannot be subject to it.

9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

Now, at last, the confusion is settled.

But YOU (obviously, he is addressing believers)...

But YOU ARE NOT IN THE FLESH BUT IN THE SPIRIT...

What is the qualification to be in the Spirit? He tells us!

**IF THE SPIRIT OF GOD DWELLS IN YOU,  
THEN YOU ARE IN THE SPIRIT.**

The Holy Spirit comes to dwell in believers at salvation and “abides in us forever.”

If someone does not have the Spirit of Christ, HE IS NOT HIS.

10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

Christ is in us. We are dead to sin and alive unto God. He has made us His righteousness.

11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

If you are saved, in other words, Jesus will give life to your mortal, human body through His Spirit. We were dead. Now we are alive.

It says “mortal” bodies, so it is referring to life on earth. Mortal bodies are those that can die. After he returns, we will have “immortal” bodies incapable of death.

That Spirit dwells in us and raises us now.

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.

Christians are not indebted to the law to live under the law.

13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

We put to death the deeds of the body by the Spirit, not the law.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

This is not referring to some super spiritual group of saints qualifying as sons. It is saying that those who have been righteous by faith and not by law **are** the sons of God.

The sons of God, all believers, ARE led by the Spirit of God.

**John 10:27-30**

*My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. <sup>28</sup>And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. <sup>29</sup>My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. <sup>30</sup>I and My Father are one."*

*Coming Up in Chapter 8:14-28*

*Paul amplifies the glories of being children of God by faith.*

*Paul speaks of our perspective during sufferings versus the glories which will be revealed in us.*

*He discusses how the Holy Spirit helps us when we pray.*

*Paul reveals the beautiful truth that all things work together for our good.*