

## Life in the Spirit: Our Obligation and Assurance

What we think about ourselves matters . . . a lot! This is true in every arena of life, but especially in our spiritual lives. And as believers what we think about ourselves is to be rooted in what God says about us. In Romans 8, Paul has been talking about two categories of people – those who are according to the flesh and those who are according to the Spirit. Because the Spirit lives within every believer (Rom. 8:9), Paul says that every believer is in fact according to the Spirit. That's who God says we are. And since we are according to the Spirit, there are some things that are true about us that Paul wants us to know. These things give us great assurance in this life.

### Read Romans 8:12-17

1. How would you summarize what this passage is about?
2. What does Paul mean when he says that we are under obligation, not to the flesh (v. 12)?

Brian said:

How one puts to death the deeds of the body [v. 13] is a sermon series in itself. But let me offer a couple thoughts about this. We put to death our sinful habits by renewing our mind with God's Word, through prayer, through confessing our sins to one another. We practice spiritual disciplines in order to open our lives up to God and His transforming work. There are all sorts of things we must do. We can't just have a "let go and let God" kind of approach to this. Effort must be applied. But it is effort energized by faith and trust in God. It is effort *by the Spirit* who empowers us to fight this battle.

3. What other ideas do you have about how we put to death the sinful deeds of the body?
4. How would you evaluate your own efforts in seeking to put to death the sinful deeds of the body?

5. What does Paul teach about our standing with God in 14-17?
6. How can knowing these things about our standing with God produce assurance within us?
7. A central image that Paul gives us in this passage regarding our status with God is that we are His children. We actually belong to the family of God! What difference can it make in our lives if we truly live in this truth?
8. What is the main thing that you feel like God is saying to you through this passage?