

Are You Fulfilling Your Obligation? (Part 2)

Romans 8:12-17

Thought for the Day: As those who have put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation we have an obligation to submit to the will and desires of the Holy Spirit and to seek to do those things that are pleasing to Him.

We are the children of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And because we are His children, we have the privilege of intimate fellowship with Him in which we are able to cry out to Him, "Abba, Father." In addition to this intimate fellowship, Romans 8:12-17 describes five significant blessings we receive when we live in submission to and dependence on the Holy Spirit.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives is absolutely critical to our growth in holiness and our ability to successfully live the Christian life!

12 Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation — but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. 13 For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live,

- In order to put to death the misdeeds of the body and not live according to the sinful nature, we must adopt the mindset that we no longer have any obligation to do what our sinful nature desires or demands.
- Instead, as Paul wrote in Romans 6:
 - 1) We must consider ourselves to be dead to sin through our union with Christ in His death on the cross.
 - 2) We must consider ourselves to be united with Christ in His resurrection to a new life of faith and obedience to the Lord.
 - 3) We must consider that we are no longer slaves to sin but that we have been set free from the power and control of sin.
 - 4) We must now consider ourselves to be alive to God in Christ Jesus; that we are no longer obligated to let sin reign in our mortal bodies so that we obey its evil desires.
 - 5) We must no longer offer the parts of our body to sin as instruments of impurity and wickedness; rather, we must now offer our bodies to God as instruments of purity and righteousness.
 - 6) We should now consider ourselves to be slaves to righteousness and holiness rather than slaves to sin and wickedness.
- This is a mental attitude that we must continually cultivate in our daily lives as we feed on the Word of God.

14 because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

Verses 12-13 are somewhat negative—they talk about the consequences of living according to our sinful nature and what we must put to death in our lives. But verses 14-17 are positive—they talk about the benefits we receive when we live according to the Holy Spirit.

As we live in submission to and dependence on the Holy Spirit:

1. He leads us and guides us.

- The primary means whereby the Holy Spirit leads us is the Word of God.
- The Holy Spirit will *never* lead us to do something that is contrary or contradictory to teachings and principles of the Bible.
- Invite and welcome the Lord's involvement in every area and activity of your life; pursue intimate relationship with Him; put your faith and trust in Him and He will guide your paths. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

15 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."

2. He delivers us from fear and enables us to enjoy all the benefits of being the beloved children of God.

- If we are operating out of a mindset of fear, then we are operating in the power and energy of our sinful nature rather than the power of the Holy Spirit. (2 Timothy 1:7)
- The Spirit of sonship (adoption) – literally translated, "to place as an [adult] son".
- The focus of adoption is not so much on how we *enter* the family of God as on the *privileges and blessings* we have within the family of God.
- "...in the Roman world of the first century AD an adopted son was a son deliberately chosen by his adoptive father to perpetuate his name and inherit his estate; he was no whit inferior in status to a son born in the ordinary course of nature, and might well enjoy the father's affection more fully and reproduce the father's character more worthily." (*Bruce, Romans, p. 167*)
- Galatians 4:1-7; Ephesians 1:3.

16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

3. He gives us the full assurance that we are God's children.

- John 1:10-12; 1 John 3:1-3.
- When the Lord returns for His Church, we will enter into the full realization and enjoyment of our inheritance as the children of God. If we have this hope within us, then we are motivated to purify ourselves just as Christ is pure.

17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs — heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ...

4. He guides us into the full enjoyment of our spiritual inheritance in Christ.

- As heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, everything that belongs to Jesus also belongs to us!

if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory

5. He enables us to endure persecution and suffering by looking forward to the glory of eternity in the presence of our Lord.

- 1 Peter 4:12-19; Matthew 5:10-12; John 15:20-21; Hebrews 12:1-3.