

# Living by the Law or Spirit

by Robert B. Thompson

---

*The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the relationship between the law of Moses and the law of the spirit of life, and how to follow the law of the spirit of life in order to overcome sin and achieve spiritual growth.*

**Duration:** 56:54

**Scripture:** Matthew 7:21-23, 1 Corinthians 9:27

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Christian Living"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses how to know when you are living in the spirit. He references James 4:13-18 and emphasizes the importance of living a good life and showing humility through deeds. The speaker also warns against harboring bitter envy, as it goes against the spirit. The sermon then transitions to reading Romans 8:5-11, which highlights the difference between living according to the sinful nature and living in accordance with the spirit. The speaker emphasizes that those who are controlled by the spirit belong to Christ and have a spirit that is alive because of righteousness.

---

## Transcript

We're going to read this morning in Romans 8, 5 through 11. Romans 8, 5 through 11. Alright, you can read along with us if you want to.

Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires. But those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace.

The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature, but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.

And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who lives in you. You notice on the 11th verse there that all of Paul's thinking moves toward the resurrection. Verse 11 is talking about the

resurrection.

And he's telling us that we have to live a holy life with the resurrection in view. We know from other Scriptures that if we do not live a holy life, we place our resurrection in jeopardy. So everything is moving toward the resurrection.

I want to start off a little technical, some technical stuff, and then hopefully with the Lord's help we'll get very practical. The technical is this. Paul is discussing here, he's talking to Jews, you want to remember, primarily to Jews.

We see that in Romans 7.1. I speak to those who know the law. And what he's doing, he's reasoning about the interaction of the law of Moses and our salvation in Christ. That's what this is all about.

And there's no better passage in the Scripture than Romans 8 to describe redemption. Romans 6, 7, 8 describe redemption, as does the book of Galatians. And so I thought I'd be a little technical, and I will, but we'll get practical down home in a minute.

Now, the relationship between the law of Moses of the Old Testament and the law of the spirit of life of the New Testament is very complex. And you seldom... There's all kinds of reactions to this clouded issue. One of them today is that charismatic Jews are going back under the law because they haven't found substance in evangelical teaching, and they want substance, especially an accent on righteousness, how to live, and so they go back under the law.

Then the current, the prevailing evangelical viewpoint is that the law, we have nothing to do with the law, now we're without law, there's no law but love, etc. and so on, which is not scriptural. So then you see a lot of things in between where we're under part of the law, but not all of the law.

And that varies from whether you eat pork or you don't, or you keep the Sabbath day or you don't. So for 2,000 years, this has been a real problem, and I'm not going to dwell on it much more, but I'll tell you what I think, how I think they interact, how I think they articulate, in this way. First of all, we have to know what sin is.

And there's enormous confusion in the Christian churches. I've said before that the only people in the world who don't know what sin is are evangelical Christians. Everybody else does.

The unsaved do. The Muslims do. The Jews do.

It's such an area of confusion. We don't know what sin is or how to address it. The idea is, well, it's something somewhere, but it was done away, and now I'm okay, I'm saved by grace, so forget about it.

And that is certainly not New Testament, because most of the New Testament writings have the bulk of it, starting with the Gospels and ending with Revelation, have to do with living righteously, meaning overcoming sin, not sinning. The whole book of Hebrews, for example, the whole book of 1 John, the book of Jude, are all exhortations to Christians not to sin. And so we know the idea is there's no law but the law of love.

That's an intellectual cop-out. That isn't going to work, because we don't know whether we're sinning or we're not. And in these days, when the pressure to sin is so great, especially in the moral realm, but also in the realm of anger, we see so much murder and the current terminology is road rage.

It used to be that people get mad and swear, but now they shoot each other. I mean, the intensity of anger and just ordinary people, just down-home, next-door-neighbors people, they call the police. One, the husband shoots the wife, an officer comes, he shoots the officer and then shoots himself.

This is common. And it used to be common. You get a sense of your time.

Of course, being older, I have probably a greater sense of time comparison than those of you that are younger, but it wasn't always this way. So, anger and murder are increasing because Satan is a murderer. Lust is increasing because Satan is the incarnation of lust.

Lying and fraudulent behavior is increasing. It's so common in the government. It's so common in business.

Every day, it seems somebody's been arrested for fraud or stealing or mishandling funds from down the grocery store to a giant corporation. So, for Christians, not to know what sin is or how to react to it, given the spiritual pressure in our culture, it's not red hot. It's not red hot.

And so, just the idea of saying we're not under the law, but under grace and whoopee and we all ought to love everybody and that's fine when these pressures are on Christian people, even to child molestation, all kinds of things go on among Christian people because they're caught off guard. They're not oriented toward living a victorious life. They're just not oriented that way.

They're oriented toward hope we die and go to heaven and the rapture and whatever. But they're not really oriented to the central message of the New Testament, which is gaining the victory through Jesus Christ over self-will, which is the Antichrist spirit, and over the lust of the flesh and over worldliness. We're not oriented.

Am I coming across to you? In this church, we are. But even so, I felt this morning that we should go over some of this so you can see what's going on here because many of us have been raised in evangelical churches and that thing still lurks in the back of your mind. Well, it's okay.

It's going to come out by grace and God wants to blow on that thing. He wants that gone because that has destroyed the moral strength of the Christian churches. Well, first of all, in Romans 3.20, we see how you define sin.

And in Romans 3.20, this is what it says. Romans 3.20, this is what it says. For by the law, we become conscious of sin.

That's the role of the law. If it wasn't for the law, what are we going to use? Conscience? Maybe. Our common sense? Maybe.

But otherwise, how do we know what sin is? And so we know what sin is by the law. The law was given to the Jews to be priests of the law, but the law governs all human beings and it governs all spirits. That's God saying, this is my moral nature.

And I'm not speaking of just the Ten Commandments per se, but of the eternal moral law of God. But the Ten Commandments are something that we have to work with. But Paul in Galatians teaches us clearly that we are not in slavery to the law again, but to Christ.

And so if that's the case, if we move from the law to Christ, and we only have the law to really tell us what sin is, and we move away from that to Christ, we're kind of left in a vacuum as far as the law is concerned. And I've given a lot of thought to this, and I know some of you have too. And as I say, it's complex.

And you have to dwell in Romans and dwell in Galatians and dwell in 1 John. 1 John, for example, in the third chapter, says he that sins breaks the law. He that sins breaks the law.

And yet we're told we're not under the law, but under grace. So this has accounted for moral confusion throughout the Christian era. Quite by accident, two books came into my hand.

One is called Hitler's Pope, which is a biography of Pope Pius XII, who was pope during World War II. It was written by a Catholic. And then another one called The Assassiny by Thomas Gifford, which is a novel and yet is thoroughly researched.

This is incredible. This is incredible what has gone on in religion. And we don't have to nail the Catholic Church.

We can find it in, for example, the behavior in Bosnia by that branch of the Christian church there and the murder that went on and on and the war in Ireland and so on. And so the religion of Christianity through 2,000 years has been a record of intrigue and politics and murder and torture of believers. And it's no wonder there's two chapters in Revelation, chapters 17 and 18, devoted to Babylon, because it's been a sordid record in our religion.

And part of that is due to the fact that we don't know where sin fits in the picture. The Catholics came up with penance. But penance is no good.

In penance, you're making atonement for your own sins. It isn't repent, like Lindley said this morning. Penance and repentance are two different things.

Penance is doing something to atone for your sin. Repentance is when you come to God and ask for forgiveness. We don't have to atone for our own sin.

Christ did that once and for all on the cross. But it shows you. And then Martin Luther came along and his idea was the whole thing is by faith and so where does sin fit in that picture? And how would you know it if you saw it? And it varies all the way to I think it's the Church of Christ that won't permit instruments in the Church to anything goes Pentecost and everything in between.

In early Pentecost, it was a sin to take an aspirin because they believed in divine healing and boy, you didn't mess with that. Well, we don't believe that anymore. But it just shows you we don't know.

We can't orient ourselves to sin because we're not clear on it. Jews have no problem. It's there in writing.

It's written in granite and in scrolls. And if you want to know what sin is, read it. It'll tell you verse by verse.

And here we come where it says the law is over and we've got grace. Well, where is the sin? Well, people don't read their New Testament and so somebody said, well, there's no law but the law of love so they assume that's what it teaches. Well, it is not what it teaches.

Not at all. It has a great deal to say about sin. Paul did.

Had a great deal and so did Jude, so does the apostle John and the Lord Jesus Christ also. So, that's a technical thing and as far as I can see and there's elders here, you can correct me or pray about it or think about it. But the way the two articulate the law of Moses and the new covenant of Christ which, of course, according to Hebrews is the law written in our heart, but how that works out in practice is that the Lord says, take your eyes off of the law of Moses and look at Jesus Christ and follow His Spirit.

Everything depends on following the Spirit because the Spirit is our law. And if it wasn't for the Spirit we wouldn't have any law. So, as it says in Romans 8, 4, if we are led by the Spirit then the righteousness of the law is ascribed to us.

And so, every day we are to be praying, repenting when it comes up, making restitution when it comes up, reading our Bible, serving, gathering with the saints. And as we do this, the Spirit of God has the opportunity to guide us in the ways of morality. And what He does, He takes the Old Testament and the New, both.

Because some parts of the Old Testament are applicable to us. And He, for example, all of us, we love the 23rd Psalm. Well, that's the Old Bible, but we know somehow it works.

And that's it. You take the book here, the whole thing, and especially the New, and you don't say the Old is no more. That's wrong.

That's not scriptural. Most of our instruction comes from the Old. In fact, 1 Corinthians 10 said the things that happened to them happened for our admonition upon whom the ends of the age have come.

So, no, we don't throw out the Old Testament at all. But we let the Spirit apply it. That's the thing.

You don't read the New Testament and make laws out of it because that is not the way the New Covenant works. In Pentecost, one of the big laws of early Pentecost was you must not have more than three messages and tongues in any service. And I'm telling you, godly pastors were adamant about that.

If there was a fourth message in tongues, that was the devil, the flesh, or a heretic because the Bible says it. That is not how the New Testament works. It's not a book of laws like the Old.

The Old, you can do that way. If the Old said no more than three messages and tongues, then that's it. But the New, you have to know what the Spirit means by this.

And what Paul was talking about was confusion and disorder. Not that there be three messages in tongues. So, it's a new ball game.

And it is not less binding than the Old. It is infinitely more. Because the law says don't work on Saturday.

The New says present your body a living sacrifice. I was never asked of anybody under the Old. The New says that we are dead to the law, but it doesn't stop there.

It says that we might be married to Christ. And if you're out from the law and not married to Christ, you're a spiritual single, and that's nowhere. God will not accept that.

You cannot walk according to your own ideas and say I am not under the law of Moses because you are still alive and the law governs you as long as you are alive. We can only be freed from the law by dying in Jesus Christ. Then we're freed from the law to be married to another.

But if we're not walking in close union with the Lord Jesus Christ in daily interaction with Him, waking up in the morning, our first thought is, Lord, this day is Yours. I am a living sacrifice. I am devoted to You today, Lord.

You are my breath, my life. I don't care whether I live or die just as long as You are magnified. If we don't do that, but instead we've got a kind of a religion going.

We've got a religion going and there's nothing that will murder Christ quicker than a religion. We've got a religion going by which we maybe attend a fervent church, possibly, and we go through the motions, but as I think it was Lindley brought up, what are we doing on Monday? I mean, this we're in is a religious setting. We have religious architecture.

We're going to a religious liturgy. But its goal is to guide you on Monday. That's its goal.

This isn't the end. This is a means to an end. The end is you tomorrow being more married to Christ than you are now.

If you haven't counted yourself crucified with Christ and are just living a religious Pentecostal life, the law comes back on you because you can't be free from the law unless you have died to your first nature, crucified with Christ, and then raised with Christ. That's the only way you can be free from the law. So, as I said, it's complex, but it works out very practically.

Now, a little bit more along this line, I was saying how it articulates. How it articulates is that the law is there so we know what sin is. It's amplified by the writings of the apostles in the New Testament.

And then as we meditate in the Word and pray and attend church, listen to the things that happen to us in life because sometimes an unsaved person will rebuke us or a pastor will rebuke us or another Christian will rebuke us about something we did. And that's how the Holy Spirit brings sin to our attention. That's how He does it.

And if we find that we're not... that person that rebuked us or the situation that rebuked us or the spirit of conviction or whatever, if it's New Testament, then we don't look at the source and say, well, they're wrong and they're prejudiced against me or blah, blah, blah. They're not saved or I always knew they were like that or something else. What do we do? We go to Jesus and we say, Lord, is it true? Thank You that that person You used them to give me the knife.

Now, You take it out, Lord, and change me. Change me. Don't get a spirit of revenge going against somebody.

Change me. This is the Holy Spirit faithfully showing you things in your personality that are not pleasing to God. I was quiet in heaven for the space of half an hour.

I told you it gets practical very quickly. Alright? So, we're coming into ministry in this church. We're coming into ministry.

Thank God. We've been here a quarter of a century and now everywhere I turn around, somebody in the church to come and teach the Bible or do something. Hallelujah.

Praise the Lord. That shows the fruit tree is getting old enough now that it can put some of the strength into bearing fruit. Okay, that's great, but I'm going to tell you what's going to happen.

It's going to bring stuff out of your personality you didn't know was there. Oh, yes. As long as you're not ministering, these things are quiet.

But as soon as you get all inflamed with the idea of ministry and you want to remember we've got Revelation 11 and 12 to show us the balance there. 11 tells us about the ministry. Chapter 12 tells us about what God is after, which is the growth of Christ in us.

Ministry never makes up for a walk with the Lord. And we see that where Paul said, lest after having preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. And again, where we see Jesus saying, yeah, you did all this stuff in my name, but you didn't know me.

Or I didn't know you. Because I never knew you. I never knew you.

So that's just one thing that will stir up things that have never come to light in our life. Spirits of ambition, spiritual ambition for one thing. Presumption.

A willingness to beat our fellow servants that we never thought would be true of us. But when we get into the ministry, and as I told you, the Christian religion through the years has been just about as bad as it possibly could be. And all these people bear the name of Jesus Christ and think that they're serving God.

And anybody on saved person could say, well, they're the greatest murderers on the face of the earth. Okay? So what God is after with you and me is our change, because He's making of us eternal servants. And what happens in this brief life is important, but compared with our service to God for eternity, it isn't even in the scale.

So God uses the things of life instead of reading the law of Moses and trying to obey those things. Forget it. Paul told us clearly in Galatians, that's over.

You don't come under that. He said, if you're circumcised, you go back and keep the whole law. Paul got a little rough with him there in Galatians.

He said, that's not it. Well, then the natural tendency is to think, well, if that's the case, who's to say what? Because we no longer have a knowledge of sin because by the law is the knowledge of sin. And so, the law of the New Covenant, the law of the New Testament, is, as it says in Romans 8.4, the law of the spirit of life.

Now, the question is, how does that work? Precisely, how does that work? And how can we tell when we're doing something wrong? When we're sinning? How can we tell when we're sinning? If we're following something that is elusive and invisible, like the law of the spirit of life, how in the world can we follow that law? We've got to have something in writing. And so, I want to speak a little bit about that this morning. How you can tell when you're following the spirit of life and when you're not.

Because, boy, you can't go by your feelings. In fact, what we have in the New Testament is not another law. It's the testimony of men who themselves were working this out in their own personality.

And God just took it and canonized it. He just said, that's it. That's the way it goes.

So, when we're young, in the Lord, you know, the Lord's sheep know His voice, but the lambs don't. One of Audrey's favorite sayings. The sheep know His voice, but the lambs don't.

And so, we have elders in the church and people that we trust who read the record of the apostles, check their own spirit, and then come and kind of help us. And as we meet together, pray together, the gifts of the spirit operates, whatever else operates. The Holy Spirit acting among us as, as I say, the vicissitudes of life.

The things that impact on us. I wonder if, I'm not going to ask for a show of hands at all, but I wonder this morning as I'm looking out at you, how many during this last week somebody offended you? Someone offended you. Could have been a Christian.

That makes it ten times worse. Someone offended you. Well, let me tell you something.

The way you, well, I've said it so many times, you thank God for that. You don't lash out at people. You don't do a burn.

That's one of the reasons we attend church. It is because when we don't, Satan cuts us out. And the first, the big red flag that you can tell when you're not, I'm going to give you now one way of knowing whether you're walking in the spirit or not, because that's the issue.

If you're walking in the spirit, you're home free because the blood of Jesus Christ is making up the difference between your imperfection and your righteousness. It keeps making up the difference, but hopefully you're growing all the while. Alright, now, here's one way you can tell.

If there's someone this morning that you're angry at, that is a red flag. You say, I have every right to be angry. No, you do not.

I'm sorry. What you're looking for is to be treated justly. And you will not be treated justly.

One of the sufferings of Christ is to be treated unjustly. And you're going to be treated unjustly. Get used to it.

And so when people do things that rub your fur the wrong way, you know, like petting a cat toward his ears, then if you do a burn, you're not living close enough to the Lord. You're walking in the flesh because every Adamic soul can get mad when someone doesn't please them. The Lord Jesus Christ is not like that.

Okay? It says, who when He was reviled, reviled not again. But committed Himself to Him that judges righteously. Oh, this is stretching time, people.

It's stretching time. Some of us have never been here before. We're being tested in new arenas of testing.

And what I'm trying to do is to keep you so that you won't mess up. Okay? So you won't mess up. It's especially important as we're going out in ministry because the old stuff won't work anymore.

You know, it's one thing to be back in the office typing on a typewriter. It's another thing to be in the front lines. And you can fool and snort around when you're back in the office with the girls.

But when you're out in a foxhole, you're out in the front line. There's no place for foolishness. Thank you.

So it's growing time. You cannot get angry at other people. You get angry at other people, you open yourself up to Satan, you can have a field day.

I'm not talking to babies now. I'm talking to people that are becoming mature in the Lord and getting ready to minister and make things count. You cannot get angry.

That is history. Now, the Bible tells a young Christian be angry and don't sin. Don't let the sun go down in your wrath.

I'm telling you that. I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about people that are coming to maturity and are getting ready to minister.

You can't get angry at all. So that's impossible. Well, yes, in our natural state it's impossible.

But it's not impossible to the Holy Spirit. See, the thing is, it's how you react when people pet your fur towards your ears. It's how you react.

See, you can immediately justify yourself. And if you spend time justifying yourself, save the phone bill. Just save it.

You can't justify yourself. All the people listening say, I knew there was something wrong there. Now I'm positive of it.

You can't justify yourself. And why not? Simply because you're not perfect. You're going to do boo-boos.

You're going to make mistakes. You're going to foul up. Get used to it.

Now that should come as a relief. You don't have to prove to anybody that you were right. They've already decided.

They're just patiently listening to you. Because they love you. But you're not making any track.

All that you're showing is immaturity. And I wonder if I should stop and take up the collection. No, we're going out to places where we have not been.

And before, all our dear brothers and sisters, we all put up with each other because we can all see the problems that each one of us have. And I certainly put myself at the head of the parade. We see that.

But boy, if you wait until the people around you are perfect, you're going to wait a long time. And you're not going to find a perfect pastor. I'll guarantee you.

You're not going to find that. That isn't going to happen. So we recognize that we ourselves make all kinds of crazy things.

And somehow, life will point it out to us. One way or another, life will point it out to us. And when you do that, don't waste your breath justifying yourself.

Go to the Lord and say, Lord, is this really true of me? Maybe God will give you a scripture. And say, thank you, Lord, for showing me. Thank you for showing me.

And your stock will go up. The Nasdaq may be going down, but yours will go up with the Lord. Alright, so that's just part of knowing whether you're walking in the Spirit or not.

If you are affronted by people because they accused you of something or did something that dismayed you or something, you're largely in the flesh. And that's a good opportunity then to go to the Lord and say, I need more of your Spirit, Lord. I just need to grow.

So you see, the people, even if they meant you harm, which is very seldom the case, but even if they did, they were a blessing to you. Because they pointed out to you what they're doing. You're raised from the dead.

I'm raised from the dead, but we're bound with grave clothes. And Jesus could have blown them off with a word. Instead, He let people around pull them off.

And I swear, they must be adhesive. They come off one hair at a time. I'm telling you, they come off one hair at a time.

Oh boy. You ever take off a bandage one hair? Ow, that hurt. Take you all day, get off a bandage.

Alright. Now, we're talking about how you know when you're in the Spirit. Here's a dandy verse along that line.

It's James 4, verses 13-18. Now, here's one to put on the refrigerator. James 4, verses 13-18.

James was a pastor and he was... That's not it. It's got to be 13-18. I want the wisdom that comes from above.

Where's that? Where's Mike? He can always find this stuff. Oh, was I right? 317? Okay. Here we are.

313. Now, we're talking about how you can tell when you're living in the Spirit. Because it is kind of vague.

Who is wise in understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. Don't you like that? Isn't that beautiful? That's what I meant by saying the Bible is full of this stuff. New Testament is full of it.

But if you harbor bitter envy... Envy is one of the seven deadly sins. Is there anybody that you envy? You know, sometimes when we get real angry with people, it's because we think they're getting away with something. In other words, we wish we could do it.

And we know we can't. And so, they're getting away with it and we're mad. Like a reformed drunk in a bar.

Well, that's envy. You don't have to envy anybody. God has given each one of you so much.

Whoa! You don't have to be envious of a soul. And selfish ambition. We've got to watch that.

The ministry is full of ambition. The record of the great religions of the world has been one of personal ambition. That's not of God.

That's of the natural man. And that's of the carnal nature. Christ does not have that kind of a spirit.

He is glad when you succeed. And he wants us to be glad when others succeed. Not saying, well, you know, I could do it better.

Or everybody look at me. Selfish ambition. Check, check, check.

That's one. If you have selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it. Or deny the truth.

Such wisdom does not come down from heaven, but is earthly. Unspiritual. Of the devil.

You've got to watch that. Because that easily gets into us. If God gives us a gift.

I know with preaching, we use the expression, a lust for preaching. You can get a lust for preaching. I heard a minister say that.

He said, I'd do anything. I'd build a church with my bare hands just as long as I get to preach. That's what you call a lust for preaching.

And I know you don't have that. If anyone would have it, it would be myself. I do mostly yakking.

But you can't have that. I mean, preaching is a responsibility that you do before Jesus. I like to think, I'm doing this for the Lord.

I swear, I'd rather be in the Maine woods. Yeah. Because I'd figure, well, Stan, Eddie, all the others, Bill Otter, you know this thing as well as I do.

You could do it, and I could be out in nature. Oh, it's been so long. I walk out of the house and say, well, there's a world out here.

That can get to you if you spend six hours in front of the computer. No. You've got to get all desire to minister out of you.

That's got to go. First, God can't get you off the dime to do anything. Then when He does, He can't hold you back.

So we die to the ministry. Huh? How many want to die to the ministry? Then you have peace. Could you figure, well, if God wants me to do something, I'll do it for my friend Jesus.

Well, if He doesn't want it, I have no desire. I wouldn't build any church so I'd get to preach. I'll tell you that.

Forget it. How about you, Mike? Would you build a church with your bare hands so you'd get to preach? Unspiritual. How many want to be unspiritual? Your greatest desire on earth is to be unspiritual, aren't you? That's not the truth.

That's not the truth of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder. Whoa.

Disorder. Confusion. Why? Because people are not acting in the Spirit.

They're not hearing from God. They're anxious to do something. And the end result is disorder.

Disorder. And every evil practice, that's Paul's legal training. By this, he covered everything else.

It's incompetent, immaterial, and irrelevant. I learned that from Perry Mason. I know a lot from Perry Mason.

You'd be surprised. This is the vocabulary I have. But the wisdom that comes from heaven.

Now, you want to know if you can check. Did you ever have something speak to you? You're pretty sure it's the Lord. And you didn't know whether it's the Lord or not.

Did you ever have that at all? Maybe the Lord told you you're going to be an apostle over in California. And you wonder if this is true. Oh, glory.

I see that many of you have heard that. All right. First of all, pure.

Now, I'll tell you one thing. I don't know if it gets to here. But when the Spirit moves, it's never with haste.

You know, there's a scripture that evangelists use. It says the king's business requires haste. But if you look up the origin of that, it's David in there trying to get showbread out of the priest at Nob.

And he says the king's business requires haste. Well, he wasn't even serving the king at that time. Well, the king's business doesn't require haste.

In fact, there's an Old Testament. It's in Isaiah somewhere. It says, he that believes shall not make haste.

And the root of the Hebrew, if you look through a few translations, seems to be you don't rush around in panic. He that believes shall not rush around in panic. And when you think something is coming, that's good in the Amplified has that.

When you think that the Spirit is one of haste and you've got to go out and do this and everyone's against you and all this stuff, that's not the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God. He doesn't put that kind of stuff on you.

Alright, it's pure. If something speaks to you and it's not pure, then peace loving, it brings peace. It doesn't bring an uproar.

It doesn't bring a militancy against people. It doesn't make you combative. It doesn't make you get out there, you've got to push.

Oh, the Lord told me I've got to do this. The Lord told me I've got to do that. Oh, nonsense.

The Lord didn't tell you any such thing. You better listen to other people. Ask a few Christians that you trust if they think it's the Lord.

And if they don't, you better check it out. And it probably is just a driving spirit trying to get you off base. Consider it.

Think about others. Now, we're getting chances, aren't we? Like in Mexico and we will in Ireland and the Philippines and other places. We're going to get opportunities to be considerate.

Isn't that so? If there's just enough hot water for one shower and the other guy's dirtier than you. They don't say, well, I have to have it. You go, I've got to have it.

That's not considerate. Oh, I'm having a ball of your... Submissive. Bow down, keep on bowing down.

I'll tell you what. If we were living in a commune, and that day may come too as things get worse, we're going to have to learn to submit ourselves one to another. Because people are going to rub us raw.

People are abrasive. How many know that? Did you... I thought about people say, it was love at first sight. They got married two weeks later.

You know, that's something, you know what that's kind of like? That's kind of like going out and picking mushrooms and eating them when you're not sure which mushroom is which. You know, it's kind of like that. If you're judging by the body, you're going to pick nightshades.

You're going to pick the wrong kind of mushroom. You better know the person for a year, or two, or three. Because you don't know what's in the package.

You're marrying the package. And you don't know what's inside. You better know what's inside before you marry the package, okay? But he's such a hunk.

How could it be wrong? Let me tell you the ways. Well anyway, it's kind of that way with people. We have to learn to get along with people, accept their strengths, and accept their weaknesses because we all have them.

And it's no occasion for us to get all down about it full of mercy. That is, we're not vindictive. We see somebody doing something wrong.

Paul in Galatians says, you see a brother's sin? Restore him in the spirit of gentleness, considering yourself, lest you be tempted. That's in Galatians. You see a brother's sin.

Oh, whoa, I saw... carrying around a fifth in his pocket. He's down here ministering. Go easy.

You may be next. We're not perfect. And Audrey and I and others, when we're assigning leadership, I mean, this is a very difficult thing.

And so a lot of prayer goes into this. This isn't something, oh, they're playing favorites or whatever. We pray about that.

Pray about that. And I think that God honors that. And it's a good thing to submit to one another in any case.

So how much more are those that have been assigned the leadership? Sure, they're going to make dumb moves. We all make dumb moves. How many here never made a dumb move in your life? Well, then, be merciful to other people.

Sure, they're going to make dumb moves. And you're hearing from God. I'm hearing from God.

I'm hearing from God. And they're not hearing from God. Quiet yourself.

You may have had the prophecy of the century and it didn't get spoken. The world goes on. Someone else will give it, believe me.

Someone else will give it. God will see that it gets given. The main thing is that you comport yourself as a Christian, full of mercy and good fruit.

We're talking about how you know when you're following the Spirit since we don't have it inscribed in granite. This is how you know. If you're not doing this, check it out.

We've got an altar here. We have nice music. You can come and kneel and tell the Lord about it.

Whoa! And good fruit. That's one way that you can tell the Spirit. You can tell if God is speaking to you.

Sometimes we don't know and we think God wants us to do a certain thing and we're not sure. In that case, don't be afraid to take a little step. Pray and say, God, if this is wrong, show me.

And watch the fruit. If what you did is causing consternation and irritation and you're getting upset, people around you are getting upset, that's probably not the Lord. Probably not the Lord.

And you say, but I know when the Lord speaks. Ha, ha, ha. I wish I did.

Very difficult to tell the Lord's voice. And like Jeremiah, God gave him a prophecy. Ten days later it came to pass.

He said, then I knew it was the Lord. You've got to watch the fruit. You can't tell.

Let me tell you something. Satan can imitate every experience you've ever had in Christ until you cannot tell the difference. People say, I could never be deceived.

You're already deceived. You can be deceived. And so that's why we have each other and that's why we're knocking heads together is because we're learning to follow the Spirit of God.

We're learning how the law of the Spirit of life operates. We're not following words that we've got down. Well, it says this, it says that.

That's not good. That tests the spirits. But as many as are led by the Spirit, they are the sons of God.

And what the Spirit leads us to is to put our sins to death. Romans 8, 13 and 14. For you live after the flesh, you'll die.

If you through the Spirit put to death the deeds of your body, you will live, comma, for as many as are led by the Spirit, they are the sons of God. Well, we're growing up from children to sons. What are we doing? We are in the battle against sin.

Well, Christ did it all. Forget it. He made it possible.

He gave us the foundation of guiltlessness so we don't have to worry about the law and we're free now to follow the Spirit. Not free, but free to follow the Spirit. Done made my mind up.

Impartial as it doesn't play favorites. Did you ever notice that sometimes you have an affinity for people? There's people that you really like, you just naturally like them. And other people, they seem to have friends, but... Guess what? That's not the Spirit of God.

The carnal nature is given to affinities and antipathies. People they like instantly, instinctively. People you don't like instinctively.

That's not God. Some of these people that you abominate are probably jewels in the sight of God. Give them some space and you'll find out they're all right.

Can't tell by looking at them. All right. Can't judge a book by its cover.

Impartial, sincere. There must be no foolishness among us when we're ministering. There cannot be wisecracking.

Cannot be joking. What you're doing is opening up the troops to the enemy. You say, well, I can't stop wisecracking.

Then don't go! Because you're going to... I was reading one of my war books last night. I love to read war books. I don't know why.

I wouldn't shoot a fly, but I love to read them. I'm great. I'm in bed and these other guys, the commandos are freezing in the water and everything.

They had taken out this newspaper reporter so he'd be right in the thick of things and everything. And some of the commandos didn't like it because they said, this guy's going to cause trouble. No, no, the brass wants him out there and get some publicity.

Well, they were trying to get America into the war on the side of England. That's what was going on. And so this commando turns around to the newspaper reporter and he says, if you cause any of us to come to harm, he says, I'll kill you.

And I thought, well, that's plain English. When you joke and wisecrack and fool around or otherwise display immaturity, you are giving place to the devil. And somebody's going to get sick.

It may not be you. It may be your brother. Let me tell you the way, and I'm through here.

I'm basically through. But let me tell you, when the English were developing their infantry, they got up. You probably read about the Battle of Culloden and others.

But when they got this, the English infantry came in a line like this. The French came in a column. The English came in a line like this.

And what they did, they came with bayonets like this. Now picture this. They came with bayonets.

Okay. The enemy's running at you. Maybe a bunch of wild Scotchmen or something.

All right. They're running at you. And you don't put the bayonet into them.

You put the bayonet into the guy over here because he's not protected. Now think about that. You're wide open.

So if your buddy here doesn't do the same thing, you're going to learn your religion firsthand. See how that goes? That was a new tactic, infantry tactic. You don't go like this because they've got a shield and a sword.

But their right flank is open. Their right side is open. So you turn and stick them in the right side.

But you're utterly dependent on the guy over here to take care of the guy that's charging you. Now just apply that to a mission trip. Just apply that to a mission trip.

The guy next to you doesn't do his part. You're liable to get it. So we're growing.

And we're learning. And thank God for all the different pressures and experiences because they are causing us to be stretched and to grow. Shall we stand?

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/11/SID11187.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/robert-b-thompson/living-by-the-law-or-spirit/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**