

Who's Leading your life?

Sunday June 28, 2026

Romans 8:12-14 (NLT) Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. ¹³For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live. ¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.

The Christians life is not about trying harder; it's about learning to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Every day we face dozens of decisions that reveal who is leading our lives.

- **Holiness Decisions** – Will I resist temptation or surrender to it?
- **Family Decisions** – Will I forgive, love, and serve, or hold on to resentment?
- **Financial Decisions** – Will I trust God or trust my possessions?
- **Ministry Decisions** – Will I serve faithfully or seek comfort and recognition?
- **Relational Decisions** – Will I build peace or create division?

Most of these decisions are not dramatic moments. They are the quiet, ordinary choices that slowly determine the direction of our lives.

Paul reminds us that every believer lives in the middle of a spiritual conflict between the flesh and Spirit.

- The flesh urges us to do what feels good.
- The Spirit urges us to do what pleases God.

The question is which one will we follow?

Paul gives us three principles in this passage for following the leading of the Holy Spirit.

1. Remember that you are Free

Romans 8:12 (NLT) Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do.

The fact that he refers to them as “brothers and sisters” reminds them of them of their new identity in Christ. They are no longer under the dominion of the sin or enslaved to their old master. They are no longer obligated to do what the sinful nature urges them to do.

We may be tempted to sin, but it no longer has authority over us. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we now have freedom to say no to sin and yes to righteousness.

Romans 8:1-2 (NLT) So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. ²And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death.

Knowing who we are in Christ matters. Why?

Because our identity shapes our behavior. We cannot consistently live contrary to the way we see ourselves. When we know who we are in Christ, we begin to live like who we are.

We are a new creation! Children of the Lord our God. Set apart for His glory and purpose. We don't owe our flesh anything anymore.

Think of your heart like a lawn. Before Christ, the weeds ruled the yard. They spread wherever they wanted because there was nothing to stop them.

But when Christ saved us, He gave us a new lawn and a new Gardener.

Our heart now belongs to Him, so we are no longer obligated to obey the flesh. The weeds of sin may still spring up, but they no longer have the right to rule because the Holy Spirit is cultivating new life within us.

After telling reminding us who we are in Christ, he now tells us what we must do.

Freedom from sin doesn't mean we'll never have to fight the desires of the flesh; it means we now have the power to fight what we were once powerless against.

2. Reject the Flesh

Romans 12:13 (NLT) For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live.

Notice Paul doesn't say: Ignore sin, manage sin or negotiate with sin. He said, put it to death!

In fact, he warns that to continually yield to the dictates of the flesh is the path to death. There is no true life, joy, or peace found in sinful choices.

Sin promises satisfaction but always leaves behind its bitter offspring: shame, guilt, and condemnation. None of these produce life. Instead, they burden the soul, rob us of peace, and hinder our fellowship with God.

Sin is never satisfied so don't ignore, negotiate or try to manage it. Just kill it!

Imagine seeing a single dandelion in your yard. You have two choices. You can ignore it, hoping it disappears. Or you can deal with it before it spreads.

Sin works exactly the same way. Left alone, weeds multiply. The longer they remain, the deeper their roots become and the harder they are to remove.

But lawn experts will tell you that the best way to control and get rid of weed isn't just by pulling them out, it's by growing a thick and healthy lawn. Healthy grass crowds out by taking the sunlight, water and nutrients and space that weeds need to survive.

The same is true for our lives. Victory over sin is not a matter of trying harder to stop doing the wrong things. It is the result of consistently doing the right things that lead to spiritual health and growth.

Practical steps to victory:

- **Resist** – run from temptation. Remove opportunities. Don't place yourself in situations where temptation is the strongest. (2 Timothy 2:22)
- **Belong** – walk with God's people. Be a part of small group community for accountability and support. (Hebrews 10:24-25)
- **Renew** – Fill your mind with God's word. Renew your mind. (Romans 12:1-2)
- **Rely** – Depend on the Holy Spirit in prayer. Our lives change when we spend time with The Sanctifier. (Galatians 5:16)

Don't just stop doing wrong, fill your life with what is right. As our spiritual life grows, there is less room for the weeds of sin to grow.

Putting sin to death isn't merely saying no to the flesh.

It also means learning to say "yes" to the Holy Spirit.

That brings us to Paul's final instruction.

3. Respond to the Spirit

Romans 8:14 (NLT) For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.

Being led by the Spirit isn't reserved just for, pastors, missionaries, prophets and spiritual giants it is the privilege for every child for God.

Notice the emphasis. Paul doesn't tell us to lead the Spirit. He tells us to let the Spirit lead us.

The Holy spirit leads. He doesn't force; He prompts, convicts, reminds and directs. Our role is to respond, follow His lead and obey.

As we walk in the Spirit, the desires of the flesh begin to lose their grip on us. As our spiritual life grows, there is less room for the weeds of sin to grow.

Galatians 5:16 and 25 (NLT) So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. ²⁵ Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives.

The more we respond to His leading the more sensitive we become. Every act of obedience strengthens our spiritual sensitivity. Every act of disobedience dulls it.

Hebrews 3:7-8a (NLT) That is why the Holy Spirit says, "Today when you hear his voice, ⁸ don't harden your hearts..."

Every day we are faced with decisions that will reveal who is leading our life. Will we follow the voice of the flesh or the voice of the Spirit?

The Christians life isn't about trying harder not to sin. It is about surrendering completely to the Holy Spirit, following His lead and allowing Him to transform the way we live. As we follow, He changes our character, strengthens our obedience and makes us more like Jesus. This is where freedom is found.

- **Remember** that in Christ you are free.
- **Reject** the desires of the flesh.
- **Respond** to the leading of the Holy Spirit.