

**The Spirit challenges us to choose true life.**

Last Wednesday we learned about the contrast between the natural sinful mind of man and a mind that has been changed by the Spirit of God. (Rom 8: 5 - 7).

This brings us to a *challenge* in verses 8 - 12.

**Rom 8: 12 - 13 Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. 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.**

This challenge is also a contrast. It is a contrast between *two choices*. The first is to pay to the sinful nature what we think we owe it. The second is to live by the Spirit.

Today we are bombarded by the untrue saying, that we need to pay ourselves first, before anything else and that we owe it to ourselves and deserve it. We buy the lie that implies that if we are completely sold out to God's Spirit, we are not going to experience the same degree of happiness, as when we live selfishly.

The result may be that we are trying to live for Jesus, yet we are at the same time trying to live most of all, for ourselves.

But if we are living by the Spirit, we are challenged to make *two commitments*. *Firstly we need to put to death the misdeeds of the sinful human nature. Then secondly we need to aspire to wholeheartedly giving ourselves in thought, in energy, and in ambition to live by the Spirit.*

The first commitment we have to make is to put to death the deeds of the old unsaved person. It means a radical (“put to death”) rejection of all practices which we know to be wrong. It results in a daily repentance, a daily turning away from all known sins. Jesus said, “If your eye offends you, pluck it out! If your hand offends you, cut it off!” This is a tough word from Jesus, and then he says: “It is better for you to go into heaven with one eye than into everlasting damnation.”

You do not owe your sinful nature anything! The Devil has tricked us into believing that we cannot live without self indulgence. But God has said, “I have set you free. You can and you will live an abundant life by walking in my Spirit.

We do not owe the old lost person we used to be, anything, but we owe the Lord a debt of love and gratefulness we cannot pay even if we continue to worship and serve him for all eternity.

Someone said that the opposite of love is not hate, but apathy. An attitude of, “I really do not care”, a complete disinterest in what the Spirit desires for as to aspire to.

The Spirit desires that we sincerely say, “Lord, I am yours. My time is yours. My talent is yours. My budget is yours. My family is yours. Everything I am is yours. I want to serve and love you, because I want to be 100% yours.”

May God give us such love because he has set us free from the bondage of the old mind and changed our minds to love and serve him more than anything!