

WHAT'S NEXT: Habits of the Heart

SERMON NOTES

Week 8: June 15, 2014

Romans 8:1-17

Life According to the Spirit

Romans 8:1–4, Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,² because **through Christ Jesus** the law of **the Spirit of life set me free** from the law of sin and death.³ For **what the law was powerless to do** in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, **God did by sending his own Son** in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man,⁴ in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who **do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit**.

I am rescued from despair

- Through Jesus the Spirit set me free from my enslavement to sin
- How? The righteous requirements of the law are met by Jesus, and applied to our lives by the Spirit.
- We are to live in a new way: God-centered not self-directed

Romans 8:5-11,⁵ 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.⁶ The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;⁷ the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.⁸ Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

⁹You, 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.¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.¹¹ 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.

I am transformed into a new creation

- I have been given a new orientation, the desire of the Spirit, not of my sinful nature
- I have been given a new hope, the power of life as witnessed in Christ's resurrection

Romans 8:12-17,¹² 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**,¹⁴ because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.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.”¹⁶ **The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children**.¹⁷ Now if we are children, **then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ**, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

I am a member of God's family

- Obligated to pursue God's will in a world dominated by rebellion
- I am adopted, blessed, and given an inheritance
- Expected to stand firm in our convictions despite the world's rejection

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I am rescued from _____

- **Through Jesus** the _____ **from my enslavement to sin**
- **How? The righteous requirements of the law** _____ **and applied to our lives** _____.
- **We are to live in a new way:** _____

Romans 8:5-11,⁵ 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.⁶ The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;⁷ the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.⁸ Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

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I am transformed into _____

- **I have been given a new orientation,** _____ **not of my sinful nature**
- **I have been given a new hope,** _____ **as witnessed in Christ's resurrection**

Romans 8:12-17,¹² 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**,¹⁴ because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.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.*"¹⁶ **The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.**¹⁷ Now if we are children, **then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ**, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

I am a member _____

- _____ **God's will in a world dominated by rebellion**
- I am _____ **and given** _____
- **Expected to stand firm in our convictions** _____

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CONNECT GROUPS

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OPENING

- Paul declares “There is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.” In your personal experience has this truth been more of a comfort or a longing? Explain your answer to the group.

GOING DEEPER

- **In light of Romans 8:1, discuss the following quote:**

One aspect that could be fruitfully explored would be the freedom Christ gives the Christian to stop brooding about a wicked past and to turn his or her attention to the present life with its opportunities for good. Preoccupation with how bad one might have been in the past, and unwillingness to let it go, is a form of resistance against God's freeing Spirit. If God forgives sin through Christ, why should the Christian insist on cherishing its memory? Forgiveness is real. It should be taken seriously.¹

- **Read the following passage in Ezekiel 36:26-27-**

²⁶ I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

¹ Achtemeier, P. J. (1985). *Romans*. Interpretation, a Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (135). Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press.

The apostle Paul states in Romans 8 that that “new spirit” is in fact the Spirit of God which is now given through God’s son. Paul, like Ezekiel, speaks with confidence that God provides the ability to trust and obey. God provides all we need for life and godliness. So what may be lacking in our devotion to God? If we have received power, then where does the challenge to obedience lie? What further insight might be gleaned from considering Jesus’ words about “putting on His yoke”(Matthew 11)?

CHALLENGE

- In the broader context of Ezekiel 36:26-27 there is a reference to the “Valley of dry bones” in Ezekiel 37. In this passage the renewing work of the Spirit is not primarily an individual matter but also involves the creation of a new people.

Reread Romans 8:12-17 along with Ezekiel 37. Discuss the broader implications for the Church, those who make up this “family of God?”.

“The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. He asked me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” I said, “O Sovereign LORD, you alone know.” . . . Then he said to me: “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.’ Therefore prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: O my people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. Then you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the LORD have spoken, and I have done it, declares the LORD.’ ”” (Ezekiel 37:1–14, NIV84)