

Message Four

Romans 8—the Focus of the Entire Bible and the Center of the Universe

Scripture Reading: Rom. 7:15—8:2, 10, 6, 11, 28-29; 12:1-2

I. The key to being an overcomer is the law of the Spirit of life in Romans 8, a chapter for desperate seekers—7:24—8:2, 28-29; Psa. 105:4:

- A. Romans 7 is the experience of being “in the flesh”; Romans 8 is the experience of being “in the spirit” (the divine Spirit dwelling in our human spirit and these two mingled together to be one spirit)—vv. 4, 9-10, 16; 1 Cor. 6:17; 2 Tim. 4:22.
- B. The enjoyment of the law of the Spirit of life in Romans 8 ushers us into the reality of the Body of Christ in Romans 12; this law operates within us as we live in the Body and for the Body—8:2, 28-29; 12:1-2, 11; Phil. 1:19.

II. In order to experience the indwelling Christ as the law of the Spirit of life, we need to see the three lives and four laws in Romans 7 and 8:

- A. The created human life with the law of good is in our soul; this law derives from the natural human life, that is, from man himself—7:21-23; Gen. 1:31; Eccl. 7:29.
- B. The evil satanic life with the law of sin and of death is in our flesh; this law derives from Satan, who as sin dwells in the believers’ flesh—Rom. 6:6; 7:15-20, 23-24; 1 John 3:10; John 8:44; Matt. 13:38; 23:33; 3:7; Rom. 3:13.
- C. The uncreated divine life with the law of the Spirit of life is in our human spirit; this law derives from God, who as the Spirit dwells in man’s spirit—8:2, 9-10, 16; John 1:4; 10:10b; 14:6a; 1 Cor. 15:45b.
- D. These three parties with the three laws are now present in the believer in much the same way that they (God, man, and Satan) were present in the garden of Eden (Gen. 3).
- E. In addition to these three laws within the believer, there is the law of God outside of him—Rom. 7:22, 25.

III. The whole Bible is like a ring studded with a precious stone; the book of Romans is the precious stone on the ring, and chapter 8 is like the light that shines from that stone; the subject of Romans 8 is the law of the Spirit of life:

- A. Every life has a law and even is a law; God’s life is the highest life, and the law of this life is the highest law—cf. John 1:4-5; 12:24; 14:6a; 10:10b; 1 Cor. 15:45b.
- B. The Triune God has been processed through incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension to become the law of the Spirit of life installed in our spirit as a “scientific” law, an automatic principle; this is one of the biggest discoveries, even recoveries, in God’s economy—Rom. 8:2-3, 10-11, 34, 16.
- C. The law of the Spirit of life, the compound Spirit, frees us from the law of sin and of death, solving for us the problem of sin and death—v. 2; Phil. 1:19.
- D. The law of the Spirit of life is the spontaneous power of the divine life; it is the natural characteristic and the innate, automatic function of the divine life—Rom. 8:2; Phil. 2:13; Ezek. 36:26-27; Prov. 30:18-19; Isa. 40:28-31; Heb. 12:2a; Phil. 4:13; Col. 1:28-29.
- E. The processed Triune God as the life-giving Spirit installed into our spirit may be likened to electricity; God’s operation as the law of the divine “electricity” within us requires our cooperation to “switch on” this law—Phil. 2:12-13.
- F. While we remain in touch with the Lord, staying in contact with Him, the law of the Spirit of life works automatically, spontaneously, and effortlessly to dispense God as life into our being and to overcome the law of sin and of death—Rom. 8:10, 6, 11:
 - 1. We need to cease from our own struggling and striving—Gal. 2:20a; Rom. 7:15-20:
 - a. If we have not seen that sin is a law and that our will can never overcome this law, we are trapped in Romans 7; we will never arrive at Romans 8.

- b. Paul willed again and again, but the result was only repeated failure; the best that a man can do is to make resolutions—7:18.
 - c. When sin is dormant within us, it is merely sin, but when it is aroused in us by our willing to do the good, it becomes “the evil”—“I find then the law, with me who wills to do the good, because the evil is present with me”—v. 21.
 - d. Instead of willing, we should set our mind on the spirit and walk according to the spirit, looking away unto Jesus—8:6, 4; Phil. 2:13; Heb. 12:1-2.
2. In order to live in our spirit, we need to take time to behold the Lord, praying to fellowship with Jesus to bathe in His countenance, to be saturated with His beauty, and to radiate His excellence—Psa. 27:8; 105:4; *Hymns*, #784.
 3. We need to cooperate with the indwelling, installed, automatic, and inner operating God by prayer and by having a spirit of dependence, thus maintaining our fellowship with the Lord of life and the Lord of work—1 Thes. 5:17; Eph. 6:17-18.
 4. We need to care for the sense of life in our spirit to remain in the fellowship of life, the flowing of the divine life, for the operation of the law of the Spirit of life—Rom. 8:6, 16; 1 John 1:2-3, 6-7; Mal. 2:15-16:
 - a. The sense of life, on the negative side, is the feeling of death—weakness, emptiness, uneasiness, restlessness, depression, dryness, darkness, pain, etc.—Rom. 8:6a.
 - b. The sense of life, on the positive side, is the feeling of life and peace—strength, satisfaction, peace, rest, release, livingness, watering, brightness, comfort, etc.—v. 6b.

IV. Romans 8 is the focus of the entire Bible and the center of the universe; thus, if we are experiencing Romans 8, we are in the center of the universe:

- A. In eternity past God purposed to enter into His redeemed people so that He could be their life and so that they could be His corporate expression; this is the focus of God’s economy—Eph. 1:3-5.
- B. Man is the center of God’s creation, because God’s intention is to be expressed through man; man can become God’s expression only by God entering into man to be man’s life and content and to make man one with Him so that man may live by Him and even live Him out; in this way God is expressed from within man.
- C. Zechariah 12:1 says, “Thus declares Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens and lays the foundations of the earth and forms the spirit of man within him”:
 1. The spirit of man is ranked with the heavens and the earth because our spirit is the location where God desires to dwell—Eph. 2:22; cf. 2 Tim. 4:22.
 2. The heavens are for the earth, the earth is for man, and man was created by God with a spirit so that he may contact God, receive God, worship God, live God, fulfill God’s purpose for God, and be one with God.
- D. The central focus in the universe is that the processed Triune God has come into us and now dwells in us; this is the greatest miracle; nothing else in the universe could be more important than this—Isa. 66:1-2; John 14:23; 15:4.
- E. We should all be full of joy since the Triune God is indwelling us and is one with us; He is our life and our person, and He is making us His home—Eph. 3:14-17.
- F. The indwelling Spirit in Romans 8 is the Triune God:
 1. In the expression *the Spirit of God, the Spirit and God* are in apposition, indicating that the Spirit and God are one—v. 9.
 2. Similarly, *the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead, and the Spirit of life* in Romans 8 indicate that the Spirit is Christ, the resurrecting One, and life; therefore, since the Spirit indwells us, all three of the Triune God are in us as life—vv. 9, 11, 2.
 3. The Spirit in Romans 8 is the all-inclusive Spirit as the ultimate consummation and the reaching, the application, of the Triune God to us.

4. The Triune God as the all-inclusive Spirit is within us for us to experience and enjoy by taking Him as our life and our person; we are the container of the Triune God—2 Cor. 4:7.

V. Romans 8 reveals that the processed Triune God as the law of the Spirit of life gives the divine life to the believers for their living—vv. 2, 10, 6, 11, 28-29:

- A. When we received the Lord by believing into Him, He functioned as the law of the Spirit of life to dispense Himself as the divine, uncreated life of God (Gk. *zoe*) into our spirit; we all need to see the great revelation that at least one part of our being, our spirit, is *zoe*; when we set our mind on the spirit, our mind, which represents our soul, becomes *zoe*; also, *zoe* can be imparted through the operation of the law of the Spirit of life into our mortal bodies; in this way we become men of *zoe* in our entire tripartite being for us to become the city of *zoe*, the New Jerusalem—Rev. 21:6; 22:1-2, 7, 14.
- B. God's desire and goal are that we live by the divine life and minister life to others for the building up of the church; this life is in Christ Jesus, and it is the life of the law of the Spirit of life—Rom. 8:2; 2 Cor. 3:6; 1 John 5:16.
- C. We need to see that the way to live as a believer is by the law of the Spirit of life; we must be controlled and directed by the law of the Spirit of life to experience a genuine and normal Christian life—Rom. 8:2:
 1. According to God's economy and eternal purpose, what God wants to do in His salvation is to work Himself into us, His redeemed people, as our life; God's desire to work Himself into us as our life is the focus of the Bible.
 2. If we are weak, lacking life, it is because we are short of spiritual breath; to breathe spiritually is to call on the name of the Lord—Lam. 3:55-56; *Hymns*, #255, stanza 2.
 3. As we continually breathe in the Spirit as life and allow Him to spread into all our being, more and more of Christ is added into us; this is to possess, experience, and enjoy the subjective God within our being.
 4. When God is thus added into our being, we will receive the life element that causes us to grow for the building up of the Body of Christ—Col. 2:19.
 5. While we are growing with this life element, the law of the Spirit of life works in us automatically to shape us, to conform us, into the image of Christ; the Body of Christ, the fullness of Christ, the new man, and the mutual habitation of God and man issue from our experience of this life—Rom. 8:29.

VI. Our enjoyment of the indwelling Spirit as the automatic law of the Spirit of life is in the Body of Christ and for the Body of Christ with the goal of making us the same as God is in life, nature, and expression but not in the Godhead and of constituting us, the members of the Body of Christ, with all kinds of functions—vv. 2, 28-29; 12:1-2; Phil. 1:19; Eph. 4:11-12, 16.

VII. Ultimately, this life will prepare the bride of Christ, which will cause the Lord to come back and usher us into the next age; for this reason, the crucial focus of the Bible and the universe is in Romans 8.