

Message Three

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

Scripture Reading: Rom. 8:2, 10, 4-6, 11, 13-15, 28-29

- I. 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. 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; the all-inclusive indwelling Spirit is constantly transmitting this life into each one of us to build up the church, edify the saints, and minister the riches of Christ to everyone who contacts us—v. 2; 2 Cor. 3:6; 1 John 5:16.
 - B. We need to see the way to live as a man 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. We need to walk according to the spirit—v. 4:
 - a. If we insist on anything for our own sake, interest, or profit, even if the thing itself is not sinful or immoral, we are walking according to the flesh.
 - b. According to the Bible, there is no third choice or neutral ground; everything is either according to the flesh or the spirit—vv. 4, 6, 9; John 3:6; Gal. 5:17; 6:8; 1 Pet. 3:18.
 - c. When we deduct the flesh, what remains is the spirit; since we know what the flesh is, we can walk according to the spirit simply by not walking according to the flesh.
 - 2. We need to be according to the spirit—Rom. 8:5:
 - a. A living according to the spirit and not according to the flesh is the realization of an inward law—the law of the Spirit of life—v. 2.
 - b. Being according to the flesh is like remaining on the ground according to the law of gravity, which may be likened to the law of sin and of death.
 - c. Being according to the spirit is like being on an airplane according to the law of aerodynamics, which may be likened to the law of the Spirit of life.
 - d. The law of the Spirit of life in our mingled spirit has the power to overcome the law of sin and of death in our flesh.
 - e. If we choose to be according to the spirit, the law of the Spirit of life will spontaneously free us from the law of sin and of death; the law of the Spirit of life does not need our help, but it needs our consent—cf. v. 6.
 - f. In every place and at every time, we need to build up a spiritual habit of exercising our spirit to “switch on” the law of the Spirit of life—1 Tim. 4:7.
 - g. The law of the Spirit of life, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, and the resurrecting Spirit have been installed into every believer; in order to receive His life supply, we need only to exercise our spirit by calling on the Lord and worshipping, thanking, praising, and exalting Him—Isa. 12:2-6.
 - 3. We need to mind the things of the Spirit—Rom. 8:5:
 - a. To mind the things of the Spirit is to set our mind on the things of the Spirit, that is, to always have our mind occupied with the things of the Spirit, which are the things concerning Christ.

- b. The things of the Spirit of God are the deep things of God; to realize and participate in Christ as the deep things of God requires us to love Him—1 Cor. 2:9-11, 14.
 - c. We need to exercise to build up a habit of continually having our mind occupied with the things of the Spirit, the things concerning Christ.
 - d. In Song of Songs the seeker was sick with love for the Lord (2:5; 5:8); within her mind there was nothing but the Lord; we need to have such a mind.
 - e. The secret of spiritual warfare is to not allow our mind to be vacant; the two spirits, the divine Spirit with our human spirit, connect all the things concerning Christ to our mind; as long as our mind is connected to the things concerning Christ by the two spirits, we are victorious—Rom. 8:6, 16.
 - f. The expression *the mind set on the spirit* in Romans 8:6 is literally “the mind of the spirit”; the mind of Christ, the mind of the spirit, is a mind that is filled, occupied, and saturated with Christ—Phil. 2:5; 1 Cor. 2:16.
4. We need to put to death the practices of our body—Rom. 8:13, 5:
 - a. The practices of the body are our old habits; these practices include not only sinful things but also everything practiced by our body apart from the Spirit.
 - b. We need to coordinate with the indwelling Spirit to take the initiative to put to death the practices of our body; then the Spirit will come in to apply the effectiveness of Christ’s death to these practices, thus killing them.
 5. We need to be led by the Spirit of God—v. 14:
 - a. We do not need to seek after the Spirit’s leading, since it is already present within us, dwelling in our regenerated spirit; if we live under this leading, we will walk and behave in a way that proves that we are God’s sons.
 - b. The leading here is not merely an action of the Spirit; it is the Triune God Himself becoming the leading in our spirit; if we would care for Him as a person who indwells us, we will spontaneously be led by Him.
 6. We need to cry, “Abba, Father!”—v. 15:
 - a. *Abba* is an Aramaic word, and *Father* is the translation of the Greek word *Pater*; the combining of the Aramaic title with the Greek title expresses a stronger affection in crying to the Father.
 - b. Such an affectionate cry implies an intimate relationship in life between a genuine son and a begetting father—v. 16.

II. Romans 8 may be considered 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—Rom. 8:9.
 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 application of the Triune God; the Spirit is 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.
- G. When Christ enters into us, our spirit is regenerated, making our spirit life (Rom. 8:10); when we love the Lord and set our mind on the things concerning Him, our mind is life (v. 6); furthermore, if the Spirit of the resurrecting One indwells us, He will give life to our body (v. 11):
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. The life that is given to our spirit, mind, and body is the indwelling Spirit as the ultimate consummation and application of the Triune God.
 3. 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*, #73, stanza 2.
 4. 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.
 5. 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.
 6. 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.
 7. 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.