

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2022**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
CHAPTERS FIVE THROUGH EIGHT OF ROMANS—
THE KERNEL OF THE BIBLE**

Message Three

The Flesh and the Spirit

Scripture Reading: Rom. 7:18, 25; 8:3-9, 12-13

I. In Romans 7 and 8 there are two key terms: *the flesh* and *the spirit*—7:18; 8:3-9, 12-13:

- A. The keys to the real experience of life are our flesh and our spirit—7:25; 8:4-9.
- B. On the negative side, we have to know the flesh; on the positive side, we have to experience our human spirit, which has been mingled with the divine Spirit—vv. 8, 16; 1 Cor. 6:17.

II. We need to see what the flesh is:

- A. The greatest destroyer of the Christian life is the flesh—1 Pet. 2:11.
- B. The flesh is the corrupted, polluted, and transmuted body—Rom. 6:6; 7:14:
 - 1. Man's body was originally pure, but through man's fall Satan injected himself into man, and man's body became the flesh—Gen. 3:6; Rom. 7:18a.
 - 2. Our body is "the body of sin" (6:6) and "the body of this death" (7:24); the body of sin is very active and full of strength in sinning against God, and the body of this death is weak and powerless in acting to please God (v. 18).
- C. The flesh denotes the totality of the fallen old man, our entire fallen being; man is totally flesh because the fallen being today is under the dominion of the fallen flesh—Gen. 6:3; Rom. 7:18a; Gal. 2:16:
 - 1. The flesh is the living out and the expression of the old man—Rom. 6:6.
 - 2. The flesh is enmity against God, the flesh is not subject to God's law, the flesh is not able to subject itself to the law of God, and the flesh can never please God—8:7-8.
- D. Like Satan himself, the flesh is against God's authority—Isa. 14:12-14:
 - 1. The flesh is in rebellion against God and against His throne.
 - 2. Our flesh is an enemy of God's authority and is in rebellion against God's governmental administration—Rom. 8:7:
 - a. Every aspect of our flesh, whether good or evil, is an enemy of God's authority.
 - b. Whatever is of the flesh is against God's throne; it will be used by Satan, the subtle one, the enemy of God, to hinder God's purpose—2 Cor. 2:11.
- E. The flesh is the camp of God's enemy and the largest base for his work—Gal. 5:19-21:
 - 1. In the entire universe God's unique enemy, in a practical sense, is not Satan but the flesh—Rom. 8:7.
 - 2. The flesh, the fallen man, is absolutely one with Satan and is used by Satan to fight against God—Matt. 16:23; Gal. 5:17.
 - 3. The flesh is the first among our enemies, taking the lead over sin, the world, and Satan to fight against us—Rom. 8:3.
- F. The flesh is the "meeting hall" and the compound of sin, death, and Satan; the flesh is a hopeless case and can never be improved—7:17-18, 21; cf. John 17:15.

III. In His wisdom and sovereignty God uses our flesh to force us to turn to our spirit—Gal. 5:17; Rom. 8:7:

- A. We are either in the spirit or in the flesh; there is no third place for us to be; the believer is a miniature garden of Eden—with God as the tree of life in his spirit, Satan as the tree of knowledge in his flesh, and his mind in between—v. 6.
- B. Judicially speaking, both Satan and our flesh were condemned once for all on the cross (v. 3; John 3:14; Heb. 2:14; 2 Cor. 5:21), but God allowed the flesh to remain with us to help us and force us to turn to Christ in our spirit and have no more confidence in the flesh (Phil. 3:3).
- C. Without the help rendered by the flesh, we would not be as desperate to gain the Lord or to have Him wrought into us—Rom. 8:6, 13.
- D. If we seek the Lord, even the sinful compound of the flesh will become a help to us in gaining the Lord; because we fail so often, we are desperate to turn to the spirit, and in this way we gain more of the Spirit—cf. Exo. 23:23, 29-30; Judg. 2:21—3:4.

IV. As believers in Christ and children of God, we need to take care of one thing—walking according to the spirit—Rom. 8:4:

- A. In Romans 8:4 *spirit* refers to this mingled spirit, which is the Spirit of God and also our spirit.
- B. Those who walk according to the mingled spirit do everything by the spirit and not by their own strength—Phil. 3:3; Zech. 4:6:
 - 1. If we walk according to the spirit, we will not merely do what pleases God according to His will; we will also carry out what God wants us to do by God Himself, who is the Spirit with our spirit—Rom. 8:4, 16.
 - 2. Whenever we walk according to the mingled spirit, Christ lives in us, and we live Him because He is in our spirit—Phil. 1:19-21a.
- C. Walking according to the mingled spirit is all-inclusive; to walk according to the mingled spirit is to live, move, act, behave, have our being, and do everything in the mingled spirit—Gal. 5:16, 25.
- D. Ultimately, the Bible requires only one thing of us—that we walk according to the mingled spirit—Rom. 8:4.
- E. The most wonderful matter in the Bible is that the Spirit of God is mingled with our spirit and that we should walk according to such a mingled spirit—1 Cor. 6:17.
- F. To walk according to the spirit is to let Christ fill and saturate us until He permeates our whole being and is thereby expressed through us—Eph. 3:16-19.
- G. The mutual abiding in John 15:4-5 is the practice of being one spirit with the Lord and walking according to the spirit.
- H. When we walk according to the spirit, we spontaneously bear the cross—Matt. 16:24.
 - I. All the things that happen to us test whether we are walking according to the spirit or we are living in the flesh—Rom. 8:4-6.
- J. The more we walk according to the mingled spirit, the more we keep ourselves under the dispensing of the Triune God—vv. 6, 10-11.
- K. Walking according to the spirit allows the processed Triune God to gain all the ground in us so that we may be occupied with Him and filled and saturated with Him, that we may be completely one with Him to be His full expression—Eph. 3:16-19.
- L. If we walk according to the mingled spirit, we will be sons of God in full, and as such sons, we will be the members of the Body of Christ, living in the church life, the kingdom of God—Rom. 8:14; 12:4-5; 14:17.