

**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 Fourteen

**Living in the Law of the Spirit of Life as the Law of Love to Fulfill
Our Destiny of Being Conformed to the Image of the Firstborn Son of God**

Scripture Reading: Rom. 8:2, 28-29; Gal. 6:2-3; John 13:34; 1 John 4:16-21; 1 Cor. 8:1; 13:4-8a, 13

I. God's economy is His intention to work Himself into us by making Himself man in order to make man God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead so that He is "man-ized" and we are "God-ized" for the building up of the church as the organic Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem:

- A. The Christian life is a life that is Christ Himself lived through us by His operating in us as the law of the Spirit of life—*Hymns*, #403; Rom. 8:2.
- B. Whenever we feel that we are weak, depressed, and backsliding, we can pray and draw near to the Lord, and spontaneously and automatically, the law of the Spirit of life will operate within us to revive us—Psa. 62:8; Jer. 17:7-8; Psa. 80:1, 3, 7, 18-19.
- C. The indwelling law of the Spirit of life is the sealing Spirit as an "engagement ring" to us, indicating to everyone that we are betrothed to Christ, that we belong to Christ, and that we are occupied by Christ—2 Cor. 11:2; Luke 15:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30.
- D. The Triune God was processed and consummated to be the law of the Spirit of life as the life-giving Spirit, "the Spirit who gives life"; He is now within us as an automatic principle and spontaneous power to give Himself as life (Gk. *zoe*) to our entire tripartite being—John 6:63; 14:6a; 10:10b; Rom. 8:2, 10, 6, 11.

II. "All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers"—vv. 28-29:

- A. Romans 8 concerns the all-inclusive Spirit giving life to the three parts of our being for the goal of conforming us to the image of the firstborn Son of God; the sole function of the all-inclusive Spirit is to impart *zoe*, the divine life, into us—2 Cor. 3:6:
 - 1. The firstborn Son is the prototype, the standard model, for the mass reproduction of the many sons of God, who are His many brothers to constitute His Body for God's corporate expression—Rom. 8:29; Eph. 4:20-21.
 - 2. God's way to mass reproduce this prototype is to work His living prototype, the firstborn Son, into our entire being; if we cooperate with and open up to this wonderful prototype, He will spread outward from our spirit into all the parts of our heart—3:16-21.
- B. The Spirit arranges our circumstances, causing all persons, all matters, and all things to work together for good; the "good" in Romans 8:28 refers to our gaining more of Christ, to our having Him wrought into our being; the law of the Spirit of life supplies us with life to transform us and to conform us to the image of Christ as the firstborn Son of God, making us a fragrance of Christ to God—Jer. 48:11; 2 Cor. 2:15; S. S. 4:16.

- C. For us to be conformed to the image of God's firstborn Son is our destiny and the goal of the working of the divine life within us; our learning Christ as the reality is in Jesus is to be molded into the pattern of Christ, conformed to the image of Christ, by taking Him as our divine life in resurrection to do everything in God, with God, for God, by God, and to God for the glory of God—Rom. 8:29; Eph. 1:4-5; 4:20-21; Rom. 11:36.
- D. Our conformation is our maturity in the divine life through which we participate in God's divinity in full and are solidified in the possession of His divine element and in the experience of His organic salvation:
 - 1. To be transformed is to be metabolically changed in our natural life; to be mature is to be filled with the divine life that changes us—2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 6:1a; Col. 1:28-29.
 - 2. Maturity in life is a matter of being filled with God as life, and blessing is the overflow of life, the overflow of God through the maturity in life; to bless others is to bring them into the presence of God and into the divine dispensing of the Divine Trinity—Num. 6:22-27; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Pet. 3:8-9.
- E. The all-inclusive, life-giving, indwelling law of the Spirit of life is infusing us with the active and energetic divine life, working within us to "Christify" us, to make us exactly the same as Christ in life, nature, and expression.
- F. We can see whether someone is enjoying and experiencing zoe, the divine life, by the manifestations of the divine life—cf. Num. 6:6-9:
 - 1. Those who are not willing to fully open themselves to the Lord to receive Him as the light of life may still use their mind to listen to messages and read the Bible, but what they hear and read become only a reference for them to judge others, an instrument to criticize others, while they themselves receive not a bit of light.
 - 2. Those who close themselves to the Lord are experts in judging and criticizing others; they are very clear about others' condition, but they do not know a bit concerning their own condition; this proves that they are entirely in darkness!
 - 3. The way that we listen to a healthy, proper message in a meeting may be a manifestation of life or death in our mind; if we receive the message with joy, this is the manifestation of a mind full of life; however, if we inwardly question and argue with the message, this is a manifestation of death in our mind; the life or death in the minds of the listeners can supply or kill the spirit of the speaking one.
 - 4. When we are full of life, although we may not do anything, our being will express life and minister life to those around us—1 John 5:16a.

III. The law of the Spirit of life is the law of Christ as the law of love—Rom. 8:2; Gal. 6:2; John 13:34:

- A. God first loved us in that He infused us with His love and generated within us the love with which we love Him and the brothers—1 John 4:19-21.
- B. The love described by Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 is the expression of the divine life (vv. 4-8a); furthermore, the fact that love is the fruit of the Spirit indicates that the substance of love must be the Spirit (Gal. 5:22); if we do not have love, our speaking is like that of sounding brass and a clanging cymbal, which give sounds without life (1 Cor. 13:1).
- C. Love is not jealous, is not provoked, does not take account of evil, covers all things, endures all things, survives everything, and is the greatest—vv. 4-8a, 13.
- D. The law of love must be substantiated by the law of the Spirit of life so that we may be able to bear one another's burdens as a spontaneous result of our walking in and by the Spirit (Gal. 6:2; 5:16, 25), but if we are filled with pride, we will be unable to bear others' burdens; this is because we deceive ourselves by thinking that we are something when we are nothing (6:3).

- E. When the law of love is activated within us, we automatically and spontaneously will be shepherds who have the loving and forgiving heart of our Father God and the shepherding and seeking spirit of our Savior Christ, going after and finding the one sheep that is lost—John 21:15-17; Luke 15:1-7.
- F. When the law of love is activated within us, our labor in the Lord is a labor of love (1 Cor. 15:58; 1 Thes. 1:3-4) in which we “support the weak” (Acts 20:35) and “sustain the weak” (1 Thes. 5:14); *the weak* refers to those who are weak either in spirit or soul or body or who are weak in faith (Rom. 14:1; 15:1).
- G. The life that we have received from God is a life of love; Christ lived in this world a life of God as love, and He is now our life so that we may live the same life of love in this world and be the same as He is—1 John 3:14; 5:1; 2:6; 4:17.
- H. We must be persons who are flooded with and carried away by the love of Christ; the divine love should be like the rushing tide of great waters toward us, impelling us to live to Him beyond our own control—2 Cor. 5:14.
- I. The commandment regarding brotherly love is both old and new: old, because the believers have had it from the beginning of their Christian life; new, because in their Christian walk it dawns with new light and shines with new enlightenment and fresh power again and again—1 John 2:7-8; 3:11, 23; cf. John 13:34.
- J. The church life is a life of brotherly love (1 John 4:7-8; 2 John 5-6; John 15:12, 17; Rev. 3:7; Eph. 5:2; cf. Jude 12a), and the Body builds itself up in love (Eph. 4:16).
- K. Our God-given, regenerated spirit is a spirit of love; we need a burning spirit of love to conquer the degradation of today’s church—2 Tim. 1:6-7; Rom. 12:11.
- L. “Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up”; we may listen to the messages of the ministry and become puffed up with mere knowledge (1 Cor. 8:1b; cf. 2 Cor. 3:6); loving one another is a sign that we belong to Christ (John 13:34-35).
- M. Loving to be first in the church is versus loving all the brothers—3 John 9:
 1. Rivalry in the Lord’s work is not only a sign of ambition but also a sign of pride; referring to our capacity, success, perfection, and virtue is a careless form of pride.
 2. Thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought to think is another form of pride (Rom. 12:3); self-boasting, self-exaltation, self-glorification, and lusting after vainglory are all ugly and base expressions of pride (Gal. 5:25-26).
- N. Just as the Lord Jesus laid down His soul-life so that we might have the divine life, we need to lose our soul-life and deny the self to love the brothers and minister life to them in the practice of the Body life—1 John 3:16; John 10:11, 17-18; 15:13; Eph. 4:15-16, 29—5:2; 2 Cor. 3:6; 4:12-13; 12:15; Rom. 12:9-13.
- O. We need to lose our soul-life by not loving the world with its pleasure; instead, taking in God and expressing God as love should be our joy, amusement, entertainment, and happiness—1 John 2:15-17; Matt. 16:25-26; Psa. 36:8-9; cf. 2 Tim. 3:1-5.
- P. Brotherly love in the church life is expressed practically in our caring for the necessities of the needy saints without any self-serving purpose or outward self-display; in the sharing of material things with the needy saints, the grace of the Lord’s life with His love flows among the members of the Body of Christ and is infused into them—1 John 3:17-18; Matt. 6:1-4; Rom. 12:13; 2 Cor. 8:1-7.
- Q. Our abiding in love by habitually loving others with the love of God fulfills our determination to gain the honor of being well pleasing to Him and has no fear of being punished by the Lord at His coming back—1 John 4:16-18; 2 Cor. 5:9-11; Matt. 25:21.
- R. Love is the most excellent way for us to be anything or do anything for the building up of the church as the organic Body of Christ—1 Cor. 12:31b—13:8a.