

Message Two

Christ as the Emancipator and as the One Who Makes Us More Than Conquerors

Scripture Reading: Rom. 8:2, 31-39

I. We can experience, enjoy, and express Christ as our Emancipator by the law of the Spirit of life—Rom. 8:2:

- A. 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.
- B. 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.
- C. 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, 11, 34, 16.
- 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—v. 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. While we remain in the touch with the Lord, staying in contact with the Lord, the law of the Spirit of life works automatically, spontaneously, and effortlessly:
 - 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—8:6, 4; Phil. 2:13.
 - 2. 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.
 - 3. 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.
- F. The whole key to our living and serving in the Body of Christ is the law of the Spirit of life, which operates within us:
 - 1. The law of the Spirit of life makes us God in life, nature, and expression but not in the Godhead, shaping us into the image of the firstborn Son of God so that we may become His corporate expression—Rom. 8:2, 29.
 - 2. The law of the Spirit of life constitutes us the members of the Body of Christ with all kinds of functions—Eph. 4:11-12, 16.
- G. We can cooperate with the inner operating Triune God as the law of the Spirit of life by “switching on” this law in the following ways:
 - 1. We need to walk according to the spirit—live in the spirit—Rom. 8:4, cf. Psalms 23:3:

- a. The secret of experiencing Christ is to be in the One who empowers us to do all things, and the secret of being in Him is to be in our spirit—Phil. 4:12-13, 23.
- b. The practicality of living in Christ is for us to live in our spirit; in the book of Romans the apostle Paul stresses that whatever we are (2:29; 8:5-6, 9), whatever we have (vv. 10, 16), and whatever we do toward God (1:9; 7:6; 8:4, 13; 12:11) must be in our spirit:
 - (1) 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—2 Cor. 3:16, 18; Psa. 27:4; cf. Matt. 6:6; 14:23; Exo. 33:11a; 34:4, footnote 2.
 - (2) In order to live in our spirit, we need to pray without ceasing—1 Thes. 5:17; cf. John 20:22; Lam. 3:55-56; Rom. 10:12-13.
 - (3) In order to live in our spirit, we need to remain in the fellowship of the divine life to walk in the divine light—1 John 1:2-3, 6-7.
2. We can mind the things of the Spirit—setting our mind on the spirit—Rom. 8:5-6:
 - a. We need to take heed to our spirit, paying attention to the sense of our spirit, in order to not grieve the Spirit and not quench the Spirit—Mal. 2:15-16; Eph. 4:30; 1 Thes. 5:19.
 - b. We can set our mind on the spirit by setting our mind on God’s words, which are spirit and life—John 6:63; Isa. 55:8-11.
 - c. To set our mind on the spirit, to mind the things of the Spirit, is also to be one with the Lord to care for the church with all the saints in the inward parts of Christ Jesus—Phil. 2:21; 1:8.
3. We can put to death by the Spirit the practices of our body—Rom. 8:13; Zech. 4:6; Gal. 5:16:
 - a. We must allow the Spirit to inhabit and reside in our inward being—Rom. 8:9, 11.
 - b. We need to remain in the church life, where the God of peace crushes Satan under our feet—16:20; 12:1-2, 11.
4. We can be led by the Spirit as the sons of God—8:14:
 - a. To be led by the Spirit is to take care of the inner anointing, the moving and working of the indwelling compound Spirit—1 John 2:20, 27.
 - b. To be led by the Spirit is to care for the rest in our spirit, being led as a captive in Christ’s triumphal procession—2 Cor. 2:12-14; 7:5-6.
5. We can cry to the Father in the spirit of sonship—Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6:
 - a. When we cry “Abba, Father!” (Rom. 8:15), “the Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God” (v. 16).
 - b. To cry “Abba, Father!” expresses the sweetness of our intimate relationship with our God—cf. Matt. 18:3.
6. We can groan in the interceding Spirit for our full sonship, which is the redemption of our body—Rom. 8:23, 26-27:
 - a. In our groaning the Spirit groans also, interceding for us.
 - b. The interceding Spirit prays for us so that we may be conformed to the image of Christ as the firstborn Son of God—vv. 28-29.

II. We can experience, enjoy, and express Christ as the One who makes us more than conquerors—v. 37:

- A. We can love God and be constrained, restricted, motivated, compelled, impelled, and propelled by the love of Christ to more than conquer in all things—vv. 31-39:

1. By loving God, we participate in all the riches contained in God—1 Cor. 2:9-10; cf. 2 Tim. 3:2-4.
 2. We need to be constrained by the love of Christ to love God and the saints with Christ as our love—2 Cor. 5:14.
- B. “If God is for us, who can be against us?”—Rom. 8:31; Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:8-10:
1. “I will make an eternal covenant with them that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; and I will put My fear into their hearts, so that they will not turn away from Me. And I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness with all My heart and with all My soul”—Jer. 32:40-41.
 2. This eternal covenant is the new covenant; it is by this covenant that God will not turn away from us and will plant us in Christ, our good land, and Christ in all His aspects will be bought by us, that is, gained by us through our paying the price to forget the things that are behind and pursue Christ—vv. 40-44; Phil. 3:8-14.
- C. God freely gives us all things with Christ; every thing, every person, and every situation are ours, the ones who love Him, for our perfecting—Rom. 8:28, 32; 1 Cor. 3:21-22.
- D. Christ, having died for us and having been raised, is interceding for us at the right hand of God—Rom. 8:34:
1. In verse 34 Christ is at the right hand of God, yet in verse 10 Christ is now in us, in our spirit—2 Tim. 4:22; cf. John 1:51; Gen. 28:11-22.
 2. In Romans 8:34 it is Christ who intercedes for us, yet in verse 26 it is the Spirit who intercedes for us:
 - a. These are not two Intercessors but one, the Lord Spirit—2 Cor. 3:18.
 - b. He is interceding for us at two ends: at one end it is the Spirit in us, probably initiating the intercession for us; at the other end it is the Lord Christ at the right hand of God, probably completing the intercession for us, which must be mainly that we will be conformed to His image and brought into His glory.
- E. No suffering, including tribulation, anguish, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and sword, shall separate us from the love of Christ—Rom. 8:35.
- F. In all the sufferings we more than conquer through Christ who loved us—v. 37:
1. Because of God’s unchanging love for us and the fact that Christ has accomplished everything on our behalf, neither tribulation nor persecution can suppress or defeat us; rather, in all these things we more than conquer through Him who loved us.
 2. The love of God is the source of His eternal salvation; this love, from which nothing can separate us, is in Christ and has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit—vv. 38-39; 5:5; Jer. 31:3.
 3. In God’s salvation the love of God has become the love of Christ, which does many marvelous things for us through the grace of Christ until God’s complete salvation is accomplished in us—Rom. 8:35; Hosea 11:4.
 4. These marvelous things provoke God’s enemy to attack us with all kinds of calamities, but because of our response to the love of God in Christ, these attacks have become benefits to us; hence, we more than conquer in all our afflictions and calamities—Rom. 8:35-37, 28.

Share five major points concerning why Romans 8 is of the utmost importance:

1. ROMANS 8 MAY BE CONSIDERED THE FOCUS OF THE ENTIRE BIBLE AND THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE. 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 (1 Tim. 1:3-5). 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. Zechariah 12:1 reveals that 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. The central focus in the universe is that the processed Triune God as the law of the Spirit of life 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). 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).

2. A CHAPTER FOR DESPERATE SEEKERS—Romans 7:24-25a; Romans 8:2.

3. THE KEY TO BEING A CHRISTIAN—living in the realm of impossibility (the realm of resurrection)—Romans 8:2-4—“For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death. For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.” This shows that the law of the Spirit of life even includes an element that deals with impossibility—vv. 10, 6, 11; cf. Rev. 21:23; 22:1-2, 14.

4. THE KEY TO BEING AN OVERCOMER—Isaiah 40:31—“Yet those who wait on Jehovah will renew their strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles; they will run and will not become weary; they will walk and will not faint.” (See notes 1 and 2).

5. THE SECRET OF HOW TO HAVE THE BODY LIFE AND OF LIVING IN THE BODY OF CHRIST IS IN ROMANS 8. (Romans 9-11 is a parenthesis, and Romans 12 is a direct continuation of Romans 8.) When we “switch on” the law of the Spirit of life, right away we will be in the Body of Christ in an actual way. The reality of the Body of Christ is the corporate living by the perfected God-men who are matured by continually exercising to reject the self and live by another life, the divine life, which is the law of the Spirit of life. This kind of living, which is the reality of the Body of Christ, will close this age, the age of the church, and will bring Christ back to take, possess, and rule over this earth with these God-men in the kingdom age.

EXPERIENCING, ENJOYING, AND EXPRESSING CHRIST

- I. **GENERAL SUBJECT—Experiencing, Enjoying, and Expressing Christ—the heart of the divine revelation and the central thought of God’s eternal economy. Our experiencing and enjoying Christ is for the corporate expression of Christ as the organic Body of Christ, consummating in the New Jerusalem—Eph. 3:21a; Rev. 21:11a; Isa. 43:7.**
- II. **Philippians 2:2 says, “Thinking the one thing.” “The one thing” is the subjective knowledge and experience of Christ for our enjoyment.**
- III. **To think something other than the one thing is to rebel against God’s economy; God’s economy is that we think the one thing; in the church life we need to help all the saints to think the one thing; our thoughts should be focused on and filled with the enjoyment of Christ for the church life, the Body life.**
- IV. **Since Philippians is concerned with the experience and enjoyment of Christ, which issue in joy, it is a book filled with joy and rejoicing—1:4, 18, 25; 2:17-18, 28-29; 3:1; 4:1, 4.**
- V. **Philippians is a book not only on the experience of Christ but also on the enjoyment of Christ; the experience of Christ is primarily in our spirit, but the enjoyment of Christ is in our soul (our mind, emotion, and will)— 2:2, 5; 1:8; 2:13; 1:20; 4:23.**
- VI. **It is possible for us to have the experience of Christ without the enjoyment of Christ; the problem here is with our soul—our mind, emotion, and will; like children who are made to eat without enjoying their food, many times we experience Christ without enjoying Him.**
- VII. **“I am somewhat concerned that you may not have very much enjoyment of Christ” (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1978, vol. 1, “The Experience of Christ,” p. 340*); Is our enjoyment of Christ sufficient and adequate? The reason that many lose the enjoyment of Christ is the problem they have in the soul; if you do not have much enjoyment of Christ, it indicates that you are not one in soul, joined in soul—2:2.**
- VIII. **Our day-by-day unique goal should be the fullest enjoyment of Christ and the fullest gaining of Christ. This is for us to reach the uttermost enjoyment and expression of Christ in the millennial kingdom as a prize to the victorious runners of the Christian race—3:14; Matt. 25:21, 23; Phil. 3:12-13; 1 Cor. 9:24.**