

My Jesus #3 – Learning to Live in Christ **Romans 8:1-13**

We continue our series, My Jesus.

In Ch. 7, where we began, Paul cried out, ***“O wretched man that I am... Who shall deliver me?”***

- It was not the cry of a lost man
- It was a candid moment of honesty in the struggle of a child of God.

If we're honest... we've all been there.

We know the answer is Jesus...

But ***knowing the answer*** and ***living the answer*** are **not always the same.**

How does Jesus become real in everyday life?

Monday morning... Or maybe Thursday morning... Or how about Saturday night...

- Is Jesus real and close? Do our thoughts turn to Him?
- Does joy characterize our attitude?
- Is our outlook hopeful?
- Does His peace whisper to our hearts?

The verses that follow are God's response to Paul, and each of us.

Last week: **No condemnation ever for those who are saved!**

That is great. So thankful...

However, **it doesn't instantly change the mess that I am.**

Today, God patiently but surely leads us one step further.

I. Explanation: What's Happening

As soon as the condemnation question is answered, God immediately turns to life after trusting Jesus. The “*walk of the believer*”.

Following are things we need to know and understand.

A. The “laws”

Paul had already revealed **the tug-of-war inside him**.

God now gives us insight into that constant battle. Vs. 1 picks up the **two conflicting forces in the life of believers**.

“law” – When Paul says **“law”** here, he’s **not talking about** rules written on paper. He’s talking about **a power... a force... an authority that governs your life**.

There are two powers, two authorities which work to control and rule us!

B. The “law” under which we are born works to dominate and destroy us.

1. It is default. We were conceived in sin and we live as sinners.

2. The description:

Vs. 1- **“walk after the flesh”** – The **flesh directs and defines**.

Vs. 2 – **“the law of sin and death”**

Default is sin. Self. “I”. Living to please me.

Death is the end result:

Vs. 5 – **“After the flesh”** – **Yielding to the influence of the flesh** – **“mind the things of the flesh”** – **Giving in to the things our flesh wants**. It is a downward spiral.

Vs. 7 – **“the carnal mind is enmity against God”**. It is war!

3. The disaster:

When I do what is natural, sensual, selfish... – I end up where we started with Paul- “wretched!”

- Vs. 6 – **“to be carnally minded is death”**
- Vs. 7 – **“enmity against God”**- Vs. 8- **“in the flesh... cannot please God”**
- Vs. 13 – **“if you live after the flesh you shall die”**

But- God didn't just show us the problem, He moved in with the solution!

C. The new, higher "law – authority, power" which works to deliver me!

The moment we are saved, Jesus moves in. His Holy Spirit takes up residence and seals my spirit. **God living in us** gives us the ability to

- "walk *not* after the flesh" (vs.1)
- But to walk ("live daily") "after the Spirit." To live "free" (vs. 2)

The Description

- Vs. 2 – "*the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*"
- Vs. 7 – "*subject to the law of God*" – **His Authority. His Lordship.**
- Vs. 10 – "if *Christ be in you... the Spirit is life*"
- Vs. 11- "*the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead*"

A Distinction: vs. 8-9

- If we are saved, we have the Spirit of God dwelling within us.
- If we are not saved, we do not!

The Deliverance: The answer to our cry!

Vs. 1 – "**Free** from the law of sin and death

Vs. 4 – "**righteousness fulfilled in us**"

Vs. 6 – "**life and peace**"

Vs. 10- "**the Spirit is life**"

Vs. 11- Resurrection! My future is sealed in Him!

Vs. 13 – Until then - "**you shall live!**"

An illustration of how two laws can exist at the same time.

- **1. Law of Gravity**

We are born under it. We can't escape it. Throughout history people have dreamed of breaking free... people have tried to fly....

- **2. Law of Aerodynamics**

In our lifetime, we have seen that which was only a crazy dream for the entire history of the world!

I love to fly. I have been a private pilot for a long time. **When I learn and apply the principles of flight, I can fly!**

Gravity doesn't go away, but something greater takes over, breaks its hold!

We are born into sin and death.

There is no escape. It has total authority/power over me.

When we trust Jesus,

- The **first law doesn't go away**. It is always lurking and working.
- **But- another authority/power - the law of the Spirit of Life in Jesus - takes up permanent residence!**

Two laws.

Knowing this is nice, but facts alone don't change anything.

Paul was brilliant. He had written Scripture. He was indwelt by the Spirit of the living God. **Yet, he struggled. "Wretched" at times.**

Children of God – Believers -

- Are indwelt by the Spirit of the Living God!
- Have the power and possibility that He brings.
- Generally know a lot of His Word. His truth.

But often we don't live like it.

God doesn't stop with an explanation of what we need to know. He tells us what to do!

II. Application: What We Must Do.

There are actually **very few directions in this passage**. For something so complex, it is surprisingly simple. **Not easy – but simple.**

A. Begin with a reality check: Remember -

Vs. 9 – "***Spirit of God dwell***" - Lives! Stays.

Vs. 10: "***Christ in You***"

B. Realize:

Vs 12 **"Therefore brethren... we are debtors"**

Acknowledge our debt – not to earn anything, but live realizing He has already given us everything!

*"But drops of grief can n'er repay the debt of love I owe
Here Lord I give myself away, tis all that I can do"*

The Christ who died on Calvary for us to give us life *can be trusted with our lives!*

We owe Him our trust and obedience!

C. Respond:

Vs. 5 - "do mind" – "things of the Spirit"

- **"Do mind"** – *"We intentionally turn our focus to"* - **Our part in His work!**
- **"things of the Spirit"** –
Jesus.
His truths.
His directions.

The Principle of Proximity:

- ***What we gaze upon becomes the reality that guides us!***

Peter – in the boat in the storm in the middle of the night in the midst of the sea!

- When his eyes were on Jesus, he walked on water.
- When his eyes turned to the waves, He began to sink!

James:

- 4:6 - ***"God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.***
- 4:7 – ***"Submit yourselves therefore to God.*** [Our principle- submit to the authority of the Spirit of life in Jesus!]
Resist the devil, and he will flee.... (How?!)
- 4:8 – ***"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you."***

God to Paul:

- *I have done my part.*
- *I will do my part.*
- *I will always be everything you need.*

But you- as my child - must choose! Must respond.

III. Transformation: *What God Will do!*

- We know **Who: Jesus!**
- We understand **what is going on.**

But facts alone won't transform.

“If I have the Spirit... why do I still struggle?”

Because power must be engaged, not just possessed.

We sit on the runway, with all we have learned, all we need at our fingertips.

The engine is running. Everything is ready.

- Knowing is not enough.
- Wanting is not enough.

The question is not - *Can We Fly?*

The question is, ***Will WE move the throttle?!!***

Will we sit here... Leave maybe... *Struggling. Wondering?*

Or, will we do our part to unleash the Spirit of the Living God in us to do all that Jesus died to make reality?

Today:

- *Will we struggle?*
- *Or take flight and soar?*