

Thursday, March 19, 2026

Romans 8:12-13

We read today from Romans 8:12-13. Read the passage now or at the end of this devotion. What can we learn today from the light of God's word to us?

Settle yourself in a comfortable posture. Sit up straight and breathe into your stomach. Focus on slowly taking calming breath in through your nose and out through your mouth. After a moment or two, breathe out and breathe in four times slowly to these phrases. "I am in Christ." "I am a new creation." "The old has gone." "The new has come."

This week, we are going to talk about selflessness. Our study will take us through the first 17 verses of Romans 8. We will break the bigger section into smaller texts that we will discuss and learn more about how our selflessness must be centered in Christ.

For Christmas, Kristin gifted me a fancy shmantzy wood pellet smoker. I love it. It has a Bluetooth connection to my phone so I can control the temperature, the meat probe setting, the "Super Smoke" option, while seeing how much fuel I have left and just how much time there is until our food is done. I still have a lot to learn, but it is a gift that I will enjoy for a long time.

One evening, I was going to smoke some steaks for dinner. Smoke them at 225 degrees until the internal temperature is right, crank the heat up to 500 degrees and sear the outside to finish. Easy peasy. I went outside to uncover, plug in, and turn on the smoker. The first steps were no problem, but when I pressed the button to power up the electronics, nothing. Blank screen. Oof.

Okay, trouble shoot. Plug in the wall is good and plug to the smoker is good. Maybe it's the GFCI outlet. Unfortunately, the previous owner of our home must have found a deal on GFCI outlets that trip to prevent a short to your electrical system. The back of my house has 3 of them and they are connected to 2 more in the kitchen. I've learned in the past that if one trips, they can all shut down. So, I went through each one, reset it, and tried the smoker again. Still nothing. Double oof.

Then I get into "the sky is falling mode". This is brand new smoker. How will I get it fixed? Do I ship it somewhere? It weighs 100 pounds! That will be a pain. Can somebody come repair it? This is going to be a real mess!

Right about this time, as I was pacing which is what I do when I'm stressed, I walked to the back of smoker and saw a red switch. It was red. It was a switch. It must have got switched when Kristin was putting the cover back on to protect the metal from the rain. Red switches, when they are lit up say "power". When they are dim, they say, "Hey dummy! Maybe try to turn me on and see what happens! Maybe read your owner's manual before you get all freaked out!" My switch was dim and I heard it loud and clear.

The steaks were very good that night.

Get a good connection to power and everything goes as it should. That is God's intention for us as we die to ourselves and live for him.

*"For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live."*

As Paul continues to call disciples of Jesus to grow in selflessness and pursue life in the Spirit, he shares that in our sinful humanity, we do not have a choice of whether we will have a “power connection”. Our choice instead lies in what power we are connected with. We can connect to ourselves, our culture and others in our world and live according to the flesh, or we can connect ourselves to Christ.

The challenge lies in how we misunderstand our power connection.

Our lives are often marked with how we connect with the world out of necessity. Going to work, the grocery store, the shopping centers, the gym and lots of other places naturally connects us to the world. We cannot avoid that. But our consideration of our minds that we spoke of from verses 5-8 is where our power connection can shift as we live “in this world, but not of it”. The constant conversation with the Spirit “plugs” us into Christ. We’re drawing from his power. And when our power is sourced in the Spirit, we die to ourselves and Christ becomes more in us. If we are not conscious of that connection, we risk allowing the world to fuel us in the ways that the text warns us leads to death.

Where are we connected to the constant power of the Spirit? Are we so focused on Christ and his presence that the power of the world has no way to get in? What power sources of the world like technology, media, and relationships should we reconsider as we move closer to Christ?

Each of these choices plugs us into power. May the Spirit equip us to pursue a deeper connection to him.

*May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord turn his smile towards you and give you his peace.*

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

I love you all. Blessings.

Feel free to share this devotion with others.

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