

Tuesday, March 17, 2026

Romans 8:5-8

We read today from Romans 8:5-8. 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.

I think that all followers of Jesus want to be selfless. The challenge comes in not only finding ways to be selfless, but to stem the selfishness that always waits to pounce and take our thoughts away from serving God and others, as we know we're called to do.

Romans 8:5-8 give us some compelling insight into how to make greater moves towards selflessness. It points us to the source of fuel for following the Spirit. It's the mind.

*Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.*

The passage continues with the contrast between a mind governed by the flesh and that of one guided by the Spirit.

That is intuitive of course. Our minds (our thoughts) steer the ship. Allowing our minds to dwell on things of the flesh steers the ship away from godliness. Focusing our minds on the Spirit points us in the direction that Christ calls us.

So how can we better direct our minds?

Have you ever graded your conversations with your spouse or best friend? What makes an effective conversation? What makes the conversation less effective? Usually, the quality of conversation can be gauged by the focus that we give it. When we are tuned into the other and focused on what they are saying, we're more understanding of what is being shared. When we have our phone open, or the television is on with the sound up, we are less prone to focus and understand.

Can we use that skill of focus to equip our minds to follow the Spirit?

What if we are in constant conversation with the Spirit throughout the day? What if while we do everything else, we have an internal dialogue of the spirit, with the Spirit who leads our minds where Christ wants us to go?

I interact with my wife throughout the day. When we greet each other, share texts, drive to places together, or even sit across the table during dinner; "Father, she is a gift to me. I see the beauty, gifts and talents that you have given her. I thank you for her love for me, and for you. Give her every good thing that she might walk and serve you."

I ride my bike to work in the morning. “Father, I see your beauty in these places. Each tree, bush, hill, and flower is a manifestation of your power. Each home is the place for people that you love. May you take glory in how every part of creation sings your praise.”

In the grocery store. “Holy Spirit, there is a bounty of your goodness on the shelves. You provide for every physical need. Thank you for the people who make these things that we may know life and enjoyment from what you give us. May each person I walk the aisles with see and know your blessings today and always.”

And at our workplace, or our school. At church, and as we drive down the street. In our homes, and at the theater, soccer field, arena, concert hall, hiking trail, or wherever it is we are called to be. As we have that internal conversation with the Spirit, which interestingly enough sounds like “praying without ceasing”, we’re focusing our minds on the Spirit’s presence and leading. Our conversation can so consume us that the distractions of the flesh and our own selfishness fall away.

May the Spirit equip us with such conversation. May we exercise our minds to constant conversation with Christ. May our hearts be turned more towards selflessness as Christ leads. In doing that work, may the Spirit in us take glory in what he is doing.

*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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