

In View of God's Mercy - Week 9

Romans 8:1-17 - Pastor Matt Dean

- The power of God for salvation is for everyone who trusts in Jesus
- God's wrath is his holy hostility against unrighteousness – all people have sinned
- That sin is an exchange – the truth about God for a lie; the glory of God for something less
- All people have sinned and people can be made right with God by grace through faith in Jesus.
- Living by faith is being fully convinced that God is able to do what He has promised to do
- We are justified, declared eternally right with God by grace through faith in Christ
- Being justified by faith in Christ - we have peace with God
- Being justified we have access to him by faith
- Being justified, we have a standing in grace
- When we suffer with a surrendered heart, we will see purpose in the pain
- We know God loves us – because he shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us
- We have been redeemed to walk in newness of life
- We must consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus
- We should not offer up our life to sin, but instead present ourselves to God (whole life response)
- We used to be slaves to sin – but now there is an obedience from the heart
- We have been set free from sin and now are slaves to righteousness –

In the conflict of “why do I do what I don't want to do” – we must remember what has been made new in us. When we ask the question? We have an answer.

WHO will save me? Jesus. WHO will deliver me? Jesus. WHO will rescue me? Jesus. WHO will redeem me? Jesus. WHO will die for me? Jesus. WHO paid for me? Jesus. WHO was punished for me? Jesus. WHO was crushed for my sin and iniquities? Jesus. WHO suffered for me? Jesus. WHO was crucified for me? Jesus. WHO took on my shame? Jesus. Jesus. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ.

We are now dead to sin and spiritually alive to God in Christ Jesus. Our flesh is real, the power of sin living in us is real – but the real eternal change has also occurred within those who trust in Christ. We have a new identity, new power, new motivation, new union with Christ.

Life in the Spirit

8 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Let this sink in – in Christ. Free from condemnation. Free from a guilty declaration. Free from the punishment we deserve. There is therefore now, NO CONDEMNATION for those who are in Christ Jesus. In Greek, “already now/finally now” implied.

“What Paul is saying is that all of God's condemning wrath and all of his omnipotent opposition to us in our sin has been replaced by almighty mercy and omnipotent assistance. In other words, if you are in Christ Jesus all of God's action toward you is almighty mercy and omnipotent assistance. It is not mixed. It is not as though some days he is against you with wrath - and those days are bad days - while other days he is for you with love - and those days are good days.” John Piper

² For the law of the Spirit of life has **set you free in Christ Jesus** from the law of sin and death.

³ For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

This is what God has done. God has done what the law could not do. This is how – God sent his own Son. Jesus did this that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us. This is what Paul was aiming at for the Roman church to understand and desperate for his people to understand. God has done something amazing and eternal.

This is an active, conscious reality. Either we set our minds on things of the flesh.
Or, we set our minds on things of the Spirit.

Paul – when he writes to the church in Galatia – he says the same thing – he says walk by the Spirit and you will not gratify, you won't give in to the flesh. He says it this way,

“¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.
(Ga 5:16–25)

There is a clear difference between life and death. Between the way to live and what life in the Spirit means.

In Jesus name, and by the power of the Holy Spirit – this is what life is to be for you – your life is to be marked by love, marked by joy, marked by peace, marked by patience, marked by kindness, marked by goodness, marked by faithfulness, marked by gentleness, and marked by self control – because this is Jesus.

You can't just see these as attributes to aim for – this is also what you have access to.

You have access by faith to greater love that Jesus has already demonstrated.

You have access by faith to true and lasting joy that Jesus has given you.

You have access by faith to greater peace and wholeness in the midst of any trial, storm or conflict.

You have access by faith to kindness that God has demonstrated to us.

You have access by faith to goodness – to know and appreciate all that is right and good and praiseworthy.

You have access by faith to faithfulness defined by God, that even when we are unfaithful, HE IS FAITHFUL.

You have access by faith to gentleness, to a loving kindness that you can't find on your own strength.
 You have access by faith to self control – even when your flesh desires otherwise.
 You have access to these things – because by faith you have access to God.
 Jesus is all these things. This is what it means to LIVE by the Spirit.

⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

Set your minds. Set your minds. Set your minds.

⁶ For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.

To set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. Life. Peace.
 Check your minds – is there confusion and death or life and peace?

⁷ For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.

Spurgeon says it this way about the mind set on flesh being hostile to God, *"It is not black, but blackness; it is not at enmity, but enmity itself; it is not corrupt, but corruption; it is not rebellious, but rebellion; it is not wicked, it is wickedness itself."*

⁸ Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. Religious behavior in the flesh cannot please God. Being a "good person" with self-righteousness cannot please God any more than someone completely consumed with sensual self indulgence in the flesh can please God.

⁹ You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, **he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.**

The same Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead – dwells in you – will ALSO give life to you through HIS SPIRIT who dwells in you. This is what GOD has done and is doing. Right now. Giving life. By His Spirit. In you.

Heirs with Christ

¹² So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. ¹³ For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

See this – we are debtors – indebted to live according to the flesh. The way we deal with sin that lives in us, the way that we deal with our flesh – is by the Spirit.

This is what it looks like — *"God, in my flesh, I am hurt and angry about this thing, I don't like the way I am feeling, I don't like my inability to let this go, God in my flesh these thoughts, these fears, these harassing emotions are wrecking me... by your Spirit — God, help me. I will wait here with You, and cry with you, and be still with You and in total transparency before You – bring my life to bear before you.*

All of me. Before You. God, by your Spirit – put to death my bitterness. Put to death my fears. Put to death the cravings of my flesh.”

¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!”

This is our new identity. Children of God – my one and only permanent identity – a child of God. This father / son relationship isn’t with a cold and distant father, this father isn’t passive or lazy, this father doesn’t hold me at arms length away, but brings me in close, calls me his own, and I am to call him Abba (daddy). This word, Jesus used. Father. Daddy. Abba. That close. If this is too good to be true, remember this is what God has chosen to do – and this is how God has chosen to do this.

¹⁶The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,
The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. God tells us we are His.

The Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit – the place that once was dead, dark, lights off, what He made alive in us, our spirit that now longs for things of God, the spirit at the core of who we now are in Christ – this is how and where the Holy Spirit bears witness to us – the Holy Spirit bears witness to us with our spirit, that we are children of God.

¹⁷and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

In this broken world – suffering and heartache is the reality for everyone because sin and sinfulness is a reality for everyone – but for those of us in Christ, as fellow heirs with Christ, as those who belong to God, our suffering is with Him, in relationship with Him – because we trust we will be glorified with Him.

Last week we were singing in this very room, and we sang these lines, *“But mine is peace that flows from heaven, and strength in times of need, I know my pain will not be wasted as Christ completes His work in me”* and from the back, I watched a dear friend, walking through cancer here and now – raise her hand in faith. She is presently giving this to Him, suffering with Him. This is a good reminder for all of us.

We are his children – He is our Father. He’s cleared the way for us to walk with Him in all our days, the good days and bad days, with as John Piper would say, His *“almighty mercy and omnipotent assistance”*.

In view of God’s mercy...

This matters because those who are NOT in Christ Jesus still face condemnation, still face God’s wrath against their sin, still are held captive by guilt and shame, still responsible for the punishment of sin, still slaves to sin, still subject to futility, still don’t know they have a Father in heaven who loves them. We have a gospel to proclaim for all the world to hear.

In view of God’s mercy...

This matters, because we have been given the great commission to make disciples of Jesus, this matters because we have been given a ministry of reconciliation, this matters because He is the God of salvation and we are His people called to live out and demonstrate and proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ – here and to the ends of the earth.

In View of God's mercy...

This matters because we now know we have a new way to live – we now know that “finally now, already now” there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus – we now know that by the Spirit, we can put to death the deeds of our flesh, we now know that we can say no to sin in Jesus name because we now know that when we walk by the Spirit we truly live, we know that we are His children, and now we know what that means. We aren't alone or on our own. We belong to Him.