

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit

Text: Romans 8:1-13

Introduction:

1. Personal pronoun 'I' found 32 times in chapter 7 as Paul described his defeat under the law as a Christian. Now in chapter 8 the Holy Spirit is the focus and is directly mentioned at least 19 times.
2. Chapter 8 is like cool water to the parched, thirsty and defeated soul of chapter 7. It reveals the key to overcoming the defeated state of chapter 7. We are to live the Christian life in the power of the Spirit.
3. These verses represent some of the most concentrated teaching on the Holy Spirit in the Word of God. "Chapter 8 sets forth that part in our salvation which is exercised by the third Person of the Godhead." (Newell)

We note 4 facets of the Holy Spirit's ministry in our lives:

I. The Holy Spirit and Sanctification (Vs. 1-4)

A. Liberty (Vs. 1-2)

1. 'therefore' = points back to struggle of chapter 7. Focus is not so much Christ's work for us but the Spirit's work within us. (Newell)
2. "no condemnation" = John 5:24 *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall **not come into condemnation**; but is passed from death unto life."* No condemnation now I dread, Jesus and all in Him is mine, alive in Him my living head and clothed in righteousness Divine, bold I approach the eternal throne and claim the crown through Christ my own.
3. "law of the Spirit of life"
 - a. The principle or authority exercised by the Holy Spirit.
 - b. a more powerful law than the law of sin and death described in Chapter 7. My sinful flesh nature is not eradicated but counteracted by the power of the Spirit in me. He is the Spirit of life, releasing the life of Christ in me to give me victory over the downward drag of the self-life. "The Spirit is the Almighty Agent within the believer making effectual in experience that "deliverance" which Paul saw when he cried in 7:24-25."
(Newell)
4. "made me free" = to be liberated

B. Purity (Vs. 3-4)

1. The weakness of the law (Vs. 3)

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- a. “could not do” = lit. “impossible”. There was something the law could not accomplish. It could pronounce judgment against sin but could not defeat it.
 - b. ‘likeness’ = Christ a real man but no sin nature (Phil. 2:7)
 - c. “condemned sin” = to give judgment against. Translated twice as ‘damned’ in N.T. Sin was deposed from its dominion
 - d. “in the flesh” Christ defeated death in His sacrifice on the cross. “The flesh – that in which sin had reigned – was also that in which God’s condemnation of sin was executed.” (Wuest)
 - i. Heb. 10:10 “By the which will we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”
 - ii. Col. 1:20-22 “And, having made peace through the blood...”
2. The walk in the Spirit (Vs. 4)
- a. ‘that’ = the purpose/goal for condemning sin in the flesh
 - b. ‘righteousness’ = that which is deemed to be right. A holy life has been made possible by the indwelling of God’s Holy Spirit.
 - c. “might **be** fulfilled in us” = passive voice. Not just by us but in us!
 - d. ‘walk’ = the conduct of our lives. Not living after the dictates and demands of the self-life but living under the dominion and influence of the Holy Spirit.

II. The Holy Spirit and Salvation (Vs. 5-9)

A. The Contrast in Preoccupation (Vs. 5-8)

1. The unsaved mind
 - a. Focused on sinful things (Vs. 5)
 - i. ‘mind’ = to think, to set one’s mind or heart upon something, to employ one’s faculty for thoughtful planning with the emphasis upon the underlying disposition or attitude (Key). It means to be preoccupied with something.
 - ii. State described in Eph. 2:3 “*Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*”
 - b. Condemned by God
 - i. “to be carnally minded is death” (Vs. 6)
 - ii. “the carnal mind is enmity against God” (Vs. 7) ‘enmity’ = hostility. “*But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God...*” (1 Cor. 2:14)
 - iii. “they that are in the flesh cannot please God” (Vs. 8)
While primarily a reference to the unsaved, it also applies

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to believers. We cannot be pleasing to God if we are walking after the flesh.

2. The saved mind
 - a. Focused on godly things (Vs. 5)
 - b. Blessed with life and peace (Vs. 6)

B. The Contrast in Possession (Vs. 9)

1. Key reason for the difference between those who are living for evil things and those living for godly things.
2. 'but' = contrast. The believer is distinct from what has just been described
3. 'dwell' = comes from root word 'house'. Means to live or dwell in a certain place as your home (Wuest). The Holy Spirit has taken up residence in me as a blood-washed, born again Christian.
4. Eph. 1:13 *"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,"*
5. 2 Cor. 13:5 *"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that **Jesus Christ is in you**, except ye be reprobates?"*
6. 1 Cor. 6:19-20 *"What? know ye not that **your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you**, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."*
7. Ezekiel 36:24-27 – prophecy of the new birth

III. The Holy Spirit and Resurrection (Vs. 10-11)

A. The Death of the Body (Vs. 10)

1. The body is subject to death on account of sin (Rom. 5:12)
2. Our spirits are alive through the agency of the Holy Spirit

B. The Resurrection of the Body (Vs. 11)

1. Resurrection attributed to Father, Son & Holy Spirit
 - a. Christ – John 2:19
 - b. Father – Ephesians 1:17-23
 - c. Holy Spirit – Romans 8:11
2. The Spirit that raised up Christ dwells in the believer. That means the believer has access to resurrection power!
3. "shall also quicken" = future resurrection and glorification of the body in view. 'quicken' = to make alive, give life. Because Christ rose, I shall rise also! Because He lives, I shall live also!
4. 1 John 3:2 *"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."*
5. 'mortal' = subject to death

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IV. The Holy Spirit and Mortification (Vs. 12-14)

A. The Christian's Debt (Vs. 12)

1. 'therefore' = on the basis of the truths discussed (e.g. the indwelling of the Holy Spirit Vs. 9)
2. "we are debtors" = we are debtors to our Saviour on account of our great salvation
3. "not to the flesh" = truth expressed by showing us what we are **not** debtors to. Being delivered from the dominion of sin through salvation, we are under no obligation to yield anymore to its demands.

B. The Christian's Deliverance (Vs. 13)

1. Victory over the dictates of our sinful self-nature is accomplished by the operation of the Holy Spirit within us.
2. 'mortify' = present tense. The day by day application of my union with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. My old man has been crucified with Christ (Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20), I am to reckon upon this fact, relying on the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit to make it real to me in the face of temptation. Praise God the cross has power to save AND to sanctify!
3. Illustration: If I reckon that my bank account has \$40,000 in it when it does not, this is fantasy. All the reckoning I can summon will not put money in my Bank Account. So, our reckoning to be dead, buried and risen with Christ does not make it happen. However, we can safely reckon on our co-crucifixion with Christ, because it is already a reality underwritten in the Word of God. In the face of searing temptation, I can aggressively count on the fact that I am dead, buried and risen again with Christ. I do not have to serve sin. The vital connecting link with my old master has been broken forever. As I doggedly reckon on this, God begins to pour His power into my life for that situation until I gain the victory. The Holy Spirit honors the Cross of Christ and my union with Him.
4. Gal 5:16 *"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."*

Conclusion:

1. Are you indwelt by the Holy Spirit? Are you born again?
2. Are you living in defeat or victory as a Christian? Is the Holy Spirit grieved in our lives?