



Community Group Discussion Guide

April 27, 2014

Life In The Spirit or Living in Freedom

Week 1

Romans 8:1-11

Introduction

The conflict of Romans chapter 7 is not meant to be a picture of the Christian life. It's meant to convince us of the futility of believing that the Law – legalism, religion – can somehow make you live right. The Law had no capacity when you were a sinner to justify you. And the Law has no capacity, now that you're a believer, to sanctify you. It leads to Paul asking: "Wretched man that I am, who will rescue me from this body of death?"

The answer to Paul's question is in everything he's written about God's grace through Jesus Christ leading to this 7th chapter. It's also answered in Romans chapter 8. To this point in the book of Romans the Holy Spirit has not been a major player in the sense that he's only mentioned twice. In chapter 8 he's mentioned twenty times. The Holy Spirit is the answer to Paul's question. It's through the Holy Spirit that we're able to live in the freedom that's ours in Christ.

Questions for Study

1. As we have seen in our study through the book of Romans there is a struggle that is taking place in chapter 7. Look at verses 18-25 and summarize what Paul is feeling and how he concludes with his evaluation of himself.
2. What conclusion does Paul make about the follower of Jesus Christ in chapter 8, verse 1? What does it mean that there is now: "no condemnation"?
3. What has '*the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*' done for you if you are a Christian?
4. What did God do to provide a solution to our struggle (vs. 3) and what do we learn about Jesus from this verse?
5. What are you learning in these chapters in Romans (about Jesus and yourself) that can help you share your faith?
6. In verses 5-11 how does Paul describe on the one hand, "life in the flesh (sinful nature)" and on the other hand, "life in the Spirit"? Compare the two.
7. It is an incredible reality that the Spirit of the living God lives "in us" (vs. 10-11) if we are Christians. See also Ezekiel 36:26-27, a promise given to God's people in the Old Testament.
8. What does the mind that is controlled by the "Spirit" bring according to Romans 8:6?
9. What do the following references say about the person who is in Christ: John 14:15-18; Romans 6:23; 2 Corinthians 1:20; 5:17, 21; Ephesians 1:7; Philippians 4:7. Let these verses deeply shape your view of yourself "in Christ".
10. When you fall into living in the power of your own flesh, how can a text like this be of great encouragement to you?