

The Greatest Story (Part 42):

New Life In Holy Spirit

Romans 8

Memory Verses: Romans 8:10

MANUSCRIPT

Introduction (Me, We, & the Struggle)

We've seen how in the Old Testament the Messiah was foretold time and time again. There wasn't a child of Israel who didn't know of the prophecies of the coming Christ who would save all people from their sin.

But, are you aware that the Old Testament also regularly prophesied of another who would come. In **Ezekiel 36:26-27** we read of the Holy Spirit which will cause us to walk according the Lord's will. **Joel 2:28-29** says that this Spirit will be poured out on all flesh. Even before Jesus' earthly ministry had begun John the Baptist in **Matthew 3:11** tells us that one of Jesus' primary purposes is to baptize us with the Holy Spirit.

And of course Holy Spirit is not a new character, just like Jesus and God the Father, he is eternal and has always existed, but his role in the New Testament would be expanded to heights never seen before. And just as the world waited in eager anticipation for Jesus the Messiah to break them from their chains of sin, they waited just as eagerly for Holy Spirit to be poured out upon them, causing them to break their chains of religion and walk in true righteousness.

It is this Spirit that Don spoke of last week which gives us the power to take the Gospel to the rest of the world. Without Holy Spirit our words and our actions would have no real power and we would be completely ineffectual in our ministry. But with him we have not just a new power, but a newness of life... an abundant life... and that is what I want us to focus on this morning in the book of **Romans chapter 8**; new life in Holy Spirit.

New life huh? The problem is that so many "so called Christians" don't feel new life and don't live in newness of life. We call the Christian life the abundant life but I think we can all point to someone who claims to be a Christian who is just miserable. They look like they have been sniffing onions and sucking lemons. They are the onion sniffing, lemon sucking, poster children of a non-transformative religion.

Maybe you can relate. Do you ever struggle with feeling that abundant life? I think if we were all honest there are days when going to church, worshipping with your church family, singing and studying the word, and praying... just feels like not fun at all. Then Monday through Saturday you want me to share the Gospel with people... ugh. And study

the Bible on my own... and pray on my own... and worship on my own... BORING. But you know what sounds good... skipping church, sleeping in late, cooking out, and watching the Panthers smoke the Saints, and otherwise keeping to myself. Now, that seems like abundant life stuff! Well, that is until the Panthers lose, the grill breaks, the kids start fighting, and the feelings of loneliness, worthlessness, and depression start to creep back in to frame.

The problem with trying to chase that abundant life is that you can't catch it apart from the Holy Spirit. **Life will always seem less than full apart from Holy Spirit.** Life will never satisfy apart from Holy Spirit. This morning I want to make it abundantly clear to you that New Life is available to you as a believer and it is found when we give attention to and yield to Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit gives New Life!

So let's turn over to **Romans 8**. Were you aware that Romans 8 is considered by many theologians to be the best chapter of the entire Bible. Meaning... if you were allowed to only have one chapter out of the entire Bible... they would recommend this chapter. Why? Well for one, almost every major doctrine is discussed here; all three facets of salvation: sanctification, justification, and glorification. Also, the law, sin, death, resurrection, adoption, suffering, persecution, creation, heaven, depravity, prayer, intercession, predestination, sovereignty, angels, demons, and the unfailing love of God... all right here. Secondly, it offers the most concise explanation of the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer. It is for this reason that we are here. So let's just read through it this morning... all **39 verses of Romans 8**.

My prayer is that through the study of this passage this morning you will see that... **The Abundant Life Isn't Automatic.** But... it is Available through a consistent reliance upon the Holy Spirit.

Teaching (Expand on the Problem, God)

The first thing we notice here about pursuing the Abundant life is... **New Life Is Found When We Relinquish Religion For A Relationship With Holy Spirit.** First, let's get our theology correct. Jesus has ascended and sits at the right hand of God the Father interceding on our behalf. In a literal understanding, this means that Jesus does not live in your heart. So who lives in your heart? Holy Spirit. Now, do I correct everyone who says that Jesus lives in you, or accept Christ into your life? Of course not. Jesus is God. Holy Spirit is God. They are both God so in a manner of speaking yes... if the Holy Spirit lives in your heart then so does Jesus and vice versa. But you should understand... when we are talking about a relationship with the God who resides in our inner being... we are talking about the person of Holy Spirit.

What does it mean to have a relationship with Holy Spirit? Well,

what does it mean to have a relationship with anyone? It means you talk with them, you walk with them, you spend time with them and you depend upon them. So with that in mind look at this first part of this chapter again in **Romans 8:1-4** where we see a distinction between a relationship with Holy Spirit and a reliance upon the religion of the law.

Paul's position is pretty upfront... the law is a law of sin and death... but the spirit is life. In other words... religion kills your personal spirit while Holy Spirit revives your spirit. Religion kills. This is why so many people have left the church and become disenfranchised with organized religion... they are sick of the mundane, ritualistic, chore like list of rights and wrongs that they can never fully live up to. Let me put it to you like this... to live according to the law.. or religion means that you must follow the list of rules and how well you do at following the rules determines your value as a child of God. Since it is impossible to constantly follow the rules you feel the exact opposite of free and alive... instead you feel worthless because you can't live up to the rules of you religion. Religion kills the soul.

Religion also breeds licentiousness. Let me explain. Most religious people recognize that they can't keep the law of their religion so instead they pick the top 3 or 5 or 10 and make an unwritten rule with themselves which says... if I can keep these 3 or 5 or 10 rules then I can do whatever else I want. As long as I do A, B, C I can do D, E, and F. Let me give you an example. Say I'm a religious church goer... I have determined in my mind that A) I will attend church regularly, B) I will pray before meals, and C) I will read the Bible twice a week. If I do those three things then I can D) smoke cigarettes, E) watch R rated movies, and F) cuss a little. Its a trade off. This is the most common way that religion works. Religion at this point isn't about getting as close to Christ as I can... rather it's about getting away with as much as I can. This also kills the soul.

But a relationship is much different. A relationship doesn't say follow these rules and you are good. A relationship says I will help you live a righteous life and if you fail I will help you back up and we will do this thing together. **Where religion breeds fatalism and legalism... a relationship breeds loyalty.** I walk with Holy Spirit because he doesn't reject me when I fail... rather I feel loved, forgiven, and valued. Now I have an attachment to him that I never had to religion. We see this in **verses 1 & 2** – there is no condemnation for those in Christ because the Spirit which brings life has set us free from religion. Where religion said... if you sin you are condemned... a relationship with Holy Spirit says if you sin you are forgiven.

How is this possible? Look at verses 3 & 4. Jesus has paid the price of the “righteous requirement of the law.” Well what's that? Perfection. The law required constant perfection. Jesus paid that. And

now we walk in perfection through religion? Nope... through a relationship with the Holy Spirit. Does this mean that Holy Spirit makes you perfect. Nope. I've explained this before but let me do it again here. By faith in Christ you are positionally perfect. Positionally, from God's perspective, you are perfect because of Christ's death and resurrection. But practically, you are righteous when you walk in a relationship with the Holy Spirit. Now you can strive for a perfect walk but not be condemned when you fail. That is the abundant life!

The point is simple... as long as you continue to live under the law you will live without newness of life. **Verse 2** – the SPIRIT OF LIFE has set you free from the law of sin and death. Only by walking in relationship with HOLY SPIRIT will you feel a newness of life. **A relationship with Holy Spirit is the only thing that can revive in you what religion has killed.**

Listen, I know that there are many people here who are on the verge of giving up on church and the christian life simply because they are sick of trying to measure up to some religious standard. We get it! So stop. Allow the Holy Spirit to work through you and begin a relationship of walking with him everyday. **The Abundant Life Isn't Automatic.** But it is available. A relationship with Holy Spirit isn't a moving walkway you just stand on... you must determine to walk with him. So start walking.

Next... **New Life Is Activated In Us When We Yield To Holy Spirit Instead Of The Flesh**. We see this in **Romans 8:5-11**. Here's how this plays out. When we become a Christian we still have the lure of the flesh within us... it will never fully be conquered until we are glorified in heaven. So what exactly changed when we became a Christian? The answer: We were given the Holy Spirit to help us fight this fight. Get this... we were given God in us to fight the fight with us! Greater is he who is in me than he who is in the world. Now you can win the fight against the flesh... a fight you were never capable of winning before. All we must do is simply **yield** to his guidance. He's the trainer in the corner telling us when to duck and when to punch... if you listen to him you will be successful. Look at **Galatians 5:16-17**. The flesh wars with the spirit – so don't gratify the desires of the flesh. Avoid them by walking in the spirit.

Look, **vs9,11** tell us that If you are saved you have the Holy Spirit... but if there is no indication of yielding to the Spirit then you don't have it – thus no new life. The only way to have new life is to be saved and to yield to the Spirit. So are you saved? Then there must be some indication of yielding to the Spirit? Is there?

Perhaps you are saved but you rarely yield to the Spirit. **Vs 6-8** tells us if you are saved but rarely yield to the spirit then you life is full of sin and your life does not please God – in one sense you have new life because you are saved... but your life will not feel new because you refuse to listen to your trainer in the corner... and you keep getting knocked out by the flesh.

This brings us to **vs10** our key verse. A relationship with Holy Spirit brings new life but only through a walking in righteousness. The Spirit is life because of righteousness. Well now I'm confused... I thought you said I could have abundant life which meant I didn't have to live a perfect righteous life... but now you are saying the only way to have the abundant new life is if I walk in righteousness. Okay... let me help you with the confusion. A new life is a life that is naturally lived in righteousness because of a walk with Holy Spirit. The more you walk with him the more you yield to him the more you learn to walk in righteousness effortlessly... that is new life. This isn't a "you must live righteous or else" this is a wow... how freeing it is to finally desire righteousness because I learned how to walk in righteousness without condemnation. Does that make sense? Practical righteousness is a result of yielding to the Spirit which brings LIFE! So... **you will only feel alive when by the Spirit you put sin to death**.

And remember... It's not automatic - **The Abundant Life Isn't Automatic**. ... but it is available. Some people think that you become a Christian and BAM; abundant life! But this passage tells us that it is something we have to pursue... I have the **knob of my gear shifter** in my Jeep which is of course a stick shift manual. Listen... I remember when I learned as a 15 year old boy how to drive a manual stick shift. A 1988 Honda Civic is all we had and it was a manual so if I wanted to drive I had to learn. My pastor taught me in the church parking lot... and it was difficult... it took days to learn, but eventually I learned it. Then when I got married the only vehicle we had was a 1989 Ford Bronco 2 which of course... was a stick shift manual... so I had to teach Lisa how to drive that too and it was hard and difficult. I remember one time she stalled out at a green light and we sat through three green lights with a long line of cars honking at us before she got it figured out... but guess what... she got it figured out. Then she went out and bought our 2002 Chevy Cavalier... which of course is an automatic. An automatic is a lot easier than driving a manual. You just put it in drive and go. A manual you have to push in the clutch and then let it out and push the gas and shift the gears. And it's the same with the Abundant life in the Holy Spirit... it isn't, Hey I'm saved, let's just put it in drive and go... rather it's a daily shifting into submission to the Holy Spirit... it's a daily putting your life into the gear of Holy Spirit. You must daily die, daily submit, and daily yield so that the Holy Spirit can get your car running right! So put it in gear.

Lastly, **New Life Is Embraced When We Listen To Holy Spirit**. Real quick... the second half of this chapter details what the Holy Spirit does in relationship with our spirit. Just as we have to reject religion for a relationship and just as we must yield to Holy Spirit and reject the flesh.. we also must choose to listen to Holy Spirit's voice. And here's what he'll

tell us in **vs. 16**. The Spirit tells us that we are Adopted Heirs of God. Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit – a supernatural communication only you can hear... and what he says in this supernatural connection is... you are God's... you are saved, adopted, and an heir of the King. Get this.. a big drag on life is being unsure of your salvation – the Holy Spirit gives assurance of salvation.

He also tells us if we are willing to listen that our present suffering is nothing compared to glory! In **vs. 23 and 18** we see that Heaven is so much greater than anything we could possibly face here on earth. So don't sweat the small stuff of life... Glory will be worth it. One of the biggest drags in life is going through trials and sufferings but Holy Spirit helps us keep our focus on the prize of heaven and glory. That's new life stuff!

He speaks to us and he listens to us. Get this... Holy Spirit hears our inner prayers and prays for us according to the will of God. We see this in verses **8:26-27**. Get this... God knows us and our hearts... because Holy Spirit is telling him. Knowing that God knows you and hears your prayers... even when you don't actually say them out loud.... That's new life stuff!

Lastly... Holy Spirit assures us that God loves us and that love gives us the power to conquer this world. Look at verses **8:31,37-38**. This is the abundant life... life is knowing you are loved. No matter how down you get, how depressed, lonely, or lost... God is gonna love you! No matter how wayward, how sinful you are... God is gonna forgive you! That's abundant life! Abundant life is knowing you are victorious. Nothing in this world can stand against you. You are more than a conqueror with the Holy Spirit! So stop being a victim and live in victory! That's abundant life! **Holy Spirit assures us of our salvation, our glory in suffering, that our prayers are heard even when we don't speak them, and that we are loved with a love so strong it helps us to conquer all spiritual and physical foes we will encounter in this life!**

But, once again, it doesn't just happen... it takes a listening and yielding... So, how much time do you take just to listen to the Holy Spirit? How much time do you spend in meditation, prayer, the word, worship? **The Abundant Life Isn't Automatic**. ... but it is available... so put it in gear.

Application (Resolution, You)

Freedom from religion brings new life but it takes a relationship with the Holy Spirit to break you away from the grasp of the law. Freedom from sin brings new life but it takes a daily yielding to the Holy Spirit to be righteous. Assurance of salvation, adoption, glorification, meaning in suffering, God's unfailing love, and victory in Jesus brings new life, but it takes a daily listening to the Holy Spirit through meditation, prayer, the word, and worship.

Conclusion

So do you feel alive? Do you feel that you have that Abundant Newness of Life? If not...Are you a Christian? Perhaps you need to simply accept Christ and receive the Holy Spirit.

If you are a Christian today and you have no doubt of that but you are still not seeing that abundant life... you need to put it in gear. You need to activate Newness of Life by putting away religion and pursuing a relationship with Holy Spirit. By putting away sin and yielding to the Spirit's leading in your life, and by dedicating your life to listening to the Holy Spirit in meditation, prayer, the word, and worship.

This morning we are going to ask the Lord to help us activate this abundant life by getting closer to Holy Spirit. If you know this morning that you need more of that abundant life... and I feel that would include a lot of us... me included I'm going to invite you to join me on your knees if possible and pray with me.