***The Spirit of Eternal Life, No. 1
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Romans 8, a new section this morning, verses 9-11, our subject is the spirit of eternal life. As we have learned well now, we know that Christians are free from ever facing a divine judgment relative to their eternal destiny. They cannot ever be condemned to hell. Christians, however, we do know, possess a certain nature which may so dominate them that they do not live in a way that pleases God, even though they are capable of doing that. Such carnal Christians do not enjoy the peace of God when they are in that state, nor do they earn rewards that they may enjoy in heaven for eternity. Those, furthermore, who are under the domination of the sin nature are naturally hostile to God, and they hate His word, the Bible. The unbeliever and the carnal Christian are both under the control of the sin nature, and so neither of them can please God. The sin nature incites people to do their own thing, no matter what the Word of God says, no matter what the laws of God require of us; we do our own thing. The sin nature hostility leads people to violence toward others. This violence takes two forms: it can be either verbal violence or it can be physical violence. The sin nature furthermore is antagonistic toward those who uphold the Bible as the final authority in society. And finally, the sin nature causes a Christian to waste his life during the very short span that he has on earth and consequently to suffer loss for all eternity.

**The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit**

This morning we begin verse 9 in Romans 8 where we pick up the important truth about the indwelling of God the Holy Spirit. As you see, Paul is going step by step now with this logical mind of his. He's made it clear we cannot lose our salvation; that's not the issue. He has made it clear we can live as if we were unbelievers; that is the issue. Now he's going to proceed to the next step of explaining how to bring that sin nature under control so you don't waste your life and furthermore so that you invest for rewards that you'll enjoy forever.

Verse 9 says, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit." The first word, "but," is the Greek word, "de," and it's a word which introduces the contrast of the Roman Christians to those who in verse 8 he declared cannot please God. His last statement in verse 8 was, "So then they that are in the flesh, they that are in the sin nature domination, cannot please God under any condition, BUT." Big contrast. And he throws that word in to indicate that something is different. And he says, "But YOU." And this is the Greek word for the personal pronoun "you," "su," from the word "ego," and in the Greek sentence, this word is first.

Now when you throw a word up first in the Greek sentence, that is a place of emphasis so that the apostle Paul, immediately in the Greek Bible this just leaps out at you that he is emphasizing "YOU Christians," - totally different from anybody else. He refers to born-again believers in contrast to unbelievers. So we would translate it as, "you, however, are." The word "are" is "eimi." This is the word for the status of these Christians who live in Rome. Present tense means this is constantly what is true of these Christians. It is active in its voice which means this is personally true of them. Indicative mood, a statement of fact. And it furthermore has the word "ou," so that with this word you have a negative - something that you are not. And of course, what he says these Roman Christians are not is also true of every one of us who are believers here this morning. You are not in what he calls "the flesh." There's our old word again, "sarx." This refers to the sin nature. Now here again, interestingly enough, in the Greek language, it does not say "the" flesh, which would be specifically the sin nature as such. This word just isn't in there. It just says you're not in sin nature. You're not in flesh. And when it does that, it is stressing the quality of evil that is characteristic of the sin nature which we are not in. And you remember that the best definition for flesh, the concise definition, is that it refers to the animal lusts that the sin nature throws up within us and to the self-centeredness. Animal lusts and self-centeredness characterize the sin nature.

So, the apostle Paul says, "While the unbeliever cannot please God, ye you Christians, however, are not in the evil characteristic of the sin nature." "But," - and here he uses a different word for "but": "alla." Before we had this word "de." This is a weaker word. Now he rises in intensity. He said, "BUT YOU Christians are not under the domination of evil, BUT in fact," heavy contrast, "you are in something else." The word "in" is "en," which indicates location right there inside of this. And what you are in, he says, is "pneuma," which is the word for "spirit." And here, of course, it refers to God the Holy Spirit. And here again, it doesn't say "the" spirit; it simply says "spirit" - the quality that characterizes the Spirit of God, which is holiness.

So, here's the picture: you, however, are not in flesh, but in spirit. He refers to two dominating mindsets that we had back in verse 5 - the mind of the sin nature, and the mind of God the Holy Spirit - two opposite elements which may govern a person's thinking and conduct - The sphere of what characterizes the sin nature, or the sphere of what characterizes the Holy Spirit). He said, "This is not true of you Christians." Then he says, "If so be." And here we have another one of those strong Greek words: "eiper." This word "ei" is our usual word for "if" in the Greek language. This pair, when you attach it to a word, gives it emphasis, makes it a VERY strong word, just like saying, "if indeed." And actually, this word is introducing one of those first class conditions in the Greek, something that's true, so, we would translate it: "Since INDEED you Christians are NOT in the quality of evil of the sin nature, but in the quality of holiness of the Spirit of God, SINCE the Spirit of God…" And here again, you have the same word "pneuma" that we had before - the spirit - but this time it's attached to the word "theos," the Spirit of God, referring here to God the Father - the Spirit of God the Father. And the Spirit of God the Father is referring to God the Holy Spirit in the Trinity.

**Relationships Within the Trinity**

As you know, the Bible tells us that there is one essence, but there are three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They have one essence, but they have different authorities, different place positions of responsibility within what we call "the Godhead." The Father is the chief executive of the Trinity. And so the Bible teaches us that it is the Father who sends the Holy Spirit. The father sends the Holy Spirit. Take a look at John 15:26: "But when the comforter," (which is God the Holy Spirit), "is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth who proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me." The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, or He goes out from the Father, and so the Holy Spirit is called the "Spirit of God," the "Spirit of God the Father." In the Greek language, this word "proceed" that you have in John 15:26 is in the present tense, so it indicates that this is a continual and eternal relationship to the Father. So, you see, you have an organizational authority structure within the Trinity itself, within the Godhead itself. God the Father is the executive head. He is the quarterback who calls the plays, and He is the one who sends the Holy Spirit, and it is he who determines to send the Holy Spirit to indwell certain people upon the face of the earth. The Holy Spirit never goes to indwell any person until God the Father sends him. God the Father sends him as per the person's trust in Christ. That person does not turn to the Lord Jesus unless God the Father has moved him to do so.

The same truth is found in the Old Testament, Psalm 104:30, where we read, "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created: thou renewest the face of the earth." Here, God the Father again is declared to be sending forth His Spirit. That is God the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, the Word of God also indicates to us that God the Son joins the Father in sending the Holy Spirit. We've already seen that in John 15:26 where we read, "But when the Comforter is come whom," Jesus says, ".I will send unto you from the Father," thus indicating that in that verse both the Father and the Son send the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, in Galatians 4:6, we read, "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." The Spirit of His Son refers to God the Holy Spirit and shows that there is an association between the Son in the position of authority over the Holy Spirit in terms of their positions in the Godhead. So, we had this relationship. The Son also sends God the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit proceeds or is sent by the Father and the Son. That's the order in the Godhead. The subordination of the Holy Spirit to the authority of the Father and the Son does not diminish the deity of the Holy Spirit or His equality with the Father and the Son.

In John 14:16, this is made very clear. Holy Spirit is equal in essence to the Father and the Son. John 14:16 says, "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever." In the Greek language, that word "another" is this word "allos." And when you have this word, it is "another of the same kind". There is another Greek word "heteros;" it also means "another," but it's "another" of a different kind. The Bible is so fantastically explicit in its original language. Jesus said, "I'm going to send you a Comforter who's going to be another Comforter, but one just like myself," indicating that God the Holy Spirit is also deity. In verse 26 of John 14, we read, "But the comforter who is the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said unto you." and so on. So, in the Godhead, you have this relationship that the Father sends the Holy Spirit, the Son sends the Holy Spirit. The point that Paul is making here when he refers to the Spirit of God the Father is that, he is referring here, I want you to see, to the deity of God the Holy Spirit. He is not speaking about the Spirit of God as an attitude of God, you see - a quality of God - and that's what I'm getting it. We are talking about a person and is a person of God the Holy Spirit.

**The Temple of the Holy Spirit**

So, Paul says, "Since you do not stand in control of the sin nature, but you are in the control of the Spirit since the Spirit of God," that is, the Spirit that proceeds from God the Father, "dwells in you." The word "dwell" is the Greek word "oikeo," which means, "inhabit as one's abode." It is in the present tense, which makes an amazing statement that every Christian is permanently, continually indwelt by God the Holy Spirit. It is active, meaning that the Spirit of God himself does the indwelling. It's a statement of fact. The indwelling, he says, "is in ('en') you." Again, we have that personal pronoun referring to the Roman Christians. So, here is an important concept concerning the Christian and the Holy Spirit. One of the unique features of the church age is that the Holy Spirit permanently indwells every believer. In the gospel of John chapter 7, beginning with verse 37, the Lord Jesus predicted that this would happen: "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me as the Scripture hath said, out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.' (But this spake He of the spirit, whom they that believe on him should receive for the Holy Spirit, was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified.)" After the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God the Holy Spirit came to indwell every believer. On the day of Pentecost, this indwelling by the Holy Spirit was to be permanent in contrast to what it had been in the Old Testament, where the Spirit of God would only temporarily come to dwell upon a person.

John 14:16 says, "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter," (one like myself), ".that He may abide with you forever." And so, the result is that he will be there and be with us permanently. In 1 Corinthians 12:13, the last phrase says, "And have been all made to drink into one spirit." "By one spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Greek, whether we be bond or free and have been all made to drink into one spirit." This word "drink" looks like this in the Greek Bible: "potizo." It is aorist tense which means it is at the point of one's past salvation - passive. This was done for the believer by God the Father. It's a statement of fact. The Christian has, so to speak, been made to drink of God the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, the classic passage, tells us that your physical body has become the temple of God the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 6:19, "What? Know ye not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit, Who is in you, whom you 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." So, the Christian's body is the dwelling place of God the Holy Spirit. It is in point of fact, called his temple, and therefore it is a sacred place. As the temple of the Old Testament was a sacred place and it was treated as a sacred place, so the Christian's body now is a sacred place. The Christian has received the very person of the Holy Spirit from God the Father, and we are told the Christian's body belongs to the Holy Spirit and not to himself to use independently.

"Ye are not your own," verse 19 says. How many of us have learned that lesson? You physically do not belong to yourself. Everything that you do in life, you have to do with your physical body. Everything. And therefore everything that you do is under obligation to the will of God - is under obligation to what God wants you to do with your body. The ownership of the body is based on the fact that Jesus Christ purchased our bodies on the cross, and that's what he says in verse 24, ".Ye are brought with a price." This word is "agorazo." It means that at the point of salvation - passive - it this was done for us by Jesus Christ. The price of this purchase, the death of Christ on the cross, paying for our sins. And so, we have been bought by that price. When you buy something, you buy for a purpose. God has bought your body for the purpose of using it as a temple for the third person of the Trinity. And so, verse 20 says God has bought your body for the purpose of bringing glory to Him, that is, bringing honor to Him: to honor Him as the divine, perfect God.

You notice it says, "You are to glorify God in your body." First of all, to honor God in your body. Now, what does that mean? Well, it certainly means to keep it healthy. That means you take concern for the kind of food you eat. You take concern for the rest you have, and you certainly take concern for the use to which you put it. And you certainly take concern for the exercise that it needs. Everything that the physical body needs. Well, that puts a whole new picture on the physical structure. Most Christians are very sloppy about their bodies - very, very sloppy about their bodies. God says, "Hey, I bought that structure. And it is a building that I'm using for the habitation of God the Holy Spirit. I expect you to shape it up and to keep it in repair and to keep it under such use that it is a fitting structure for Me, not the least of which is that it's to be a sacred and a holy place."

It is obvious that you do not use the body, therefore, in sexual immorality or in perversion. 1 Corinthians 6, beginning at verse 13, says, "Foods for the body and the body for foods: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication," (sexual immorality), "but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. And God hath both raised up the Lord, He will also raise up us up by His own power." You see, ultimately, God intends to completely refurbish your body in the resurrection and to make it a perfect structure for all eternity. "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? Know ye not that he who is joined to an harlot is one body? For two, saith He, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is outside the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." So, it is obvious if we are going to glorify God with our bodies, we not only keep them in a state of health to the extent that that that possible, but we also preserve it from sexual immorality. We further invest its capacity in God's service under the Holy Spirit's direction. It is easy for a Christian in his daily life to be insensitive to the godly use of his body.

And don't forget, along with the body, there is also that which is associated with the body: your soul. We are told in the book of Genesis that after God put man together, he then breathed into its nostrils and man became a living soul. The soul is attached to the body. So when you're talking about glorifying God, you must also realize we are told by glorifying God with our souls: the mind, the will, the emotions. But further, he says, you are to glorify in your spirit. And that, of course, refers to our human spirit. It is the place where we receive spiritual instruction from the Spirit of God. It is the reservoir for storage of doctrine which is taught us by the Spirit of God from the Bible. We have a system, that grace system of perception, that we ought to use every day to fill that human spirit with divine viewpoint of doctrine. We have a capacity that God has given us apart from our human IQ for you to learn God's thinking - that's the grace system - and the Spirit of God who indwells us makes that possible. From the divine viewpoint-oriented human spirit, a Christian builds then the spiritual maturity structure in the soul which glorifies God. The believer who has this kind of maturity is a thing of beauty. It is a thing that honors God. Christians are often very sloppy and careless with the condition of their human spirit. They have therefore little ability for the godly use of the body. The two, you see, are connected. So Christians often forget to whom their body and soul and human spirit belong, and consequently, they do the shameful things which grieve and quench the Holy Spirit.

And it's a serious thing when we forget that our bodies are the Temple of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 gives us a very sober warning: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God," ok, we've established that, ".and that the Spirit of God dwells in you." We understand that. Now: ".If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." There is no moment of the day or night when God the Holy Spirit, who indwells your body, is not present to observe.

You know, it's amazing what good behavior people are on in front of other people, but they don't mind acting like dogs in front of God the Holy Spirit when no one else is around. It's fantastic. Stop and think about that. God the Holy Spirit is always there; He's always observing. And Christians need to consciously start practicing the awareness of the presence of the Holy Spirit so they never forget Him - they never forget that He's there. Just think how often we are willing to act like bestial animals when nobody but the Spirit of God is around. You'd think we'd be embarrassed. You'd think we'd be humiliated. But let somebody walk in, and where we'd been engaging in the screaming meemies, we would become pleasant and sweet. Where we had been acting in some evil thing, we will immediately want to cover it up and stop doing it. That's really crazy. God the Holy Spirit is there all the time, but most Christians forget it. They don't live moment by moment in the conscious presence of that person within their bodies. They're very much aware of other human beings who are there watching and listening, but this person we ignore. It is God the Holy Spirit therefore who is a powerful incentive for a Christian to use his body and soul and spirit in a way that He would approve so that we are not embarrassed in his presence.

There is a huge amount of Scripture, as you know, on how we Christians should act and think in response to Satan's world and to other people, but we don't remember to apply when we need it. This is one of the greatest defects in spiritual relationships. So much of what we know we cannot apply. The average Christian does not make the connections between the principles of doctrine and how he uses his body and how he uses his human spirit. And so there's a great deal of ugliness and a great deal of sin and a great deal of evil that results. We have to remember to apply it when you need it. When we have that, then we rise up to the aristocracy that we are as the members of the royal family of God.

Now what this verse says, as you see, verse 17, "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." It is not just one of those, "Oh, gee, I went and forgot to apply the Word. I didn't act right. I didn't act like a good Christian. I didn't act like I should have." It's a lot more serious than that. When you defile God's temple, when you defile the area of your soul, when you defile the area of your human spirit, then you have entered into a very serious condition. The word "defile" is this word "phtheiro." It means "to destroy by correcting." You know how corrosion on an electrical outlet will destroy that outlet. It will just eat it away. And that's what this word means - a fantastic word. It means you do what is corrupt, and you will eat it away; you will destroy it. And so you have something here that's a continuous pattern. It's an active thing that you as a Christian may choose to do. If any man chooses to corrupt the Temple of God, then there will be serious consequences.

This word "defile" is used several places in the Bible. I'll just give you a couple of them. In 1 Corinthians 15:33, the word is used of good morals being corrupted when you associate with evil people. The human viewpoint crowd will corrupt your good morals and will lead to destruction. 2 Corinthians 7:2, the apostle Paul said, "I was the kind of Christian that I did not corrupt anybody's morality." In 2 Corinthians 11:3, the minds of Christians corrupted from the truth in Jesus Christ. Here, Christians led astray from their devotion to the Lord. Ephesians 4:22 uses this word "phtheiro." Christians are to put off the deceitful desires of the sin nature which belong to the unsaved so that so many Christians are indistinguishable from the unbelievers. And that's a sad thing.

And finally, Revelation 19:2 describes God's destruction of the tribulation false church which has corrupted mankind with her false doctrines. So, what this verse tells us is that God the Holy Spirit's Temple, which is your body, if you corrupt it, He will destroy it. God will bring destruction upon those corrupting the body, the soul, and the spirit. He will terminate their evil efforts and their influences. He will do it. God shall destroy those who corrupt the temple of God, because it is holy, which temple you are. You remember what the Lord Jesus did when he walked into that temple in Jerusalem. He found the money changers desecrating the temple of God. He drove them out. Now this is exactly what Paul is talking about here, that you desecrate your temple - that means you desecrate your mind, you desecrate your emotions, you desecrate your will - God is going to come through and destroy you. He will destroy you; He may even take your life. But you can count on the fact that He will destroy you. And that is why it's important to understand the doctrine of the dwelling of the Holy Spirit. What a fantastic grace that we Christians individually are now the place in which God the Holy Spirit dwells.

**The Person of the Holy Spirit**

And we should remind you then that the Holy Spirit then is not an "it." Don't refer to it as an "it." He is a "He." He is a person. The Holy Spirit possesses intellect. He has a mind. Romans 8:27 indicates that he has a mentality. 1 Corinthians 2:10-11 indicates that He knows and researches the things of God. 1 Corinthians 2:13 tells us that he teaches divine viewpoint to people. Now, you have to have a mind to be able to do that. Secondly, because He is a person, he has emotions. And so Ephesians 4:30 tells us that he can be grieved, he can be grieved by the sin, the willful sin in the life of a Christian. Romans 15:30 tells us that he expresses the emotion of love. And furthermore, because he's a person, has a will, therefore He makes decisions. He can do things. 1 Corinthians 12:11 tells us that He distributes spiritual gifts to each of us - spiritual abilities. Acts 8:29 and Acts 13:4 tells us that He directs our Christian service. He makes decisions for us. In John 16:7-8, we're told that he reproves evil. All of those are acts of the will. So he's not an "it;" He is a personal force.

It is interesting that in the Bible, the word "pneuma," which is the word for "spirit." And it will add the word "Holy Spirit" or "Spirit of God," "Spirit of Christ" - this is in the neuter. But when you have those personal pronouns referring to the Holy Spirit, the Bible uses a masculine pronoun. You have an example of that in the Greek Bible, in John 16:7-8. So that is very clear that we're dealing with a person, that is the Holy Spirit, who is a member of the Godhead, is coequal, as we have shown you, with the Father. He is part of the Godhead. Matthew 28:19 indicates that when He is included on that dramatic occasion with the Father and the Son. Matthew 28:19 in the baptismal formula, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." In Acts 5:3-4, He is called "God." And then as you go through the Bible, you discover that he has the attributes of deity. In 1 Corinthians 2:11-12, the Bible indicates that the Holy Spirit has omniscience; in Psalm 139:7, that He has omnipresent; and Job 33:4 that He has omnipotence. In 1 John 5:6, He has veracity. In Luke 11:13, He has absolute righteousness. And in Romans 8:2 compared with verse 11, we see that He is the creator of life. The Holy Spirit is also related to God the Father and God the Son in the Benediction, which is recorded in 2 Corinthians 13:14.

All of these things indicate that He is God. As a matter of fact, he has applied to Him the most sacred name of God: Jehovah Yahweh. In Jeremiah 31:31-34, He has this name applied to Him. Hebrews 10:15-17 refer to this Old Testament passage and apply to the Spirit of God, God the Holy Spirit.

**Reasons the Holy Spirit Indwells Believers**

Briefly this morning then: the reasons why God the Holy Spirit indwells you and me as believers. This is what the apostle Paul has stressed to us, that we Christians are His temple. It's a serious relationship, and there is a reason for it. Number one, it is through him that we are enabled to glorify the Lord Jesus. John 16:14, "He [God the Holy Spirit] shall glorify Me [God the Son]: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." "Glorify" means to make the Lord look wonderful. The divine good that we produce through the filing of the Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus Christ. The human good that we produce through our sin nature carnality dishonors him. So, number one: God the Holy Spirit is in us to glorify Christ, to make him look good. How many times have you made the Lord Jesus look bad at this week? Every time you did, it was the sin nature doing it, not God the Holy Spirit. Our natural inclination is to make the Lord look bad.

Furthermore, God the Holy Spirit indwells us to produce the fruit of the Spirit. And please don't say "fruits." It's a singular cluster of fruit. Galatians 5:22-23 [says], "The fruit of the spirit is love and joy and peace and longsuffering, gentleness, goodness and faith, meekness, self-control: against such, there is no law." Now as you go through the Bible, you discover that these are the characteristics of Jesus Christ. Ephesians 3:19 tells us about the love of Christ. John 15:11 tells us about His joy. John 14:27 about His peace. 2 Peter 3:15 about His longsuffering. 2 Corinthians 10:1 about His meekness. Romans 2:4 about His kindness. Revelation 19:11 about his faithfulness. These are the characteristics of Christ. So, if we're going to have the character of Christ, it is something that God the Holy Spirit produces in us. And it is the fruit of the Spirit, a single cluster, which constantly functions in our lives. What we do for the Lord Jesus, you see, has little effect on the unbelievers if we do not radiate the character of Christ.

So, you can be out there storming for God and you can be out there a great challenge to do great things for God, but if you do not do that reflecting the character of Jesus Christ, which the Spirit of God produces in us, it'll have very little effect and very little influence on the unbeliever. Paul and Silas had a tremendous impact on the jailer because they reflected the character of Christ in what they were doing. They would not have impressed the jailer if they had sat there grumbling about their mistreatment, if they had been trying to retaliate because of their mistreatment, if they had been down in the mouth because of their mistreatment. If they had been trying to return evil for evil, that would not have been the character of Christ. He understood that here were men of some kind of character that he had never seen before; [it] was the character of Christ, and it drew him to a conviction. Without the character of Christ, we don't convince anybody of anything.

This brings us to a third reason the Spirit indwells us, that which we have in Ephesians 5:1, which is to imitate Christ. Ephesians 5:1 says, "Be ye therefore followers [imitators] of God as dear children." It is God the Holy Spirit that enables us to do this. Christians are, in effect, a letter from God to mankind. So, be careful, the Word of God says, that you convey the right message. 2 Corinthians 3:2-3 says it this way, "Ye are our epistle [our letter] written in our hearts, known and read of all men: forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." We are a letter. So Paul says, "Look to the Spirit of God to enable you to imitate Jesus Christ." And that's what Paul and Silas did. They were not unhappy when they were in jail. The Bible says they were in joy praising God with song. They were not worried; they had peace. They were trusting the Lord. They were not revengeful; they didn't try to act in pay a payback, evil-for-evil category. And they had no complaining. They sat there and they took it, longsuffering for the Lord's sake. They had gentleness and goodness because they spared the life by not running away. They could have really finished this fellow off in a big way. When that earthquake took place and the doors flew open, they could have put him to death - just like that. All they had to do was leave. In Roman times, when you were made the jailer, that meant that nobody escaped. And if they do escape, you instantly were put to death. So all Paul and Silas had to do was - to put this guy in his place - was to have scooted. And they could have, but they did not. And so when the man saw that, he understood what was happening. They had meekness. They were not preoccupied just with their own suffering but they knew that this man had a very serious problem that he had to face in his own personal soul, and furthermore, while in the midst of danger in their own trial, they took the time to tell him how to go to heaven. Now that's faithfulness. That is faithfulness! And furthermore, in spite of the provocation - and I mean that backs were raw with the stripes that this man had put on them with the whip - they did not lose their cool. The greatest characteristic of Jesus Christ: never lost his cool, maintained the stability of his temper. And one of the clusters of the fruit of the spirit is self-control in the face of provocation - not when everything is sweet and nice.

A fourth reason the Spirit of God - very quickly - indwells us, is in John 16:13: to illuminate the Bible. Nevertheless, when He the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak from Himself; but whatever He shall hear, that He shall speak: He will show you things to come." That is now recorded in the Bible. God the Holy Spirit guided the authors to write the Scriptures. 2 Peter 1:21 tells us now God the Holy Spirit guides us to understanding the recorded Scripture. So, it is the Holy Spirit who teaches us doctrine, who illuminates the Scriptures, produces in us the mind of Christ, and enables us to know how to apply the Bible. Don't let anybody tell you that the Bible is not applicable today because it's not understandable. It is understandable, and it is applicable.

And finally, God the Holy Spirit indwells us in order to fill the believer. Ephesians 5:18, says, "And be not drunk with wine, which is in excess, but be filled with the Spirit." With the Holy Spirit: that means be under the control of the Holy Spirit. Christians who are under control of the Holy Spirit is a spiritual believer who is under divine guidance. This enables the Christians to live a godly life walking by means of the Spirit. It is the basis of producing those good works that Titus 2:14 says we have been called to perform.

One final reason for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is to assist the believer in prayer. We have this indicated in Romans 8:26-27, "Likewise, the spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: for the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. He that searches the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." So, God the Holy Spirit gives the spiritual Christian guidance in his praying so that he will be asking in a way that is in keeping in what the name of Jesus stands for. The name of Jesus stands for what the Lord Jesus would approve. The old sin nature, on the other hand, is prone to praying in a self-centered, not in a God-centered way, so that kind of praying is profitless. It is the Holy Spirit who expresses the believer's need to the Father even when the Christian himself finds it difficult to verbalize the very needs that he has that he cannot even perhaps put his finger upon in a specific way. A marvelous ministry of the dwelling Holy Spirit.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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