

SERMON STUDY SUMMARY

Romans Part 17: A New Me – Living in the Spirit

INTRODUCTION

Romans focuses on the spiritual freedom from sin and death that is available in Christ. When Jesus enters your life, your spirit, which had been dead up to this point in time, is made alive in Christ. God sees you as forgiven, righteous and perfect, not because you are but because you are in Christ, who is perfect. There will be struggles with sin but the real you, your spirit, is now alive in Christ and He is offering Himself to live the Christian life through you.

Living in the Spirit means to no longer be motivated by a fear of condemnation but by a love for God and others. There is no condemnation for you if you are in Christ Jesus because through Him, the Spirit has set you free from the law of sin and death. God sees you as completely justified and your identity in Christ is forgiven and righteous even as sanctification or maturing must still happen.

Secondly, **living in the Spirit, means to not set your mind on the temporary things of life but on the eternal things of God.** Your mind is set on whatever you think about or take your cues from throughout the day. The desires of the flesh and the desires of the Spirit can be contrasted in three ways. The flesh urges you to satisfy your appetite in doing what you want, having earthly things as the object of your highest affection. This is defiant against God. On the other hand, the Spirit urges you to have an eternal perspective on everything you do. Your primary concern will be knowing and loving God and making Him known in all that you do. Secondly, the flesh is fueled by the fear of “what might be” while the Spirit is fueled by confidence in “what is”. As a child of God, you know He is totally trustworthy and will direct your paths. Thirdly, the flesh pushes you to establish your identity and to be your own god, devoting your life to making a name for yourself so as to be significant in the eyes of others. In contrast, the Spirit encourages you to rest in your true identity, which is in Christ. This identity means adoption into God’s family, not living as a slave to sin and being a co-heir with Christ.

Finally, **living in the Spirit means that you live in total dependence on Jesus rather than on your own ability to live a God-pleasing life.** When you embrace Christ as your Lord and Savior, the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, living His life of victory through you. Total dependence means to daily surrender and submit your life to God and His control. Living in total dependence on the Lord also means daily seeking His guidance and direction in your life. Getting to know Jesus as you study Scripture, will guide you to His will for your life. Interactions and circumstances will be seen as opportunities to grow to be more like Christ. Living in total dependence means to daily align your thoughts with His thoughts. If you want to live a victorious Christian life, you need to be serious about what you expose your mind to. Sinful acts are committed in your mind before your behavior. Therefore, the battle is won in the mind.

Obedience unlocks God’s power. Living in the Spirit does not mean waiting until you feel powerful and confident in your own ability before you act but rather doing what God wants in spite of your feelings, fears or weaknesses.

SERMON STUDY GUIDE

IN - PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. Who or what influences you the most in: The clothes you wear? The music you listen to? The food you enjoy most? The activities you do?
2. When someone says the word 'freedom' or 'you're free' what image or thought comes to your mind?

UP - PURSUE GOD

Read Romans 8:5-11

3. Paul makes many declarations relating to both the flesh and the Spirit. List those in two columns and discuss the consequences of each.

Read Romans 8:12-17

4. How do I know if I have God's Spirit? What are the qualifications, benefits and obligations of living according to the Spirit?

OUT - PURSUE MISSION

5. Where we set our mind and how we occupy it plays a key role in how we live out the Christian life (Rom 8:5-8). How do you 'set your mind' on the right things? When unhealthy thoughts enter your mind, what have you found helpful in dealing with them? (Refer to 2 Corinthians 10:5)
6. Pastor Henry equated living according to the Spirit with living in total dependence on God. In the coming days and weeks, how can you grow in your dependence on God?

For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

You can't live an authentic Christian life in your own power. Christ is offering to live the Christian life through you by way of the Holy Spirit. Review the three points on Living in the Spirit in the summary. What area in your life do you tend to live in the flesh rather than the Spirit? What change of attitude or habit may be necessary to live in alignment with the Spirit?

THE WORD (NIV)

Romans 8:5-11

Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. 6 The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. 7 The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. 8 Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.

9 You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. 10 But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. 11 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.

Romans 8:12-17

Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. 13 For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

14 For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. 15 The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. 17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

2 Corinthians 10:5

We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.