

Romans

Romans Chapter Eight

Romans 8:5-8

October 3, 2010

This is lesson number 60 in our exposition of the Book of Romans.

The Theme of the Letter

Romans 1:16-17

“For I am not ashamed of **the gospel of Christ**, for it is the **power** of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the **righteousness of God** is **revealed** from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’ ” Romans 1:16-17

“PEACE WITH GOD”

Romans 8:5-8

5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

The thing that I want believers to see in this entire great letter to the church at Rome is how Paul continues to remind believers that our election, calling, justification, sanctification, and finally our glorification is all in Christ.

If our preaching does not magnify and glorify God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, it is not of God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.

We are continuing to look at verses 5-8 of Chapter 8; let me give this very brief summary of verses 1-4.

In verse 1 the Apostle gives the Christian the greatest statement of assurance, i.e., **what is to be believed**, in all of Scripture.

Verse 2 tells us **why the Gospel is to be believed**.

Verse 3 tells us **how atonement for sin is accomplished**.

Verse 4 tells us **to whom it applies; viz. to believers and to believers only**.

Romans

This great assurance applies only to the genuine believer in Jesus Christ. So it was necessary for the Apostle to tell us in verses 5-8 **how we can know** if we are a genuine Christian or not.

This is not a popular subject in our day. The experts in church growth tell us that we are not supposed to preach anything that makes people uncomfortable. If we preach about sin and God forbid if we tell anyone that they have offended God they might be offended and stop coming to church. They will go somewhere else to church where they can have their ears tickled and not feel the least bit convicted of sin.

If our preaching does not convict you in any way it is because you are dead to the truth or we are not preaching the truth. I can tell you that what I have to preach disturbs me and causes me want to continue to make my 'calling and election sure.'

It is not my purpose to cause anyone to be uncomfortable unnecessarily. But if a person is unwilling to examine their life in light of the Word of God they are living a life of denial and most likely they are deceived.

What if you went to a doctor and the doctor discovered that you had cancer but the doctor did not want to upset you so the doctor told you not to be concerned or even failed to tell you the truth of the matter. That doctor is not helping you at all.

Now I know that these kinds of illustrations break down at several levels but what I am saying is that the Word of God is very clear on this subject of saving faith. And we are to examine ourselves by the word of God.

Someone said true Gospel preaching will afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted.

The unbeliever may be a member of the church and hear this kind of message but will not accept its application to himself and will be very frustrated and irritated that the preacher would even discuss it at all.

The believer will listen and realize that it is only by God's grace that he or she has changed from living the life of an unbeliever to living the life of a believer in Jesus Christ. The believer will want to grow in his understanding of the life of faith.

Romans

The hope and expectation of this preacher is that the Holy Spirit will set His love upon the unbeliever and convict him of his sin and guilt and lead him to repentance and belief in the Gospel of the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ.

Without rehearsing the last two lessons on verses 5-8, I will say that the distinction that the Apostle makes between the unbeliever and the believer is that the unbeliever lives his life under the influence of his sinful nature and the believer lives his life under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

The characteristics of the unbeliever:

1. They live out their lives and make life choices under the influence of the flesh or sinful nature. They are not interested in what God's Word has to say about the choices they are considering.

2. They are spiritually dead and cannot discern the things of the Spirit.

3. They are at enmity against God; they hate the God of the Bible.

4. They will not, indeed they cannot, submit to God's law as being holy and just and good. They can only rationalize and excuse their sin.

5. The unbeliever cannot please God.

The characteristics of the believer:

1. They set their mind on the things of the Spirit of God.

2. They value their soul.

3. They have a serious interest in the Word of God.

4. They love their brothers and sisters in Christ.

5. The believer does please God.

But the Apostle tells us that there is a greater difference between the non-Christian and the Christian. Do you see it in verse 6?

For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Romans

The unbeliever has no real peace and the believer is at peace.

Why did the Apostle select peace out of the other evidences of the Spirit?

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control.

Lloyd-Jones says that the reason that Paul selects peace is that peace answers the negatives in verses 7 and 8 and that is why Paul does not state the positive side of each statement in 7 & 8.

E.g.,

6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and **peace**.

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

He does not say the opposite here that the spiritually minded love God or that the spiritually minded submit to the law of God.

Why, because they are at peace with God.

8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

He does not say the opposite here that the spiritually minded do please God.

Why, because they are at peace with God.

The greatest comfort that accompanies justification {not guilty, no condemnation} is peace!

Romans 5:1

Romans

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ...

We are a long time from our exposition of Chapter 14 {if God gives me that much more time} but the same comparison is made in 14: 17. The context of Chapter 14 is between the weak Christian who observes all kinds of special days and regulations about food and drink and the strong Christian who understands that those things are indifferent, or matters of conscience. But the reason that the strong Christian is indifferent is because he has peace. Special days such as Christmas and Easter are not wrong they are just not any more holy than any other day. They are matters of conscience.

Romans 14:17

17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

What is the very first thing that you realized when you knew that God had shown you mercy? You had peace with God.

We sing, “When peace like a river attendeth my way, When sorrows like sea billows roll; Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, ‘It is well, it is well with my soul.’ ”

When I was under deep conviction, before God saved me I was in total desperation and did not want to live any longer as a hypocrite. I begged for God to either save me or send me to hell. God not only saved me but He overwhelmed me with His peace. When I got up off my knees I did not know what the next day might bring but I was at peace that it would be all right.

No longer was I the enemy of God, no longer did I hate God, no longer did I consider His commandments to be an unreasonable restriction on my so-called freedom. I was content, yea glad, for God to be God.

Are you at peace with God?

When God the Holy Spirit begins to convict a man of his sin and guilt that man is not at peace with God; but when that sinner is born again, regenerated by the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit, he not only has new life he has peace.

Romans

The born again man can no longer live according to the flesh or under the influence of his sinful nature. He wants to be changed.

That change is called repentance.

John the Baptist came preaching repentance.

Luke 3:7-9

Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.9 And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

Luke 3:15-17

15 Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not, 16 John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

When Jesus began to preach:

Mark 1:14-15

Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

Repentance means to change. Change the way you think.

Change the way you think about sin.

Change the way you think about yourself.

Change the way you think about God.

When a man is convicted of sin and guilt he agrees with God that he ought to be in hell. But by grace through faith he now knows something about the love of God. How could He love me so?

1 John 3:1

Romans

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called the children of God!...

John 3:16 is more than a poster board to be held up at a football game.

The love of God is revealed to the man who is born again.

1 John 4:7-11

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.⁹ In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

The Christian now knows that the God he hated, the God to whom he was an enemy loves him individually and loves him personally and he has peace! The believer has a correct view of the law of God. Before he was born again he could not freely submit to the law of God.

He entertained the idea that somehow he could obligate God by certain of his religious deeds. If I do this then God MUST do that! He thinks that God is depending on him to do something!

The believer is content to know that God is entirely in control of His creation through His providence and His predestination; and that includes the salvation of spiritually dead sinners.

God's righteous requirement in the law no longer seems unfair.

1 John 5:1-5

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.² By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. ³ For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. ⁴ For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is

Romans

the victory that has overcome the world -- our faith. 5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Now this means more than the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments are the written words of the law that is innate in every soul born into the world, i.e., natural law from Chapter 2.

The Ten Commandments have not been made void says Paul in 3:31, but they must be understood in the context of the New Testament. The Ten Commandments have always been spiritual but the natural man can only understand them in the letter of the law and not in the Spirit.

Take this example from Matthew 18:15-17

"Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' 17 And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.

When our Lord Jesus commands us how to deal with perceived offenses; that is not an optional course of action for the believer, it is how we live under the influence of the Spirit.

Luke 6:46-49

"But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say? 47 Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: 48 He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. 49 But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great."

So the believer does not find God's commandments to be burdensome and he seeks to obey the Lord in every way. The believer seeks the sincere milk of the Word and has a heart's desire to obey God out of reflected love and not out of legalistic duty.

Another aspect of peace is satisfaction.

The man living under the influence of the flesh is never satisfied.

Romans

He wants money, but he never has enough money to be satisfied.

If he is addicted to drugs or alcohol he is never satisfied.

If he is addicted to illicit sex or pornography he is never satisfied.

But the man who is at peace with God is content and he is satisfied.

Those are the negative things about the unbeliever

No godly repentance.

God's commandments are burdensome to him.

He is never satisfied.

In other words: No peace.

But the blessings of peace of the believer come from knowing that he has the truth about himself and about God.

Going back to Lloyd-Jones:

The Christian has life and peace; he rests in the truth.

The true preacher does not seek for truth in the pulpit; he is there because he has found it. 'Can the blind lead the blind?' Of course not, our Lord says; they will 'both fall into the ditch.'

1 Corinthians 2:10-16

10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

Romans

13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.**14** But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.**15** But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.**16** For "who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

And in the context of repentance our Lord Himself told us about revealed truth in Matthew 11:25-30:

At that time Jesus answered and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.²⁶ Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.²⁷ All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.³⁰ For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

A Christian is satisfied to accept God's management {providence} of His creation. The believer is not a fatalist because he knows that God hears his prayers and the believer trusts his heavenly Father.

Philippians 4:4-13

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;**7** and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy -- meditate on these things.**9** The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you. **10** But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity.**11** Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: **12** I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.**13** I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Romans

The Christian is at peace with God and he strives to be at peace with his brothers and sisters in Christ.

The believer lives under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

How do we live under the influence of the Holy Spirit?

The things of the Spirit are those things to which the Spirit always draws attention. Set your minds [make it your business] to learn the things to which the Spirit calls attention to in the Word of God.

We are not **mystics** who claim to have extra-biblical authority. There is no authority for the Christian that is not found in this holy book.

We are not **Gnostics** who claim to have a secret knowledge that is available to only a few select individuals.

All believers will respect and obey God's holy word because the Holy Spirit who dwells in us reveals Christ to us through the Bible.

Are you at peace with God?