

Series through Romans: TRUTH: UNASHAMED, PART III

Sermon Title: Week 3, Life in the Spirit

Principal Scripture: Romans 8:12-13 Date: November 11, 2018

† **Stop it!**

- **MadTV skit. Bob Newhart. Dr. Switzer. Katherine. Fear of being buried alive in a box... 10 words...**
- **We've all tried STOP IT. It doesn't work! Rom 7...**
- **Religion loves the STOP IT approach... take it all the way to threatening wrath/hell... STOP IT OR I'LL..**
- **By the way, fear of hell, fear of punishment has no power to change behavior.**
- **But we try to figure out a way to CHANGE, because...**

† The common desire of every person: we want to **LIVE.**

- **By LIVE, I mean...**
  - **Be free of destructive patterns. Have courage**
  - **Have peace. Joy. Purpose. Meaning. Contentment.**
  - **NOT WORRY. Free of fear, trust, like ourselves**
  - **Be able to CHOOSE TO STOP unhealthy..**
- **How do we do this? How do we actually TRULY experience sustained change-transformation? We try all sorts of ways, but when we strip away all of these temporary measures, AND LOOK AT WHAT SCRIPTURE ACTUALLY TELLS US, AS FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST... the reality is that...**

† Reality! In Christ, we *live* by **FAITH** and by the **SPIRIT.**

**Romans 1:17** For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

**Galatians 5:16** So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

**Galatians 5:22-23** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness and self-control.

**2 Peter 1:3-4** His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. <sup>4</sup>Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

**Romans 7:6** But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.

**Colossians 3:1-2** Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup>Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

- **This is the resounding theme of the New Covenant! Set our minds- fix our eyes upon Christ- for by his spirit Christ has given us everything we need for the ‘godly life’... IN CHRIST we are given the fruit of the spirit, and we live, we walk, BY THE SPIRIT!**
- **Scripture proclaims- one absolutely essential factor by which the believer may experience the LIFE that God has given us... and that is THE SPIRIT.**

† By the Spirit

- **BUT WHAT DOES THIS MEAN! LOOK LIKE!** This is the question we must ask, and pursue **BECAUSE IT IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL THAT Living BY THE SPIRIT is not just a concept we SAY is true, but it is a truth that forms the very foundation of our faith, in our EXPERIENCE.**
- This is what we see... continue in Romans 8. **LAST WEEK, Paul made it clear that the SPIRIT OF GOD, of CHRIST, dwells with in us, that we are in UNION with the Trinity. Now, he says WHY THIS MATTERS**

**Romans 8:12-13** Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation (**there is a necessary result**)— but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. <sup>13</sup> (NASB) for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

- **Flesh: mindset on ourselves, life centered upon ourselves, trying to live out of my own strength and wisdom... “Self life”...**
- **Back in VERSE 9- we are NOT IN the flesh, we are IN the spirit, but we can choose to live ACCORDING to the flesh, result is DEATH. Opposite of life. (ILLUSTRATION... I am 52. That is my reality. I can try to live as if I am NOT 52... result is not good!)**
- **BUT.. if BY THE SPIRIT... put to death- RENDER POWERLESS... deprive my flesh of it’s power and influence... I WILL LIVE. I will EXPERIENCE the life of God in me, through me.**
- **SO... HEAR... deprive my flesh of its influence, and EXPERIENCE LIFE. So.. HOW IS THIS DONE?**
- **BY THE SPIRIT. In other words, SPIRIT DOES IT.**
- **HEAR! In my mind, will, emotions, I have to make the choice, take the step- but my power is the SPIRIT.**
- **SO THE CRITICAL QUESTION... HOW DO I KNOW, LIVE BY, THE SPIRIT.**
- **BECAUSE- we tend to put focus on fixing our problem. God is saying- YES there is effort, energy, focus...but it is first to get to know ME!**
- **Lets talk about this, will continue to unpack as we go through romans... (This is going to become my theme going forward, like, ‘love god, love people)**
- **FIRST BIG THOUGHT... understand difference between what is TRUE and what we FEEL.**
- **As believers, our lives are rooted in UNCHANGING TRUTH, but in life we have CHANGING experiences**

† **Unchanging Truth, changing experience**

- **Life is all over the map! As tend to have this idea that life is basically upward, and we are able to be secure in our knowledge of what will come- we are in control, and life in general is known, stable, and improving. THIS IS HISTORICAL ANOMALY.**
- **“American Dream”. Problem is that LIFE HAPPENS, and we awaken to reality- reality that almost all people, for all history, have known. LIFE IS UNCERTAIN. EMOTIONS ARE NOT TRUSTWORTHY.**
- **Our actual life experience, and importantly, HOW WE FEEL about our life.. CHANGES. Ship on the ocean. (ephesians 4.. like children tossed about by waves and carried about by the wind)**

- **BUT THERE IS A GREATER TRUTH.** This is the unchanging hope of who God is, what he is doing, and WHO WE ARE because he has MADE US HIS.
- An essential part of living **BY THE SPIRIT** is knowing what is true, and **CHOOSING TO BELIEVE IT**, even when we don't feel like it.
- God says "You are free from sin, you are precious, you are mine, whole, dearly loved... we say "But I don't FEEL LIKE THAT!" I know, but walk with me, and one step at a time, I'll show you. **THIS LEADS TO.... HUNTING ANALOGY!**

#### † Range time

- Elk hunt... all of a sudden, there's the animal. If you are a good hunter, you know what to do.. second nature kicks in, your rifle does the work... **HOW DO YOU GET TO THIS? LOTS of RANGE TIME**
- At the range.. things go slow. You learn your rifle. You adjust your thinking. You practice. Adjust. Enjoy the fellowship of others doing the same thing... you 'become one' with your rifle
- **PICK YOUR ILLUSTRATION...** in our relationship with Christ, what does our **RANGE TIME** look like?
- You see... we go through life like an unprepared hunter... **CRISIS! OPPORTUNITY! SOMETHING CHANGED...** God, God, God... where are you, God, do something, God, help me... but at times we don't even recognize Gods presence, his hand, because we haven't learned to recognize him. We haven't done the range time, we haven't learned to walk by faith.
- To use Ephesians 4 again, we haven't **MATURED**, we haven't grown, and we are tossed about...
- **SO.. what does our 'range time'... ongoing heartbeat of LIFE IN THE SPIRIT look like?**
- **NOT A FORMULA.** Will entail choices and actions, but it's not just a set of actions
- **NOT BASED ON FEELINGS...** although living in the spirit will, at times, be quite emotional.
- **DIFFERENT FOR EACH**, yet there will be common patterns for us all, that we see in scripture
- **INTENTIONAL...** although as we grow, it becomes second nature

#### † Life in the Spirit

- **PRAYER.** Just pray.
  - Not just asking God to do things. Just together. Personal Worship. **GRATITUDE**
  - Honest, here is where I am. Here's my struggle. Lord, I give this to you, by your spirit, lead me
  - God... I **SURRENDER.**
  - Lord, give me your eyes- **HUGE... HONESTY TO SEE WHAT IS GOING ON IN MY HEART**

**Psalm 139...** Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; <sup>24</sup> And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.
- **PRAYER: LORD, GET ME PAST MYSELF!**
- **SCRIPTURE.** Sometimes more guided study... or, as you go, allowing God to just show you the beauty...

- **Negative influences... noise... turn them down. GUARD YOUR HEART... What do we put into our minds? Not legalism and fear, but wisdom**
- **Fellowship of believers. The spirit lives in community. Don't isolate. Seek healthy people.**
- **LISTEN. Ask, let spirit to show you- reveal- what we need to hear, to learn. PROBLEM is that we are seekers, but we are seeking an excuse to justify our action, why we are trapped where we are. Rather than listening for conviction, we want God to validate our immaturity. The Spirit won't do this!**
- **From scripture, recognize the work of the Spirit.**
  - **Fruit. Humility. Love people. Servants. Generous.**
- **HAVE A HEART TO RESPOND.**
- **MANY WAYS... BUT IT WILL BE CONSISTENT. ONGOING. WE ARE BRIDE OF CHRIST... we are in a relationship.**
- **CLOSE. New iphone app, 'screen time'. This week, look at your "Spirit time. God time". Not a formula, but it IS a relationship, and relationships grow through choices, actions, and presence. GOD is present to you, may we desire to be present to him**