

Apply The Word

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EIGHT ON VIII
GOSPEL HOPE from ROMANS 8

Message Info

Title:

Life in the Spirit

Speaker:

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Date:

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Scriptures:

Romans 8:2-8

Theme: When we live in the power of the Spirit we fulfill the law.

Introduction: Context always affects meaning, and one of the ways that we see this is in how we understand the phrase, “the power of the Spirit.” The Pentecostal/Charismatic movement would generally understand that phrase to refer to something of supernatural and spectacular impact. But in today’s text, Paul is emphasizing a different aspect of the Spirit’s powerful work in the life of the Christian.

This text offers 2 ways to live in the knowledge of the Spirit’s power:

1. The law of the Spirit of life (2-4)

We have law because of who God is and how he works in the world. God is just, and all of his ways are just. So, the law reflects his justice and his good design in his world. In this way, the law points beyond itself to God himself.

When someone violates the law (like drunk driving), we are not just concerned about a technical violation. We feel the *immorality* of the offense—it is wrong, selfish, unjust, and rebellious.

Paul also discusses the law in 3 senses: a) the law of sin and death—meaning, the power and authority of sin in our lives; b) the law of the Spirit—meaning, the power and authority of the Spirit in our lives; and c) the law—meaning, the Mosaic law. When we trusted in Jesus, the law of the Spirit (b) overcame the law of sin and death (a). We have been liberated from its power.

The real power in the life of the Christian thus comes by the Spirit, who frees us to obey God. The Law (c) could not do this—it is powerless to produce the heart change that leads to obedience.

2. Life in the Spirit vs death in the flesh (5-8)

There are only 2 options according to the biblical description: live according to the flesh or to the Spirit.

Flesh has a range of meanings in the Bible: a) sinful passions, b) humanity in general, c) worldliness. In this passage it is the latter.

Paul is contrasting living for God and his will vs. living for the world and its priorities. Note, we are not given a list of flesh v. Spirit things here, because Paul’s focus is on the heart. Gal 5:19-24 does give a list; but even that is only illustrative.

In Christ, by the Spirit, the flesh is put to death and we have been freed to live in obedience to our Father.

Questions:

1. Are you pursuing growth in obeying God? If so, in what ways?
2. How does the gospel work to produce in us growing obedience?
3. How do you most struggle to obey the Lord?