*DAILY DEVOTIONAL*

September 17 - 22

*The Holy Spirit*

**Monday, September 17 Romans 8:1-4**

“No condemnation through the power of the Spirit”

There are many benefits to belong to Christ Jesus, but surely none is more important than receiving our pardon from sin. All of us have sinned, which means that all of us are guilty of breaking God’s law. That guilt leads to the condemnation of being separated from God. Should we die in our condemnation, our separation will be eternal. But, says Paul, those who belong to Christ are no longer condemned, for the sin which led to our condemnation has been forgiven through his death on the cross.

In verse 2 Paul explains why we need no longer worry about condemnation. It is because of the “power of the life-giving Spirit.” Paul envisions sin as a kind of power which leads to death (that is, eternal separation from God). But, says Paul, the Spirit is a greater power. The power of sin (which leads to death) has been overcome by the power of the Holy Spirit (which gives life). Paul goes on in verses 3 and 4 to show that this power of the life-giving Spirit is released through Jesus Christ’s death on the cross.

*Free in Christ by the Spirit’s power, I am no longer condemned for my sin. Amen.*

**Tuesday, September 18 Romans 8:5-8**

“The mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace”

Paul is drawing a contrast between two kinds of life. There is the life which is dominated by sinful human nature, whose focus and centre is self, whose only law is its own desires, which takes what it likes when it likes. In different people that kind of life will be differently described. It may be passion-controlled, or lust-controlled, or pride-controlled, or ambition-controlled. Its characteristic is its absorption in the things that human nature without Christ sets its heart upon.

The other kind of life is the life dominated by the Holy Spirit. Analogous to how we live in the air, the person dominated by the Spirit lives in the Spirit, never separated from him. Analogous to how we breathe in the air and the air fills us, so the Spirit fills us. Our mind is no longer our own; in the Spirit we now have the mind of Christ. Our desires are no longer our own; because of the Spirit we now fulfill the will of Christ.

*Holy Spirit of God, I submit all I am, mind and body, to your control. My desire is to “breathe you in” daily and thereby experience your life and your peace. Amen.*

**Wednesday, September 19 Romans 8:9-11**

“God will give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit”

The Spirit-controlled life is daily coming nearer heaven even while still on earth. It is a life which is such a steady progress toward God that the final transition of death is only a natural and inevitable stage on the way.

The reality is that we all must die because we are all involved in the human situation. Sin came into this world and with sin came death, the consequence of sin. Inevitably, therefore, all of us must die; but the one who is Spirit-controlled and whose heart is Christ-occupied, dies only to rise again.

Paul’s basic thought is that every Christian has been connected to Christ by the Holy Spirit; our life is “in Christ.” Christ died - we will die. Christ rose again - we will rise again. The Spirit-controlled person is on the way to life; death is but a foreseeable reality that has to be passed through on the way.

*Heavenly Father, you raised your Son from the dead. I praise you that through your Holy Spirit and because of your Son, you will also raise me from the dead. Amen.*

*DAILY DEVOTIONAL*

September 17 – 22

*The Holy Spirit*

**Thursday, September 20 Romans 8:12-17**

“The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are God’s children”

It is quite clear that Paul is thinking of the life of the believer in terms of a divine family relationship. As is common with all families, life in the family of God involves privileges as well as responsibilities. To be a child of God, we must be willing to be “led by the Spirit of God” (verse 14). This is both an obligation on the part of the child and evidence of the child’s relationship to the Father.

The person who claims to be a child of God but lives in careless indifference to the Spirit or in open defiance of the Spirit is at best a living contradiction and at worst a spiritual imposter. To be “led by the Spirit” is to come under his control and to be alert to his promptings as our human spirit interacts with the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit’s most important prompting of my human spirit is to assure me that I am, indeed, a child of God, and to teach me all that it means for me to be in such a wondrous relationship.

*Reassuring Holy Spirit, I praise you for connecting deeply with my human spirit and giving me a joyful sense of well-being. I rejoice that I may call God “Papa.” Amen.*

**Friday, September 21 Romans 8:18-25**

“Although having the Holy Spirit, we Christians groan”

Christian groaning should not be confused with childish moaning and selfish grumbling - something which Paul clearly rejects by his positive attitude to his own suffering which he welcomes as a sign of his connection to Christ who suffered. Rather, Christian groaning is the expression of a deep desire, a heartfelt longing for God to finally correct all that is wrong in the world.

The Christian’s groaning is related to his new insight into humanity’s sinfulness - his own as well as that of others. It is as much a sorrowing after what our fellow human beings have lost in terms of God’s blessing as a sorrowing from a sense of personal loss that comes from the painful awareness of our own limitations. Looking forward to the time we will be released from all that hinders our spiritual life with God, we groan in anticipation of our future glory.

*Dear God, by your Holy Spirit living in me, you give me a foretaste of what life with you will be like in eternity. As I seek to live faithfully for you in this life, I groan in anticipation of what it will be like when sin no longer hinders me. Amen.*

**Saturday, September 22 Romans 8:26-30**

“The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness”

These verses form one of the most important passages on prayer in the whole New Testament. Paul says that we can’t always be sure what God wants us to pray for, but the prayers we would offer if we knew are offered for us by the Holy Spirit who lives in us and who knows the mind of God. One scholar put it this way: “Prayer is the divine in us appealing to the divine above us.”

We don’t always know what to pray for because we cannot foresee the future. Consequently, we may pray to be saved from things which are for our good, and we may pray to receive things which would be to our ultimate harm. In any given situation we do not know what is best for us. We are often in the position of a child who wants something which would end up hurting him; and God is often in the position of a parent who has to refuse his child’s request, because the parent knows what is good for the child far better than the child himself.

*Helping Holy Spirit, I praise you for taking my prayers, which express my desires but lack information, and bringing them before my heavenly Father in such a way that they are in harmony with his good and perfect will for me. Amen.*