

BRIEF PERSPECTIVE ON SPIRIT LIFE

The exhortation to live our lives in the Spirit of God is beautifully set in context by the Book of Romans. On the Book of Romans, Martin Luther wrote 'this Epistle ..is the very purest Gospel and is worthy not only that every Christian should know it word for word, by heart, but occupy himself with it every day, as the daily bread of the soul.'

I encourage you to read the Book of Romans using the mini overview, before embarking on this week's study in Romans 8.

The mini overview of the Book of Romans is this:

God's salvation through Jesus Christ; salvation by grace alone; received through faith in Jesus Christ and effected by the Spirit; the failure of the Law and success of the Spirit in producing true righteousness; the need to be transformed in mind (by the Spirit) so as to live in unity as God's people in the present.

(adapted from 'How to Read the Bible book by book' by Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart)

While Romans was written in the style of a theological treatise, the application of the spiritual principles is anything but.

One of the imperative principles is living in the Spirit.

Go ahead, do the study in the Word of God and share what the Spirit is revealing to you.

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WARMING UP

1. What are some examples of things unseen by the naked eyes but are real?
2. Share with one another your understanding and experience of the Holy Spirit.

INTO THE PASSAGES

Read Romans 1:15-17, 3:22 - Setting the context for life in the Spirit

3. What is the reason behind Paul's bold declaration that he is not ashamed of the gospel? How can we learn from Paul's example?
4. What is the link between salvation and righteousness? How do we 'obtain' this righteousness?

Read Romans 8:1-17- Life in the Spirit

5. Paul contrasted life in the Spirit to life in the flesh. Why do some people choose life in the Spirit and why do some choose life in the flesh?
6. Paul used the subordinating conjunction 'if' frequently. Why?
7. What does the Spirit of God tells us about our identity? Do our actions reflect our identity?

MOVING FORWARD

All of us need a fresh reminder of who the Holy Spirit is in our lives.

When we confess our faith in Jesus Christ, the righteousness of Jesus was imputed upon us. We are saved (our salvation) on the basis of Jesus righteousness.

It doesn't stop there. The Holy Spirit was given to every believer to indwell, empowering them to live out the righteous lives. This righteous living is evident when there is renewal of the minds of the believers (the inward work of the Spirit), resulting in transformation of the character (outward expression).

Determine to live by the Spirit of God in 2013 because it is the only way to live.

LIFE TOGETHER

God has laid this theme of *Life Alive* in our hearts. May it go deeper than a cognitive acceptance but a true spiritual awakening that the Spirit of God desire to work powerfully in the lives of every members of BCEC.

Hear what the Spirit of God is saying to us during Sunday sermon, during small group bible study and in your personal quiet times with God.

Avail ourselves to the help of the Holy Spirit in our private and corporate prayer lives.

Ask for His convicting work in the lives of our loved ones, our colleagues, our neighbours and friends who have yet to know Jesus.

In other words, live our lives wholly in the Spirit

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These notes are primarily for the Into the Passage portion, and are to be used just as guidelines or commentary notes. Most of them are my own thoughts, so take that with a grain of salt. Let the Word of God lead you to truth, not these notes.

INTO THE PASSAGES

Read Romans 1:15-17, 3:22 - Setting the context for life in the Spirit

3. What is the reason behind Paul's bold declaration that he is not ashamed of the gospel? How can we learn from Paul's example?

Paul had a life changing encounter with the living Christ on the road to Damascus. It was evident from his epistles and the Book of Acts that Paul lived his life by the Spirit of God and his obedience to the leading of the Spirit in his life (example Acts 13:4, 9, 16:7), resulting in the transformation of his life (something that were attested by the other apostles).

4. What is the link between salvation and righteousness? How do we 'obtain' this righteousness?

We are saved (salvation) on the basis of our righteousness. Our righteousness is conferred to us by faith in Jesus and our confession is both an event and a process. It is an event because there will be a first time when all believers confessed with their mouth and believed with their hearts. It is a process because this righteousness live must be lived out to 'prove' that our faith is genuine. Thankfully, the Spirit of God is given every believer to guide him/her to live.

Read Romans 8:1-17- Life through the Spirit

5. Paul contrasted life in the Spirit to life in the flesh. Why do some people choose life in the Spirit and why do some choose life in the flesh?

Living in the Spirit presupposes submission to the Spirit of God. Before life in the spirit can begin, there must be death of self. Many live unyielded life and enjoy sinful pleasures. There is no interest to read the Word of God and no desire to pray in such people. Though people may be occasionally moved by the Spirit of God, they lack

6. Paul used the subordinating conjunction 'if' frequently. Why?

Not everyone who attends church truly loves Jesus or know the implications of salvation. Paul's epistles were written to the churches but contained stern warning. One such warning is from Phil 3:18 'For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ'.

The Roman church was not founded by Paul and he may not have known them well enough, which could suggest the elaboration by his letter on the foundations of the gospel.

7. What does the Spirit of God tells us about our identity? Do our actions reflect our identity?

It is no coincidence that one of the works of the Holy Spirit is to affirm our identity as sons of God. When Jesus' righteousness was imputed on us, we became who we are - we are sons of God. The principle is simple, if we are sons of God by faith, we must live like sons of God by faith. Some are of the opinion that the confession of our faith (our justification & salvation experience) is separate from the sanctification (righteousness effected by the Spirit). My personal understanding of scripture and persuasion is that sanctification validate our justification and salvation experience (save for the thief on the cross who having confessed his faith in Jesus died on the cross not long after & other exceptional circumstances).