

Witness of the Spirit

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill's sermon emphasizes the transformative power of the Holy Spirit and the assurance of no condemnation for believers in Christ as articulated in Romans 8.

Duration: 1:18:33

Scripture: Romans 7:24

Topics: "Witness Of The Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher tells a story about a wealthy boy who is accused of being snobbish by his classmates. The boy confronts his father about the accusation and learns that his father is not his biological father. The preacher then discusses how the teachings of the Bible go against the standards and values of the world. He emphasizes the importance of having the witness of the Holy Spirit in our lives and the freedom from condemnation that comes from following God's word. The preacher also expresses concern about the current state of society, including collapsing morality and spirituality, and urges listeners to examine their hearts for any bitterness or grudges.

Transcript

The epistle of Paul to the Romans and the 8th chapter. Romans and chapter 8. You may or may not remember that, I know you weren't living then, 1772 a man by the name of Samuel Taylor Coleridge was born. He became one of the outstanding critics of the day, later, not when he was born, but later.

And he wrote a lot of things. One thing that is outstanding in his writings was a thing called the Ancient Mariner. And it was acclaimed and disclaimed.

He was born in when? 1772, died in 1834. But he said this epistle of Paul to the Romans, in his opinion of course, one man's opinion isn't everything, he said this is the most sublime thing that was ever written, this amazing epistle. When I first came to America, my first trip in 1950, there was a book critic by the name of Wilbur Smith.

A very outstanding, almost a genius, he had a private library of 25,000 books. I think I'd like that number too. Well he said if this is the most sublime book that has ever been written, the epistle to the Romans that is, the 8th chapter is the very peak of all the revelation.

And it is the most sublime part of the most sublime book. I think it was in the 1800s there was a hymn written, Eternal Light, Eternal Light, how pure the soul must be. There's a phrase in that hymn that always sticks with me.

The writer speaks of the Holy Spirit's energies, the Holy Spirit's energy. It was he who moved over chaos in the beginning, you remember, and out of it brought cosmos or order. It was he who moved over men, some that climbed, one climbed the sycamore tree.

Amos was a herdsman. David was a king. These strange characters, different characters were all inspired by the Holy Spirit of God.

In these days when there's some disregard for the Old Testament, I want to remind you again that all, that's A-L-L, scripture is given by inspiration of God. And even in this day it's profitable to us. The energy of the Holy Ghost breathes all through Romans as far as I'm concerned.

In fact there are 26 references to the Holy Spirit in the epistle of Paul to the Romans. And if I remember 18 of them are in this very chapter. I reminded you before that Romans 7 is a funeral march.

Romans 8 is a wedding march. I think if Paul had known it after he wrote Romans 7 he would have sung, Out of my bondage, sorrow and night, Jesus I come. That's a great hymn.

Out of my sickness into thy health, out of my poverty into thy wealth, out of my sin and into thyself, Jesus I come. God had to continually remind the children of Israel, Remember thou wast a bondsman. Never forget or be ashamed of your birthplace.

I don't care if you're born in a gutter. I don't care if you're born of a harlot. You have life.

Can't be made as much as science tries. It can destroy it. In fact it's making an oven now to roast us all in it.

Can't just decide what temperature but we're trying to beat the Russians at it. But life is the most precious thing. Romans 7, full of darkness and death.

I'll say this and repent afterwards. I sometimes think that many of the modern preachers are devil's advocates. I heard the greatest holiness preacher, greatest expositor in the world, 50, 60 years ago, 50 years ago.

And he gave a classic sermon on holiness and then he finished and said, Now look, I'm not preaching sinless perfection. But you know in our day we're more afraid of holiness than we are of sinfulness. That's a great weakness of the church today.

He finished up by saying, but remember with all his amazing comprehension of God, the Apostle Paul finished up saying, Oh wretched man, that's a lie from hell. He did not finish there. There happens to be another chapter after Romans 7 and it's called Romans 8. To me the Apostle Paul is the best example of his own theology.

Every preacher should be that. A man with an experience, this is not mine, it's good enough to be mine, but it isn't mine. A man with an experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument.

I had to jump out of a burning hotel in Chicago in 1951. You'll be amazed at the advice I got afterwards, how I should have done it. I should have jumped and tipped head over heels coming down.

All the counsel I got after I'd gone through that horrible experience. I said, I suppose I should have sat down and said, Hey, fire department, wait, I'm drawing a plan now to get out of this place. I happen to have some experience, I don't want to repeat it, I don't want to tell you about it either.

But you see, this man's life breathes everything he preached. He dares to say what few men dare to say. What things ye, as followers of readers of my testimony, what things you have seen and heard in me doing, the God of peace be with you.

Ask your preacher on Sunday, dare he say that? Dare he say to you, go where I go, read what I read, do what I read? Follow in my footprints, and when you get to the literacy, I'll be accountable for the way you've trod, because you've followed me. You know, when you read this chapter, first of all, this eighth chapter, there's nothing tremendously exciting about it, I think. It doesn't give you any goose lumps, or whatever you want to call, turkey pimples, or anything else.

It seems very plain at first. But, Dr. Sangster of Westminster, a very marvelous man, used to say, Brother Ravner, we need to be close readers of the New Testament. He didn't mean read it closely like this, you know.

He meant, get down and don't skip it, don't get through it quickly, meditate on it, it's a lost art. The psalmist says, I will meditate in thy precepts. Meditation, contemplation, brings revelation.

Look how he begins. Yes, he's finished there, verse 24 of the previous chapter, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this death? The law can't do it. But he answers in the next verse, I thank God through Jesus Christ my Lord.

With my mind I serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin. What does he mean? He's sinning? No, he says, my body, this body of mine, is going to serve the law of sin, which is death. If man hadn't of sin, there would have been no death.

But he says, this body most likely will serve the law of death. Of sin and of death. He says, there is therefore now no condemnation.

The key verse, let me jump to it. It's down here in two verses, verse 15 and verse 16. Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Father.

That's what it really is. Father, Father. That the eternal God who sits on a throne, the high and lofty one who inhabited eternity, is my Father.

We reminded ourselves of this last week. Abraham never called him Father. Nor did Isaiah.

Nor did the outstanding prophets of the Old Testament. But we are permitted by the grace and mercy of God, because we being God was contracted to a span, an incomprehensibly made man. The heavens of heavens cannot contain him, and yet he's packed into the womb of a virgin.

How do you explain it? You can't. Any more than you can explain how eternal life was put to death on the cross. There is therefore now no condemnation.

Let me go back, I'm sorry. Verse 15. Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again, but the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father, or Father, Father.

The spirit itself. That's a terrible translation. The spirit isn't it, it's him.

He's a person. And I remind you again that the Trinity is not composed in this way. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Spirit is not, N.O.T., a junior partner in the Godhead. He's equal with the Father, equal with the Son. Every mass... Let me say this.

The Holy Spirit is totally incapable of doing anything small. You say, but, well, my salvation wasn't dramatic. I've never been a prostitute.

I've never been a thief. Come on. It took the mercy of God, the blood of Christ, and the power of the Holy Ghost to redeem you, and regenerate you.

You're the product of the triune God. It didn't happen just because you knelt down and said, I'm a lousy rotten sinner and I deserve hell. No, no, no.

Agencies have been working before ever you could say that. It used to be, years ago... Yes, years ago. Years ago, preachers used to preach about prevenient grace.

Do you know what that means? It means all the times God interfered in your life when you were ready to slip into hell, and he rescued you like that. When you're going to do a somersault into destruction, and there came an unseen hand and an unseen power and restrained you. It might have been called fear.

It might have been some other thing. But prevenient grace was there. You did not make the first move to God.

He made the first move to you. The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit. Notice that.

You might say to me, did you see Sonny James in the meeting? I say, yeah. No, I didn't. I saw the shell he lives in.

Nobody's ever seen him, not even his wife. Which may be good, but anyhow. All I've seen is the house in which you live.

You are a spirit. God is a spirit. And as an old hymn says, spirit to spirit thou dost speak.

You've not received the spirit of bondage. The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, not our emotions, not our thinking, not our intellect. I am a spirit capable only of being touched by God on the level of the Spirit.

You can put my body to death. You can't put my spirit to death. The Spirit beareth witness.

How does he beareth witness? Well, this first verse says, there is therefore now no condemnation. Oh, if you were Methodist, I'd have you sing that great old hymn of Charles Wesley's, And can it be that I should go? How many of you know that? Wonderful. What a pity it isn't in our book.

These Baptists are only 200 years behind. They'll catch up some of these days. Don't frown on me now.

Because I've got the advantage, I can point you out, see. But that's when Wesley wrote that. And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Saviour's blood? Died he for me who caused his pain? For me who him to death pursued? Amazing love, how can it be that thou, my God, shouldst die for me? The second standard says, no condemnation though I dread.

You see, I never have joy bows or much excitement in it. Well, that's not the point. I remember slipping into a meeting after I preached at a meeting in Ireland.

I went in, and as I went in, the schoolmaster of the district, very fine Christian was there, and he waved, I said, Hi. When the altar call was given, his daughter, a very bright 15-year-old, rosy-cheeked, blue-eyed Irish girl, went down to the altar. He said, Would you please help my daughter when she comes back? I will if I can.

She went up to the altar last week when this man called. Oh, so when she came up, I said, Come on, let's go here. Your daddy wants me to talk with you.

What happened tonight? Tell me this. What happened last week? You went up to the altar last week. Why? I was tormented with guilt.

I was weighed down with condemnation. I was haunted with memories. What happened? Well, I went to the front.

They told me what to do. What happened? Nothing. I got up in the morning.

I was just the same. Felt my guilt. First I disappointed God.

She went down the list again. And then I said, What happened tonight? She said, Well, I just went up to the front and I said the same thing again. What happened? Nothing.

Are you sure? Well, I don't feel any excitement. We used to sing a hymn, You shall have the joy bells ringing in your heart. No joy bells ringing in my heart, she said.

But that's not the point. What's the point? You said that when you went up to that altar last week and this week, you were bored down with condemnation and guilt and haunted with memories, afraid of exposure, what your daddy and mummy would think. Did you really pray sincerely, God be merciful to me, a sinner? Did you really say, I believe Jesus died for my sins, even mine, as John Wesley said? He prayed that at a quarter to nine on the 24th of May, 1738.

And he said, I believe at that moment, self-righteous man, brilliant scholar, impeccable morality. I believe at that moment, I passed from death unto life. His brother too had a colossal intellect.

His brother too was an outstanding teacher. And he wrote this verse. Remember, he has no hideous crime record.

He never polluted some woman's life. He never stole. He was impeccable in his morality.

But he wrote this lovely verse again. In the same hymn, Man, can it be that I should gain? And he says, No condemnation is a second stanza. And then he says, Long, long, my imprisoned spirit lay fast bound in sin.

And here's a man, you can put your finger on him. You couldn't fault him in anything in his life. He was a perfect scholar, a perfect gentleman, a man of unclouded revelation of God as far as he knew.

But there came a moment when he said, Long, my imprisoned spirit lay fast bound in sin and nature's night. Thine eye diffused a quickening ray. I woke, the dungeon flamed with light.

My chains fell off. What chains? Not chains of depravity in the sense we think. The chains of fear.

The chains of false religion. The chains of false teaching. I said to that girl, Well, just wait a minute.

Please don't run away. You said last week that you felt condemnation lashing you, conscience was burning in you, fear was on you. Yeah, I felt as big a criminal as anybody on God's earth.

Do you feel it now? A little, face it. No. Mr. Regner, I don't feel guilty.

I don't feel lashed with guilt. I don't feel a burden crushing me. Well, you've got the witness of the spirit.

Why? Because if he doesn't witness with condemnation, he witnesses with joy. He witnesses with peace. You don't need much witness of the spirit if your bell's battling in your ear all day, do you? But sometimes when the enemy comes, but you know there deep down in your heart that there is no condemnation.

No condemnation, now I dread. Look at verse 34. I like the who... Excuse me.

I thought you were coughing for me there. Okay. 9 verse 33.

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, who is even at the right hand of God the Father, making intercession. Verse 35.

Who shall separate us from... It's as though he says, Come on, who? Come on, where are you? Come on, bring your condemnation. No condemnation, now I dread. Why not? Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died.

Can anybody contest, whether they're men or demons or theologians, can you contest the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ? It is Christ that died, who is at the right hand of the Father, making intercession or supplication. Can anybody contest his supplication? He's at the right hand of God. Can anybody contest his sovereignty? He has broken the power of sin.

Nobody can contest him. He made one perfect offering once at the end of the age, when billions of sins were on him. I tried to preach a couple of weeks ago about the contrast between the Christ on the back of a donkey going down the streets of Jerusalem with two or three thousand people scorning, ridiculing.

No doubt the Romans used to see an emperor go down the road with his slaves or his captives chained to the wheel of his... Here's a man on a donkey. Good night. Is he starting a kingdom? The church has made a lot of that on Palm Sunday.

But we've made very little of the man on the donkey when he comes on a white horse charging through the skies. When without saying a word he faces two hundred million people, he has no sword in his right hand because he has seven stars. And yet what is in the ninth of Revelation, right after the marriage supper you get the bloodiest battle that's ever been, the battle of Armageddon.

Blood is going to flow. It's from the ground up to the bridles of the horses and it's two hundred miles in length. You talk about a holocaust.

That's a super, super, super holocaust. Jesus Christ with authority and power. We've lost sight of that.

Do you know why we're not impressing the world? Because our God is too small and the church is too paralyzed. They're not concerned to go to art galleries and see what Rubens or Raphael or somebody else painted three centuries ago and now they'll pit yourself for ten million dollars. How can you have a dead service if a living Christ is in it? Come on! I get angry when young people say our church is about as exciting as a Tupperware party.

Well, join Amway. Here he is, the Christ of God. His substitution cannot be contested.

His supplication cannot be contested. His sovereignty cannot be contested. Isaac wrote among his great hymns, wrote one, Jesus shall reign wherever the sun doth its successive journeys run.

His kingdom stretch from shore to shore till moon shall wax and wane no more. Blessings abound where'er he reigns the prisoner leaps to lose his chains the weary find eternal rest and all the sons of want are blessed. Where he displays his healing power death and the curse are known no more.

In him the tribes of Adam bore small blessings and their fathers were... You know, there are people who've gone to graves today never heard the name of Jesus Christ two thousand years after he was here on earth. I'm haunted by the five... almost five billion at least in excess of four billion people that never heard the name of Jesus yet. They're most likely to hear the name of rock and roll stars and hear the name of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 8 again, verse 1 There is therefore now no condemnation. And not one of you can even squeak a hallelujah for that. What a miserable crowd.

Hmm? When we went to the Methodist church I used to love to watch an old man wasn't too old sitting across here across the aisle a big hefty guy he had a very great job he was a garbage collector but you know what he'd been rescued from the verge of hell and I felt sorry when we had a strange preacher and they sang and can it be because he was in for trouble. As soon as they stopped singing the old boy there would raise a hand it looked as big as a shovel to me and he put his hand up like this and he'd bawl out about ten keys out of order Long my imprisoned spirit lay fast bound in sin and nature's night Thine eye diffused a quickening ray I walked the dungeon's great flame and he'd get those big hands Oh boy, like an earthquake. I got scared when he got there.

My chains fell off. My heart was free I rose and I went forth and I followed him and he did. You know we think we haven't been saved from much we didn't have a rotten record a rotten past.

Brother, if you knew how many hearts beat your way away from eternity when he intercepted you on the road to destruction it may take eternity to open our eyes. There is therefore no condemnation for those of us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. That's why it says in verse 15 you've not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear but we have received the spirit of adoption.

How many of you tonight are adopted? I don't mean spiritually. Thank you. Oh, I got some information there.

I mean adopted. There's been a row in England this week over a princess who was discovered now she's in the royal family she's been adopted her parents were criminals in the German SS army or something and boy is she embarrassed she's found out she was adopted. We have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry and we were outside the covenant of God but now we can cry Abba Father because he's brought us in.

We have some schools in England they're called public schools one of them is called Eaton at Eaton you have to get your child's it's only a boy's school of course pardon me but the day your child is born you have to register that child to go to that school it's a school for royalty mostly princes, rich people those private schools are called public schools I don't know why any more than when you finish a school period you call it the commencement how in the world can it be commencement when it's the end of the thing tell me after but this public school this little boy went to a public school he always had more money than anybody else they used to take big boxes we called them tuck boxes filled with candy and fruits and all kinds of stuff this little fellow always had enough that when other boys would run out he'd say here, here, here, here give them a quarter give them an apple give them candy one day a little boy came up to him and says listen you're snobbish just because your daddy owns a mill and he owns half of the town and a chauffeur drives you to school in a Rolls Royce you know better than we are I've got something to tell you too the man you call daddy isn't your daddy you say that again I give you a bloody nose he won't alter it he's not your daddy when he got home he dashed straight out of the car went into his daddy's library daddy says come son you're home for Christmas do you know what I've got for you?

I've got you the pony you wanted and I've got what's wrong? he said look at me straight are you my daddy? what? are you my father? when the boy got back to school the other little urchin was there to jump on him and he said did you ask your daddy? yeah well is he your father? no no he's not you're laughing when I told you you said you'd give me a bloody nose what are you laughing about? well he said he took me to the window of the library and he showed me he said you see that town over there I own about three quarters of it you know the big castle that you go to in summer? well that belongs to me too and that yacht that we sail on that belongs to me too and not only that but I've got millions and millions of pounds in the bank I've got thousands of acres of land I am one of the richest men outside of the royal family you're not my daddy? no what happened? one day when the night when the bombers came to Liverpool your parents were killed and it's literally true they used to go around with trucks or vans after the air raids and pick up children that were terrified and bleeding and wounded and they didn't know who they belonged to and the kids didn't know very often anyhow he said we went to they took me to a big home for boys one day my daddy and mummy he my foster daddy if you want they went to that place and said we want a boy and the matron said well we have 500 to choose from he said then they reduced it to 15 then they reduced it to 5 and my daddy said let's take 5 we can afford them my mother said who can manage them? so they decided not to have anybody but me they chose me my daddy said all that I've told you is all yours I've changed your name I've changed your station in life I've given you more than you could conceive as a little boy and you tell your friend this when you go back to school but what else did he say? he told me to tell you that when they wanted a boy they had 500 to choose from but when you were born your folks had to have you whether they wanted you or not do you think I'm going to be worried what this world says about my simple trusting of a Galilean merchant who died for my sins and nobody's sure about it listen I've passed from death unto life he's changed my name he's changed my destiny he's got a mansion laid up for me he's got eternal life laid up for me he's got the most glorious company the world could ever dream of I'm going to be the marriage supper of the lamb and you know what else?

I'll have to change my sex I'm going to be part of the bride but there's no sex in soul there's no sex in soul listen don't waste your sympathy I'm the child of a king I'm belong to a royal priesthood and a holy nation I can call the maker of right now my dear street wife's garden is gorgeous I said to her tonight darling you've done a great job the roses are gorgeous they look so wonderful and we have a beautiful plant spread out like this not quite like that but anyway spread out it's called bougainvillea there's a lot of it grows over in the Bahamas glorious colors red and bluish tangerine white magnificent all that when I see it I think of a word of Isaac Watts when he said he made the stars those heavenly flames he counts their numbers calls their names his wisdom's vast and knows no

bounds he put the color in all of them he shaped all of them and that mighty God the everlasting father the prince of peace is my God I can talk with him on an eye to eye one to one level when I want in my closet I can turn back the pages of history and all I can say when I turn them back is great is thy faithfulness to individuals to colonies of people to nations of people great is thy faithfulness the spirit bears witness not always with joy bells but with peace and boy I need peace more than I need joy bells it's the most elusive thing in the world in our last hundred years there have been 1800 peace pacts between the nations and we're further from peace now than we were when we started why? there's no answer Jean-Paul Sartre the great French critic says this the present generation

thank you the present generation of people he says we've come to an impasse for the nations of the world at this given moment of time that brilliant philosopher says there's no way out well there isn't why did we wake up to that long ago? it's a problem nobody can solve can God solve it? no he can't he has solved it we've got every answer we need in the Sermon on the Mount because the one basic problem that humanity has is we can't get on with each other it's a problem of human relationships man and wife children and parents churches fellowships all except last days but anyhow blessed are the peacemakers now it's blessed are the pacemakers blessed are the meek we think it's blessed are the weak meekness is the strongest thing Jesus is the only person ever tried to found a kingdom on

meekness his first call to men was come unto me for I am meek the main part of his message the Sermon on the Mount is meekness Paul writes about the gentleness and meekness of Jesus Christ but gentleness today means softness and meekness means weakness but meekness Jesus was the meekest man that ever lived but twice he cleansed the temple wouldn't you have gone in a temple the second time after you cleaned it out once and raised everybody's madness against you but he did it that's why when he was on his way to what we call the triumphal entry into Jerusalem he was not going to cleanse the temple again why didn't they kill him? he was defenseless except they had a wall of angels around about him nobody could get through blessed are the meek do you remember there's a record of Moses he was

the meekest man in all the earth mercy needed it with a sister like he had maybe that's why the Lord's making you meek or getting you ready for a wife Moses the meekest man in all but when he came down from the mountain and they were making a golden cup he was angry he was mad with them Jesus was the meekest man look what a pity we can't get on TV and blast this into the ears of the people you have one of two options right now to submit to the blood of the lamb or wait and meet the wrath of the lamb and there's no creature on earth I'm told which is more fierce than a ram that has got maddened it's totally impossible to get hold of it and do anything with it it can get away from a man or a team of men right now God in his sovereignty in his mercy is still giving us some protection I don't

think it's going to last long within five years we'll have collapses in America we never dreamed of and right now there is a day of mercy a day of grace God is a God of mercy but he's angry with the wicked every

day stick that on your bumper sticker they'll burn your car verse 2 says the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus had made me free free from the law of sin and death ok verse 3 for what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin condemned sin in the flesh that the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled not destroyed he comes and gives me power to keep the law impeccably folk are crazy they say the old testament isn't for today well that's a fine thing to give the world isn't it they want to

commit adultery they want to lie they want to cheat tell them now that the ten commandments are obsolete forget it Jesus says I came not to destroy the law but to fulfill we have to keep the moral law as long as there are men on earth the ceremonial law is not ours we don't have to go through all the rituals of ceremonial law thank God God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin get that for a minute God sending his own son so the son was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh so the son was seen first he was sent then he was seen in the likeness of sinful flesh he was a sent one he was a seen one in the likeness of flesh and for sin he was a substitute one he condemned sin in the flesh he was a sinless one the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who

walk not after the flesh but after the spirit verse 8 or verse 7 the carnal mind is enmity against God it is subject to the law of God neither can it be carnality is not subject to the law of God there is no law of God that will cancel carnality in your life he doesn't curb it or control it he cleanses it he removes it the carnal mind is enmity against God it is not subject you can put all the laws you like come on you know you drive down the road there I-20 does everybody keep the speed limit? don't blush I see you're blushing well that's alright you shouldn't do it you can legislate you cannot legislate righteousness in this nation there was a tremendous try years ago when I was a young man to legislate the drink business prohibition came in did it stop it? not on your life it made the

Kennedys multimillionaires we're told Al Capone was paying a quarter of a million in tithes every week to the Roman church because he was running the underworld of liquor in Chicago you cannot legislate carnality the carnal mind is enmity against that's a terrible word it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God oh that's an escape hatch for us isn't it? they that are in the flesh as long as I'm in this flesh that's not what it says it's talking about your fleshly nature which is quoted there in Galatians 5 the works of the flesh all the horrid things the temper, the pride all those things if you're in the flesh you cannot please God well that's a breather isn't it? till you come to the next verse where it says but you're

not in the flesh now what do you do? you're not in the flesh sin shall not have dominion over you the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath raised me from the dead ye are not in the flesh but in the spirit if so be the spirit of God dwelleth in you I tell you this is spirit, spirit, spirit all the way through 26 times in the book and 18 times in this one chapter it's the law the spirit of life in Christ Jesus when Paul says O wretched man that I am who should deliver me from the body of this death he says I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord I do not like flying in airplanes somebody came to me and said the Lord told me to buy you a Learjet for 3 million dollars I know he doesn't know the Lord because the Lord knows I don't like planes but I'm still fascinated when I see a

plane with 400 people on and 400 of 800 pieces of baggage and all the gasoline weight and the thing goes like that no, up it goes if I took a piece of paper and let go of it it won't go up even if I tell it to it would go down a feather comes on the breeze it goes up for a second then it goes down you can talk about depravity as being human gravity if you like there's something in us that pulls us down that the Lord the

spirit of life in Christ Jesus why does that jet go on like that because it has a greater thrust you notice I remember once being outside of Chicago airport there no it wasn't it was Dallas as a matter of fact and through the sky I could see a track of planes coming in a long way off a little by little but you know when they got about a mile a half a mile from the airport

suddenly they put all the blast on and the exhaust let out pouring black smoke why? he wants to stop how does it stop? puts the power on why? because the slower he goes the bigger the pull of gravity is and any pilot will tell you it's much harder to bring a plane down than to get it up in the sky you've got to keep a perfect balance with it as soon as he slows those engines that gravity pulls like that and he has to thrust he has to watch that control that he has there to see he's got perfect balance there is no answer to the sin question except in the cross not in going to the cross but getting on the cross not Christ being crucified for me but me being crucified with Christ and when that happens the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and of

death I said there's nothing very volcanic in this chapter mercy there is so explosive you say but I've got a bad temperament maybe you have a woman told me one day she said Mr Raymond I love having my devotions I love services I love singing but I'm temperamental I said excuse me you said you're temperamental I said is it your temper or your mental no she said I think it's something I was born with maybe it was but it doesn't have to stay with you they that are in the flesh cannot please God says verse 9 says now look at this majestic thing here you're not in the flesh but in the spirit if so be listen the spirit of God dwells in you that's verse 9 verse 10 if Christ be in you verse 11 it's the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelling in you come on you've got the

spirit of God the spirit of the Son and the spirit of the Holy Ghost dwelling in you put them all together you think this is what Paul is talking about verses 8, 9 and 10 I put it at the bottom of my Bible here verses 8, 9 and 10 equal the fullness of God Paul says in Ephesians 3.19 that you may be filled with the fullness of God if you have the residency of God the Father by his spirit and the residency of the Son and the residency of the Holy Ghost there's not much room left for anything else is there are you telling me that God the Father in his holiness God the Son in his holiness God the Holy Ghost in his holiness are prepared to coexist with that vile temper of yours coexist in that little shrine of your heart when you're secretly lusting and dominating for something which is

altogether against his holiness at the end of Ephesians there's a statement that I think one of the greatest in the Bible it says it begins in Ephesians 2 by saying that we are in subject to the devil the world and dominion of the devil but it finishes by saying ye ye ye who's ye ye folk who read it you are the habitation of God by the spirit if you knew there was some drug or somebody who could cure you of every possibility of getting defiled by disease would you go to them there's a fountain filled with blood Cowper wrote in the days of Wesley and sinners plunge beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains a dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day and there have I not may I but there have I though vile as he in the sight of God washed all my sins away you cannot be pure

and impure at the same time you cannot be calm and spiritual at the same time because this very scripture says the carnal mind is enmity against God and it says in Romans 7 to be carnally minded is death get rid of this bunkum about the carnal Christian forget it if you're carnal you're not saved to be carnally minded is death who's dead the sinner is dead in trespasses and in sin he's not just bad he's dead he doesn't need help he needs life Jesus did not come into the world to make bad men good essentially he came into the world to make dead men live out of my bondage sorrow is that sure isn't it out of my

sickness into thy health out of my poverty into thy out of my sin because you see you go through oh I mustn't preach I'm going to preach this a week on Sunday I'm going to preach on

Romans 8 we're opening the new building by the way in Van a week on Sunday and while I remember because I forget this coming Tuesday and Wednesday I have to preach at Jimmy Swaggart's college somebody says shall we pray for you I said no pray for him I know the word God has given me all I need is power to deliver it I got two mornings to preach to a thousand or more students and others that will come will you pray Wednesday and Thursday that God will do something you look a bit surprised ok but that's what it's all about anyhow trying to think of a hymn Wesley wrote I think Jesus thine all victorious love shed in my heart abroad then shall my feet no longer rove rooted and fixed in God my steadfast soul what does Paul pray that ye may be steadfast and unmovable is that a poetic dream you

say you preach sinless perfection don't preach anything of the kind never heard a man preach it in my life you make it sound as though it's impossible to sin no that's not it at all I'm not saying it's impossible to sin I'm saying it's possible not to sin the scripture says we're kept by the power of God through faith and to salvation oh those boys have been up on the moon there and apparently they had some oh no they get to the moon they got half way up there they're coming back I have a bundle of papers in my office at least I had it unless I gave my grandchildren when the Apollo 15 went up to the moon they took some pictures there and they took a little Bible and they sent me one of them from the what do you call it now NASA it says on it this little Bible that was taken this was taken

on to the moon by a member of the crew of Apollo 15 I have this thing in my office they sent me a lot of pictures and they said one of them said the most amazing thing we've got used to looking up at the moon and it has no props on it just a ball up in the sky but he said when we got up there we saw the world hanging like that looks strange to see the world I just left no props on it no pedestal just there just swung in space isn't that amazing my dear sweet wife lived in Melbourne Australia for some years I went and preached around Australia and you know on the stir of the world Australia is down here and the ocean is there you think that isn't wonderful you try a handful of water on the bottom of a bucket and get it to stick you can't get it to stick and yet God hangs the world upon

nothing it took us billions of dollars to find that out Job said that thousands of years ago boy aren't politicians dumb he hangs the world upon nothing this paper is thin I've used this illustration before maybe I caught a fish over in the Bahamas in the sea of course I remember it was about 34 inches long and it weighed 34 pounds we took it back to the house and we gave it to the cook she goes precious black woman I think she could cook a shoe and make it tender I'm glad she didn't of course but then they gave me some fish and said would you like that fish? no no taste what? did you put some salt on it? no why should I put salt on it? it's been swimming in the saltiest water in the world for the last 25 years and the skin is only as thick as this and yet that fish can live in that

atmosphere year after year for a generation or a decade another decade and the salt doesn't go through that little thin skin but you tell me that God can hang the world on nothing and keep a fish in the ocean for 25 or 125 years and the salt doesn't get in but he can't keep me from sinning in a lousy world like this that the blood can't protect me that the promises of God can't protect me that the Holy Ghost can't protect me well go home and dream we're so used to a crippled church we'll be embarrassed if we see the church start moving in the Holy Ghost the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead he shall also it says he shall quicken your mortal bodies you know I'm learning to claim this a bit more not for when I die but every day that I live let me go over to another verse here

before I finish likewise the spirit the mighty Holy Ghost verse 26 healtheth our infirmities the Holy Ghost what's your infirmity? it's nothing about a physical infirmity talking about some spiritual weakness the spirit also healtheth our infirmities so he deals with our weakness I recognize my infirmity and claim on him and he comes and makes up that I have a deficiency my infirmity we know not what we should pray for as we are so he deals with our ignorance he makes intercession for us according to the will of God so he makes up for our insufficiency he deals with my weakness he deals with my ignorance he deals with my insufficiency you wonder that we sing Wesley's hymn Jesus lover of my soul bow oh Christ I want to tell you something God has no afterthoughts Calvary was not an

afterthought God hasn't defined a solution to the day in which I live the church has to rediscover it we've got the answer to all sin to murder and lying and incest and lust and all the diabolical things of hell have all been answered in Jesus Christ the average church you go up and down the same thing every Sunday the Lord died for your sins sing a lovely hymn they don't know anything about being emancipated all they want is forgiveness how many people want their fetters broken their lying spirit their lustful spirit their deceitful spirit their spirit of temper their spirit of pride their spirit of uncleanness God does not have to find an answer the blood of Jesus Christ God's Son is adequate but I have to go and submit myself to him verse 26 says the spirit itself or himself maketh

intercession for us verse 34 it is Christ that died yea he is risen again who is at the right hand of God who maketh intercession for us so in verse 26 you have intercession in verse 27 you have intercession in verse 34 you have intercession now there's an awful lot said about predestination do you know what people do they amputate it oh you were predestinated to be I had a man in my office recently and he was so strong on predestination oh well God knew the moment you were born and he charted your course he knew the moment you died I said you're telling me that last year that God supervised the flushing of a thousand fetuses or a million fetuses down the john come on man you say he was a foreordained of God that child when it came from the womb God knew it would be shoved down in a

toilet and flushed away or something will be put in its mother and the little thing could be torn up in its mother's womb is that your God sure we predestinated to what this verse 29 who he did foreknow also he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his son that's predestination I'm predestined to be holy I'm predestined to be pure I'm predestined to walk in the light as he walked in the light as he was so are we when we get to heaven no no sir as he was so are we in this world we're trying to put it all off till we get to the other side I'm told a popular preacher in town says there's no victory till you die shut the place up and become a Mohammedan they can preach that the big stumbling block in the world tonight is not poverty and all these it's all capsuled in one little word

S.I.N it explains every wrecked home every wrecked life the failure of every government system and every other system the law of the spirit of life I love that phrase so the spirit bears witness to my life he bears witness because I have no condemnation he bears witness why because I have the spirit of adoption boy I wouldn't like to wake up tomorrow morning and feeling I wasn't in the kingdom would you would that be haram oh you're big enough you're six foot four you feel secure I wouldn't in this world I can wake up in the night and sing with confidence we now draw nigh and father Abba father cry the spirit answers to the blood and tells me I'm born of God this is Dutch to you if you're not born of the spirit he can't bear witness you're a child of God if he has to witness to

condemnation to guilt to sin my dear wife wrote something to me last week it's very interesting a man had taken the place of his brother in jail a man went along and he said your brother was sentenced to five

years wasn't he yes and you said you'd take it yes what are you doing he said I've taken his penalty but I can't take his guilt I've taken the punishment he still bears the guilt but Jesus took the punishment and the guilt no condemnation I dread it's possible for me to live as close to God on earth as I would if I were in heaven thy kingdom come thy will be done in earth I am earth I came out of the earth I'm of the earth earthy Jesus Christ made it possible this must be right because Spurgeon said it and he wasn't Pentecostal what did Spurgeon say a little faith will get you to

heaven a little more faith will bring heaven to you you know your children your parents your children should be able to look on you as though you'd stepped out of heaven and getting out of bed in the morning with a bad temper or something you should walk before them every day and children say my mother is the holiest woman on earth I've a letter on my desk now it was written in 1724 by the daughter of what's his name I've forgotten oh good I told this before Jonathan Edwards she says my daddy is a gravelled voice rough looking man and he's fierce in the pulpit that he is a lamb when he's home but my mummy she's nine years of age boy she's got a vocabulary an awesome vocabulary when my mummy comes out of her prayer chamber in the morning she said she needs a veil over her face you think

children don't know your ambition shouldn't be to be a successful missionary first of all or a successful minister your ambition should be know that now you're conformed as far as God can do it he'll keep doing it conformed to the image of his son the gentleness and meekness of the Lord Jesus Christ give me a couple of minutes here verse 13 says if ye live up to the flesh ye shall die but if through the spirit you do mortify the deeds of the body now come on your experience of God ten years ago isn't good enough tonight you were filled with a spirit maybe you've been leaking the question is not when you were filled the question is are you filled? are you filled with the love of God? are you filled with the knowledge of God? are you filled with the will of God? if ye live up to the flesh

ye shall die but if through the spirit you mortify the deeds of the body remember that great phrase of Paul in one Corinthians man when he says I keep my body under you've got to have rest for your mortal body you can have rest but don't be lazy there's a big difference you've got to eat for your mortal body but don't be a glutton keep your body under control it's the temple of the Holy Ghost be ambitious but don't be covetous you see it's a partnership I have with God and you have with God it's not all God's business it's mine as well let us lay aside every... what's the weight in your life? what's the thing that destroys your prayer life? what's the thing that destroys your devotion? racquetball?

I had a man a brilliant man in the British Navy one of the high officers and he lost his anointing do you know how? ridiculous stamp collecting he could read his Bible in Greek he was a marvelous teacher but he got occupied with stamps he spent a fortune in stamps he had racks and racks of books they were all he said one day I'll sell you my British Colonials for twelve hundred pounds that was about fifty thousand dollars at that time just one section of his stamps his wife said he used to say when he came home from the Admiralty he'd get his Bible out he would talk he'd explain this in the Greek and something else but now he said it wasn't TV collecting stamps collecting stamps he had more than anybody else he had some prize stamps remember again it's a simple thing but it's true the

good is the enemy of the best the devil doesn't want you to get drunk or dissipated he wants to get your life attached to something else as long as he can draw you away from holiness and draw you away from holy contemplation and draw you away from meditation and draw you away from obedience he doesn't care how he does it the simpler the trick is more devastating if he through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body he shall live as many as are led by the spirit of God they are the sons of God

how do I know the spirit bears witness because he leads me that's why I don't have to tell you but I have to have an inward obedience and that inward obedience will soon show up verse 22 we know that the whole creation groaneth this groaning comes in three times verses 26 and 28

we know that the whole creation groaneth and travelleth in pain together until now not only they but ourselves also have the first fruits of the spirit well brother if you got the first fruits what are the final fruits going to be if we've got a peace that passeth out understanding if we've got a joy unspeakable a faith unshakable and a will unbreakable dear Lord what's the ultimate going to be if I can have these in my mortal flesh what's it going to be when I get a glorified body that's the last thing in this verse even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption to wit the redemption of the body I skip one great verse there verse 17 if we're children we're heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ you know Jesus Christ wants to share all the riches of redemption

with me I think of a family in England they had a lot Ireland actually they had a lot of money they were very highly respected great social standing great crowds of pedigree cattle and everything you can imagine and when the family was up everybody respected their children but something went wrong in the family and their prosperity turned to adversity and the esteem people had for them went the very opposite way now the children were all lifted with father and mother people sneered at the children oh your old dad couldn't do this your old dad didn't do that remember the time when you were the most respected people in the whole community and now you're the most despised what happened the son shared the glory of his father socially and financially when they were very wealthy and then when

the thing turned the other way he had to bear the shame let me look at this just a second another thing I want to quote here from Romans 8 you could say there that we're heirs of God there's the dignity but wait a minute if children and heirs heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ if so be what? you can't separate from it if you're going to share his glory you must share his suffering now notice what it says if so be that we suffer with him not for him there are millions of people suffering for him in Russia tonight they won't bow the knee to the government it doesn't mean they're suffering with him they're suffering for him they know as Christians they should take this way if I suffer with him I share his grief I share his anguish how many people do you know you call them friends

you could go in your days of joy and your days of prosperity if your world collapsed if shame came over your house if your daughter got into sin or your son or something would you go freely to them and say listen this is my condition right now if I'm going to suffer with him I'm going to see the world as he sees it these eyes of mine remember again Revelation 3 he says to a church I counsel thee to buy of me eye salve and that was what they exported they exported it to the world because they didn't have shades and they go down the roads or across the deserts like you get snow blindness you get sand blindness and the Lord says I counsel thee to buy of me eye salve he says to the same one I counsel thee to buy of me clothing and they were the greatest exporters of wealthy clothing in the

world he says I counsel thee to buy of me gold they had the greatest gold exchange in the known world at that time everything they boasted in God said it's nothing it's all materialistic it will perish with the using I counsel thee to buy of me real eye salve that you may see and I say I warn you tonight don't pray that unless you want to see as God sees isn't there a hymn a verse of a hymn that says oh take the dimness of my soul away I don't want to wake up in heaven and look at all the things I've missed that I could have seen I'm prepared to step out of track and as one of your old sayings in America is I'm prepared to march to another drummer the philosophy if you want to call it of this book is contrary to everything the world has

all its standards all its values all its goals

they're totally wrecked when you put them under the microscope of the word of God and the whole thing about the success of the Holy Spirit is getting the witness of the Spirit that there's no condemnation in my life that guilt has been removed that I can walk triumphant in his name that I can be like him in this present evil world if I'm going to share in his bounty sometimes he witnesses with groanings that cannot be uttered that's not according to our idea we thought he'd give us ecstasy all the way and he'd pull all the God isn't going to pull down the mountains he's going to give strength to get over them he's going to make you the most popular person on earth he's going to give you a close relationship with him that you won't care a hell of beans about anybody else's opinion or

thinking a little boy says well, I don't care what you think my daddy changed my name I'm receiving all his wealth I receive a mansion I can have that Rolls Royce I can have the yacht I can have everything he changed my nature boy, I love to read this book, do you?

I read about a book of life in Revelation I believe that book of life has the name of everybody from Adam right till the final trumpet blast that's the book of life the Lamb's book of life is different the book of life God put on record when I was born the Lamb's book of life he put on when I was born again we've got three wonderful sons when they were born we had to get their names registered they were sent to London to Somerset House that has the names of every Christian I was going to say no, not every Christian every English person in the last 200 years oh, I suppose they can microfilm them now they have stacks and stacks in rooms millions and millions of copies of birth certificates the Queen of England has a bunch of children do you know what? she has the honour of having her

children in the same book as mine isn't that something? there's only one book for the British Empire my children's names are there the Duke of Swansea's names Lord Swansea's there then will he own my worthless name before his father's face and then the new Jerusalem appoint my solar place you think I'm going out to the beggarly elements of the world the junk houses of this world the rock and roll Christian rock they call it Christian rot it is you think I'm embarrassed to be a child of a king? every man that's falling in hell at the final judgement will wish he'd lived a pure life wish he'd lived a holy life wish he'd lived an obedient life and it's a bit too late when the final curtain begins to fall you today you've been sewing without knowing it you've been putting threads in your

garment for eternity you've been building your character we're not going to wear the same things in heaven in fact all people going to hell are not going to be punished the same they're going to be beaten with many stripes and with few stripes I can't wait till all the pimps and all the mafia and the folk that run the underworld that stand at the judgment seat of Christ and have to bow their knee and then he consigns them to everlasting hell I'll shout hallelujah if you don't I can't wait till the roll is called I see people from every kindred and tribe and tongue coming not all to the be part of the bride not all to the wedding feast if they've been obedient because you know well enough there were ten virgins not five harlots and five virgins and it was midnight and it was time to go in

and five of them made it and five didn't where did the five that didn't go outer darkness work it out for yourself it's not eternal darkness it's a temporary punishment because eventually they got into the marriage supper I'm convinced of that but they were shut up and they knocked on the door what did the one inside say I know you not in the seventh of Matthew he said to those big multi-billion dollar evangelists who said we've healed in your name cast out devils raised to death he says I never knew you he doesn't

say that to these he says I know you not their oil was running out their testimony was weak their prayer life was in rags come on don't be too kind to yourself don't assume that Peter is waiting inside the gate just to clamp a big crown a six-decker crown with diamonds and

rubies forget it we cannot earn anything for our salvation but we have to earn everything for our reward we're only rewarded according to our labors our faithfulness great is thy faithfulness somebody ought to add another verse great is my faithfulness the only thing that rejoices the heart of God so far as I know is number one my obedience to him my faithfulness to him my worship of him I can't make him rich well there you are I take too much time still we're going to pray some pray for us at Jimmy's Faggots I'll be there Wednesday and Thursday I'll be back for Friday night though I've asked brother Ray Ray Dorsey to bring the message either a message or a report on his recent visit to India I don't know which but I'll take the song song part of it which I enjoy so much and then we'll

have the message so please come I'm not asking you to take all the time now to pray for my meeting I'm asking you what time we have left to pray what's on your heart maybe it's a burden for this nation someone told me about four nights ago on the 700 club one of the greatest economists in the country said that if and when all the banks go down in this country only 2% of the money in the banks is covered with insurance there'll be some shocks it's not the collapse that's coming that troubles me it's the collapse that we have already that troubles me collapse in morality collapse in spirituality powerlessness of the church we must be an embarrassment to God does the spirit bear witness tonight that you're displeasing him have you condemnation in your heart have you bitterness have you got

some grudges some jealousy some pride no wonder your life is hampered puts cataracts on your eyes buy some ice off tonight buy obedience buy repentance say Lord I don't care what it costs take the dimness of my soul away take the impurity away through the precious blood take care of my weakness the weakness in my intercession I don't doubt the sacrifice of Jesus it's perfect I don't doubt the power of the Holy Ghost I just doubt because it's not working in my life so let's pray for a little season

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