

Better Way Apostolic Church- Bible Class

Subject: Freedom from Defeat: Romans 8:7-17

ARE YOU READY TO LEAVE THE WILDERNESS?

You know the mark of Israel's life in the wilderness - the cause of all their troubles there - was unbelief. They did not believe that God could take them into the Promised Land. And then followed many sins and failures-lusting, idolatry, murmuring, etc. That has, perhaps, been your life, beloved; you do not believe that God will fulfill His word. You do not believe in the possibility of unbroken fellowship with Him, and unlimited partnership. On account of that, you become disobedient, and did not live like a child doing God's will, because you did not believe that God could give you the victory over sin.

Are you willing now to leave that wilderness life? Sometimes you are, perhaps, enjoying fellowship with God, and sometimes you are separated from Him; sometimes you have nearness to Him, and at other times great distance from Him; sometimes you have a willingness to walk closely with Him, but sometimes there is even unwillingness. Are you now going to give up your whole life to Him? Are you going to approach Him and say, "My God, I do not want to do anything that will be displeasing to Thee; I want Thee to keep me from all worldliness, from all self-pleasure; I want Thee, O God, to help me to live like Peter after Pentecost, filled with the Holy Ghost, and not like carnal Peter."

Thinking Errors 1- Victimstance:

When a person is held accountable for their behavior they will portray them self as the victim. They act as though the world is against them. When playing the victim the person does not take responsibility for changing any behaviors, as they believe they are helpless to do so.

[Because the carnal mind is enmity against God] Because it is a carnal mind, and relishes earthly and sinful things, and lives in opposition to the pure and holy law of God. Therefore, it is hostility against God; it is irreconcilable and implacable hatred.

[It is not subject to the law of God] It will come under no obedience; for it is sin, and the very principle of rebellion; and therefore it cannot be subject, nor subjected; for it is essential to sin to show itself in rebellion; and when it ceases to rebel, it ceases to be sin.

From this we learn that the design of God in the economy of the Gospel, is not to weaken, curtail, or lay the carnal principle in bonds, but to destroy it. Since it is not subject, and cannot be subject, to the law of God, it must be destroyed, else it will continue to rebel against God. It cannot be mended, or rendered less offensive in its nature, even by the operations of God it is always sin, and sin is always hostile, and hostility, wherever it has power, will invariably show itself in acts of hostility and rebellion.

Thinking Errors # 2 Anger

When a person is held accountable for their behavior they will become angry in order to get the focus off of their inappropriate behavior and on to the anger. This allows people to focus on calming them down, or leaving them alone so they will not explode. Everyone has anger, however when someone uses anger to avoid taking responsibility for his or her

behaviors this is a thinking error. It is similar to a hop-over in that the person is attempting to remove the focus from their behaviors.

Romans 8:8 [So then.] Because this carnal mind is enmity against God, they that are in the flesh-who are under the power of the workings of this carnal mind (which every soul is that has not received redemption in the blood of the Lamb).

[Cannot please God.] Because of the rebellious workings of this principle of rebellion and hatred. And, if they cannot please God, they must be displeasing to him; and consequently in the broad road to final perdition.

Freedom from Defeat - No Obligation (Rom. 8:5-17)

"Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh" (Romans 8:12). There is no obligation to the old nature. The believer can live in victory. In this section, Paul described life on three different levels; and he encouraged his readers to live on the highest level.

"You have not the Spirit" (vv. 5-8). Paul is not describing two kinds of Christians, one carnal and one spiritual. He is contrasting the saved and the unsaved. There are four contrasts.

In The flesh - in The Spirit (v. 5). The unsaved person does not have the Spirit of God (Romans 8:9) and lives in the flesh and for the flesh. His mind is centered on the things that satisfy the flesh. But the Christian has the Spirit of God within and lives in an entirely new and different sphere. His mind is fixed on the things of the Spirit. This does not mean that the unsaved person never does anything good, or that the believer never does anything bad. It means that the bent of their lives is different. One lives for the flesh, the other lives for the Spirit.

Death - life (v. 6). The unsaved person is alive physically, but dead spiritually. The inner man is dead toward God and does not respond to the flings of the Spirit. He may be moral, and even religious; but he lacks spiritual life. He needs "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:2).

War with God - peace with God (vv. 6-7).

In our study of Romans 7, we have seen that the old nature rebels against God and will not submit to God's Law. Those who have trusted Christ enjoy "peace with God" (Romans 5:1), while the unsaved are at war with God. "'There is no peace,' saith the Lord, 'unto the wicked'" (Isaiah 48:22).

Pleasing self-pleasing God (v. 8). To be "in the flesh" means to be lost, outside Christ. The unsaved person lives to please himself and rarely if ever thinks about pleasing God. The root of sin is selfishness - "I will" and not "Thy will."

To be unsaved and not have the Spirit is, the lowest level of life. But a person need not stay on that level. By faith in Christ he can move to the second level.

"You have the Spirit" (vv. 9-11). "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you" (Romans 8:9). The evidence of conversion is the presence of the Holy Spirit within, witnessing that you are a child of God (Romans 8:16). Your body becomes the very temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). Even though the body is destined to die because of sin (unless, of course, the Lord returns), the Spirit gives life to that body today so

that we may serve God. If we should die, the body will one day be raised from the dead, because the Holy Spirit has sealed each believer (Ephesians 1:13-14).

Romans 8:1-4

"The Spirit has you!" (vv. 12-17) It is not enough for us to have the Spirit; the Spirit must have us! Only then can He share with us the abundant, victorious life that can be ours in Christ. We have no obligation to the flesh, because the flesh has only brought trouble into our lives. We do have an obligation to the Holy Spirit for it is the Spirit who convicted us, revealed Christ to us, and imparted eternal life to us when we trusted Christ. Because He is "the Spirit of Life," He can empower us to obey Christ and He can enable us to be more like Christ.

But He is also the Spirit of death. He can enable us to "put to death" (mortify) the sinful deeds of the body. As we yield the members of our body to the Spirit (Romans 6:12-17), He applies to us and in us the death and resurrection of Christ. He puts to death the things of the flesh, and He reproduces the things of the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is also "the Spirit of adoption" (Romans 8:14-17). The word adoption in the New Testament means "being placed as an adult son." We come into God's family by birth. But the instant we are born into the family, God adopts us and gives us the position of an adult son. A baby cannot walk, speak, make decisions, or draw on the family wealth. But the believer can do all of these the instant he is born again.

He can walk and be "led of the Spirit" (Romans 8:14). The verb here means "willingly led." We yield to the Spirit, and He guides us by His Word day by day. We are not under bondage to Law and afraid to act. We have the liberty of the Spirit and are free to follow Christ. The believer can also speak: "We cry, Abba, Father" (Romans 8:15). Would it not be amazing if a newborn baby looked up and greeted his father! First, the Spirit says, "Abba Father" to us (Galatians 4:6), and then we say it to God. ("Abba" means "papa" - a term of endearment.)

A baby cannot sign checks, but the child of God by faith can draw on his spiritual wealth because he is an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ (Romans 8:17). The Spirit teaches us from the Word, and then we receive God's wealth by faith. What a thrilling thing it is to have "the Spirit of adoption" at work in our lives!

There is no need for the believer to be defeated. He can yield his body to the Spirit and by faith overcome the old nature. The Spirit of life will empower him. The Spirit of death will enable him to overcome the flesh. And the Spirit of adoption will enrich him and lead him into the will of God.

What a difference it makes in your body when the Holy Spirit lives within. You experience new life, and even your physical faculties take on a new dimension of experience. When evangelist D.L. Moody described his conversion experience, he said: "I was in a new world. The next morning the sun shone brighter and the birds sang sweeter .. the old elms waved their branches for joy, and all nature was at peace." Life in Christ is abundant life.

But there is a third level of experience for which the other two are preparation.

Practical Discipleship

Basically, God is looking for us to serve Him in three ways: as a wife (bride of Christ), as a worker, and as a witness.

Wife—The good wife comes from the fact that Christians are the bride of Christ. Christ expects His bride to be pure (avoid the things of the world that would defile us) and chaste (not flirting with the world or running after other loves). That's easy to understand. These are the same things you want of your husband or wife.

When we violate God's rules in marriage we come to the big "D's" (and I don't mean Dallas!)—disgrace, disease, debt, dishonor, and divorce.

Worker—a good worker is someone who comes to work on time every day; gives an honest day's work for an honest day's pay; and does his job without complaining. These are simple ideas that should apply to your place of employment as well as your place of worship.

Witness—witnessing is not throwing someone in a corner and making them believe as you believe. Witnessing is simply telling people the difference Christ has made in your life. Sharing answered prayers should be as natural as sharing an exciting news item from the newspaper. Sharing your love for Christ should be as easy as sharing your devotion for your favorite team. It's simple to witness when Christ is the main focus of your life.

As Charles Templeton puts it, "**Christianity does not remove you from the world and its problems; it makes you fit to live in it, triumphantly and usefully.**" **Are you fit to live and ready to die?**

Though martyrs of the first century: Steven, James the Great, Philip, Matthew, James the Less, Matthias, Andrew, Mark, Peter, Paul, Jude, Thaddeus, Bartholomew, Nathaniel, Thomas, Luke, Simon the Zealot & John all were motivated for God through their suffering.

This Chapter deals with the freedom that we now have as believers in Christ and suggest to us that through our suffering with Him we to should be motivated to help build His kingdom. Our life and goals should not be base on the world's ideals of self-worth.

Quote: "**Ability is what you're capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it**

Everyone has real and intense personal struggles which dedication to Christ does not eliminate. The harsh truth is that living for the Lord sometimes increases the severity of the struggle.

The struggles we experience have several causes. Some of our suffering is the inevitable lot of fallen people living in a fallen world. The results of the Fall include separation not only from God and from others, but also from ourselves. We come apart as a person, unable to genuinely accept ourselves as we are. Our consequent struggle to be or to pretend to be what we are not explains much of our deep discontent and personal suffering. Becoming a Christian does not end the struggle; it provides us with the resources to see the battle through to a successful conclusion.

Some of our suffering is the direct result of being a Christian (Romans 8:17) The Lord often allows His people to suffer as a means of promoting an awareness of His absolute sufficiency.

Sometimes our suffering is related to unbiblical patterns of living. Whatever the cause, people today are wrestling with personal distress and afflictions. God has ordained the local church as His primary instrument to tend to our personal aches and pains.

Paul says it best in Philippians 2:21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. Self and self-centeredness are the most prevalent and despicable factors inhibiting the growth of the church.

We must realize that Christian service is not only evangelizing but includes the selfless building up of the Lord's people. We need to challenge, encourage, and assist members of the local church to get on with the job of one-anothering: love one another, bear one another's burden, and pray for one another.

Quote: **Motivation** is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going."

I. Why do we do what we do?

Many people are terribly confused about their own behavior. Why do we do what we do? Paul expressed agonizing bewilderment over his own behavior in Romans 7. He tells us that he regularly found himself doing precisely the opposite of what he honestly felt he wanted to do. As he observed his perplexing pattern of behavior, he could only conclude that there was a law of some sort operating within him which completely opposed his conscious and sincere intentions. Most of us can relate with Paul dilemma.

We could get many answers for why we do what we do, but I believe it is all about our motivation.

There are five needs starting with the lowest or most basic.

1. Physical (food, water, etc.) 2. Security- knowing that my physical needs will be met tomorrow. 3. Love (what I would call security) 4. Purpose (What I would call signification). 5. Self-actualization- development of myself into a full, creative, self-expressing person)