**Lesson 19: You Need Supernatural Intervention**

Text: Romans 8:1-13

**Introduction**

Our struggle with sin as described in the first seven chapters of Romans indicates that we must receive help outside ourselves. Although the mantra of the day is to “believe in yourself” and “try harder,” God says otherwise. You need supernatural intervention! That intervention is found in the Spirit of God. Paul refers to the Holy Spirit twenty-one times in this chapter of Romans. This is significant since Paul referred to the Spirit only four times in the previous chapters. The purpose of this lesson is to trace Paul’s discussion of life in the Spirit as opposed to life in the flesh. The phrase “the Spirit of life” indicates that it is the Holy Spirit that gives us spiritual life. There is NO spiritual life apart from the Spirit. Therefore, it is important for us to understand to role of the Spirit and to appreciate His intervention.

1. **Since salvation is found in Jesus Christ, there is no condemnation to those who are in Him. (v. 1)** 
   1. Friberg defines *condemnation* as “a legal technical term for the result of judging, including both the sentence and its execution; sentence of doom, punishment.” There is no verdict against us! How can this be? It is only possible through the justification that is by faith. Since salvation places us “in Christ,” we can’t be condemned because Jesus can’t be condemned. (v. 1a)
   2. In this chapter, Paul draws a contrast between walking after the flesh and walking after the Spirit. (v. 1b) It is important to note that Paul is comparing those who have never been born again with those who have. Other passages such as Galatians 5:16-26 describe the struggle we continue to have against the lusts of the flesh. The focus is different in Romans 8:1-13. Verse 9 makes it clear that he is contrasting the saved and the lost. You are in one of those two categories.
   3. “Walking in the flesh” describes life without God. It is the characteristic way of living for those who have not experienced the new birth. Since they do not have the Spirit residing within, they do not have spiritual life. Therefore, they cannot experience spiritual growth. They cannot make spiritual decisions. It does not mean that they are as wicked as possible. It means that they are separated from God. They are walking “according to the course of this world” (Ephesians 2:2).
   4. “Walking in the Spirit” describes the life of those who have trusted Jesus as Savior. They were once on the same path as the lost. Now, they have a new walk in Christ Jesus. They have spiritual life because they have been “born of the Spirit” (John 3:1-8). Their orientation of life is completely different! They live with a new purpose, a new destination, and supernatural help to please God. Keep that in mind as we continue our study in this monumental chapter of the Bible.
2. **The supernatural intervention of the Spirit has made us free from the law of sin and death. (v. 2-4)** 
   1. The law (principle) of sin and death is consistent and not a respecter of persons. Like the law of gravity, it applies to all people. In the flesh, we serve sin and are spiritually dead. A proper understanding of the law of sin and death will bring every person to ask the question posed by Paul in Romans 7:24. It will also bring them to the only possible answer as presented in Romans 7:25.
   2. Paul elaborates on what it means to be “in Christ” and how the Holy Spirit provides the supernatural intervention that we all need. The Spirit liberates us from the old reign of sin and death!
   3. It is impossible that we could be saved through the law, due to the weakness of the flesh. (v. 3) Since we could not keep the law, God sent His Son to die in our place. In the incarnation, God was manifest in human flesh. He came to put an end to the reign of sin and death through His substitutionary death on the cross. Thereby, He condemned sin in the flesh.
   4. Jesus’ work on the cross made it possible that His righteousness might be given to us. (v. 4) There is no way that we can perfectly keep the law before or after salvation. The only man who perfectly kept the law was Jesus Christ. When Paul talks about the righteousness of the law being fulfilled in us, he has Christ’s righteousness in mind, not ours. We no longer walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit. We are the recipients of supernatural help.
3. **There is a sharp contrast between walking after the flesh and walking after the Spirit. (v. 5-8)**
   1. Those who are after the flesh are focused on the things of the flesh. (v. 5a) The direction of their life is determined by what the flesh wants as it interacts with a world system that is ruled by Satan.
   2. Those who are after the Spirit are focused on spiritual things. (v. 5b) The direction of their life is guided by what God wants.
   3. The carnal (fleshly) mind leads to death. (v. 6a) This is not a reference to physical death, but spiritual separation from God.
   4. Those who are spiritually minded live with peace. (v. 6b)
   5. The carnal mind is always in opposition to God. (v. 7a) It is not subject to God’s will. Rather, it opposes God’s will at every turn.
   6. As a result, those who have never been born again cannot please God. (v. 8)
4. **Paul knew that the believers in Rome had experienced the supernatural intervention of the Spirit. (v. 9-13)** 
   1. Those who are not indwelt by the Holy Spirit do not belong to Jesus. (v. 9)
   2. The body is dead due to the effects of sin, but the Spirit is alive. (v. 10) Even the believer is in the process of physically dying. Nonetheless, we have eternal life because of the Spirit.
   3. Since the believers are indwelt by the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead, they too will be physically resurrected. (v. 11) God’s work of redemption is thorough!
   4. As believers we are not obligated to live according to the flesh. (v. 12)
   5. Rather, living in the Spirit secures a home in Heaven and radically changes our lives in the present. (v. 13) Paul is not stating that a believer can lose his salvation when he says, “if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die.” Remember, his focus has not been on saved people who still struggle with the flesh. His focus has been on the contrast between the saved and the lost. In this part of the verse, Paul is saying that those who live without the Spirit of God will one day be eternally separated from God. Those who have the Spirit have eternal life and the supernatural help to “mortify” (put to death) the sinful deeds that once dominated their lives.
5. **Central Idea: The only way to be free from the law of sin and death is through the supernatural intervention of the Holy Spirit.** 
   1. Man is in a hopeless situation apart from the Spirit of God. Self-help books and seminars are insufficient to overcome the law of sin and death. The only solution is for the lost to hear the gospel, experience conviction that comes from the Spirit (John 16:8), and to repent, placing their faith in Christ. At that moment, they are born of the Spirit. This is a supernatural intervention.
   2. If you are constantly living after the flesh, you have some evaluating to do. Have you really been born again? Life is different when the Spirit moves in. Make sure you are saved by speaking with another believer who can help you (1 John 5:13).
   3. As a believer, you have the Spirit of life living within! You do not have to live a life that is dominated by fleshly desires. The Spirit is at work in you to make you like Christ. It will not automatically happen. You must yield to the leading of the Spirit. Say “yes” to His leading in your life.

**Conclusion**

The world does not understand the supernatural intervention of the Spirit of God. We are blessed to know the difference that He makes. We would not have a home in heaven nor help on earth if it were not for the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. Praise God for His supernatural intervention in our lives! As we continue in Romans 8, we will see just how blessed we really are.