

# The Spirit & Me

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Preacher: Rev. Murdo M Campbell

[ 0 : 0 0 ] for a short while if we could turn back to that portion of scripture that we read Paul's letter to the Romans on chapter 8 we're going to try and look at the whole chapter I know you could probably spend weeks studying this wonderful chapter but we're going to try and look at the whole chapter this evening but if we just read again at verse 1 Romans chapter 8 at verse 1 where Paul writes there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus now this evening as I mentioned to you that we're bringing our study of the person and work of the Holy Spirit to a conclusion and you could say that we've learned a lot in our study well I've learned a lot anyway

I don't know about yourself but we've learned that the Holy Spirit brings or when he begins to work in our life he brings form, fullness and fellowship and the Holy Spirit we've said he does that because the Word of God is inspired the Bible is God breathed it's spirit filled it's the divine breath of God the Holy Spirit which means that this book that we read when we've come to know and love it's a living book and it's a book that speaks into our daily lives and into our daily situations it's a book that shapes us and moulds us into the image of Jesus Christ but what we've also discovered is that in the Old Testament the Old Testament church the Holy Spirit dwelt in saints and upon servants but now in the New Testament church today the Holy Spirit dwells in all of us as saints and upon all of us as servants so we're all servants and we're all to be witnesses for Jesus to the ends of the earth we've also learned that by God's grace we've been baptised with the Holy Spirit we've received the gift of the Holy Spirit which is the promise of salvation through our daily reading and studying of God's word we are daily being led by the Spirit and because of our salvation we've also received spiritual gifts from the Holy Spirit and these spiritual gifts as we said before they are to be used for the good of the church and for the glory of God but now this evening as we bring our study to a conclusion

I want us to consider how the Holy Spirit works in us personally of course we've talked about how the Holy Spirit works but how does he work in us personally and I want us to think about it under the title The Spirit and Me The Spirit and Me and you know there's no better chapter in the Bible to help us think about this topic than Romans chapter 8 because Romans chapter 8 it's a favourite chapter of many of the Lord's people and it's a favourite chapter because it reminds us of the Christian's hope and assurance and that that hope and assurance it comes from the Holy Spirit dwelling in the heart of the Christian and the hope and assurance which Paul reminds us of in this chapter is that when we have the Holy Spirit dwelling in us we have the promise of no condemnation from Christ and no separation from Christ and you know what better hope and assurance what better hope and assurance to have that when we have the Holy Spirit dwelling in us we have the promise of no condemnation from Christ and also no separation from Christ and that's what Paul emphasises in Romans chapter 8 but I want us to note four areas in which the Holy Spirit plays a key role in the life of the Christian and that's what we see in this chapter four areas in which the Holy Spirit plays a key role in the life of the Christian and these four areas are salvation sonship supplication and separation four S's for you salvation sonship supplication and separation four key areas so the first area key area in the life of the Christian is salvation salvation let's look look again at verses 1 and 2

Paul says there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus for the law of the spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death now don't you just love the opening words of Romans chapter 8 because they're just full of hope they're full of assurance for the Christian there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus and you know that's how Paul often describes salvation he describes salvation as being in Christ Jesus we're being in we are in Christ because for Paul salvation is when you're in union with Christ salvation is when you're united to Jesus Christ by faith and you know Paul he loves this concept of union with Christ because he writes about it in almost every one of his letters and every time he writes about it Paul is emphasizing how precious our salvation is because of our union with Christ in fact he says that our union with Christ it came into being the moment we were effectually called by the Holy Spirit because when we were effectually called by the Holy Spirit the Catechism reminds us that the Holy Spirit he convinced us of our sin and misery he enlightened our minds in the knowledge of Christ he renewed our will he persuaded us and enabled us to embrace

Jesus Christ as he's freely offered to us in the gospel and in that moment of being effectually called in the gospel we were regenerated by the Spirit we were made alive by the Holy Spirit we were brought from death to life we were brought from death in Adam to life in Christ that's what regeneration is being brought from death to life darkness to light the dungeon to liberty and it's when we were effectually called and regenerated by the work of the Holy Spirit it's at that moment we were united to Jesus Christ we were brought to know this mystical marriage union between Christ and the Christian and you know the wonder of our salvation tonight is that through our union with Christ by the Holy Spirit we have received every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ Jesus all the blessings and promises of heaven they are ours tonight because of our union with Jesus Christ but you know

[ 7 : 27 ] Paul he not only emphasizes here what we have graciously received by being in union with Christ by the Holy Spirit Paul also emphasizes what we don't receive by being in union with Christ by the Holy Spirit because he says in verse 1 there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus there was condemnation for us when we were dead in sin when we were in union with the first Adam but now there is no condemnation because we've been made alive by the Holy Spirit and we've been united to Jesus Christ by faith my friend in Christ we have a new status there is no condemnation we are in Christ we have a new status and that new status is because we have a new relationship in fact we have a new relationship as Paul says with the law of God we have a new relationship with the law of God through our union with Christ by the Holy Spirit because the law it condemns us the law condemns us because of sin but through our union with Christ by the Holy Spirit

Paul says we have been set free from the condemnation of the law that's what he reminds us in verse 2 he says for the law of the spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death for God has done what the law weakened by the flesh could not do by sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin he condemned sin in the flesh in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not according to the flesh but according to the spirit you know my friend our hope and assurance of salvation tonight is not in what we've done for ourselves and not even what we're doing for ourselves our hope and assurance of salvation tonight is in what God has done for us and what God is still doing for us in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit we've been set free he says we've been set free from the condemnation of the law a law which we once despised and broke continually because of our sin and disobedience and we broke it continually because we were in union with the first Adam our catechism reminds us that when Adam sinned we fell with him we fell with him we sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression but the wonder of wonders is that tonight we are in union with Christ

God sent the last Adam and he condemned the last Adam in the flesh in the flesh of the last Adam and in order that the righteous requirement of the law would be met in order that condemnation could be served in order that we could be presented as righteous before a holy God in order that we would not receive condemnation God sent his own son and condemned him to death my friend this is our hope and our assurance of salvation tonight that because Jesus Christ received condemnation in the flesh of Adam we have received no condemnation through our union with Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit and you know it's because of the hope and assurance that we have through Christ you know it's because of that that we should be able to say with the hymn writer and you know I'm always going back to the same hymn when I think of these wonderful truths of scripture because they just sum up our hope and assurance you know how

Philip believes he said man of sorrows what a name for the son of God who came ruined sinners to reclaim hallelujah what a saviour you know that's what Paul is saying here he's saying bearing shame and scoffing rude in my place condemned he stood sealed my pardon with his blood hallelujah what a saviour guilty vile and helpless we spotless lamb of God was he full redemption can it be hallelujah what a saviour my friend this is our hope and assurance as a Christian tonight that there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus but you know Paul he doesn't stop there because he goes on in verses 5 to 8 and he gives he gives to us marks of the Christian so that we'll know whether or not we've received this great salvation because having explained this wonderful salvation of being in union with Christ by the Holy Spirit

Paul now wants us to examine ourselves and ask am I in Christ am I in Christ have I received this promised hope and assurance of no condemnation and Paul says in verse 5 he says those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh but those who live according to the spirit set their minds on the things of the spirit for to set the mind on the flesh is death but to set the mind on the spirit is life and peace for the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God for it does not submit to God's law indeed it cannot those who are in the flesh cannot please God and with this Paul he's asking us what's your mindset what's your mindset like what's your focus in life what's your priority in life who is Lord over your life who do you put first because to be Lord over your own life and to put yourself first that's evidence that you're still living according to the flesh and as Paul says to set your mind on the flesh is death it doesn't please God but what's pleasing to

[ 13 : 44 ] God says Paul and what's an evidence of your salvation is when we put the Lord first and when we make the Lord our priority by living according to the spirit and setting our minds on the things of the spirit and the things of the spirit of course they are Christ his word and his church my friend an evidence that we're in union with Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit is that Jesus is Lord over our life and he's first in everything an evidence of the spirit working in us is that we are seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and knowing then that all other things will be added unto us and evidence of the spirit is putting Jesus first and so we're considering four areas in which the Holy Spirit plays a key role in the life of the Christian so the first area is salvation the second is sonship sonship now look at verse 9

Paul says you however are not in the flesh but in the spirit if in fact the spirit of God dwells in you anyone who does not have the spirit of Christ does not belong to him but if Christ is in you although the body is dead because of sin the spirit is life because of righteousness and so having questioned our status of salvation and even encouraged us to do the same Paul very quickly reaffirms to us that as Christians we're not in the flesh but we're actually in the spirit he says you however are not in the flesh but in the spirit and he says we're in the spirit because the Holy Spirit dwells in us and because the Holy Spirit dwells in us we belong to Jesus we're in Christ Jesus we're in union with Christ by the Holy Spirit and because we're in Christ he says we're alive we've been made alive by the spirit and it's the same spirit says Paul who raised up Jesus

Christ from the dead it's that same spirit who dwells in you that's what he says in verse 11 if the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his spirit who dwells in you and it's because the Holy Spirit dwells in you you've been set free from the power of sin and death you're no longer enslaved to sin and Paul applies this to us by saying your freedom in Christ it should encourage you and enable you to put to death the deeds of the body your freedom in Christ should encourage you and enable you to put to death the deeds of the body I love the way the authorised worship translates this where Paul says that because of our freedom in Christ we should mortify the deeds of the body we should mortify the deeds of the body that's what he's saying in verses 13 for if you live according to the flesh you will die but if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live so we are to mortify the deeds of the body so that we will live you know it was John

Owen the Puritan he wrote that famous book the mortification of sin maybe you've read it maybe you've read the Puritan paperback version it's a brilliant book and John Owen he writes famously in that book the quote be killing sin or sin will be killing you and it's a very simple statement but also very powerful be killing sin or sin will be killing you and my friend because of our union with Christ and because we've been made alive by the Holy Spirit we are to be killing the very thing that brought us into an estate of death in the first place we're to be killing sin we're to put to death the deeds of the body we're to mortify the deeds of the flesh and we should be encouraged and enabled to do it says Paul in verse 15 because we have not received the spirit of slavery we are not bound by sin anymore we are free in Christ we're no longer enslaved to sin we're no longer bound by its power and its hold over our lives no says

Paul as Christians we have received the spirit of adoption we've been made alive and set free by the spirit we've been united to Jesus Christ and because we're in union with Jesus Christ the son of God we've received the spirit of adoption that's what he says in verse 15 for you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear but you have received the spirit of adoption as sons by whom we cry Abba Father and what Paul is saying is that we've received the spirit of adoption we've been numbered as the children of God where God is now our Father in heaven and he's our Father in heaven in whom we can come to in all our weakness and in all our brokenness and we're able to cry to him as Paul says Abba Father Abba Father and you know the word Abba it's just a

[ 19 : 27 ] Hebrew word for father so what literally Paul is saying is we've received the spirit of adoption as children by whom we can cry Father Father but the reason Paul wrote Father Father and when he wrote it originally he wrote it in first in Hebrew and then in Greek and the reason he wrote in both Hebrew and Greek was to remind us that there's no one to whom God cannot be a father there's no one whether Jew or Gentile there is no one in this world who cannot receive the spirit of adoption there's no one who cannot be made alive and set free by the spirit and united to Jesus Christ and made a child of God there's no one outside of God's reach there's no one who is unable to cry Father Father and my friend the beautiful thing about being the children of God is that

God is our father and Jesus is our elder brother and as children of our heavenly father Paul goes on to say that we are heirs of his inheritance we are heirs with God we're joint heirs with Christ and we're heirs of God because we're in union with Christ by the spirit we've received every spiritual blessing in heavenly places because we're in Christ Jesus and my friend our inheritance that Paul speaks about that is ours because of our union with the royal king of heaven and our inheritance Peter reminds us it's incorruptible it's undefiled it fadeth not away but it's been reserved in heaven for us and you know my friend in the midst of all that goes on in life with all the ups and all the downs what better hope and assurance to have than to know that God is your father Jesus is your saviour and elder brother and that you have a great inheritance awaiting you on the other side of the veil what better hope and assurance to have and you know that's what

Paul even reminds us in verse 18 he says for I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us you know by the encouragement and the enabling of the Holy Spirit we're not to look to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen because the things that are seen says Paul they're temporal but the things that are unseen they are eternal and so as we consider four areas in which the Holy Spirit plays a key role in the life of the Christian we see that the first is salvation the second is sonship and the third is supplication salvation sonship and supplication look at verse 19 he says for the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God for the creation was subjected to futility not willingly but because of him who subjected it in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God

Paul begins verse 19 by using the creation as this helpful illustration to remind us of the hope and assurance of the Christian because Paul says that like ourselves the creation has been groaning and it has been groaning since the fall of Adam but because of the salvation accomplished by Jesus Christ Paul says that the creation will also one day be set free from sin and decay and that freedom from sin and decay is the same freedom we will experience as the children of God but you know in order to emphasize the suffering of the creation and then the freedom from the suffering that awaits the creation and ourselves in order to emphasize it Paul uses the vivid illustration of the pains of childbirth he says in verse 22 we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now now I don't know how many of you watch the TV program called the midwife

I'm sure the men don't watch it at all but interestingly well they've been filming or they're currently filming over in Carlyway but even if you've never watched call the midwife or maybe you've seen or even some of you have experienced childbirth for yourself then you'll know that in those moments before a baby is born the pains of childbirth are increasing all the time and that excruciating pain it builds and builds and builds to a climax and then the child is born and once a child is born the pains of childbirth are over and there's this joy of holding a newborn baby and that's the vivid illustration Paul is presenting us Paul is reminding us that in this life there will be suffering and that suffering will build and build and build even right up until our death but one day he says we will be free from suffering one day the pain will be exchanged with joy which means that's our salvation tonight is not yet complete because the work of salvation it's amazing it involves the past the present and the future in salvation we're saved we're being saved and we will be saved therefore our salvation it will not be complete until our soul and body are reunited as at the resurrection on the last day and for that day says Paul we hope that's what we're hoping for look at what he says in verse 24 for in this hope we are saved the hope of the resurrection now hope that is seen is not hope for who hopes for what he sees but if we hope for what we do not see we wait for it with patience we wait for it with patience now the hope of the

[ 25 : 52 ] Christian is not an uncertain hope it's a sure hope in fact the writer to the Hebrews says that the hope of the Christian is Christ himself he's the anchor of our soul and he's sure and steadfast and in him and in him alone our hope is sure and steadfast but as those who have hope and assurance in the Lord Paul says we're to wait upon the Lord if our hope is in the Lord we're to wait upon the Lord and as those who wait upon the Lord we're to wait upon the Lord in prayer and supplication and what's remarkable is that the spirit not only gives to us hope and assurance of salvation Paul reminds us here that the spirit also gives to us hope and assurance in our supplication he says in verse 26 likewise the spirit helps us in our weakness for we do not know what to pray for as we ought but the spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words and he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the spirit because the spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of

God don't you just love that that in all the pains and difficulties of life with groanings and decay with illness and brokenness with heartache and sorrow despite all these things your union with Christ and the indwelling of the spirit it gives to you the hope and assurance that in your prayers and supplications you don't even need words you don't even need words because when you're at your lowest and your weakest when you're at your most vulnerable and you're waiting upon the Lord in prayer it's the Holy Spirit who's interceding on your behalf and as he intercedes the spirit he enables you to pray according to the will of God he enables you to submit to the will of God and my friend when you submit to the will of God through prayer and supplication Paul reminds us that we will know that all things will work together for good to those who are the called according to his purpose it's when we're brought to our lowest and that we're praying according to the will of God by the spirit that we know that the

Lord is in control and he's working all things together for good my friend despite all the struggles you may face in this life the purpose of God in your life is the completion of your salvation that's what it's all about he's begun the good work in you he began it even in eternity past and he will bring it on to completion at the day of Christ Jesus and you know that's what Paul he goes on to explain this is why the whole chapter is so wonderful to read together he goes on to explain in verses 29 and 30 that our salvation it began in the realms of eternity and our salvation it will be completed by God when our body and soul reunites in glorification at the resurrection that's what he says in verse 29 those whom he foreknew he also predestined and he predestined them to be conformed to the image of his son in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and those whom he predestined he also called he effectually called them and those who may call he also justified they're justified by faith and those who may justified he will one day glorify them he will one day glorify them my friend as the

Lord's people we have a wonderful hope and assurance because of our union with Christ by the Holy Spirit you have a wonderful hope and assurance but there's more there's more as we said there are four areas in which the Holy Spirit plays a key role in the life of the Christian the first is salvation the second is sonship the third is supplication and lastly there is separation salvation sonship supplication and separation look at verse 31 Paul says what then shall we say to these things if God is for us who can be against us he who did not spare his own son but gave him up for us all how will he not also with him graciously give us all things you know in the closing verses of this wonderful chapter having considered that our salvation is because of our union with Christ by the

Holy Spirit and that our sonship is because we've received the spirit of adoption and our supplication is through as Paul said the intercession of the spirit it's because of all this that Paul responds by asking all these you could say rhetorical questions about the wonder and glory of our hope and assurance in Jesus Christ he asks all these rhetorical questions he says in verse 31 what then shall we say to all these things if God is for us who can be against us he who did not spare his own son but gave him up for us all how will he not also with him graciously give us all things who shall bring any charge against God's elect it is God who justifies who is to condemn Christ Jesus is the one who died more than that who was raised who's at the right hand of God who indeed is interceding for us he asks another who shall separate us from the love of God in Christ shall tribulation no distress no persecution no famine no nakedness no danger no or sword no as it is written for your sake we're being killed all the day long we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered no he says in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us and it's with that having asked all these rhetorical questions and yet questions which are full of hope and full of assurance for the Christian Paul now says I am persuaded I am absolutely persuaded that in my salvation I am in union with Christ by the Holy Spirit I am persuaded that I have sonship in Christ by the spirit of adoption I am persuaded that I have supplication through Christ by the intercession of the

[ 32 : 24 ] Holy Spirit and because of all this my hope and assurance of salvation sonship and supplication in all this I am persuaded that nothing and no one will be able to separate me from the love of God in Christ Jesus my Lord this is the wonder and hope of our salvation he says I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor powers nor things present nor things to come neither height nor depth nor any other creature is able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord and you know my friend these verses are some of the most comforting words in the Bible because they remind us and they remind you that through your union with Christ by the Holy Spirit Christ lives in you this is the wonder of it he lives in you and because he lives in you his promise is true I will never leave you and I will never forsake you my friend you have hope and assurance that Christ is with you because he lives in you he lives in you by the Spirit and if he lives in you he will never leave you and he will never forsake you and the wonder of it is- because he lives in you you can say he's always with me he's always with me he's with me everywhere I go he's with me when I go to work he's with me when I go to the school he's with me when I go shopping he's with me when I go in my car but not only that because he lives in me he's with me when I face opposition for my faith he's with me when I go through illness he's with me when I experience sorrow he's with me when I'm confronted with things that seem too much for me to bear and he's with me because he lives in me by his

Holy Spirit his promise is faithful and true I will never leave you and I will never ever forsake you my friend Jesus Christ will never leave you and never forsake you because he lives in you by the Holy Spirit the Spirit and me it's all about Jesus my friend we have a great and glorious salvation because of the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives we have salvation because of our union with Christ by the Holy Spirit we have sonship because we've received the spirit of adoption we have supplication through the intercession of the Holy Spirit and we have the promise of no separation because Christ lives in me by his Holy Spirit what better hope and assurance to have in this life and even in death itself what better hope to have than this hope well may the Lord bless our study and his word to us let us pray

O Lord our gracious God we marvel at thy salvation that thou wouldest work in our hearts those who are the dust of the earth we bless thee O Lord and we praise thee that thou art the God of heaven and that the God of heaven looked upon us sinners such as we are we marvel Lord that we have been drawn to thyself that we have been united to Jesus Christ that we have been effectually called and regenerated that thou art the God who has begun that good work in us and who promises to bring it on to completion help us then we pray to have that wonderful hope and that great assurance that Jesus is with us every day of life and he's with us because he's in us he is Christ in us the hope of glory help us then we pray to keep walking in the spirit to keep being led by the spirit and through him through the work of the spirit in our lives that we would look ever to Jesus knowing that he is the author and he remains the finisher of our faith

Lord bless us in our weakness encourage us we ask keep us we pray and go before us for Jesus sake Amen we're going to bring our study or our service to our conclusion by singing to God's praise in Psalm 71 Psalm 71 page 310 Psalm 71 we're singing from the beginning down to the verse marked 5 O Lord my hope and confidence is placed in thee alone then let thy servant never be put to confusion and let me in thy righteousness from thee deliverance have cause me escape and incline thine ear unto me and me save and we're singing on down to the verse marked 5 of Psalm 71 to God's praise

O Lord my hope and confidence is placed in thee alone then let thy servant never be who took confusion and let me end thy righteousness from thee deliverance have cause me escape and find thine ear unto me and be saved be thou my dwelling rock to which

[ 38 : 55 ] I ever may resort thou thou thou gave command me to save or learn my rock and fort free me my God from wicked hands hands hands hands cruel and unjust for thou O Lord for thou dart my hope and from my youth my trust the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the

Holy Spirit be with you all now and forever more Amen