



Our Personal World War
Romans 7-8; Gal 5; 2 Pet 1 April 9, 2017

I. Introduction:

- A. We are in a series on the Holy Spirit called “Empowered”, and are learning together more about how the Spirit empowers us to live out the mission God has given us here together at MVC.
 - 1. Good Friday service is this coming Friday at 7PM – Join us as we remember what Jesus did for us on the cross and take Communion together!
 - 2. Easter Service will be next Sunday at our normal time 9:30. You still can pick up inviter cards at the Welcome Center and Next Steps Table.
 - a) Invitee – 1st step of a process in having a spiritual conversation with this person. Consider 2 things: inviting them early for coffee at the Café and sit with them so they do not feel alone. Then at some point after Easter follow up with them for coffee to see what God may be doing in their hearts!
 - b) Every one of us that calls MVC your home – you are a greeter next week! I want every one of us to welcome people you do not know as if you were welcoming them into your home! Because hopefully this will become their new home as part of the body of Christ!
- B. The 15th Century Devotional Writer Thomas a Kempis wrote something that rings so true to me today in 2017 “No conflict is so severe as his who labors to subdue himself!”
 - 1. The battle against my own desires and my own appetites, and my own affections and my own thoughts and my own attitudes and my own habits is the biggest battle in my life, it is my “personal world war” that is still raging in my life!
 - 2. Anybody else here feel the “personal world war” going on within them?

- C. Some of you might be saying to yourself right now, “Wait a minute, didn’t you tell us last week that with the new heart that God has given to us we have the capacity to obey God. And didn’t you say He has placed His Holy Spirit within us specifically to give us the power to obey God?” The answer is yes I did!
- D. But the truth at the end of Rom 7 must be considered here as well!
 - 1. Turn and read Rom 7:21-25
 - a) Note as I read that in v21b-22 that is the New Covenant of Ezek 36 & Jer 31 we talked about last week
 - 2. What he is saying is “While we are brand new creatures at the core of our being, with a brand new heart and the Holy Spirit within our hearts, we are still inseparably linked to a fallen flesh – that is our bodies which is bent on sinning!”
 - a) That is why we feel the “personal world war” going on within us!
 - 3. Now look at Rom 8:23
 - a) Read
 - b) Let me say it the Pat Peglow way – I am a saved person on the inside, but I am living in an unsaved body! Therefore, I am looking forward to the day when Jesus returns and I get a new saved body!
- So what do we do until then?

II. The war between the flesh and the Spirit

- A. First of all, recognize that God does not condemn the believer for this struggle; to have victory here we must start from a position of knowing that you are OK with God rather than trying to get OK with God. Listen to Rom 8:1
- B. Also, we need to be standing on the ground that we are fighting from a place of victory that has already been won rather than a place of trying to get the victory. We fight as victors rather than as victims! Read Rom 8:2
- C. 3rdly in the midst of the battle as we stand with a clear conscience before God as victors we need to walk by means of the Spirit who already lives within our new heart that longs to obey God!
 - 1. Listen to Rom 8:3-4
 - 2. Continue with Rom 8:8 – in the flesh is referring to those who are not saved, people who do not have the Spirit living in them.

3. Read v9 – Those who do have the Spirit of Christ living in them are characterized as being in the Spirit. As a matter of fact, He says if the Spirit does not live in you, you are not saved!
 4. In v10 he says what I said earlier: “We are saved people living in an unsaved body”. Read v10
 5. Now in verse 11 he says an amazing thing about us at this very moment experiencing the resurrection power of the Spirit of Christ giving life to our mortal bodies which is characterized by death and sin.
 - a) Before I read, what kind of bodies will we receive in the future resurrection? Immortal bodies, bodies that will never die!
 - b) But in this verse He is talking about a present ministry of the Spirit in our mortal bodies!
 - c) Read v11
 6. What he is saying here is that the same Holy Spirit who raised up Jesus from the dead, that is the very same Spirit who lives in us, and right now He is going to exercise resurrection power in our dead sinful bodies, so that we can live for Christ rather than being controlled by our fleshly bodies!
- D. Then in verse 12 and 13 he tells us what we are to do with these truths! “So then”
1. So then our obligation, our duty or responsibility in light of these amazing truths is not to live according to, in conformity with the things that our flesh seeks to get us to do, otherwise we will continue to live a life characterized by death and sin. Watch for this as I Read v 12-13a
 2. But rather live in agreement with, say “yes” to the Spirit within us and what the new heart longs to do then the Holy Spirit will put to death, put out of operation, will dismantle the deeds this body seeks for us to do and will fill us with the life of Christ Read v13b
- E. Let’s just quickly see this same battle through another angle by seeing how Paul talks about it in Gal 5. Turn 5:16. In Rom 8:12-13 He calls it “living according to the Spirit”, and here Paul refers it to as “walking by the Spirit” they are essentially the same thing!
1. Read v16
 2. In Rom 8 he said when you live according to the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body/flesh, here he says when you walk by the Spirit you will not carry out the desire of the flesh!
 - a) Read v17-18 as here we see the personal world war!

3. Then he defines for us what the deeds of the flesh are: Read 19-21
 4. Finally, he defines for us what the fruit of the Spirit is for those who walk by means of the Spirit! Read v22-23.
- We will come back and expand on this in 2 weeks when we see what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit and then following week further into how to walk by the Spirit, but in closing for now let's look at some

III. Practical insight on walking by the Spirit

- A. Simply - to live in accordance with the Spirit – means to say yes to the Spirit, and to walk by the Spirit means to walk depending upon Him!
 1. We say yes to His desires and will and we depend upon Him rather than ourselves to put out of operation the deeds of the flesh and to fill us with the life of Christ!
- B. “So there are basically 2 questions that I test myself with to see if I am walking by the Spirit!
 1. The 1st question is - Who is the object of my trust, the Holy Spirit or myself? Am I depending upon the power, love, wisdom, passion, the life, the victory, the peace, the purity, the ability to forgive, control over myself, etc. etc. to come from me or from another – the person of the Holy Spirit to provide those in and through me!
 2. The 2nd Question is “Am I trusting or trying?” “Am I trusting the Holy Spirit right now to work a miracle in and through me or am I trying real hard to do and be what God wants me to be?”
 3. The way you answer those 2 questions is a great indicator of if you are walking by the Spirit or the flesh.
- C. One last clarification – Walking by the Spirit does not mean passivity on my part so that I do nothing until I feel the Holy Spirit move!
 1. Turn to Read 2 Pet 1:2-4 –
 2. God has already granted us everything we need for life and godliness by His divine power!
 3. But listen to what Peter says next – Read v5a-c.
 - a) Applying all diligence to faith. It all starts with faith; we are saved by faith, and we walk by faith as Christians.

- b) And he says we are to apply all diligence to our faith! In the Greek that is an idiom that literally means –to do one’s very best, to make every effort, to try as hard as possible!
- 4. Is this a contradiction to everything I have said today? Not at all – the foundation here is faith! It all starts with faith, and in this passage we are to work hard to add to our faith moral excellence and knowledge and self-control and godliness, etc.
- 5. So, I step out in obedience, giving my all in doing what God has called me to do. But from the very first step I am doing it all in dependence upon the Holy Spirit that He is at work in me to give it my all and that He will produce the miracle of the life of Christ through me!
- D. So the next time that anxious thought comes or that lustful thought or negative thought or attitude, or that angry response pops up its ugly head, your first response should be to rely upon the person of the Holy Spirit to work a miracle in and through you as you step in the direction of applying God’s Word regarding those different areas!