

Romans (8:9-11)

Two Resurrections

Part 30 – March 27, 2005

THE BIG PICTURE



This is the “Big Picture” at His Place: Christ as *Savior*. Not just prophet, teacher, or good example. But Christ *crucified* (to cleanse our sin) and *resurrected* (to confirm his authority).

The brass plaque says: Be part of the *big picture*.

All of these individual photos are random His Place events and people (not just donors). You see? *Together* we make up the body of Christ! As we practice *Christ-likeness*, we offer this valley a *mosaic of truth* that increasingly reveals the face of Jesus.

Q: Ever wonder how God uses you to reveal Christ to others?

When we step back in Heaven, we’ll get a clear perspective. You’ll see the vital role God reserved for you in his body. This is why it’s no good to *demand* others to measure up to my *personal* expectations ... my perspective is just too limited.

Our duty is to display this *mosaic of truth* by supporting, encouraging, and assisting each other’s faith; *and* by joyfully cultivating our own growth in a faith that’s first God-honoring, and then loving, accepting, & forgiving. This is “Spirit-filled” faith, and Paul talks about it today:

You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you. – Romans 8:9-11 NIV

YOU, HOWEVER

Q: What makes someone a *real* Christian? Is it whether you are baptized or confirmed? Is it the church/denomination you belong to? Is it because you attended to Sunday school? What makes a believer different - on the inside?

[In Romans 8:8 Paul said] Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. – Romans 8:8 NIV

Now, in 8:9 Paul starts with: “You, however” and then goes on to describe five ways that those “not-controlled by the sinful nature” are different from unbelievers or artificial believers. It offers us an excellent Easter self-examination.

THE SPIRIT IS IN ME

Verse nine is very clear about what makes someone a Christian:

You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. – Romans 8:9a NIV

So, it's not dogma, doctrine, or documentation; the foremost difference is whether or not the presence of God dwells in you.

1. [So, the first difference is that] God's Spirit is in me.

Q: How do I figure out if the he lives (dwells) in me?

The word used for "lives in" (oikem) comes from the word for house (oikos). The implication is that the Spirit takes up *residence* in you. You are his home. This makes it simple for us, because there are two very obvious things that take place when someone makes our house their home:

- A. There is a new closeness - as we talk and interact.
- B. There is a new familiarity - as I'm becoming known.

If God's Spirit is really living in me, I will experience an ever-increasing awareness of his nearness, both in proximity (as my aloneness fades) and relationally (as we interact). If I'm not growing in intimacy (knowing and being known) or in the security of his company, something is profoundly wrong.

I AM IN THE SPIRIT

There's something else that happens when someone moves in:

- C. There is a new influence - as they affect our life.

You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit ... – Romans 8:9a NIV

To be "controlled" by the Spirit doesn't mean we give up our free will; it means he becomes the predominant influence. When salvation is a *reality*, we have a new desire to honor God by the way we live. And when we fail, we have a sense of remorse that leads to repentance.

The NIV uses "*controlled by*"; others say, "*In the Spirit*," but they're saying the same thing: In the *dominion* of God's Spirit.

2. [So, not only is God's Spirit in me] I am in God's Spirit.

Think of pushing a cup down into a sink of water. The water fully surrounds and envelops the cup; and ultimately, if you go deep enough the water pours in over the edge, immersing the cup. Not only is God's Spirit living intimately inside of me, but I am immersed in the power and dominion (will) of his Spirit. In this way, he is in me and I am in him.

I BELONG TO CHRIST

[Then Paul says] And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. – Romans 8:9b NIV

Q: Why does Paul call the Holy Spirit, the “Spirit of Christ”?

In John 14, Jesus said these classic words about the Spirit:

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever – the Spirit of truth ... he lives with you and will be in you. – John 14:16-17 NIV

But have you ever noticed what Jesus adds in the next verse?

I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. – John 14:18 NIV

The Holy Spirit *is* Jesus Christ *is* the Lord God. We can't separate them. This is why Paul uses all three terms:

- “Spirit,” “God's Spirit,” and “Spirit of Christ.”

Jesus himself and God himself take up residence in you through their Holy Spirit. This is why Jesus said:

And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” – *Matthew 28:20*
NIV

Christ has bought us with his blood, and inhabits us by his Spirit. That's why Paul uses the phrase, “*belong to Christ*”:

And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. –
Romans 8:9 NIV

3. [So, the third difference is that] I *belong* to Christ.

Not like a rich man who buys a summer house and visits in his off hours, but like a family who saves to own and then celebrates their permanent residence.

- Jesus vacated the tomb in order to inhabit my heart

This is why Paul declares:

But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. – Romans 8:10 NIV

4. [This is the fourth difference] My spirit is *truly* alive

Inexpressible joy and unshakable hope continue to build and grow in those who know that their creator resides *in* them, restores them when they fail, and refuses to condemn them.

TWO RESURRECTIONS

And then comes the ultimate gift ever conceived of. In verse eleven Paul describes *two* resurrections. To illustrate the first resurrection, our own Greg Fralic has sent us a greeting from the holy lands at what many consider to be the tomb that Jesus rose from.

[Video: Greg at the Garden Tomb]

Q: Greg, what exactly did you see in the tomb? Nothing? It's empty?

Q: Was this emptiness the highlight of your trip so far?

Q: Do a lot of tourists come to see the emptiness?

So, if there was something to see, there'd really be nothing to see ... but since there's *nothing* to see, that's a "must see"?!

Paul now talks about two resurrections: Jesus' and *yours*.

And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you. – Romans 8:11 NIV

5. [This is the fifth difference] I will become immortal.

Q: Do you know the difference between eternal and immortal?

A: *Eternal* is to have no beginning or end (that's God); *immortal* is to have a mortal beginning, but ultimately no end.

That's the promise of Easter (the ultimate gift) immortal life in the eternal realm in perfect intimacy with our Creator-Father. But the promise comes with a condition: you must be occupied, influenced, and owned by the one who redeemed you.

Q: Does the Spirit of Christ dwell in you?

It's as simple, yet as challenging as, as repenting (turning from sin and self-direction) and receiving Christ as Lord of your life and occupant of your heart.

If you want that, then pray this prayer:

Merciful and mighty Jesus Christ, I choose to turn from the things that bring guilt and shame, and place my trust in your acceptance and forgiveness. Come into my heart and help me to turn from self-reliance to faithful obedience. Amen.