

# Enjoying our Journey with In the Holy Spirit (Part 2)

By Tom and Alberta Ecker

As we said previously, Jesus **sent the Holy Spirit** to the Apostles and disciples to **empower and enable** them to testify and witness. **God the Father sent God the Holy Spirit from Jesus for our benefit.** The Holy Spirit was **sent** to give us **new life, teach** us how to live in our new life **and empower** us to be **faithful** and **obedient** in our new life. **God the Holy Spirit** is the one who **Leads**, who **Counsels** and who **Directs** the Body of Christ (the Church) here on earth. As we begin to focus and reflect on **Romans 8** let's recap a few verses from Paul that bring us to the conclusion found in **Romans 8:1** Then we can go on to understand how we journey with **God the Holy Spirit** as He **Leads Counsels** and **Directs (LCD).....**

## OPENING PRAYER

### Romans 6:3-4

*<sup>3</sup> Or don't you know that all of us who were **baptized into Christ Jesus** were baptized into **his death**? <sup>4</sup> We were therefore **buried** with him through baptism **into death** in order that, just as **Christ was raised** from the dead through the glory of the Father, **we too may live a new life.***

Paul wants us to understand that what Christ went through we vicariously go through, which means **we spiritually experience and are spiritually joined** to his life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension and intercession through our baptism. We understand now that our **baptism** into Christ Jesus' **death** means the **burial and death** of the **old life**. This is the beginning (not the end) of our **personal** and **subjective transformation** and **participation** in Christ...

### Romans 6:11-12 & 14

***11 In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. 14 For sin shall not be your master,***

We learned that sin is no longer our master because we are dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. The scriptures show that we are not **free from our obligation** to live this **new life** that is now **Lead** and **Counseled** and **Directed** (LCD) by the Spirit of life. The **wonderful truth is** that now we are free to serve in the **new way of the Spirit**.

**Romans 7:6** *6 But now, by **dying** to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.*

**MAJOR KEY:** *in Christ Jesus and through **our baptism** into **His death**, we go from being "**law bound**" to being "**Spirit led.**"*

*[We share the following points about "our role" because this has been confusing to some people over the last few years.]*

From our church booklet, **The God Revealed in Jesus Christ.** *Beginning on page 11*

**So what is our role?** We **may freely choose to respond** to the gospel with thankful and hopeful hearts, **encouraging and building** one another up in the Body of Christ.

**[Our new life in Christ Jesus is a matter of **choice** and a matter of **response**. As we **receive and grow in grace** we celebrate this grace in **fellowship together.**]**

*Continuing on Page 11 under **Personal Response***

We must **take care not to confuse** what is **true in Jesus** for all humanity with each **individual's personal response** to the truth.

We do not “decide for Christ” in the sense that our personal decision causes our salvation. Rather, we accept what is ours **already in Christ**, placing our trust in the one who has already trusted for us **in our place**.

When we **personally believe** the gospel, which is **to accept** what is already ours by grace, we **begin to participate** in God’s love for us. We **begin to live out** the new creation that God, prior to our ever believing, made us to be in Christ

[We **begin** to realize we have a **two-way relationship of reconciliation** with God and each other. **Major Key:** There is the **general**, or **objective**, truth for all humanity in Jesus, and also the **personal**, or **subjective**, **experience** of this truth.]

**Objectively all people**, past, present and future, are justified already; all are sanctified; all are reconciled **in Jesus** in and through what he has done as their **representative and substitute**. **In Jesus, objectively**, the old self has **already** passed away; **in him, objectively**, we are already the new humanity, represented as such by him before and with God. [This is the picture of that one-way **objective reconciliation** on the part of our loving Triune God **toward** all humanity; **this is not** the picture of our **subjective response** and **experience** of reconciliation].

What is **objectively** true for everyone must be **subjectively and personally received** and **experienced through repentance and faith**. To be reconciled, and yet **not know and experience it, is to continue to live as though one is not reconciled**. Having one’s eyes **opened by the Spirit** to this reconciliation, **choosing to embrace it**, and then **experiencing it does not cause** the reconciliation to occur, but **it does make it personally realized**

Now we can turn to **Romans 8:1**. We have considered the implications of what we **have learned** and how we have **come to participate and be active** in the Body of Christ. Now we can go on to understand how we **journey with the Holy Spirit** as He **Leads, Counsels** and **Directs**.

The Chapter title for Romans 8 is.....

### ***Life Through the Spirit***

**8:1** *Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,*

No condemnation because **through our baptism** into the death of Christ Jesus and our resurrection in him to our new life we **now personally realize and experience our reconciliation** to God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**2** *because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.*

By the Spirit of life we now live in the new way of the Spirit, **set free to experience our new life** as those who are **set free from the law of sin and death.**

**3** *For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature,*

When we **were controlled** by our sinful nature, the law was powerless and **could not set us free** from our sinful nature it **could only tell us what our sinful nature was prone to do.**

Continue verse 3 *God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man,*

By coming in the likeness of sinful man taking on the **sinful nature of the first Adam** and **overcoming that sinful nature through the power of the Holy Spirit**, Jesus in effect condemned sin in sinful man. We are no longer helpless creatures unable to overcome the sinful nature we were born with under the first Adam, we **now have been born from above** and **we live in the new way of the Spirit** as we **share in** the very nature of God.

**4** *in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.*

What righteous requirements of the law does God want to be fully met in us? **There are two righteous requirements, 1)** Love the Lord your God with all your heart, your soul, your spirit, your mind and your strength, and **2)** Love your neighbor as yourself. We meet these righteous requirements because **we do not live according** to the sinful nature **but according (harmony and agreement with)** to the Spirit. We now begin to experience new activities of service that flow from **new motives**. These **new activities of service** will spring from our life in the Spirit. Our new life in the Spirit **is grounded in** the very **nature of God** whose every action and motive goes out in Love. Now we are enabled to yield and obey the Leading, Counseling and Direction of the Holy Spirit.

**5** *Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.*

*"Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires."* This clearly pictures those who **are not responding** and **are not experiencing** the **reconciliation** that is theirs in Christ Jesus. *"Those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires."* We now have a new mind set; we **are experiencing that reconciliation** that is ours in Christ Jesus. We can **now experience** the mind and thus the mindset of Jesus. We now have the desire to **set our mind on and be mindful of** the things of the Spirit.

**6** *The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;*

The mind of a sinful man/woman **is living in death**, his/her mind is **not experiencing life and peace and reconciliation**. This mind is indulging the whims and desires of the flesh and unless the mind is transformed by a new mindset the man/woman will not experience reconciliation. However the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace. Does this mean mind control, like suddenly we become unthinking, controlled robots? No way! The Spirit we are blessed to receive is the **Spirit of self-control**. Now we **are able to control ourselves** in ways that we never could. Over time, our Spirit led transformed minds are able to grasp our new life as we grow in grace and knowledge and live in peace.

*7 the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. 8 Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.*

Those **controlled** by the sinful nature are, as we would say in the vernacular "out of control." They **have no way** for the self **to be free** from **the control** of the sinful nature, instead they are controlled by the sinful nature and they cannot please God.

*9 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**.*

Thank God that we are **controlled** by the Spirit and the Spirit we have **been given** is not a controlling spirit but rather the spirit of power and of love and of self-control. This is the Spirit that **enables** and **empowers** us to control our sinful nature so that we are **no longer** controlled by the sinful nature.

*10 But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your **(redeemed & reconciled)** spirit is alive because of righteousness.*

Right here we can bring out some Trinitarian teaching by Torrance. This will further clarify why there is **no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus** and why **our spirit is alive because of righteousness**. From "An Introduction To Torrance Theology" page 52.

Thus, every baptism that the Church does in the Trinitarian name is finally at its greatest depth **a union with and participation in Christ's own baptism in the Jordan and Christ's own baptism in the cross and (His own) resurrection**. Torrance views all of the earthly life and ministry of the incarnate savior in terms of this **blessed exchange**. He thinks out the **doctrine of ministry** and the **gifts of the Spirit** also in terms of this **blessed exchange** and our **union with and participation in it via the Holy Spirit**. At its core the **blessed exchange** involved in Christ's atoning **reconciliation** tells us that the **Triune God** has **loved us to the uttermost** and has entered the **dark depth of our sinful humanity** within this fallen creation in order to make **our** misery, shame, sin, guilt, alienation and godlessness **his own, substituting himself for us**, thwarting evil, **forgiving, reconciling, redeeming** and **restoring us to union and communion** with the **Triune God** who loves us.....

**What are the implications of what we have been taught and how does this transformation affect you and me?**

- 1) Our **baptism** into Christ Jesus' **death** means the **burial and death** of the **old life**. This is the beginning (not the end) of our **personal** and **subjective transformation** and **participation** in Christ.
- 2) We must **take care not to confuse** what is **true in Jesus** for **all humanity** with each **individual's personal response** to the truth.
- 3) What is **objectively** true for everyone must be **subjectively and personally received** and **experienced through repentance and faith.**
- 4) **Romans 8, verse 1** instructs us on "no condemnation" because **through our baptism** into the death of Christ Jesus and our resurrection in him to our new life we **now personally realize and experience our reconciliation** to God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- 5) **Romans 8, verse 4** teaches that we meet the righteous requirements (of the law) because **we do not live according** to the sinful nature **but according to (that is in harmony and agreement with)** the Spirit.
- 6) We now begin to *experience* **new activities** of service that flow from **new motives**.
- 7) Our new life in the Spirit **is grounded in** the very **nature of God** whose *every* action and motive goes out in Love.
- 8) **Romans 8:5** clearly pictures those who **are not responding** and **are not experiencing** the **reconciliation** that is theirs in Christ Jesus.
- 9) **Romans 8:6** shows that over time our Spirit led transformed minds **are able to grasp** our new life as we grow in grace and knowledge and live in peace.
- 10) **Romans 8:9** leads us to thank God that we are **controlled** by the Spirit and the Spirit we have **been given** is not a controlling spirit but rather the spirit of power and of love and of **self-control**. This is the Spirit that **enables** and **empowers** us to **control our sinful nature** so that we are **no longer controlled** by the sinful nature.

- 11) Every baptism that the Church does in the Trinitarian name is finally at its greatest depth **a union with and participation in Christ's own baptism in the Jordan and Christ's own baptism in the cross and (His own) resurrection.**
- 12) The **Blessed Exchange** at its core is the amazing reality of Jesus **having entered** into humanity (an incarnation that was past, is present and continues forever) and **substituting himself for us**, thwarting evil, **forgiving, reconciling, redeeming** and **restoring us to union and communion** with the **Triune God** who loves us...