



Romans 8 Pt. 3: Alive in Christ

Romans 8:10-13 *“But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. 11 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 because of his Spirit who lives in you. 12 Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. 13 For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.”*

As always God is the one who will show His word in its fullness to us. I tend to read passages from all over the Bible at the same time. I’m a Bible junkie of sorts. Today I was reading in Job 11. There are a few friends of Job who are telling this stricken man why he is stricken. Yet, as I read this, I can see Romans 8 being played out in real time. Job says he is righteous. One of these friends named Zophar disagrees.

Job 11:13-15 *“Yet if you devote your heart to him and stretch out your hands to him, 14 if you put away the sin that is in your hand and allow no evil to dwell in your tent, 15 then, free of fault, you will lift up your face; you will stand firm and without fear.”*

Are you in Christ Jesus? Job did not have the Christ to save him. Where was his hope found? Was it in the words of friends? Did he have a Bible? Job had only one thing to hope in: God. Yet, it looked like God had judged or abandoned him. It struck me that our faith in God has an easier path than Job because Jesus sacrificed Himself for us. We know! We have the comforting words from God in the Bible. We have it easier to believe. Job could only follow the

unseen God with faith alone. God's love and kindness alone. He had no law or church tradition to guide his walk.

The story of Job is the story of Paul in so many ways. Paul believed in God. He did not have a hope in the Christ. Paul's whole world was wrapped up in Parasitical laws and traditions loosely based on the Old Testament. When Paul was blinded on the Damascus Road, who saved him? What happened to his faith that day? Yet, on that very same road the law-abiding Paul met the Christ. The Messiah that opened his eyes and his heart to true faith. A faith that listened, learned, and followed the one true God. Christ Jesus has saved us all from the penalty of the law. The new law states that we have the Spirit of Christ is in us now. It's something Job never had to hold on to.

The Spirit gives life because of righteousness. What is that? Righteousness means "it's morally right and justified in the sight of God." In English, Romans 8:10-13 is telling us that we were destined to die under the law. Jesus sent the Spirit to live within us. This Spirit raises things from the dead. He hovered over a dead world and brought life. He hovered over Jesus' dead body and raised it to life. We are dead to sin, but alive in Christ by the Spirit of God. Paul's uses the word righteousness because God approved of what Christ Jesus offered Him. The actions of Jesus and the Spirit were morally right and justified in the eyes of God the Father.

This is what makes these verses so powerful and full of hope. Paul lived under the heavy burden of the Law. Job could only guess why God had allowed him to be stricken. Yet, we are protected from God's judgment in Christ. How do we know we are in Christ? You are in Christ if you have the Spirit of Christ. Those who love the Bible, church, and all the good things of God are in Christ. Apologists love to argue with a Bible critic named Bart Ehrman. Many of Ehrman's

philosophies on the Bible are wild and nonsensical to the theologian. Why? It's because a person with the Spirit of God would see the Bible Gods way, not the worlds way.

People love to speculate on the words in the Bible. Why did Paul use the words *life* and *death*? Are they a direct meaning or an allegory? What is Paul really saying? Is this the hidden meaning from God or a crazy writer? Yet, to be alive in Christ means you understand Gods way, His words, and His action. To be fair to Job, he did not have the robust theology we have today? Yet, he was just trying to understand God's actions. Paul spent years doing the very same thing. It makes sense that in the end Job did not denounce God. Paul (in Romans 8) does that same thing. God's love surpasses the law that the Pharisees held dear. For both men: where is our hope in God found? It's in the Spirit of the Christ. We become alive to the truth and alive to the hope in the Christ. It's something the flesh and the law could not do.

Romans 5:4-5 *“But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.”*