

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Fall Term of 2017**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CRUCIAL REVELATION OF LIFE IN THE SCRIPTURES**

Message Twelve

**The Key to Being an Overcomer—
the Law of the Spirit of Life for the Body of Christ**

Scripture Reading: Rom. 6:6; 7:15—8:13; 12:1-2

- I. The key to being an overcomer is the law of the Spirit of life in Romans 8, a chapter for desperate seekers—7:24—8:2, 28-29; Psa. 105:4:**
- A. Romans 7 is the experience of being “in the flesh”; Romans 8 is the experience of being “in the spirit” (the divine Spirit dwelling in our human spirit and these two mingled together to be one spirit)—vv. 4, 9-10, 16; 1 Cor. 6:17; 2 Tim. 4:22.
 - B. The enjoyment of the law of the Spirit of life in Romans 8 ushers us into the reality of the Body of Christ in Romans 12; this law operates within us as we live in the Body and for the Body—8:2, 28-29; 12:1-2, 11; Phil. 1:19.
- II. In order to experience the indwelling Christ as the law of the Spirit of life, we need to see the three lives and four laws in Romans 7 and 8:**
- A. The created human life with the law of good is in our soul; this law derives from the natural human life, that is, from man himself—7:21-23; Gen. 1:31; Eccl. 7:29.
 - B. The evil satanic life with the law of sin and of death is in our flesh; this law derives from Satan, who as sin dwells in the believers’ flesh—Rom. 6:6; 7:15-20, 23-24; 1 John 3:10; John 8:44; Matt. 13:38; 23:33; 3:7; Rom. 3:13.
 - C. The uncreated divine life with the law of the Spirit of life is in our human spirit; this law derives from God, who as the Spirit dwells in man’s spirit—8:2, 9-10, 16; John 1:4; 10:10b; 14:6a; 1 Cor. 15:45b.
 - D. These three parties with the three laws are now present in the believer in much the same way that they (God, man, and Satan) were present in the garden of Eden (Gen. 3).
 - E. In addition to these three laws within the believer, there is the law of God outside of him—Rom. 7:22, 25.
- III. The subject of Romans 8 is the law of the Spirit of life:**
- A. Every life has a law and even is a law; God’s life is the highest life, and the law of this life is the highest law—cf. John 1:4-5; 12:24; 14:6a; 10:10b; 1 Cor. 15:45b.
 - B. The Triune God has been processed through incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension to become the law of the Spirit of life installed in our spirit as a “scientific” law, an automatic principle; this is one of the biggest discoveries, even recoveries, in God’s economy—Rom. 8:2-3, 10-11, 34, 16.
 - C. The law of the Spirit of life, the compound Spirit, frees us from the law of sin and of death, solving for us the problem of sin and death—v. 2a; Phil. 1:19.
 - D. The law of the Spirit of life is the spontaneous power of the divine life; it is the natural characteristic and the innate, automatic function of the divine life—Rom. 8:2; Phil. 2:13; Ezek. 36:26-27; Prov. 30:18-19; Isa. 40:28-31; Heb. 12:2a; Phil. 4:13; Col. 1:28-29.

- E. The processed Triune God as the life-giving Spirit installed into our spirit may be likened to electricity; God's operation as the law of the divine "electricity" within us requires our cooperation to "switch on" this law—Phil. 2:12-13.
- F. While we remain in touch with the Lord, staying in contact with Him, the law of the Spirit of life works automatically, spontaneously, and effortlessly to dispense God as life into our being and to overcome the law of sin and of death—Rom. 8:10, 6, 11:
 - 1. We need to cease from our own struggling and striving—Gal. 2:20a; Rom. 7:15-20:
 - a. If we have not seen that sin is a law and that our will can never overcome this law, we are trapped in Romans 7; we will never arrive at Romans 8.
 - b. Paul willed again and again, but the result was only repeated failure; the best that a man can do is to make resolutions—7:18.
 - c. When sin is dormant within us, it is merely sin, but when it is aroused in us by our willing to do the good, it becomes "the evil"—"I find then the law with me who wills to do the good, that is, the evil is present with me"—v. 21.
 - d. Instead of willing, we should set our mind on the spirit and walk according to the spirit, looking away unto Jesus—8:6, 4; Phil. 2:13; Heb. 12:1-2.
 - 2. In order to live in our spirit, we need to take time to behold the Lord, praying to fellowship with Jesus to bathe in His countenance, to be saturated with His beauty, and to radiate His excellence—Psa. 27:8; 105:4; *Hymns*, #784.
 - 3. We need to cooperate with the indwelling, installed, automatic, and inner-operating God by prayer and by having a spirit of dependence, thus maintaining our fellowship with the Lord of life and the Lord of work—1 Thes. 5:17; Eph. 6:17-18.
 - 4. We need to care for the sense of life in our spirit to remain in the fellowship of life, the flowing of the divine life, for the operation of the law of the Spirit of life—Rom. 8:6, 16; 1 John 1:2-3, 6-7; Mal. 2:15-16:
 - a. The sense of life, on the negative side, is the feeling of death—weakness, emptiness, uneasiness, restlessness, depression, dryness, darkness, pain, etc.—Rom. 8:6a.
 - b. The sense of life, on the positive side, is the feeling of life and peace—strength, satisfaction, peace, rest, release, livingness, watering, brightness, comfort, etc.—v. 6b.
 - c. The sense of life is related to the consciousness of the conscience according to the life of God and the reality in Jesus—Eph. 4:18-21.

IV. In order to live by the law of the Spirit of life in our spirit, we must see what the flesh is—cf. Rom. 8:6, 13:

- A. The flesh is the corrupted, polluted, and transmuted body:
 - 1. Man's body was originally pure, but through man's fall Satan injected himself into man, and man's body has become the flesh—Gen. 3:6; Rom. 7:18a.
 - 2. Our body is "the body of sin" (6:6) and "the body of this death" (7:24); the body of sin is very active and full of strength in sinning against God, and the body of this death is weak and powerless in acting to please God (v. 18).
 - 3. As long as we are still living, until the day of our redemption, the body of sin and death is always with us—cf. 8:23.
 - 4. The word *flesh* refers also to our entire fallen being; man is totally flesh because the fallen being today is under the dominion of the fallen flesh—3:20; Gen. 6:3a.
 - 5. The flesh is the "meeting hall" of sin, death, and Satan; the flesh is a hopeless case and can never be improved—Rom. 7:17-18, 21; cf. John 17:15:
 - a. The flesh is at enmity with God and is unable to be subject to the law of God.
 - b. The flesh can never please God—Rom. 8:7-8.

B. Sin is Satan himself in our flesh:

1. Sin can deceive us, kill us (7:11), lord it over us, that is, have dominion over us (6:12, 14), and cause us to do things against our will (7:17, 20); all these activities show that sin is a living person.
2. Sin is the evil nature of Satan, the evil one, who, having injected himself into man through Adam's fall, has now become the very sinful nature dwelling, acting, and working in fallen man—cf. Matt. 16:22-23.
3. In Galatians 2:20 Paul says, "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me"; in Romans 7:17 he says, "It is no longer I...but sin that dwells in me," showing that sin is another person within us.
4. In our flesh no good thing dwells, because the flesh is fully possessed, taken over, by Satan as sin—v. 18a.

V. For the sake of His economy, God in His wisdom and sovereignty uses our sinful, ugly flesh to force us to turn to our spirit so that we may live by the law of the Spirit of life and gain more of the Spirit—8:2:

A. We are either in the spirit or in the flesh; there is no third place for us to be—vv. 4-13.

B. Judicially speaking, both Satan and our flesh were condemned once for all on the cross (v. 3; John 3:14; Heb. 2:14; 2 Cor. 5:21), but God allowed the flesh to remain with us to help us and force us to turn to Christ in our spirit and have no more confidence in the flesh (Phil. 3:3):

1. Without the help rendered by the sinful, ugly flesh, we would not be as desperate to gain the Lord or to have Him wrought into us.
2. Our goal may be holiness, spirituality, or victory, but God's goal is to work Himself into us; often, when we are in a difficult situation, we are more open to the Lord, more willing to turn to Him, and more willing to allow Him to work Himself into us—Rom. 8:28-29.
3. Our hardships, defeats, failures, and disappointments force us to realize that there is no hope in the flesh; the flesh is good only to force us to turn to Christ in our spirit, to make us desperate to get into the spirit, and to keep us watchful to stay in the spirit—Matt. 26:41; Eph. 6:17-18.
4. The Lord does not care for whether or not we have a victory; the Lord cares for only one thing—that we gain Christ as the Spirit—Phil. 3:8; 2 Cor. 3:18.

VI. Today we need to take care of one thing—walking according to the spirit to gain, to win, Christ as the Spirit—Rom. 8:4; Phil. 3:8; Rom. 10:12-13; Eph. 6:17-18:

A. Our flesh is a compound, compounded with sin, death, and Satan; our spirit is also a compound, compounded with Christ, the Spirit, and grace—2 Tim. 4:22; Rom. 8:16; Gal. 6:18.

B. Only the persons who walk according to the spirit can be the proper members for the building up of a local church; if we do not have such a walk, sooner or later we will be a trouble to our local church—5:16-26.

VII. Our enjoyment of the indwelling Spirit as the automatic law of the divine life is in the Body of Christ and for the Body of Christ with the goal of making us the same as God is in life, nature, and expression but not in the Godhead and of constituting us the members of the Body of Christ with all kinds of functions—Rom. 8:2, 28-29; 12:1-2; Phil. 1:19; Eph. 4:11-12, 16.