



The last couple of days I have asked Father God if there was a particular message He wanted me to give His people at this time when we celebrate Jesus' death and resurrection. This morning, I awoke with Romans 8:11 on my heart.

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.
Romans 8:11 (NKJV)

In chapter 7 Paul talked a lot about how he did things that he did not want to do and seemed unable to control it. He talked about two different natures, the physical or carnal nature and the spiritual nature. The physical or carnal nature comes from our soul, where our mind, emotions and fleshly desires are in control of what we do. The spiritual nature comes from our spirit which is in constant communion with the Spirit of God.

Chapter 8 in Romans contrasts these two different natures and how through the power of God it is possible to live with our spiritual nature in control. When we allow the Spirit of God, who lives in us because we are believers, to have control, then we live a different way. Paul had to learn this, just like we must learn it. More often than not, it is not an easy task to give up control of our lives to God. Chapter 7 tells of the struggles in this pursuit.

The first thing we must understand and believe is that it is possible to leave the old way of living behind and to allow God to be in control of our lives. Paul wanted his readers to think about the power it took to bring Jesus back from the dead. Jesus had died, been laid in the tomb with a huge stone rock put in front of the outside entrance, so if by chance, Jesus would come back to life, He could not escape the tomb.

Glory be to God and the power He used to raise Jesus from the dead, and to open up the tomb so all would see and believe. It is that same power that enables us to live a life like Jesus. Yet, today, sin is rampant everywhere around us. We see Christian leaders falling because the flesh has controlled them instead of their spirit.

We have been taught and believed for centuries that the world was just going to get worse and worse until Jesus came back to rescue us. Many believe there is nothing that can be done about the evil, so we hide from it. We run from it. We live our lives as much as possible, ignoring the level of evil that exists around us.

The ungodly are seemingly taking over every aspect of life around us and we let them. People in “church” settings are now talking about a new doctrine. They believe we have misinterpreted the doctrine of the rapture where Christians are removed from the earth, so God can destroy the wicked.

In this new doctrine, it is not the righteous who are removed, but it is the “evil ones” who are removed. Gone without a trace. Many, who call themselves “prophets” are declaring it. I do not pretend to know how God does everything, or what He plans, but I don’t believe either doctrine is correct. I know scripture does say that evil will be dealt a final blow at some point.

Most people don’t care how it happens. They just want evil to be gone. I don’t blame them. It is extremely hard to hear about the amount of child molestation, human trafficking, murders and other human atrocities taking place today. In our minds, the only way to stop it, is to destroy the ones who are doing it. They are so evil, they cannot find redemption and be saved. We even go to the point of declaring them not human, so it makes it easier for us to want them gone.

If a person, who has become a believer, can still live their lives doing horrible things, how is there hope for a non-believer to come to Jesus after doing some horrific things and to change their ways? To us, it seems impossible. We have trouble living our own lives spiritually.

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV)

Most believers know this verse and quote it often. We cannot please God without faith. Faith for what? Pretty much everything. We must believe that HE is. This means more than just believing that He exists. God once said He was the “I AM”, which implied that whatever we need, He was able to provide or to BE. The second part of this verse says we must believe that He rewards those who seek Him.

To seek God is not strictly in relationship to salvation, we must seek Him in everything. Paul also has something to say about the importance of faith in this letter to the Romans and mentions something else that causes God to not be pleased with us.

That’s why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God.

Romans 8:8 (NLT)

We, as believers, have trouble believing that we can control our emotions, our mind, and our fleshly desires. Paul says that if we cannot, then we do not please God. That is a tough pill to swallow. Then, no one pleases God except for Jesus, or so we think. God spoke from heaven, more than once, that He was pleased with His Son.

Jesus even declared that He always did what pleased the Father.

And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.

John 8:29 (NKJV)

If we can never please the Father, why even try? But, we can! Not because of our efforts, but because Jesus through the Holy Spirit now lives in us.

The whole purpose of Paul writing chapter 7 and 8 of Romans was to show us, in spite of how hard it seems to be to live by the spirit instead of the flesh, it is possible. In fact, it is necessary in order for us to live a godly life. He tells believers, because they believe, Jesus lives in them. He explains to them, the God who had the power to raise Jesus from the dead, is the same God who now lives in them. Certainly, there is enough power to cause us to change our way of thinking, and most of all to change the way we live!

Yet, I believe, this is the kind of faith Jesus was talking about when He asked if He would find faith when He returned to earth. Would His believers have the faith to believe they could be controlled by their spirit instead of their flesh? Would they believe it was possible not only for them but for those to whom they spoke concerning the Kingdom of God? This power living in them, that controlled how they lived their lives, would be the catalyst to change the world.

Most believers have not understood this was possible to the extent of walking daily in its truth in their own lives; therefore, they have not believed it was possible for very evil men and women to come to Jesus and change their ways. This has resulted in a cry for God just to destroy everything that is evil and to even destroy the people who perpetrate evil.

The Bible tells us that our weapons of spiritual warfare are strong enough to pull down mindsets and beliefs that have become strongholds in our lives, as well as in our communities. We do not have the faith to believe that God has given us that ability. We do not destroy people, but we can and should destroy mindsets that hold people in bondage.

I am sorry to say, the evil in the world is our fault, as believers. We have not had the faith to believe that our natural tendencies toward evil can be overruled by our spirits, when our spirits are in constant communion with the Spirit of Truth who lives in us. We choose. Once we choose and walk with Him on a daily basis, allowing Him to direct our every move, we become more and more controlled by our spirit instead of our flesh. It is a process, but if we seek Him, He rewards us with the best gift of all, HIMSELF. That power can destroy evil mindsets and the works of evil.

Once we begin to live like this, we can have faith that God can change people and bring down the blindness in them so they can see truth. We can believe for the strongholds that have people in bondage, to be destroyed. We can believe God rewards us for our faith in Him and He will move mountains through us!

Ask God this year as you celebrate Resurrection Sunday, to reveal the truth of faith, and give you the desire to please Him by letting Him have control instead of your flesh, in all areas of life. Spend some time reading both these chapters until your heart believes and cries for the King to rule in every area of your life. Tell God you long for Him and His heart. You desire for Him to be proud of you.

Again, it is a process. The move from living carnally to living spiritually is the process of maturing. It takes time, but mature we must! In order to live this way, we must be able to discern good from evil. Today, there is total chaos because many who declare themselves believers are at opposite ends of the spectrum on issues that face society today, each declaring their side to be the will of God.

It is God who sets the standard for good and what is right. We cannot understand that without hearing the voice of God and knowing His heart. We learn by walking with Him every moment of every day. We mature by following His will and His heart in every situation we face daily.

We learn to discern if we believe something through our mind and intellect or through hearing the true voice of God. It is not always easy to know, but our desire to seek God and know His heart will guide us. Again, remember, it takes time and is a process. It gets easier the more we endure and set our hearts on hearing and obeying.

But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

Hebrews 5:14 (ESV)

This is not about acceptance. He accepts us as His own. But He is eager to find a people who have His heart so the earth's inhabitants can see the glory that fills this planet and they will desire what we have found. He longs for a people who have the faith it takes to see His great design for this planet from His heart and want to connect with Him to bring it to pass! He desires for us to hear His voice and understand His ways so we know and understand what is truly right and wrong in His sight. He wants us to be successful and to be fulfilled and that comes through living our lives from a spiritual standpoint, not a carnal mindset.

In truth, the things that please God are because He loves us and wants us to be fulfilled as we live life on earth. He is not pleased because we are not living the best life He has for us! As we contemplate the pain Jesus endured for us, and the joy of knowing He overcame the grave, will we believe that the power that raised our Savior from the dead is enough to do all this, to change us and the world in which we live? The world needs us to believe and have this kind of faith.

The choice is ours! The world needs us to show them the Truth of this power and what Jesus provided for us by His pain, His death and His resurrection!

Happy and joyous Resurrection Day to you all!

