**Romans 8:1-17**

Introduction

I. The Gospel

 A. God sends his Son to do for us, what we can’t do for ourselves (bring justification)

 B. God sends his Spirit to do in us, what we can’t do in ourselves (sanctification)

II. Romans 8 describes the transforming work of the Spirit in our lives

A. He transforms our relationship with God

B. He transforms our thoughts

C. He transforms our actions

The Passage

I. The Spirit transforms our relationship with God

A. v. 1-2

1. He brings freedom into our relationship with God

2. He frees us from the power and authority of sin and death and frees us from a life of constantly trying to keep God’s law and constantly failing and experiencing condemnation

B. v. 15-16

1. Where there was once fear and slavery of condemnation from the Judge, he brings an experience of seeing God as our Abba Father

2. He speaks into our spirit (that deep inner core of our self), and convinces us that we are God’s loved children

C. This transformation in our relationship with God is the basis of all other transformation

1. Love is the only thing that really changes us in the end

 a. Guilt and fear can motivate us for a while but they don’t bring lasting change

b. Techniques and disciplines can change behavior on the outside but can’t change us from the inside out

2. The King’s Speech

George VI came to Lionel to learn new speech techniques, but what he really needed was to be re-parented in a relationship of trust and safety

3. This is Paul’s prayer for the Ephesians in 3:16-19

II. The Spirit transforms our thoughts (v. 5-8)

A. This is an issue of what we “set our minds on” (v. 5)

1. John Stott: “it is a question of what preoccupies us, of the ambitions that drive us and the concerns that engross us, of how we spend our time and our energies, of what we concentrate on and give ourselves up to.”

2. Analogy of a computer: what are the background programs that are always running in our minds?

B. Paul articulates two kinds of mindsets

 1. The mind of the sinful nature/flesh

a. death = spiritual death = thinking on things that alienate them from God

b. hostile to God = thinking on things that are opposed to how God thinks about

c. does not submit to God’s law = their minds want to rebel against God’s moral standards

d. can’t submit, can’t please God = there are not just unwilling; they are incapable apart from outside intervention

 2. The mind of the Spirit

a. life = spiritual life = being alive to God and the things that he cares about

b. peace = at peace with God in our minds

No longer rebelling in our minds against God’s moral standards, but seeing them as guidelines that lead to life, health, and wholeness

III. The Spirit transforms our actions (v. 12-14)

A. Notice “put to death the misdeeds of the body”

1. The Spirit is at work in our lives overcoming our sinful behaviors, leading us to purer, healthy behaviors

2. We all know this doesn’t happen all at once, but slowly, gradually

B. Galatians 5

1. The acts of the sinful nature

Sexual immorality and impurity, idolatry hatred, discord, factions, fits of rage, jealousy and envy, selfish ambition, drunkenness

2. The fruit of the Spirit

love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control

Conclusion

I. How do we experience the Spirit’s transformation in our lives?

II. The most common biblical metaphor is walk: walk, be led, keep in step

A. This implies a passive aspect: prayerfully surrendering control to the Spirit so that he leads our lives

B. This implies an active aspect: actively following his lead, taking active steps towards righteousness

**Discussion Questions**

1. Was there anything said about the Holy Spirit and his transforming work on Sunday that was new to you or said from a new angle?

2. How would you answer the following question if it were posed to you: “Practically speaking, how do we actually walk in the Spirit?”

3. As you consider the transforming work of the Spirit in your own life, where have you seen him most transforming you over the past few years (you may consider the three areas discussed on Sunday: our relationship with God, our thoughts, and our actions)?

4. What would you say to a person who considers himself/herself a Christian but looks at his/her life and cannot see any significant transformation or growth over time?