

But for now, we're going to continue worship through scripture and through the sermon today. And I want to set our hearts on Romans chapter 8. That's what we've been working through. So I'm going to ask you to stand if you're able.

And I just want to read scripture over you in this moment. I invite you to close your eyes if you'd like. Turn off everything else and let's just hear God's word together, says Romans, chapter 8, verses 5 through 11.

Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires. But those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God. You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh, but are in the realm of the spirit. If indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. 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.

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. Let's pray.

Father. God, thank you for your word.

God, I pray those words just wash over us, settle into our hearts and into our minds. God, we pray that the sermon that is prepared today would honor you, God. Give us a heart and ears and a mind to learn. Listen, we pray for Matt, God, that his words would be yours. We give you all the glory.

So Jesus name, we pray these things. Amen. You can have a seat.

Good morning.

Okay, I'm gonna make sure my mic's on here. I think I'm on you. I'm gonna do something here. So I. I always carry my Bible up here as a reminder to me that that's what we're all about. But if I put it on this music stand, the lip's not very big and that falls off and my notes fall off so I don't look stupid.

I'm just gonna put my Bible here so you know that that's what I'm. That's what we value, right? All right. So otherwise, the first service, it fell. Then my nose fell on the floor.

And I probably looked like some, you know, nutty professor or whatever. So anyway, so the words for the day to start with are life and peace, life and peace. Say those with me. Life and peace. So Jesus promised abundant life.

Some versions say the rich and satisfying life, life to the full. That's life. But he also promised us peace. And he said, I give you a peace the world can give to you. So don't let your hearts be troubled and don't be afraid.

So we can have peace where our hearts aren't troubled and anxiety doesn't take us over.

Life and peace, that's the Christian life.

So how's that going for you lately?

I mean, if I were to grade myself in life and peace, I don't get an A on either one of them. There's a book I read years ago called Disappointment with God. And maybe that's you. You're like, Jesus promises this like abundant life and deep and abiding peace, but I'm not feeling it. And you often.

Then we often go self kind, what's wrong with me? But the reality is we all struggle with that. But I'm gonna tell you right now, my challenge for the whole sermon is gonna be there's more. There's more than you're experiencing. I don't care if you're 15 or 85 or 90, there's more.

There's more that God wants to do in your life. There's more that Jesus can do. There's more the Holy Spirit can do in your life. So this series is called More Than we're doing, Romans, chapter 8. And the whole idea is that we're more than what we think we are because of what God can do in us.

So we're gonna read one. We're gonna read one verse from the passage. We're gonna repeat one verse from the passage Maggie just read. And it's Romans 8:6. And I think we'll have it on the screen here if we could do that.

Romans 8:6. So if you would read this out loud with me, we're gonna read it through twice. Here we go. The mind governed by the flesh is death. But the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.

One more time. The mind governed by the flesh is death. That line again. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the spirit is life and peace. That word governed in some versions is the word controlled.

Some versions, which I like this word, they use the word dominated.

The life dominated by the flesh is death. The life dominated by the Spirit is Life and peace. Cause we're all about life and peace. That's what we're talking about today.

So you might not be able to see it, but I have a red tape line starting right there, goes all the way back to here. It's red painter's tape. So it will not ruin the floor. In case some of you are concerned about that. All right.

Because Paul in this passage makes a very, very clear distinction between two kinds of people. And the Bible confirms this all throughout. There's two kinds of people in the world. There's two kinds of people in this room. There are those who are governed by the law of sin and death, the flesh.

And there are those that light was intentional. All right? There are those governed by the spirit of life. And he says there are those who have the spirit of Jesus in them and there are those who do not. It's a very clear division.

There's nobody in between or all over. It's, you have the spirit of Christ in you or you do not. And that includes all world religions. Spirit of Christ in you is what the Bible says is the most important cause that's the whole point of the resurrection of Jesus, the life of Christ in us. So there's this red line separating these two.

If you. I'm sure nobody was counting, but when Maggie was reading, the word Spirit appeared nine times in this part of the passage alone. Dominated by the Spirit, the word flesh, living by the flesh. And I'll explain that in a second. Occurred five times.

So Paul's clearly doing. Life dominated by the spirit, life dominated by the flesh, life dominated by the spirit, life dominated by the sinful nature in the flesh. Two kinds of people. And I have no, I'm not naive to think that there's not people in this room that are in this category. I'm not being accused.

I'm just saying. I just. Statistics tell me that, you know, there's people who, in this room who don't have the spirit of Jesus in you. And I'm not. No accusation.

I'm just saying that. Cause it's true. So let's talk about this side for a second. What is this? This is the life governed by the flesh.

He says the mind governed by the flesh is death. So here's my statement for this one. I'll talk about. If you don't have the spirit of Christ living in you, you are on the road to death, right? If you do not have the spirit of Christ living in you, you're on the road that leads to death.

Not trying to be Blunt, not trying to be harsh, but it's what the Bible tells us and it's there. All right, so what does that mean? What does this mean to live by the flesh? Well, there's a couple different things the scripture talks about to help us define this, right? And the whole book of Romans, if you just scan through life governed by the flesh, are characterized by these things, self reliance, self righteousness, self centered and selfish.

The mantra is try harder, try harder, try harder. That's the mantra of a lot of world religions. Try harder, Climb up the ladder, higher, maybe you'll make the cut. Try harder, try harder, try harder. And when you fail, there's shame.

When you fail, there's shame. All right, Hostile to God. Paul just said that you're hostile to God. Can't please God. Slave to sin under the curse of sin on the wide road to death.

And then Paul later in Galatians, describes the life in the flesh. He calls it the works of the flesh as sexual morality, impurity, lustful thoughts, idolatry, sorcery. This is Galatians 5. Hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, parties and others. That's what characterizes this kind of life, the life of the law of sin and death, the life of the flesh.

But then lest we, and I'm including me in that, think, oh, I'm, I'm good, I'm good. Paul also talks about his own life and he talks about, I realize I can have no confidence in the flesh. And by then he talks about all of his religious accomplishments. I'm like of the right kind of a Hebrew, I'm Israelite, I'm from the tribe of Benjamin. I know the law well, I've been circumcised, I'm zealous for God.

But he says, that's when I was in this place, I was putting my confidence in the flesh. Translated today might say, well, I've been baptized, I've gone to church for years, I know the Bible, I'm a good person. But you still may be living in the flesh because Paul said religious activity in and of itself without the spirit of Jesus in you is living in the flesh. Now that's one side. That's that side.

And again, I, I don't know. I don't know anybody here that I'd say is living there. But I know there are people that live there. And I also know there's people that live here that lean that way, right? So that's the one side.

Those who live according to the flesh, controlled by the flesh, dominated by the flesh. All right, the other side then Paul says, then there are those who are dominated by the Spirit. He said, the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. So my statement for this one is this. If you have the spirit of Christ living in you, you're on the road to life and peace.

Road to death, road to life and peace. Just a clear division. Paul makes that clear. The Bible makes it clear.

So this is the road to life and peace. And like I started off, it's like Jesus said, I've come to give you life and life to the full. He tells the Pharisees, you won't come to me to let me show you the way to life. Angel lets the apostles out of prison in the book of Acts. And he says, go back to the city square and, and tell them about the life available in Jesus.

Paul even talks about in earlier in Romans about baptism. When you're baptized, you're baptized into the life of the resurrected Jesus. So life, life, life, life, life. Right? And then Jesus, like I said earlier, he promises peace.

I give you peace. Not that the world gives, world can't take it away. Don't let your hearts be troubled. Don't be afraid. That's what he's promising now, you might say, which I would have said in my growing up years in my church.

Well, yeah, he's talking about, he's talking about life in heaven after I die. Jesus promises eternal life. Yes, but that's not the full answer. Cause he didn't say John, chapter 10, I've come that you might go to heaven after you die. He didn't say that.

He said, I've come that you might have life. And yes, he gives us eternal life, but eternal doesn't mean later on. It means right now, never ending. So I want you to understand, when you see the word life or even eternal life, don't always think, don't jump to only heaven after you die. It's kind of like this, you know.

My wife and I got engaged X number of years ago. I can't remember how many years ago we've been married. She's not here, but I'll know it by the next service. So. And if I would have given her the wedding ring, and if our wedding vow would have been if I would have said, I give you this ring and I promise you I will take care of you in retirement, will have life and peace in retirement, she'd throw the ring back in my face.

Right. So if you think all Jesus is Offering here is I'm promising you life in your physical retirement. What about in the meantime? And that's where we're living. We're living in the meantime, right?

We're living between when we get baptized and open ourselves to the spirit of Jesus and now and then. But it's not only after we die. So what's he promising us? He's promising us his life now.

So I want to tell you, Christianity is more than you think, or I think Christianity is more than attending church on Sunday, dropping a few

dollars in the offering, being nice to others, attending, attending church dinners. Christianity is more than volunteering. It's more than giving away used clothes and used furniture. As really good as those things might be. There's more.

I'm 63. If you would have been the 8 o' clock service. I was a young man in that service. In this service, I'm an old man. But I told those people who are older than me, there's more.

There's more for you from the Holy Spirit. Retire from the Holy Spirit. There's always more. There's always more.

In the Old Testament, Ezekiel and Jeremiah both tell people, there's gonna be a day and God says, this where I'm gonna write my law on your hearts. Remember, this is the law of sin and death, always failure. I'm gonna write my law on your hearts. I'm gonna write my law on your minds. It's gonna be inside of you.

Even in John, chapter 14, when Jesus was talking to the disciples, this was a. It's an interesting transition because he talks to the disciples. He said, there right now, the Holy Spirit is with you. But then he's talking about post resurrection. Holy Spirit will be in you.

He makes this prepositional transition from with, to, to end, all because of his resurrection. So for those of you who had the spirit of Christ in you, he's in you. I don't totally understand that, but the Spirit of Jesus is in your being. And that's the promise of scripture. That's what the provost, Paul's telling these people.

He's in you.

Jesus said, I'm going to ask the Father. He's going to give you another spirit who's going to be in you, not just with you, like an advisor or a counselor. He is a counselor, but he's more than just around me when I need him. He is in you. And if you don't live your life with the Spirit in you, you're going to.

You're going to feel like you're living over here.

Okay, I'm gonna pause for a second if you could hold off on the piano for now. I'm not quite there yet. Is that all right? It's not probably my fault, but I was gonna sing along with the song she was playing, so I don't want to do that. So.

So we have this law, spirit of death, sin and death, the law of life and peace. Some of you, and I've been there who are living on this side, we do a little bit too much of this. And we listen to the calls of there. Of envy and sexual. Sexual addictions, other kind of addictions, whatever.

But you still have the spirit of Christ in you. So how do you live where there's more of the Holy Spirit controlling you and you don't do that? So here's what I'm gonna. What I'm gonna share right now was something somebody shared with me 25 years ago was transformational for me, changed the way I thought about my life with Jesus. And here's my point.

It's gonna be. It's all about the tone you use. And you might say, what are you talking about? If you're married, you know what I'm talking about. It's not the words you say, it's the tone you use.

There was a study done at USC that found that if they would study couples in therapy, and they found that due to their study, they could predict with 75% accuracy which couples were gonna make it and which weren't by the tone of voice. Example. If I come home and I say to my wife, hey, what's for dinner? If I come home and say to my wife, hey, what's for dinner? Different tone, right?

In our. With young kids, if I would've said, okay, I'll change the diaper. I'm rolling my eyes. Or I can say, hey, I'll change the diaper. I don't know if I ever really said it that way, but I'd like to think I did, right?

Those of you who are dads, you know what I'm talking about. Or there might be, hey, can you help me out here? Or hey, Kathy, can you help me? Now? When I was sharing this with my wife, she said asking about what's for dinner was sexist.

So I've added one more. Have you got that transmission fixed yet? Or, hey, honey, have you fixed the transmission yet? All right. But we get the reality that tone matters.

And my concern is. And my realization years ago was the tone I attributed to the voice of God through the law was wrong.

Because here's the tone that often we think so. Spirit of life, spirit of death. And Paul's talking about the law. Most Jews of that day, when they heard that, they would have thought not just the Ten Commandments, but Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. That was the law.

That was the way to live, to experience life and joy and peace. But I'll use the Ten Commandments as an example for how we tone them incorrectly. All right, this is the Ten Commandments in the tone of the law of sin and death. According to the flesh. You shall not have any other gods before you.

You, you shall not commit adultery. You, you better not steal, you better not lie, and you better not covet your neighbors wives. And I'm doing this intentionally because if you see God that way, it's all

about. I don't. When you fail, you just see this.

And shame is abundant upon you. Self condemnation is abundant on you. Cause that's the tone you've attributed to God. It's not God. God is kind.

Bible says his kindness leads repentance. Same law, different tone. You, you will become the kind of person who worships no other God but me. You, you will become the kind of person who doesn't commit adultery. You'll become the kind of person who won't lie, you won't steal, you won't covet your neighbor's wife.

Because my spirit's in you. You will become that kind of person. The law is the same. Same law. But the law of sin and death is God is this way.

The law of spirit of life is God pleads because his kindness leads us to repentance. So I think a lot of us, when we're living even in the law of the spirit of life, we still hear that tone from God. That's not his tone. Yes, he wants you to repent, but his kindness leads you to repentance. Yes, he wants you to be free of sexual addiction or lying or stealing or other commandments.

He wants you to be free of those things. But he invites you through his kindness to trust in the promise of the spirit in you that you don't have to be that way anymore.

I've shared before that before I was married, I had a handful of your struggle with pornography. And I remember sitting in a room with a friend of mine, a guy's name was Dave. And we were talking about this. Cause I was telling him I was frustrated. And I was sitting here, he was sitting like over there.

And he just said to me one time, matt, you just don't have to do that anymore.

The promise of the spirit of life. You don't have to over there. If you live in here, you can't do anything but sin. But you, you're over here, don't live that way. You don't have to do that anymore.

I don't know what that is for you, but you don't have to do that anymore. Maybe it's sexual addiction. Maybe it's lying. Maybe it's deception. Maybe it's stealing.

Maybe you're coveting. But you don't have to do that anymore if you have the spirit of life in you. And you might say it's a pretty simple answer. It is a simple answer. Sometimes it's hard to work out.

But you don't have to do that anymore. You are no longer a slave to sin. You aren't now the enemy. He wants you to think he's standing



right here on the other side of the line, shouting you and trying to pull you over into the law of sin and death. Shame.

Yeah, you're gonna fail. Just try harder. Yeah, you're gonna fail. Just try harder. So the promise, the promise of scripture is there's more.

You are more than stuck. You're not in the law of sin and death. You're living in the law of the spirit. So there's more. There's more than being a good person.

There's more than being religious. There's more than a life of try harder, try harder, fail, try harder, wash, rinse, repeat, try harder, try hard. That's a lot of our spiritual lives, or at least it has been for a lot of us. There's more than maintaining a religious image. Jesus wants to set you free.

He wants to dominate your life. Cause he wants to set you free. He wants you full of joy, full of life, full of peace. He wants you to be alive, awake and free. There's also more of the Holy Spirit.

He wants to dominate your life. He wants you to have more peace and joy. The Holy Spirit wants you to be alive, awake and free. You can be more than you are right now. The promise of the Holy Spirit is you will be more than you are right now.

Philippians, chapter one. Paul says, I'm confident of this, that God will complete in you what he started. So I don't know your level of struggle or your level of frustration with low experiences of life and peace. But the promise of Jesus is he will complete what he started in you. It's a promise.

It's a promise. So if you're frustrated, if you're struggling or whatever. It's a promise. He will not quit on you. You might think, well, I'd quit on me.

If you knew what my life was like, I'd quit on me. If you knew all the sins I committed, I'd quit on me. Jesus won't quit on you. And like Sean said this last week, if you're living over here, you're gonna experience condemnation from sin over here. The Holy Spirit will speak with conviction.

And the way Sean said it last week, the difference between the two is where do you wanna run? If you're over here and something about your sin is brought up, you wanna run and hide? Cause that's condemnation, shame, it's heavy. If you're over here, it's conviction. The Holy Spirit's trying to draw you to the light, draw you back to him.

So it depends on where. If you're feeling convicted of sin, it's probably the Holy Spirit pulling you into life and saying, you don't

have to be that way anymore.

The very last verse of this passage, verse 11, reads this way. If the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you. Now just think about this for a second. The spirit that resurrected Jesus, dead body in the tomb, resurrected, walks out of the grave. That spirit, the power of that spirit is in you.

If you have the spirit of Jesus in you, he's in you. That's a lot of power. The same spirit that rose Jesus from the dead lives in you. If you have the spirit of life in you. So on the screen, I just adapted a little bit.

Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in me. I want you to stand up and we're gonna say this out loud a couple times, not as some kind of a mantra. But I want you to believe this is true, right? If you have the spirit of Jesus and you read this out loud with me. The spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in me.

One more time. The spirit of Jesus. Sorry. The spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in me. One more time.

And now put your hand over your heart. The spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in me. Go ahead and have a seat.

So we finish the service with time to respond. And I'm going to stay. Sit on this side for a second. If you are one who you're living by the law of sin and death, you realize you're living according to the flesh. You've done the religious thing, but you've never been there.

You haven't Invited the spirit of Jesus in you. I. I want to encourage you, when we come up here in a second for communion, talk to one of the prayer counselors and say, I maybe just say, I want to cross the red line. I'm tired of this kind of life. Cause it will lead you nowhere. You can try it.

It will lead you nowhere. Sin and death. So we'll lead you. So that's one invitation to respond. For those of us that have the spirit of Christ in us, the invitation to respond is we have communion, the Lord's table.

And Jesus said, every time you eat this bread, little wafer on the bottom and drink this cup, grape juice on the top, every time you eat this, remember me. Remember me. Every time. I like to suggest things to remember. So this week I'm gonna suggest, remember that the spirit that rose from the dead is living in you even as you take it.

You might say, this is the spirit of Jesus in me. And it's the same spirit that rose him from the dead. Just as a reminder. Because when times gets hard as we do, we struggle. Times get hard.

Sometimes we just need to be reminded the lies of the enemy are not true. And that what's true is the same spirit who rose Jesus that is in me. And whatever I'm struggling against, whatever I'm battling, the anxieties, fears, sins, whatever, I have an advocate inside of me, and he will guide me to peace in life. So if that's you, which is most of us have the spirit of Christ, take that and remember that about him. That's one of the things he promised to us.

Promised. All right. This is the place. Promise. This is the place of condemnation.

The first verse of Romans 8. There is therefore now say it with me. No condemnation for those of us in Christ Jesus. That's the promise. Law of the spirit of life has set me free from the law of sin and death.

Alive and wake up is what Jesus wants you to be. Let me pray.

Jesus. I don't. I don't. I don't know. Of course, I don't know everybody's story here, but I'm quite sure there must be some here today who have lived too long in the.

Under the law of sin and death. And maybe even some of the recent events in the world have piqued their interest in God and what's going on. And maybe that's why they're even here this morning. Morning. So I just pray, Holy Spirit, that you would illuminate them with the love of Jesus and call them to Jesus to follow him.

For the rest of us who have the spirit of the life of Jesus in us.

We want the abundant life you promised. We want the deep, abiding peace you promised right now in this life, not in the end of physical retirement. So, Jesus, would you help us understand and see there's more of the Holy Spirit that you want to offer us, and we can let ourselves be filled with more and more of the Holy Spirit. We ask this all in your name, Jesus. Amen.