

Walking Through the New Testament with Paul the Apostle by His Life and Pen

LESSON NO. 26 - Please read Romans 8.

Reading about Paul's life, we are often overwhelmed with the persecution he suffered to bring the glorious truth of rest for one's soul, joy and peace found only in Jesus Christ.

In Romans 8, we get a clear vision of a man, not in the least bit bitter with life's circumstances. Paul is **consumed with joy and wonder with his privilege** of being a Christ-follower.

Paul's summary in Romans 8 is: Christ's love for us and our love for Christ far surpasses any temporary pain or earthly loss. The JOY of our salvation makes life on earth a blessing, though it is indeed mixed with pain, pleasure, joy, sorrow, peace and trouble.

There is a place in heaven prepared for us by Jesus and none of the fleeting earthly difficulties will ever be remembered. The word FULL means the maximum a vessel can hold. This is exactly why Paul and all of us Christ-followers need only remember this one statement inspired by the Holy Spirit: - Psalm 16:11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is **fullness of joy**; At Your right hand are **pleasures forevermore**.

In heaven we will NOT BE ABLE to hold any additional JOY because we will be constantly full.

Aren't we overwhelmed with the truth that we are the most blessed creatures in all the universe? Pain like Paul suffered is not in vain. This will help us put in proper perspective the temporary pains we also experience on earth with the everlasting fullness of joy in heaven as expressed by the following verse.

Revelation 21:3-4 God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. **There shall be no more pain**, for the **former things have passed away**."

Before we begin our summary connecting the different truths about Paul's life, let's review and rejoice in the 1st and last verse of Romans 8, sweetly enjoying all the verses in between:

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:37-39 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For **I am persuaded** that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, **shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord**.

Truth: Paul's life, like all Christians was transformed the day he was born again. Salvation is a "before and after" event. - Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, **unless one is born again**, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Theme: In this Lesson we will trace Paul's life and his commentary on what he learned and taught.

Question: What happens when love for Jesus Christ enters into the human heart and gives birth to the spirit of Jesus Christ?

Answer: That person will now love the things that were previously hated, and hate the things previously loved.

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This was Paul's life before the Love of Jesus entered Paul's heart:

Acts 8:3 As for Saul, **he made havoc of the church**, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.

Acts 22:3-5 "I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today. **I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women**, as also the high priest bears me witness, and all the council of the elders, from whom I also received letters to the brethren, and went to Damascus **to bring in chains even those who were there to Jerusalem to be punished.**"

After the Love of Jesus entered Paul's heart:

Galatians 1:13-17, 23 For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, **how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it**. And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, **to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles**, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. vs. "He who formerly persecuted us **now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy.**"

What did Paul preach after being born again? According to Scriptures:

1 Cor. 15:1-11

- Christ died for our sins.
- Christ was buried.
- Christ rose again the third day [He is alive and rules the entire universe].
- Christ was seen by Peter, then by the twelve apostles. After that Christ was seen by over five hundred brethren at once.
- Christ was seen by James.
- Christ was seen by Paul.

Acts 17:30-31 Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but **now commands all men everywhere to repent**, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man [Jesus Christ] whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."

What did it cost Paul to preach this Gospel?

2 Corinthians 11:24-29 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness— besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation?

Can we imagine how deeply painful the memories Paul had of his persecution of Christians? Jesus told Saul (Paul) that he was actually persecuting Christ, Himself.

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This truth was so real to Paul that he would try to describe his deliverance and freedom from the guilt of his past, he used the word for "super-abounding" grace to describe his new position in Christ. Paul witnessed that God's grace and mercy is greater than ALL our sins.

1 Corinthians 15:9 For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

1 Timothy 1:12-14 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

What did Paul gain by faithfully preaching the risen victorious Christ?

Romans 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time **are not worthy to be compared** with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

2 Timothy 4:8 Finally, there is laid up for me the **crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

What will those who love and follow Christ receive? Love, Joy, Peace. Freedom from the guilt of our past and freedom from the fear of the future.

John 15:11-12 "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that **your joy may be full**. This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

Philippians 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and **the peace of God**, which surpasses all understanding, **will guard your hearts and minds** through Christ Jesus.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

1 Peter 1:7-9 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of **Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love**. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you **rejoice with joy inexpressible** and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.

Galatians 5:22-23 But the **fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

What will all Christ-lovers and Christ followers receive after death?

John 14:1-3 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. **I go to prepare a place for you**. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

Romans 8:14-17 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit **that we are**

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children of God, and if children, then **heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ**, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

Dearest Reader, we are called to a most wonderful work. John 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as **I have loved you**, that **you also love one another**. Unimaginable eternal treasure will result as we declare to everyone **The Greatest Love Story Ever Told** and ask our listeners, "Would you like to go to heaven?" Jesus said whoever desires could come and be with Him there.

Seeing the beauty of Jesus Christ and the simplicity of the Gospel will give us overwhelming gratitude for each step of our heavenward journey. It is all about Jesus!

We love to receive your questions. Your questions can be sent to write2stm@gmail.com or WasItForMeRom832@gmail.com.

All our love to you in Christ - Jon + Philis