

Title: Spirit Driven Life

Text: Romans 8:1-2

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Place: Decatur Church of God

In one of the popular ads that accompanied the 2010 Super Bowl, Cars.com tells the fictional story of a wonder child named Timothy Richman. From his earliest years, Timothy displayed an amazing level of confidence, and his confidence came from knowledge.

As a toddler eating in his high chair, he saw a pan of food cooking on the stove catch fire. Knowing somehow that baking soda puts out fires, Timothy calmly threw his rattle at a box of baking soda located on a shelf above the flaming pan, knocking over the box, which poured the soda into the pan and extinguished the flames.

As a boy about to learn to ride a bike, Timothy stands straddling the bike as his dad prepares to put on the training wheels. Timothy says, "Balance, momentum, and a low center of gravity," and with that knowledge fully absorbed, before Timothy's dad can get the training wheels on, Timothy pedals the bike away and down the driveway.

In junior high, Timothy confidently walks up to a teen on an Italian beach who has been stung on the leg by a jellyfish and acting on his knowledge of first aid he pours vinegar on the inflamed skin. He explains in perfect Italian that vinegar can neutralize jellyfish stings.

As a high school student on safari in Africa, he uses his knowledge of veterinary obstetrics to deliver a baby Bengal tiger that was breeched.

As an adult, Timothy gets out of his car on a highway as a tornado approaches a bus full of cheerleaders. Using his knowledge of storm cells and tornadoes, he explains to the cheerleaders that they will be safe if they exit the bus and lie in a low-lying depression beside the road. Just as the cheerleaders and Timothy jump safely into the ditch, the bus rises in the air and is carried away by the tornado.

The narrator explains, however, as Timothy stands with a scared look on his face in a new car lot, "When it came time to buy a new car, he was just as nervous as the rest of us."

Then Timothy sees a Cars.com sign and pulls out his cell phone. The narrator concludes, "So Timothy Richman got his knowledge at Cars.com, regained his confidence, and got the perfect car at the perfect price."

This little commercial entertainingly illustrates the fact that no matter how much knowledge and confidence you have in many areas of life, you can still be clueless in another important area of living.

The fact is, no matter how smart you are, apart from God's help you are clueless about important spiritual truths.

One of those important spiritual truths is that God wants us to experience and live a Spirit Driven Life.

Romans 8:1-2

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, [2] because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.

I. To start with, there is no guilt or condemnation for those who choose Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.

A. What does it mean to be condemned?

- Adam and Eve were condemned and forced to leave the Garden of Eden because they chose to disregard the plan of God. – He called it sin.
- People chose to participate in that sin so they were condemned to a lengthy swim during the great flood of Noah's day.
- King David chose to sin with Bathsheba and stood condemned. His first child died as a result of his sin.

* Condemn means to determine the punishment or destiny of one found to be guilty of breaking a law or someone not deserving a blessing.

* If I am ticketed for speeding I may be condemned to pay a fine. If I am found guilty of stealing electronics from Wal-Mart I may be found guilty and condemned to some time in jail. If I am arrested from shooting another man, there is a good chance that I will be found guilty and condemned to either life imprisonment or maybe even the death penalty.

B. In life, you and I would be guilty of rebellion against God but Jesus took our condemnation upon Him and released us from the guilt so that, through Christ, I am no longer condemned.

- Satan seeks to make us believe that the condemnation is still in effect.
- Notice that Paul is convinced that Jesus is interceding on our behalf.

Romans 8:34

Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

* Our sin should condemn us but Jesus loves us so much that he paid the price for us.

Romans 8:39

Neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

* With God the honeymoon never ends. He is infinite in power and wisdom and creativity and love. And so he has no trouble sustaining a honeymoon level of intensity; he can foresee all the future quirks of our personality and has decided he will keep what's good for us and change what isn't; he will always be as

handsome as he ever was, and will see to it that we get more and more beautiful forever; and he infinitely creative to think of new things to do together so that there will be no boredom for the next trillion ages of millenniums.

-*John Piper, The Pleasures of God (Multnomah, 2000), p. 188*

God seeks to fill us with His presence and assure us of a God-connected life. There

II. The Spirit of life has set us free from the law of sin and death.

1 Cor. 15:45

So it is written: "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit.

A. What does the scripture mean?

* "Life" according to Holman's Illustrated Dictionary is the principle or force considered to underlie the distinctive quality of animate beings. "Life," as used in the Bible, however, has a much wider application than only to physical, bodily existence.

1. Only God has life in the absolute sense. He is the living God. All other life depends on God for its creation and maintenance.
2. In the same way that God is Creator by giving His breath or spirit to living creatures, so no possibility of life exists when God withholds His breath or spirit.

2 Cor. 1:9

Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.

3. This being the case, every life is solely the possession of God.

4. Life is fellowship with God. We come to God to receive life. We walk in fellowship with God, and in His light we see life. That is freedom.

* All our freedoms flow from a devotion or result from an obligation. For example:

- I can worship where I choose...devotion to God and country.
- I experience love and support...devotion to my spouse.
- I can choose to drive on state and national highways...the result of a tax obligation.

* Is our commitment to the law of sin similarly driven?

B. The law of sin is death.

1. Without God, we are devoid of life and cannot see.
2. The law of sin, and our devotion to it, brings death.

Conclusion: The proper response to life as the gift of God is to live life in service to God by obeying Him, doing God's will, and feeding in God's Word. Only that life which lives in obedience to God deserves to be called life in the true sense of the word.

The Apostle Paul teaches that all Christians are to make the Lord Jesus central and live so as to show that He is their purpose for living.

Romans 14:7-8

For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. [8] If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

Such living demands fellowship with the Savior who is the purpose for living and is dependent on our constantly seeking and thinking on what is above

Col. 3:1-2

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. [2] Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

This is the new and transformed life. This is a life free from the penalty of sin.

*A. Berkley Mikelson and Phil Logan
Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary.*

Romans 6:18a

You have been set free from sin...