

MODULE 7 THE CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

Describe a time when you were in such a desperate situation that you needed someone else to step in and help.

Today, we are going to look at a passage that describes just that.

EXAMINING THE PIECES

In order to get the context, read Romans 7:15-24.

How would you summarize what Paul is saying in these verses?

In v. 24, what if it wasn't a "who" question but a "what" question? "What" kinds of things do we sometimes think will make us better?

The question in v. 24 provides the backdrop for the content of chapter 8. So, Paul is answering, "who will deliver me from this body of death?" So, on one hand, Romans 8 answers that there will be a future deliverance, but it also answers that there is also a present deliverance.

Read Romans 8:1-8

In light of what you read in chapter 7, why is v. 1 such great news?

According to v. 2-4, what did God accomplish? And how is it accomplished?

In verses 5-7, Paul will tell us what it means to walk according to the Spirit and according to the flesh. What words does he use to describe it and what does that mean?

What are the results of both lives?

What's the point?

Sanctification is that process by which God graciously, persistently and powerfully energizes our will by His Spirit to produce in us the fruit of His righteous character. For many of us, though, our lives are more often characterized by the frustration of not doing what we want to do and doing the very things we don't want to do (see also Romans 7).

But, Romans 8 was written to help us move from frustration to freedom - the freedom of life, peace, and righteousness...all by the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

What's the problem?

The problem that 100% of humanity faces is that we have this thing within us that the bible calls the "flesh". At the most basic level, the "flesh" is that which is opposed to God.

So, the "flesh" is that inclination within us that seeks to live life independent of God. For the unbeliever, it's all that they know. But for the believer, the flesh can still very much be the dominating force in our lives - either as we actively oppose God in rebellion or when we subtly oppose him by trying to live the Christian life independent from him.

EXAMINING THE PIECES CON'T

Read 8:9-11

What characterizes the believer?

So, according to Romans 8:1-10, how would Paul answer the question he raised in 7:24?

But, his answer isn't complete. How will we ultimately be set from from this body of death according to v. 11?

Read 8:12-17

In all of us, there is one of two kinds of death that takes place. What are the two ways to die according to v. 13? What does this mean?

The work of God that he does in our lives through the Spirit bear witness to a present reality and a future hope. What are these according to v. 15-17?

SO WHAT?

There are two ways to walk according to the flesh. One is by walking on our own and in rebellion against God. The other is by going through the Christian motions and trying to live the Christian life on our own and not by the Spirit. How do these two ways show up in your life?

If you were to describe what it looks like for you personally to set your mind on the flesh, what does that look like?

Why is God's Spirit the only solution to our flesh, sin, and defeat?

What would walking with a mind set on the Spirit look like in your daily life?

Spend some time thanking God that He has truly provided for our deliverance - not only our future deliverance, but our present deliverance as well.

What's the solution?

The only solution to the flesh is the Spirit. In other words, the only way we will grow in our sanctification and reflect more of God's character is by the power of the Spirit in us. We have no resources in and of ourselves to overcome the flesh - the victory comes from God through His Spirit in us.

What's our response?

Romans 8 calls us to have our "mind set on the Spirit". Setting our mind on the Spirit takes our eyes off of an inward or outward solution and focuses them upward.