

How – And Why – You’ll Win the War Against Sin
Romans 8
#23 in a Series on Paul’s Letter to the Romans
Faith Community Church – March 26, 2006

Objective: *to survey Romans 8 so as to identify the main points in Paul’s argument, and to encourage us to realize that in Christ sin can be defeated.*

Introduction

(Play recording of Romans 8 by Max McLean)

All Scripture is important, but there are some sections that are especially significant, and such is that case with Romans 8. I thought it best to try to get the big picture this morning by looking at the whole chapter, and then come back in the weeks ahead and look at some of the main themes in greater detail.

Recapping Romans

I remember reading that the book of Romans has been used at times in law school because of its logical and forceful argument. I’m not sure if that is fact, but it is certain that there is a clear line of thought that flows through the book so far. Let’s review it.

Major point #1 – Regardless of how much we know or how good we try to be, the entire world stands guilty before a just and holy God because of willful disobedience. (Romans 1-3).

Major point #2 – Though deserving punishment, God has not left us without hope. Jesus Christ died to pay for our sins. When we believe (have faith) in the sufficiency of Christ’s death for our own sins, God declares us to be justified – to be pardoned and free from guilt in his sight. (Romans 3-5)

Major point #3 – Not only are we made right with God when we place our faith in Christ, we are also set free from the dominant power of sin in our lives. As a result, we are now under an obligation to stop serving sin and start serving God. (Romans 6)

Major point #4 – This new life cannot be pursued simply by trying to keep a list of external rules (the Law). Furthermore, despite the deepest desires of our heart, we still struggle with the frustrating reality that sin remains an ongoing enemy. Thankfully, though, there is a way out through Christ. (Romans 7)

This “way out” is what Paul addresses in Christ. And I’ve summarized the message of Romans 8 in my sermon title: *How – and Why – You’ll Win the War Against Sin.*

How – and Why – You’ll Win the War Against Sin

1. You can win the war against sin because the Holy Spirit lives in you (8:1-11).
 - a. A good part of Romans 8 concerns the Holy Spirit's ministry to and in us as Christians.
 - b. The New Testament clearly teaches that the Holy Spirit, who makes us spiritually alive, actually lives in the Christian. Jesus promised this as a unique part of the New Covenant in John 14:15-17, and Paul affirms this in Romans 8:9-11.
 - c. The work of the Holy Spirit in our lives is multi-faceted, but we will find that he provides us with the power to actually act like we were dead to sin and alive to God.

2. You will win the war against sin because God has made you his child (8:12-17).
 - a. In this passage Paul discusses the doctrine of adoption. Adoption in the Roman world was different than the practice of adoption today, and we will explore the significance of that in the weeks to come.
 - b. What is important for us to realize from this section is that another of the ways in which the Holy Spirit works in our lives is to affirm and assure us of the fact that we belong to God.
 - c. Have you ever doubted that? If so, Romans 8 contains one of the most helpful discussions of the assurance of our salvation that we could want. What Paul says next in this chapter is based on the fact that we irreversibly, irrevocably, for all time belong to God. Can a true Christian lose his or her salvation. No! Why? Because

3. You will win the war against sin because of God's unstoppable decree (8:18-30).
 - a. In this section we look ahead to what God has in store for those who have trusted in Christ. Furthermore, we realize that his plan involves the redemption of the entire world, including creation.
 - b. The heart of this section, though, is an assurance that despite what goes on in our lives, God's purposes still stand. Look at the affirmation in verses 28-30.

4. You will win the war against sin because nothing can separate you from God's love in Christ Jesus (8:31-39).
 - a. Do we need any other reinforcement of the fact that we will in fact make it? That we will someday realize the fullness of the salvation that God has provided?
 - b. Then listen again to this great statement of assurance and hope (Read 8:31-39).

Connecting This Passage to Our Lives

1. Have you trusted in Christ? If not, I urge you to do so.
2. If you have, here are two questions: Can you live a life that pleases God now? Yes you can. And then, when eternity dawns, will you be with Jesus Christ forever? Yes you will. "O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be."