

**Introduction:** Jesus' work was not finished when He left the empty tomb. He rose in order to carry His victory at the Cross into Heaven, there to intercede for us, (Rom. 8:34), and to give us His Holy Spirit to bring His love and power right into our very hearts and lives. This week in our notes on Romans, we focus on this great movement of Christ from the Cross and Tomb to the Right Hand of God. May we thrill with Paul as we behold the unbreakable connection between our lives in all their trials and Christ's omnipotent intercession for us at God's Right Hand.

**Monday: read John 14:23-26 and Romans 8:9-11.** We know that, on the Great Day of Christ's return, we will be raised up to meet Him. Paul promises that in Romans 8:11 when he declares that our mortal bodies will be given life through the Spirit who gave life to Christ's body. But even now, that same Spirit lives within us as "*the Spirit of Christ*," (Rom. 8:9). What a bond between us and our Savior! Not only are we by faith "in" Christ, connected to Him as a body knit to the Head, He is also in us, having sent from the Father's right hand *His Spirit* to abide in us! What cooperation between the members of the Trinity in order to make "their home with us," (John 14:23). The Father sends the Spirit, (John 14:26) and the Son sends that Spirit too! The Spirit of God lives in us (Rom. 8:9) and the Spirit of the Christ does too! All this points to the same great truth. When we confess with our mouths "Jesus is Lord," and "believe in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead," we are not only saved, (Rom. 10:9); we also become the habitation of God!

**Meditate and Pray:** Thank the Triune God for His indwelling you by faith with the words of this great hymn by Henry F. Lyte (# 707, especially verse 4):

*(Verse 1): Jesus, I my cross have taken, all to leave and follow Thee.  
Destitute, despised, forsaken, Thou from hence my all shall be.  
Perish every fond ambition, all I've sought or hoped or known.  
Yet how rich is my condition! God and Heaven are still mine own.*

*(Verse 4): Take, my soul, thy full salvation; rise o'er sin, and fear, and care;  
Joy to find in every station something still to do or bear:  
Think what Spirit dwells within thee; what a Father's smile is thine;  
What a Savior died to win thee, child of heaven, shouldst thou repine?*

**Tuesday: read Romans 7:4 and 8:9-11.** We know that Christ is exalted to God's right hand because of His Spirit which He has poured out into our lives. Because He is God, He has the Divine power along with His Father to "pour out" this Spirit into our hearts, (Rom. 5:5). But once there, what is that Spirit of Christ to do in us? Well, there is real fruit from Christ's Spirit in us! As Romans 7:4 promises, the body of Christ was raised from the dead, "*that we might bear fruit to God.*" Add to that Jesus' own promise that we are to be known as Christians by the fruit of our lives in this world, (Matthew 7:16-20). "Lord, please make us fruitful through the power of Christ's Resurrection Spirit!"

**Meditate and Pray:** Have you ever wondered where a fruitful Christian life *in this world* comes from? Have you despaired at times of *ever* producing lasting fruit for God, given the great conflict with sin which we all face as Christians (Remember Romans 7:21 – "*When I want to do good, evil is right there with me.*")? Well, be of good cheer. The Risen Jesus is so strong as to send life-giving vigor into us even before the spring-time of His return! In this cold world, the buds of Christ's life already lie ready to burst open in our lives! Thank Jesus for keeping His promise to produce fruit in our lives as He said He would in John 15:16: "*You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit – fruit that will last.*" Thank the Holy Spirit of Christ for His determination to make you flower and bear fruit even in this cold world with this missing verse from Hymn # 335 in our Hymn book:

*Tender Spirit, dwell with me!  
I myself would tender be;  
Shut my heart up like a flower*

*In temptation's darksome hour,  
Open it when shines the sun,  
And his love by fragrance own.*

**Wednesday: read Romans 8:12-15 and Psalm 145:13-20.** Being united to Christ in His resurrection, as Paul declares to be true of all Christians in Romans 7:4, implies a great and profound obligation on our part. To put it simply, someone like Christ who can raise us from the dead spiritually, and bodily, *has every right to demand our cooperation in the new Christian life we live.* In other words, the first fruit which Christ demands from us as new believers living in the power of a risen life is that we hate sin just as He does, and therefore cooperate with His Spirit in putting it to death. This is the point of Romans 8:13: In contrast to the old way of sin and death, we, by the Spirit of life in us, are to *put to death* the misdeeds of the body. We are to strangle our sins while they sleep; trample our lusts instead of appeasing them, and never live at peace with the sinful flesh remaining in us. That is the militant life into which the Spirit of God will lead us to live as “sons of God,” (Rom. 8:14)!

**Meditate and Pray:** Are we weary of the battle? Too much conflict for us to face? Not if we are “sons of God,” led by the Spirit of God! Our “spirits” are not to be fearful, (Rom. 8:15), because at every moment when the battle seems too hot, we can cry out by the Spirit for God the Father’s help as Romans 8:15 encourages us to do! And our Father will never fail to hear our cry when our foes multiply! Psalm 145:13-20 again and again reminds us that God will uphold us in the strife when we fall and will hear us when we cry out for help. Put Him to the test and He will never fail to come to you in the battle. As C.S. Lewis put it, speaking of Christ’s incarnation, “Jesus has joined our sad regiment” by becoming man – will He now forget us after having endured the same battles which we face?

**Thursday: read Romans 8:16-17 and Galatians 4:6-7.** For the Christian, there is no avoiding conflict with sin and Satan in this life, nor the hatred of those who first hated Christ. This is part of our inheritance. As Romans 8:17 declares, we will not share Christ’ glorious inheritance without first sharing in His sufferings at the hands of a hostile world. But Jesus ensures that we will endure such hostility to the very end, and will enter into our Heavenly inheritance safely. How? Look for an answer to Galatians 4:6, where Paul tells us that the very same Spirit who was operative in *successfully* waging war against this world in the person of the Son of God *now* dwells in us, sent into our hearts by God the Father – nothing less than the “Spirit of His Son”! That’s how God the Father ensures that we will persevere to the very end in our profession of faith! He gives us the same Spirit which He gave His own Son! No better protection could God the Father give us than the very Spirit who protected His Son!

**Meditate and Pray:** Thank God the Father for the great fact of *your* perseverance in the faith because of the earnest and guarantee given you in the Spirit of God with the words of Toplady’s great Hymn (# 463):

*A debtor to mercy alone, of covenant mercy I sing;  
Nor fear, with Thy righteousness on, my person and off’ring to bring.  
The terrors of law and of God with me can have nothing to do;  
My Savior’s obedience and blood hide all my transgressions from view.*

*The work which His goodness began, the arm of His strength will complete;  
His promise is Yea and Amen, and never was forfeited yet.  
Things future, nor things that are now, nor all things below or above,  
Can make Him His purpose forgo, or sever my soul from His love.*

*My name from the palms of His hands eternity will not erase;  
Impressed on His heart it remains, in marks of indelible grace.  
**Yes, I to the end shall endure, as sure as the earnest is giv’n;**  
More happy, but not more secure, the glorified spirits in Heav’n.*

**Friday: read Galatians 4:6, Romans 8:15-28.** The Christian life is full of groans and cries. (The word “cry” in Rom. 8:15 could actually be translated “shriek”). As sons of God we are indeed waiting for things to get better – waiting patiently for “what we do not yet have,” (Rom. 8:24-25). Even the Holy Spirit who has been given to us as the “firstfruits” of the promised harvest when Christ returns, (Rom. 8:23), groans right along with us in Rom. 8:26! He helps us with His groans when we are at our wits’ end and know not what to pray! Yes, the Christian life is indeed perplexing! But the Spirit of God, given to us from the hand of the Risen Christ, knows how to help us when we do not know what to do or what to say! He intercedes for us *from within* just as Christ intercedes for us *from the Throne!*

**Meditate and Pray:** Thank God for the insight of B.B. Warfield, when he says about Rom. 8:26-28:

*“It is true that in this weakness... we cannot be sure what we need and cannot even pray articulately; we can only, like nature itself, groan and travail in pain, for we scarcely know what. But there is one who knows. In these very groans the Spirit’s hand is active... There is no danger, then, that we shall fail of the needed help. Maybe we do not know what we need – God does. He can and will read off our groans of pain and longing in terms of intelligence and love... there is nothing that can befall us which is undirected by Him; and nothing will befall those that love Him, therefore, which is not directed by Him to their good.”*