



pursuing the presence of **GOD**

IF THE SPIRIT LIVES IN US, WHY ARE WE SUCH A MESS?

Main text: Romans 8:1–17

Supporting text: Romans 7:15-21

This weekend, Pastor Jonathan extended the conversation about the presence of the Spirit of God within us asking the question, “If God’s Spirit lives within us, why Christianity is such a mess?” Christians in America today are divided and contentious on any and every issue, 6500 people are ceasing to identify as Christian every day, 3000 churches close every year, and Christians attending college are more likely to have a crisis of faith at a Christian college than a secular university. Jonathan opened by looking at Romans 7:15-21, in which Paul relates the intensity of his own struggle with his sin nature. For Paul, sin is a power that is only conquered by the power of the Spirit. In the next chapter, Romans 8:1–17, Paul talks about how the presence of the Spirit is the marker of those who belong to Jesus and 3 things that flow out of the Spirit’s presence are 1) hope for resurrection life, 2) an obligation to live according to the Spirit, and 3) the ability to cry “Abba, Father” as adopted sons and daughters of our Father in heaven.

Questions:

- Jonathan began with openly discussing that Christianity has a problem that’s causing people to leave the faith. He called Christian faith in America a “mess.” Do you agree with this? Why or why not?
- In Romans 7:15-21, Paul relates his own internal battle with sin, which he understands as a power that he is unable to overcome on his own. Would you describe sin this way in your experience?
- Some think that in Romans 7 Paul is talking about his past life before Christ rather than his ongoing experience of living in Christ. Pastor Jonathan disagreed. What do you think?
- Read Romans 8:1–17. What does Paul say is the defining marker of those that belong to Christ? (Hint: verse 9).
- Paul then describes 3 things that flow out of the indwelling presence of God. What are they? (Hint: Resurrection life 10-11, Obligation 12-13, Adoption to sonship/daughtership 14-17)
- After reading through these texts, why do you think there is such tremendous division and contentiousness in Christianity?