

# AHEAD IN THE LIFE OF GOD'S SPIRIT

Thomas Robinson, *He Goes Ahead of Us 6*, Pentecost, June 8, 2014

## ROMANS 8:9-17

<sup>9</sup> **You**, however, are **not in the flesh** but **in the Spirit**, if in fact **God's Spirit dwells in you**. Anyone who does not have **Messiah's Spirit** does not **belong to him**.

<sup>10</sup> But if **Messiah is in you**, although the body is dead because of sin, **the Spirit is life** because of righteousness.

<sup>11</sup> If **the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you**, he who raised **Messiah Jesus** from the dead will also **give life to your mortal bodies** through **his Spirit dwelling in you**.

<sup>12</sup> So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. <sup>13</sup> For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if **by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live**.

<sup>14</sup> For all who are **led by God's Spirit** are **children of God**. <sup>15</sup> For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received **the Spirit of adoption as sons**, by whom we cry, **"Abba! Father!"** <sup>16</sup> **The Spirit himself bears witness** with our spirit that we are **children of God**, <sup>17</sup> and if children, then **heirs – heirs of God** and fellow **heirs with Messiah**, provided we **suffer with him** in order that we may also **be glorified with him**.

## ACTS 2:1-4

<sup>1</sup> When the **day of Pentecost** arrived, they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly there came from heaven **a sound like a mighty rushing wind**, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> And divided **tongues as of fire** appeared to them and rested on each one of them. <sup>4</sup> And they were all **filled with the Holy Spirit** and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

---

## REVELATION 21:3

<sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, **the dwelling place of God is with people**. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God."

## ROMANS 8:1-4

<sup>1</sup> There is therefore now **no condemnation** for those who are **in Messiah Jesus**. <sup>2</sup> For the law of the **Spirit of life** has set you **free in Messiah Jesus** from the law of **sin and death**. <sup>3</sup> For **God has done** what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending **his own Son** in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he **condemned sin** in the flesh, <sup>4</sup> in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who **walk** not according to the flesh but **according to the Spirit**.

## GALATIANS 5:22-25

<sup>22</sup> But the **fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup> And those who belong to Messiah Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> If we live by the Spirit, let us also **keep in step with the Spirit**.

## ACTS 2:38-39

<sup>38</sup> And Peter said to them, "Change your way of thinking and be plunged in water every one of you in the **name of Jesus Messiah** for the **forgiveness of your sins**, and you will receive **the gift of the Holy Spirit**. <sup>39</sup> For **the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off**, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself."

## LUKE 4:14

<sup>14</sup> And **Jesus** returned in **the power of the Spirit** to Galilee, and a report about him went out ....

## Pentecost – Day One

Seven weeks (49 days) follow Passover, Exodus, Crucifixion. Then comes Pentecost, “50,” the feast of weeks, Shavuoth, first fruits, the Torah, new beginning, the Holy Spirit breaks in. Seven weeks of years, then Jubilee; ‘proclaim liberty,’ life renewed. Seven days of creation, then the human story begins. Seven signs in Jesus’ ministry, culminating in his resurrection, then a new age/world begins. The First Day of a new week. The Holy Spirit. The disciples in Acts 1 didn’t know what they were waiting for, following Jesus’ instructions. They experience, are empowered, share the new reality. Jesus’ ministry continues, as he ‘*pours out*’ the Spirit. God’s Life, God’s Spirit breaks in to human experience in a new way. In Jesus’ resurrection, the final resurrection happens once, ahead of time, pointing ahead. By giving the Holy Spirit he gives the first taste of the life of that age to come, when God dwells with directly with us humans. We begin to share the promise of God’s own life.

## What Life Am I Living?

Acts 2 begins the exploration of the meaning of the Spirit. Romans 8 reflects the depth and challenge of that experience. The idea/reality of new life is always challenging. We’re used to the mess of our lives: our fears, rages, self-justification, pride, little gods – death. This is what Paul calls being ‘*in the flesh*.’ It’s our ordinary way, without God’s life. It can be better or worse. We can self-improve around the edges. But ‘*life according to the flesh*’ has no permanence. It ends in death, judgment, punishment, ultimately nothing. But really new life? That would take a miracle! Yes! The miracle of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. God continues his great miracle of incarnation in us humans. Jesus’ life and ministry was the full union of God’s life with human life. We are not Jesus, but he calls us to receive this gift of Life from him, a gift we were created to receive. God wants us to share his life. Who is the real you? “In the flesh”? “In the Spirit”? The Spirit is God’s gift, but I can refuse the gift or open myself to his presence. That’s the beginning of the life of the age to come. God’s Spirit, Messiah’s Spirit, dwells in us, like the temple. Power of resurrection life, now! The dynamic of life changes. We’ve always been vulnerable to our sin – ‘*a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear*.’ But God gives us a new identity in Jesus by the Spirit. We are adopted as God’s children, with unimaginable intimacy with God. We share in Jesus’ life, death, glory.

## Walking by the Spirit

The new reality is given, but then learned and lived in our life as God’s children, led by God’s Spirit. We ‘*walk in newness of life*,’ walking ‘*according to the Spirit*,’ opening ourselves to the Spirit’s work and thus ‘*keeping in step with the Spirit*.’ In this way, God works out the full reality of all that Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection meant step by step in our lives. New reality can be painful. It can be excruciating to put to death favorite sins of revenge, pride, anger, indulgence, unfaithfulness, unforgiveness, etc., that we’re used to but are killing us. We live in such self-deception that our deadliest wounds of sin feel like life, our pride, self. Tearing down our comfortable little gods really hurts. Do we really want life? Only God’s self-giving love in Jesus and the Spirit can break through the deception. God does and gives what we could never do or provide for ourselves. In Jesus he takes our sin on himself and gives us his life. He works patiently and continually in us to grow the fruit of his Spirit in a life of *love, joy, peace, patience*.... He stays with us through ups and downs. We learn to walk with God, walk by the Spirit, in newness of life, into the eternal life of God.