

2011 SERMON #8 ROMANS #8 NO CONDEMNATION NO SEPERATION, CHURCH HISTORY SUNDAY Romans 8:28-39

About 40 years ago Dr. Donald Gray Barnhouse decided to ask a group of Christian leaders to name their favorite chapter of the Bible. Of the 20 Christian leaders, five named Romans 8 as the one chapter they would choose. But those leaders are not alone in that estimation. Romans 8 is regarded by many Christians as the greatest chapter in all the Bible. One reason is The Holy Spirit is mentioned 19 different times. more than any other chapter in the Bible.

On this History Sunday as we celebrate 130 years of First United Methodist churches existence here in Aberdeen.. It is good for us that we acknowledge the work of the Holy Spirit. Because it was at Pentecost that we celebrate the Coming of the Holy Spirit, And the birth of the Christian church. Without which no church would ever start, Ever stay, Or ever stand As a beacon of light to the world.

It starts from within.

I. GET INTO IT

First UMC here in Aberdeen, Didn't start because we gathered a group of people and then sought God's Spirit upon them. No, it started because some men and women in early Aberdeen, Had the Spirit of God come into them, And then they gathered as a group. To talk, sing and pray about its affect on their lives. It started from within,

And today, more than any time in history, we need to be led and fed by the Spirit of God And we must get into it. To have something stable and secure To live our lives out fully.

SLIDE---According to U.S. News & World Report (4/22/96),
89 % of Americans think that rudeness and lack of respect is a serious problem:
73 % - Think mean-spirited political campaigns are to blame:
67 % - Think rock music is to blame
52 % - Think talk radio is to blame:
1 % - Think their own behavior is uncivil.

John Wesley the founder of Methodism,
Wanted to reach the world for Christ.

He wanted them to have a personal
Assurance of faith, and victory over sin.
And Romans 8 is that chapter of Christian assurance.
IT begins with:

“no condemnation” and ends with “no separation.”

SLIDE---**1Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,
2because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin
and death.
38For I am convinced that.... nothing else in all creation, will be able to separate us from
the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:1,38**

SLIDE---That's what drove those early circuit riding preachers
Out into the frontiers.
They got into the Spirit of God
They had good news.
And they wanted to share it with the world.

Most of the 18th century preachers were single because
Nearly half of the circuit riders died before they were thirty years old;
about 2/3 died before they had spent 12 years in the laborious service.

SLIDE---A pioneer preacher in Louisiana wrote, ' Every day I travel I have to swim through
creeks or swamps, and I am wet from head to feet, and some days from morning to night I am
dripping with water. My horse's legs are now skinned and rough to his hock joints, and I have
rheumatism in all my joints...what I have suffered in body and mind my pen is not able to
communicate to you.''But none of these things shall move me, neither count I my life dear
unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy.'"

That is a spirit Purposed life from the inside out.
God moved them across this land.
In 1784, there were 15,000 Methodists and 83 traveling preachers.
By 1839, the denomination had grown to 750,00 members
served by 3,500 traveling preachers and 5,856 local preachers

Those early preachers GOT INTO IT.

SLIDE---**Because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law
of sin and death. Romans 8:2**
They Got into it.

I. THEY GOT OVER IT.

Now the Apostle Paul is talking about the struggle
Of the sinful nature vs the Spiritual nature. Vs. 5-8

SLIDE---**5Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature
desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the
Spirit desires. Romans 8:5**

Last week sermon summarized this.
That battle inside us of our desires.

SLIDE---Of the flesh vs the spirit.

This battle starts young:

A man took a second job delivering pizza. He said: I was met at the door by the families 7 year old son who was sent to pay me. As he approached I noticed that he was carrying a check in one hand and two dollars in the other, which I assumed was my tip. To my dismay, he pocketed the bills before handing me the check, which was for the exact cost of the pizza. I asked him , "Could that have been a tip?" And the seven year old said: "Yep, not bad for just a walk from the living room and back!"

Look at the consequence of the sinful nature vs the Spiritual nature.

The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; 7the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. 8Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. Romans 8:6

Sinful mind is death / Spiritual nature is life

Sinful mind is hostile to God /Spirit life pleases God.

This is the struggle we live with.

LET'S GET OVER IT.

That's part of what it means to live in this sin-cursed world.

There is a time to struggle.

There is a time to snuggle.

back into the arms of God.

SLIDE---A lady tells of watching loggerhead turtles come to laying their eggs on barrier Island.

One huge female dug herself onto the beach dug a hole and laid her eggs. The woman watched and decided to come back in the morning to check on the eggs. What she discovered was the mother turtle tracks showed she headed in the wrong direction. Not back to the sea but out into the sand dunes. The sand was now as hot as asphalt in the sun.

She followed the tracks and found the turtle exhausted, all but baked, her head and flippers caked with dried sand. After pouring water on her and covering her with sea oats, She fetched a park ranger who returned with a jeep to rescue her. He flipped her on her back, wrapped tire chains around her front legs, and hooked the chains to a trailer hitch on his jeep. Then took off yanking her body forward so that her mouth filled with sand and her neck bent so far back I thought it would break.

SLIDE--- The ranger dug her over the dunes and down to the beach. At the ocean's edge, he unhooked her and turned her right side up. She lay motionless in the surf as the water lapped at her body, washing the sand from her eyes and making her skin shine again. A wave broke over her; she lifted her head slightly. Other waves brought her further back to life until one of them made her light enough to find a foothold and push off, back into the ocean. She said: I reflected that it is sometimes hard to tell whether you are being killed or saved by the hands that turn your life upside down.

Sometimes people come to Christ and they get upset because he turns their lives upside down.

Their relationship, finances, marital difficulties

Have put them way out in the wilderness,

Scorches in the sand dunes of despair.

Persons come to us as pastors and,

Want God to help them back.

That's good,

So we pray with them, and encourage them,

And then sometimes we have to tell them,
 God is going to flip you on your back,
 Because you are so twisted in your living and your thinking.
 God comes over grabs onto them and
 Begins to drag them back to life.
 Sometimes things get nasty.
 Those close to them don't understand.
 They get hurt and bruised.
 And misunderstood.
 They get discouraged, they get disillusioned,

But when they stop and look at where they were,
 And how God has gotten them to where they are.
 They discover that its through the storm and through the flood
 That we find a new sunrise in life.

And God has to flip some churches on their back.
 To get their attention.
 The first church here in Aberdeen, didn't know where to build.
 There were votes,
 There were opinions
 There were arguments
 There were attitudes this way and that.

But through the struggle came a new beginning.
 IN 1908 our fore parents built on this location.
 The same struggle occurred in 2002 when we voted to
 Stay or move from our downtown location.
 Some wanted to stay,
 Some wanted to move.
 The vote was to stay and to build.
 So today we are honored to share in this ministry at 502 S. Lincoln.

God's purpose in all this was to use the church to display his wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. 11 This was his eternal plan, which he carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord." Ephesians 3:10-11 (NLT)

It is through the struggle that oftimes people see the real Jesus in us.
 The struggle is just "part and parcel"
 of what it means to live on this earth.
 So let's just Get over it.
 Our struggle is without condemnation.

II. GET ON WITH IT

12Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation--but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. Romans 8:12

We have an obligation.
 Once we are set free by the Spirit of God,
 To live by the Spirit.

For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.. Romans 8:13

And there is nothing that we can't accomplish for his Glory.

Because God can use all things to work together for his Good to those who love him.

28And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28

The Apostle Paul is saying that

there is no failure for those who are in Christ Jesus?"

Oh we do struggle,

We do stumble.

We are like children.

A property manager was showing a rental unit to prospective tenants and asking the usual questions. "Professionally employed?" he asked.

She said: "We're a military family,"

He asked: "Children?"

She said proudly, "Oh, yes, ages nine and twelve,"

He said: "Animals?"

She said: "Oh, no, they're very well behaved."

We are not animals. We are sons and daughters of God.

But there is no failure.

14because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. Romans 8:14-15

We can struggle, but we're not condemned.

We can fall, but we're not condemned.

You can trip, stray off the path, but we're not condemned.

We may make a thousand mistakes, we may sin and we do,

We are not condemned.

because God has said we will not be made a slave again to fear.

And the Holy Spirit himself

Testifies with our spirit when we cry ABBA FATHER

And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." 16The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Romans 8:16

We are Heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.

Now if we are children, then we are heirs--heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. Romans 8:17

From Suffering to Glory.

That is our story.

If you've had children, you understand this.

What do you do when your children are trying to learn to walk and fall down?

They grab the side of the couch and try to stand up. ... PLOP.

They crawl back up again and ... PLOP.

Finally the day comes when they can stand, and then they take a step and ... PLOP.

What would you say about a father who spanked his child because he plopped?

You'd say he's not much of a father

Because when you're a father and you see your children try and stumble,
 you don't spank them for falling or failing.
 You cheer them because they got back up.
 That's what "no condemnation" means.

When Jesus saved you,
 he didn't say he would take away all your problems.
 No, but he did say this.
 In your problems, in your struggles, there is no condemnation.
 SO--- Get on with it.....Get up and get going.
 We are called to live a godly life
 From suffering to Glory.
 LAST

III. GET ABOVE IT

**Do you know that God has already made provision
 For our ultimate victory?**

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

The Spirit of the living Christ is the most powerful
 Force in the universe.

With Christ we can get above it.

Paul lists the things we can get above that would separate us from Christ love.

Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

Romans 8:35

He says not even death shall separate us:

**As it is written, 'For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be
 slaughtered.' Romans 8:36**

That is what the church of Jesus Christ does for us.

Harry Emerson Fosdick received this letter from a Christian mother who moved into a new
 subdivision: She wrote: We tried everything we could think of to make this place something
 other than a rental subdivision. She said: We tried organized recreation, community picnics, and
 square dancing. We formed a women's club, a bridge club, and even started a garden club. We
 had a parents' organization and evening discussion groups. We tried everything. But it was not
 until the church came that we changed from a subdivision into a community and became real
 neighbors to one another (Dear Mr. Brown, 1961 , p. 150).

The Spirit of Christ within is what unites us.

It teaches us that Christ love is not fickle.

Those he loves, he loves forever.

Those he saves, he saves forever.

**No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. Romans
 8:37**

God has given us his son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

He gave us the best that heaven had for us.

If he has given us the best

Will he hold back the rest?

No,

If God has done this much we may be sure
 that if we need anything else,

Our God will supply all our needs according to his riches in Glory. Phillipians 4:19

Why? Because God is for us.

Who can separate us from the love of God?

Paul ends this like any good preacher

After he has laid out his arguments,

He switches to his personal testimony.

38For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.Romans 8:38-39

That is the power of the Spirit of God in your life.

‘For I am convinced’

That is what the world needs to hear from you and me.

I am convinced

That is what makes this church and every church important.

“I am convinced that nothing can separate us from the love of God.”

Every church in the world

Every steeple

Every cross.

Every open door

Every Bible

Every hymn sung

Testifies that their no separation from the love of God.

For I am convinced Romans 8:38

That is our witness against the darkness,

That is our witness against the storm,

No condemnation.....No Separation.

So as we look to the future of this historic church of 130 years.

May we as a congregation of believers,

Get into it.

Get over it

Get on with it

And Get above it.

May God bless us and keep us faithful to his word,

so that the footprints that we leave will lead other to believe!

Amen..(May it be so)