

A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED ON PAUL'S LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN ROME

THE SPIRIT OF GOD LIVES IN YOU

Romans 8:9 "You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you."

There are only two realities for you. Either you are in the realm of the flesh or the realm of the Spirit. If you are in the realm of the flesh then you cannot be in the realm of the Spirit. If you are in the realm of the Spirit, then you cannot be in the realm of the flesh. You ARE in the realm of the Spirit when the Spirit of God dwells in you.

How then do you know which realm you are in? The test is quite simple. When you believe and confess that Jesus is your Lord and Savior, then you live in the realm of the Spirit because "no one can say Jesus is Lord unless the Spirit tells him." (1 Corinthians 12:3) John writes, "This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God. . ." (1 John 4:2)

How does the Holy Spirit do this work in you? He "calls you by the Gospel" to partake of the spiritual blessings that are yours in Christ. (Small Catechism, p. 150) Revelation 22:17 says, "The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come.'" And let the one who hears say, 'Come.'" And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price." The Holy Spirit's work in you to give you faith and trust in Jesus. And through Christ you come to God the Father.

The written and spoken Word of the Gospel and the sacraments are the means by which the Holy Spirit brings and keeps you in the true faith in Jesus Christ. (See Small Catechism, p. 152, question number 161.) This statement is based upon the words of Romans 10:17, "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ." 1 Peter 1:23 says, "You have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God." Titus 3:5 tells of you receiving the blessings of the saving work of Jesus through the Spirit working this faith in you through your baptism, "He saved us (you). . . by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit." You are a baptized believer because Christ is in you and Christ is in you. This is how the Bible defines what it means to be a Christian.

Prayer: Holy Spirit, work in me faith in Jesus through whom I am able to say Jesus is Lord and God is my Father. Amen.

Creator Spirit, by whose aid The world's foundations first were laid,
Come, visit ev'ry humble mind; Come, pour Your joys on humankind;
From sin and sorrow set us free; May we Your living temples be.

O Source of uncreated light, The bearer of God's gracious might,
Thrice-holy fount, thrice holy fire, Our hearts with heavn'ly love inspire;
Your sacred, healing message bring To sanctify us as we sing.

Giver of grace, descend from high; Your sev'nfold gifts to us supply;
Help us eternal truths receive And practice all that we believe;
Give us Yourself that we may see The glory of the Trinity.

Immortal honor, endless fame Attend the Almighty Father's name;
The Savior-Son be glorified, Who for all humankind has died;
To You, O Paraclete, we raise Unending songs of thanks and praise.
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