

**TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
IHOP BIBLE STUDY**

12 Romans 8: 1 - 17, "The Sin Offering" -- with commentary

The purpose of the Letter to the Romans is to develop a "Model for Living the Awakened/Transformed Life." Today's study is the 12th of 27 lessons.

According to our Study Chart we are studying the 3rd section of "Embrace The Work of Christ and the Spirit" This is one of seven sessions under the rubric of "Spirit Help." This is the first session in this series. Remember, the focus of the Book of Romans is to provide us "The Model For Living The Awakened/Transformed Life."

A caveat—

Avoid the dreaded curse of Head Trip Analysis. It is a curse because it robs Paul of his relevance and cheapens the deep meaning of his message. It is so easy to fall into because Paul is leading us down into the pits of Christian theology in a closely reasoned argument. It is almost mind-numbing.

Keep your Gut Trip perspective. Keep asking, "How do I experience what Paul is saying?" Struggle, struggle, struggle to avoid falling back into this old habit. Yes, struggle against it. Contend against it. Fight it with all you have.

Before you begin to read this assignment, take a moment to re-ground for yourself the following list of words. If necessary, memorize the answers and whenever you see the word then draw back into your mind these definitions. I found this is the only way that Paul begins to make sense. Remember, good luck is where opportunity meets preparation! So, Good Luck!

- 1) The nature of God --** God is Perfect At-One-Ment. As we live in God's presence we experience harmony in our relationships with neighbor, self and God, and thereby overcome "man's fundamental disharmony." This fulfills the Great Commandment of Christ.
- 2) Our intended purpose as human beings --** Our created purpose as human beings is to live in God's presence in At-One-Ment with neighbor, self and God.
- 3) The experience of Sin --** Sin is experienced as separation. Sin is the experience of living outside of God's presence. First of all, the nature of human beings is fated to live separated from neighbor, self and God because of our gender, race and cultures; over these we have no control. Second, this human condition results in pride and self-centeredness that leads to performing acts that push others away from us and exacerbates sin's power.
- 4) Christ --** The Awakening Event. This term is not an object to be understood but a experience of At-One-Ment. It is the Patrolman's "red light." It awakens us from sin.
- 5) The Spirit --** Go back almost five years and recover one of our earliest principles – if a word looks religious is probably means At-One-Ment. The Spirit is an Alarm Clock to awaken us to At-One-Ment.
- 6) Righteousness --** See above concerning our earliest principle. Righteousness is living in a right relationship to God who is Perfect At-One-Ment.
- 7) vs. 4, The righteousness requirements of the Law --** The Law (all 613 Laws of Moses) can result in living in At-One-Ment, which is to live in God's presence. As we fulfill The Law we can end up living in a more harmonious relationship.
- 8) Paul's use of the term "death" -- Paul uses this word to mean living apart from God and/or Christ!** Rarely does Paul use the word death to mean physical death.

In an earlier lesson Paul speaks of the death of the old self; here Paul uses this death literally in this special sense, yet it does not refer to physical or natural death.

NOW, MAKE A COPY OF THESE WORDS ON A CARD, and carry it with you, and look at it whenever you encounter one of these words, or the compound use of these words, such as, "Spirit of life set me free from the Law of Sin and death" (vs. 2).

My transliteration of verse 2: *"Through Jesus Christ, the one who saves me from the failure of living my intended purpose, and also through the fundamental principle of being awake to my At-One-Ment with neighbor, self and God, I am set free from the fundamental principle of living in separation from God's presence. The result is to experience the inner peace of fulfilling my intended purpose as a human/humane individual. This makes my neighbor happy, it makes me happy, and God smiles.*

GUT-TRIP ANALYSIS CARD

Romans' Old Christian Code Words

Romans 8

The Nature of God -- Perfect At-One-Ment

Human Purpose -- To live humanely

**Exp. Of Sin -- In-human (racism, sexism, etc.)
Un-human (self depreciation
Fated to be: gender, race, culture**

Christ -- An awakening event (not an object!)

Spirit -- Conscious awakening (alarm clock)

Righteousness -- Living right w/ intended purpose

The Law -- Tool of awakenment

Death -- The Old Sinful Self dies

LESSON PLAN FOR THIS SESSION: The IHOPers spent a lot of our hour together grounding these words. The little card was distributed to put into our Bibles for referencing these words as we continue to read Romans.

I. Read vs. 17. Do some commentary reading on the significance of being "heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ." First, translate the religious words into Gut Trip Analysis then see what you have inherited as a son or daughter of God. Share your findings.

WS: Again, it is important to remind ourselves that "Christ" is not an object, but an experience of being awakened. Usually, this experience happens in some kind of accountability. The IHOPers summarized our conversation in this way: Our inheritance is At-One-Ment living in God's presence. Christ is the experience of awakening to our intended purpose.

II. Read vss. 5 - 16.

WS: I found it helpful to divide my paper into two columns. Mark one column "Flesh" and the other column "Spirit." List the various items in their appropriate

column. Be sure you seriously reflect on the significance of each word or phrase. Run it through your own human experience in order to ground it.

FLESH	SPIRIT
<p>Vs. 5 – Sinful nature: fated by our gender, race or culture to live in the antithesis of At-One-Ment.</p> <p>Vs. 5 -- Sinful desires: Decisions we make to separate ourselves from others; i.e., racism. . . or to separate ourselves from our-selves; i.e., self-depreciation.</p> <p>Vs. 6 -- Mind of sinful man is death: It is like smoking – we know what is bad for us, but we become obsessive about it.</p> <p>Vs. 7 -- Hostile to God: We fail to fulfill our intended purpose; failing to stand in the presence of God.</p> <p>Vs. 7 -- Can't submit to God's Law: We continue to hurt the one's we love the most.</p> <p>Vs. 8 -- Can not please God: According to John Wesley, the human situation is that we are spiritually asleep. The human predicament is that we can not awaken ourselves. Or, as Satre—the French playwright observed, we live in “No Exit.”</p> <p>Vs. 9 -- Not belong to Christ: Paul makes the point here that when we live by the “flesh” then “we do not belong to Christ.” In Gut Trip Analysis this means the decision is made to remain as victims and not be a victor.</p>	<p>Vs. 5 -- Minds set on what the Spirit desires: Embracing the surrendered life of At-One-Ment.</p> <p>Vs. 6 -- The mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace: It can be said that when we experience (whole) life and peace, we are experiencing the Spirit.</p> <p>Vs. 9 -- Controlled by the Spirit – then God lives in you: When we experience harmony with others and/or within ourselves, this is evidence that God is living inside us. <i>(The underline is my emphasis for Gut Trip Analysis.)</i></p> <p>Vs. 10 -- If Christ is in you. . . your spirit is alive because of righteousness: As we experience harmony within us, this is evidence we are right with God.</p> <p>Vs. 11 -- Because of the Spirit who raised Jesus Christ from the dead (the absence of God) will then give life to your mortal bodies through his spirit that lives in you. <i>(See note above re: Gut Trip Analysis.)</i> It is our “mortal bodies” that finally represent physical, emotional and spiritual death. Our bodies are the abode of our hopelessness. But, the resurrection of Christ, AND OUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE RISEN CHRIST, represents hope and rebirth.</p>
<p>Vs. 13 -- If we live according to the sinful nature we die: The purpose of the “old self” is to live outside our intended purpose of living in the presence of God.</p>	<p>Vs. 12 – 13 -- We have an obligation. . . but not to the sinful nature: Our obligation is to fulfill our intended purpose of standing in the presence of God.</p>
	<p>Vs. 13 – If we live by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, and you will live: Putting to death our misdeeds is easier than we think. We ask forgiveness of those we harm knowing that God already forgives us.</p>
<p>Vs. 15 -- For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear: Angst is the characteristic that demonstrates our slavery to sin. When we are fearful, we are no longer standing in God's presence.</p>	<p>Vs. 14 – Because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God: This supports vs. 13. God has already forgiven us, we only need to awaken to claim it, because we are family!</p> <p>Vs. 15 -- You received the Spirit of sonship, and we cry “Papa!”: <i>(Think Prodigal Son, here.)</i></p> <p>Vs. 16 -- The Spirit himself [sic] testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. When we live in harmony then it can be said that our spirit is in harmony with our intended purpose.</p>

III. Read vss.1 – 4. These are a summary of Paul’s theology. Use your Word Card to unravel what Paul is summarizing about the Spirit of Life and the Law of Sin in light of our relationship with Christ. Write a summary statement here.

WS: As the Awakened we fulfill our human purpose of “praising God;” or as Gut Trip Analysis interprets “praising God” as standing in the presence of God. The result is a profound sense of peace within us, and our neighbors find peace in our relationship with them. To live unawakened is the antithesis of fulfilling our human purpose of living humanely which is to live in the presence of God.

Paul puts it this way. Now there is no condemnation for those living in Christ Jesus. WWJD always is the Christian ethic

The Law of the Spirit of Life (At-One-Ment) set me free from the Law of Sin and death (the antithesis of At-One-Ment.) The death that is implied here is not physical death, but living the death of our intended purpose.

The Law is weakened by sin because the purpose of the Law is to Awaken us. However, the Law also convicts us without hope of forgiveness. God defeated the absence of our forgiveness through Christ. Paul likens this to a “sin offering.”

In this way, sin is condemned in “sinful man,” in order that the “righteousness requirement of the Law” is met.

For those who do not live according to the sinful nature (the antithesis of At-One-Ment; not living in the presence of God), but according to the Spirit (in At-One-Ment and in the presence of God) and in this way fulfill our intended purpose as humans.

IV. In light of our work above, write a summary of your reflections over chapters 1 through 7. Clarify for yourself what you mean by sin and the purpose of The Law.

WS: I’ll have *The Interpreter’s One-Volume Commentary* speak for all of us.

E. New Spiritual Endowment (8: 1 – 17)

We are now ready to move forward to a fuller comprehension of the effects of what God has done in Christ for sin-ridden humanity. We are in a better position for this move because the intervening chs. 5 – 7 have shown how the power of Christ has dealt with **man’s fundamental disharmony with God** (5: 1 – 11 – *emboldened for emphasis*), the dominance of sin and death (5: 12 – 21), and the continuing challenge of sin (chs. 6 – 7). The inadequacy of law to meet man’s *[sic]* need has also been explained (5:20; 7:7 – 14); now Paul can refer to it summarily as **the law of sin and death**. (p. 782.)

(By-the-way, in reading this commentary, I found lots of interesting stuff for today’s lesson. Resource it!)

Alright folks, talk to me.