

# SPIRITUAL MATURITY (LIVE BY THE SPIRIT)

Romans 8:1-15



## SYNOPSIS

This Sunday we heard about what it looks like to grow in spiritual maturity. When we consider what it takes to move from non-believer to a spiritually mature believer, we look at what Paul suggests in Romans 8 as we think about what God wants for and from us. Paul points out the hope we have when we think about the freedom we have in Jesus.

There are two types of freedom (negative freedom and positive freedom). Not only have we experienced negative freedom (the casting off of restraints that enslaves us), we also have experienced positive freedom (the authority and ability to choose). In this passage, we realize that we have both. Paul exhorts us to exercise this freedom to direct our life towards the things of the Spirit.

Romans 8:5-6 tells us that we have a choice to set our minds on the things of the flesh or set our minds on the things of the Spirit. Often times, we set our minds on the things of the flesh because of fear. We make decisions out of fear and for the sake of self-preservation. But we are encouraged to submit to the Spirit, not falling back in fear, but living in confidence as children of God.

Two ways we can live by the Holy Spirit: Hosting the Holy Spirit and Obedience to the Leadership of the Holy Spirit. By "hosting" the Holy Spirit, we are attentive to what He desires. We lay down our own agendas and priorities in order to learn what the Holy Spirit wants in our lives. By "obeying" the Holy Spirit, we are learning how to submit our own self-interests that come in conflict with the Holy Spirit's leadership. It is in those moments that we can experience submission and obedience. Discomfort, tension, challenge is actually the perfect environment for growing in spiritual maturity.



## OUTLINE

1

### FREEDOM TO CHOOSE

Freedom is not just removing restraints, but being given more authority and ability to control and direct our lives. As we move from slavery to freedom, we are not just casting off restraints, but actively choosing to set our minds on the things of the Spirit. We do that by Hosting the Spirit and obeying the Holy Spirit. Setting our mind on the Spirit is not just doing more "churchy" things, but having a relationship with the Holy Spirit and following His leadership in all aspects of our lives.

2

### HOSTING THE HOLY SPIRIT

As a host, we are mindful of the guest - in the same way, when we "host" the Holy Spirit, we are setting aside our own wants and preferences to learn what the Holy Spirit is doing. We are giving preference to the Holy Spirit. Do we know what the Holy Spirit wants to do in and through our lives?

3

### OBEDIENCE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Often times, God invites us to experience an abundant life, but that leads to dying to ourselves. It requires us to lay down our own lives (as most important) in order to follow Him. The true test of obedience is when God's call conflicts with our self interest, but we choose to submit to the Spirit and obey. As we grow towards spiritual maturity, different things will cause tension, but it will create an environment for us to grow in spiritual maturity.



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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

How do we know the difference between following "the flesh" and following "the Spirit" in a life decision?

2

What are you fearful of in this world?

3

Has there been a time you failed to do God's will because of fear? How did that decision turn out?

4

How mindful are you of the Spirit and what God wants in your everyday decisions?

5

What fears and decisions do you need to surrender to God in order to obey in following His leadership?



## BIG IDEA

To be led by the Spirit is to cast off restraints that prevent us from freedom in Christ, but also to actively choose to set our mind on the things of the Spirit. When we don't, we fall back into a spirit of fear, making decisions in life based out of fear and self-preservation. As we learn how to live by the Spirit, we must have the mindset of a host, "hosting" the Holy Spirit by giving preference to what He desires to do in our lives. We must also be diligent in choosing obedience. When the desires of our flesh clash with the desires of the spirit, we must learn how to submit and follow His leadership with full obedience.