

# The Birth of a New Consciousness

(Romans 8)

By: Sylvia Pearce

This is a chapter from, ("The Treasures of Darkness.")

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

(Romans 8:1)

How can words express the glory that filled Paul's heart as his spirit leaped in agreement with the Spirit of Life that was in him? The Spirit of Christ had set him free from the downward pulls of the law of sin and death, which held him in bondage in his flesh. Paul, in Romans Seven, ends shouting his freedom cry, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin"(7:25).

Paul finally had the discernment to see that there were two dimensions inside of him. One was the flesh dimension, which he was aware of all of his life, and the other was the Spirit dimension, which was a new reality to him. It was impossible for him to operate in both consciousnesses at the same time. There had to be a severe stripping away of one reality and a radical replacement with the other. Paul says in Philippians 3:7 "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I might win Christ." And Jesus says that "whosoever will save his life shall lose it: And whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it"(Matt, 16:25).

God's dealing with the Jewish nation at the Jordan River is a vivid picture of how God deals with Paul. If we can imagine the Jordan River flowing between the last few verses of Romans Seven and the first verse of Romans Eight, we will see Paul's dilemma. He is standing in the wilderness looking across the Jordan River at the promised place of rest. The obvious question arises. "Will I stay in

the miserable, but comfortably familiar wilderness and not receive my inheritance, or will I leap into the risky unknown and receive what God has promised me?"

This enlightens us, as well as challenges us today. Which consciousness are we going to operate from? Here in Romans Seven, we will either remain in a needy, condemned, "I've got to fix myself" consciousness and operate in it, or we will leap into the Spirit dimension and operate by faith as "whole, complete and lacking nothing" (James 1:3). We cannot have both worlds. For "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God"(I Cor. 15:50).

There is glorious freedom awaiting God's sons upon entering into the new promised land of no condemnation. Yet at the same time this is the place, I dare say, that most Christians get snagged and even stopped. We have never heard that Christ has come back inside of us releasing us from a striving self by giving us his own life of rest. The children of Israel did not enter into rest because of their unbelief. They paid a great price as an example to us. Let us honor their suffering by learning from their example.

God has strong warnings concerning this radical place. "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it" (Hebrews 4:1). "For we which have believed do enter into rest," as compared to the Israelites who could not enter in because of unbelief. Here in Romans 8, we reach the Jordan River in our consciousness and the penetrating question arises, do we believe what God says to be the truth, or do we believe what appears (feeling and thinking level) to be the truth? The Israelites grieved the Holy Spirit because they erred in their "evil hearts of unbelief" (Hebrews 3:7-19).

Strong language isn't it, yet this is a very serious matter, for we are standing between the bondage of a hellish me, and the freedom of a new me as Christ. Behind us is the Romans Seven desert of striving self, which is death, yet before us, lays the apparent impossibility of unconquerable giants. How is it possible for me to totally inherit the rest that is promised, when my soul seems so manic one minute and the next minute plummets downward to the depths of despair? My heart is comforted by the scripture knowledge that this Spiritual warfare is normal. Our Lord

himself experienced satanic attacks in the wilderness. The Hebrews letter says in 10:32, "after you were illuminated, you endured a great fight of afflictions." And in 4:11, "we are to labor to enter into His rest." This fight and this labor is the simple leap of faith. Yet all hell tells you it is not true.

That is why Romans Eight puts great emphasis on walking in the Spirit and not in the flesh. For we have no condemnation if we "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." If Paul walks in who he is in Christ, he has no condemnation, but if he strives to become something by self-effort, he is condemned and under the law.

Walking in the flesh is temporarily revisiting Romans Seven by falling into the trap of believing I "should," I "ought" to try to somehow improve myself, defend myself, or keep myself from evil. The illusionary "I" has reappeared and this "I" is subject to the outer law that it cannot keep. We are always being tempted downward with assaults that pull us back to self-effort: "be more patient, don't lose your temper, get rid of your evil thoughts, struggle against your lust, solve yourself, and try to fix others." "I am a needy self so I have to DO, DO, DO in order to save myself." This is a lie!

Because I am so used to taking charge of my own life and trying to control myself, I easily slip back into the try and fail dilemma of Romans Seven. God puts us through a painful process of learning how to walk in the Spirit. The way to walk in the Spirit is always by faith. That means we always go back to what the truth is about us: since the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the grave dwells in you, He, the Holy Spirit, will quicken your mortal flesh! For you are not really a flesh being, you are a Spirit being (Romans 8: 9-11). Flesh doesn't master flesh, but Spirit masters flesh. Someone once said that we all think "we were human beings on a spiritual journey, but in fact we are really Spirit beings on a human journey."

The truth is that the law of Spirit and Life, which is Christ as us, has set us free from the law of sin and death (Satan's bondage in our flesh level). It is already done. For what we could not do for ourselves, Christ did by "condemning sin in our flesh" (Rom. 8:3), thereby freeing us to be joined to our true husband, Christ, who fulfills the "righteousness of the law in us"(8:4).

The Cross defeated the whole satanic reign in our flesh by condemning Satan and putting him behind prison bars, thereby rendering him powerless. Satan is bound but not gagged, for he can still shout accusations at us behind prison bars, which he does constantly (Rev. 12:10). This is why we have to learn how to walk in the Spirit truth and not in Satan's accusing lies.

We must learn not to look at what is seen, for Satan would have us look down at our flesh appearance, which is "the mind set on the flesh." If we do, God promises us that we will die (8:6a). But if we dare look at the unseen and fix our gaze there, we are setting our "minds on the Spirit." That mind-set promises us life and peace (8:6b). Let us shout the victory before it comes into outer manifestation. We can now claim our right not to be condemned; we will not receive that lie anymore. However we appear, there is "now (present tense) no-condemnation."

We fight by not fighting, just like Jehoshaphat the king, "Ye shall not need to fight in this battle; set yourself, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord "(II Chron. 20:17). Now the onus is on God, for we cannot stop ourselves from striving. God is the one that causes our faith stand to appear in our flesh. However, we are not going to watch for it to happen, for that would be "the mind set on the flesh" again. As far as we are concerned, we are going to accept ourselves as right selves, "whole, complete and lacking nothing." That is the "mind set on the Spirit."

God promises us that if we "walk in the Spirit we shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh"(Gal. 5:24). How do we walk in the Spirit? We just "be" ourselves and expect the Spirit to cause us to walk in God's ways, "and do them." "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you shall keep my judgments, and do them" (Ezek. 36:26-27).

The Gospel is an exchange of gods, not an exchange of flesh. There was not one thing wrong with Paul's flesh, in fact, there never was. Christ won the victory over Satan in Paul's humanity, at the Cross (Romans 6:6). Therefore the fight is over. We can now leap into the person of Christ as our Victor, and our Rescuer, and our Life. We cease from trying to be our own savior and cannot touch our rescue. We confess with God that it is "not by (our) power, or by

(our) might, but by my Spirit saith the Lord"(Zech. 4:6). When you know the truth and agree with God, the lie falls away because it looses its false power. "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free"(John 8:32).

This operation is the total work of the Holy Spirit as He births our consciousness from self-loathing to self-love and self-acceptance, from self-effort to Spirit believing. We cannot touch this process. It is a metamorphosis, somewhat like a butterfly coming out of its cocoon. There is a transformation taking place inside of us as all the false realities die in the brightness of Christ, "the day star," rising in us, as us. Like the butterfly, we shed our grave clothes of false belief in a false self. Every lie drops off with the cocoon in the glory of His coming.

When this happens we do not lose our unique human self with all its faculties and capacities. The grave clothes are not our humanity, but the lies we've believed about our humanity. We were never wrong; we were indwelt by a false god, who misused our precious humanity. What we do lose is the illusion of an independent self we believed in. What we gain is the glory of Christ's Spirit and my spirit, merges together as one spirit being. It is an interpenetrating of spirits. So much so, that we don't know where one stops and the other begins.

Most Christians can say that Christ lives in them, but confessing that Christ is as us is another story. My friend Linda once said that, saying Christ is as us, is "the ultimate form of loving ourselves." We have to take a leap of faith to say it, for it doesn't seem to be the truth. But until we do take a leap and say, "Christ as us," then we are not accepting the form that Christ is taking as us, and ultimately we are not believing God, for Ephesians 1:5 says: He has "predestined us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He has made us accepted in the beloved." God has accepted us, therefore, we by faith, accept ourselves.

Saying the truth will cause us to suffer though, because on the appearance level it seems untrue. Paul suffered to fully know who he was. We too, will suffer, just like the butterfly suffers as it

emerges to its glory. This suffering is the one condition of our being sons. "You are a co-heir if so be that you suffer with him" (Romans 8:17). The perfect God-man, Jesus Christ, was forced into perfection through the things He suffered (Hebrews 2:10). So it is fitting that we also learn the obedience of faith by the things we suffer.

Through all of this metamorphosis, all we have is our word of faith, for all God has is His Word. In fact His Word framed the worlds (Hebrew 11:2). Jesus is called the Word. We are sanctified through "the Word of truth" (John 17:17). Jesus told the centurion he had great faith when he asked Jesus to heal his servant by speaking the word only (Matthew 8:8). Jesus also said, "by your words you shall be justified and by your words you shall be condemned" (Matthew 12:37). And finally, Revelation 12 speaks of that great war in heaven when Satan, the deceiver of the whole world, is cast out. How did the saints overcome him? By the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives unto death. The saints overcame Satan because they put their faith in the finished work of the Cross and stood on their word of faith alone.

This is the declaration of emancipation of the human self! It is revolutionary! All hell screams at us as if we are liars. We fight by not fighting, and by leaping into the person of Christ who is our rest. Satan is the liar and the father of illusions, but we don't judge by appearances, but judge righteous judgment and walk by faith.

Faith is substance, and the substance is within us supernaturally. Faith is not built on reason, it is built on fact. The fact is that we are complete in Christ, lacking nothing (Colosians 2:9-10). All we have is our word of faith, yet the strength doesn't come from our word. The strength comes from Christ, the one we are putting our faith in. Our word might be very weak, even seeming as small as a mustard seed. But wasn't Abraham's faith small in the beginning? He could only hope when everything looked hopeless (Romans 4:18). We must take heart, for is anything too hard for God?

Second Corinthians 3:18 shows us how to be transformed by the Spirit. It begins in verse 17 by saying, "The Lord is that Spirit;

and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." This verse is saying that the Holy Spirit will do the work. This frees us from trying to sanctify ourselves. Then it goes on to say in verse 18, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image: from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Cor. 3:17-18).

Our only part in this whole process is to just look into a mirror. The question is; do I just see myself alone? Or do I dare to see, by faith, the glory of the Lord in my human form? By simply gazing into the mirror of my true identity, I am changed from glory to glory even by the Spirit of the Lord.

It seems simple, but hell screams at you, telling you the very opposite. That is why the Psalmist says, "He prepares you a table, in the presence of your enemies." God's table is full, filled with the heavenly food of truth, but you must eat it at the accusing finger of our enemy. He does this purposely, for it is His way of fixing us. Opposition forces us to say the truth. If we don't, we die under the weight of hopelessness. Yet even when we are so weak that it seems impossible to say the truth, we can depend on his word in II Tim. 2:13, "If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful; He cannot deny Himself." The glory of the Lord finally comes into being as God "anoints my head with oil, my cup runneth over; Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Psalm 23:5&6).

My husband, Scott, said something interesting the other day about faith. He said, "Faith takes too long for most people, so we have to devise ways to help God get rid of our evils." In a day of micro-wave living with instant everything, we think we need instant answers. But James says, "let patience have her perfect work that you may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing." So actually it is in not seeing that we really learn faith.

Faith does dissolve into knowing however. For faith becomes a settled fact in us, more sure than our outer reality. That is why Jesus said to Peter, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it." Inner revelation knowing is unmovable. For what we take by faith becomes a living reality in us.

This process of faith is a miracle. Christ becomes the new free and spontaneous you. You will not be able to explain how it happens because this new life comes from the other side (the Spirit). One day you will look back at your past and wonder what happened to the you who hated yourself so much. As you rise, the old falls away and death has no sting, because you have no more fight. Finally you are then free to love and accept yourself.

God must expose Satan by bringing him to the foreground in Romans 7. Then after Satan's exposure and defeat in us, he is hardly noticeable in the background, for he is finally put under the feet of Jesus (Hebrews 10:13). Our consciousness is changed from a divided sin-and-devil consciousness to a unified seeing of God only. We never again see Satan as an enemy to be feared. We have overcome him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony (Rev. 12:11). Now, we are as Paul says in Romans 16:19, "simple towards evil," because we see how it fits back into God's purposes.

We walk on the unseen waters of the truth. The miracle is that what we take must take us, and comes back as an echo inside our consciousness as a confirming witness (I John 5:10). That is when we cry as Paul did in Romans 8, "Abba, Father." The son has possessed his possessions and comes home to the Father within. Job's hopeful cry, "Yet in my flesh shall I see God," races through time and bursts into manifestation in us today.

Paul's divided consciousness is finally united into the oneness of the mind of Christ. For it is Christ's own mind manifesting in Paul's mind. Paul can now begin to see that "the sufferings of this present world" are not worthy of comparison "with the glory that is revealed in us" (8:18). Even at the fall, we were subjected to suffering and "vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him, who hath subjected the same in hope" (8:20). None of us wanted suffering, but now we can see that God subjected us to it, because the only way we can know God's grace and glory is in comparison to our sin and suffering.

Even in Paul's new resurrected life he has suffering. For agony is right, and the opposite end of the authority of faith. Now he is a trustworthy son. For he has gotten himself back as a right self.

God can trust him with the intercessions of others Even our groaning and weaknesses are right and part of the price we all pay as intercessors. We travail and “groan within ourselves with groaning that cannot be uttered.” In our weaknesses’ we don’t even know how to pray, but the Spirit helps our infirmities (8:26-27).

The glory of it all is “that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purposes.” All means everything, good or evil, working together as God’s perfect plan to conform us to the image of His Son” (8:28-29).

Finally, Paul ends this chapter by recognizing that he has inherited the very nature of God, which is totally self-giving. His attitude is spontaneously Christ-like. “For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us” (8:36-37). Paul’s concern is instantly for others and how God’s redemptive purposes will be fulfilled through him. Whatever the cost, Paul’s life is for others. If it means peril, tribulation, famine, the sword, or even death, it matters not. For nothing can separate him from God and His love for him. Christ has come back again in Paul to lay his life down for others.

Paul leaves us in Romans Eight in victorious union with Christ, and with sufficiency in all things, no matter what trials our lives might bring. His consciousness changes from a double minded, unstable mind set, to a steady single eye of seeing God only.

So now we have a total Christ in a total and complete human being. As Paul says, “So, Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time (as us) without sin unto completed salvation.” Hallelujah, what a Savior!