

DEEP SIX STUDY

March 3rd, 2024

The Secret Life of Confident People – “In Control”

MESSAGE HIGHLIGHTS *(You can view the full message online at capecodchurch.com)*

Opening: As we continue our series in Romans 8 – looking at how God’s grace makes us “confident people” – we pick up this week in verse 5. As we all know from experience, uncertainty is the enemy of confidence – so we do what we can to remove as much uncertainty as we can before we venture into something new. That may be what Paul is doing in the first few verses of Romans 8 – answering the big questions about the Christian faith for his audience in order to ease their uncertainty and give them confidence in their new life.

1. How’s It Going to Go? (Romans 8:5-9; 12:2)

- Paul starts out in verse 5 by answering what he must have thought was his readers’ #1 question: “How is all of this (their new Christian faith) going to play out in my life?” And he starts in a somewhat odd place: by talking about their “sinful nature.”
- Our “sinful nature” is simply our *inner bias* that we’re born with that leads us to do the wrong thing. This sinful nature (or “flesh,” as Paul also calls it) is why nobody has to be taught how to be selfish, or angry, or how to lie – we’re all naturally good at it from the day we’re born. (Note: we should let go of any notion that we’re born “good” and only get corrupted by the influence of others...)
- Paul then uses another interesting word: “control.” He observes that, even if we’re taught to be “good” people, our sinful nature takes control of our actions and thoughts, and our lives can feel like they’re out of control. But Paul doesn’t leave us there – because, as believers, we don’t have to be controlled by our sinful nature.
- In verse 9, Paul answers the question “how’s it going to go?” with the most hopeful answer of all: as believers, we don’t have to be controlled by our flesh because we have the Spirit of God living in us. And if that’s true, we can do anything and be the person God guides us to be – not slaves to our sinful nature anymore but guided by the voice of God’s Spirit to live lives of purpose and confidence.

2. How’s It Going to End? (Romans 8:10-11)

- The second question we tend to ask to reduce uncertainty and become more confident is, “how is it going to end?” Paul addresses that question for his audience in the next verses – and he goes straight to every human’s innate fear: the fear of death.
- Paul lays it out beautifully in just two verses. For believers, because the Spirit of Christ lives in us, we will be resurrected to eternal life by the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead. And that’s the best “ending” we could possibly ask for!

- This isn't the new-age idea that "our spirits will live on in the universe" – it's far better than that. Paul is promising a *physical* resurrection – in our own bodies (only better), just like Jesus was resurrected. Because one day God will make all things new and perfect again – and we're going to live there!
- The ultimate confidence we can have – and the basic "secret" to a life of confidence – is contained in these verses. It's the confidence that not even *death* can overcome what God has in store for us.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

These passages may provide additional insights related to the subject of this week's message. All verses are NLT unless otherwise noted.

Joshua 1:9; John 14:26; Romans 8:31-34; Galatians 5:22-23; Hebrews 4:14-16; Revelation 21:1-4

Video of the Week: [Holy Spirit](#) by the Bible Project

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. The message opened with the idea that "uncertainty is the enemy of confidence." In what events and circumstances in your life have you found that to be true?
2. Paul notes here (and elsewhere in his letters) that – even if we're taught to be "good" and do good things, our flesh can take control of our actions and our lives can feel like they're out of control. Have you ever seen that in your own life? What was that like?
3. Read Romans 8:5-9 again. One of the facets of the "fruit of the Spirit" listed (by Paul) in Galatians 5 is "self-control." By your understanding, how does being "controlled by the Spirit" (Romans 8:9) result in "self-control" – aren't those two different things?
4. A popular line of thought in today's world is that people are born inherently "good" and then are messed up by the people and circumstances around them. If they want to have good/happy/productive lives, they just need to get in tune with their inner "good" selves. How would you respond to that idea?
5. How would you lay out the Christian alternative to that line of thought for someone who's never heard it?
6. The message noted two practices for helping us hear the "voice" of the Holy Spirit as he seeks to guide us in our lives: a "daily quiet time," and confession ("opening all the rooms of your house"). Most of us

understand the idea of a quiet time with God each day; how does *confession* pave the way for the voice of the Spirit to be heard more clearly?