

# BELPRES CHURCH

## Sermon Title: Second Wind

Dr. Scott Dudley

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**Scripture:** Romans 8:1-6

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, <sup>2</sup>because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you<sup>[a]</sup> free from the law of sin and death. <sup>3</sup>For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh,<sup>[b]</sup> God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering.<sup>[c]</sup> And so he condemned sin in the flesh,<sup>4</sup> in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

<sup>5</sup>Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. <sup>6</sup>The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.

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**Transcript:**

It is so great to have you worshiping with us today. Thank you for joining us. My name's Scott Dudley. I'm the senior pastor here, and we are so glad that you are worshiping with us today. The scripture comes from Romans 8. "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus, the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending His own son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so He condemned sin in the flesh in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit. Those who live according to the sinful nature, have their minds set on what that nature desires. But those who live in accordance with the Spirit, have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by sinful nature is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace."

So Jesus prayed that you would use these next few minutes to help us connect with You, hear from You, learn from You, leave more like You and focused only on You. We pray this in Your name, Jesus. Amen.

Well, if there was such a thing as word of the year or phrase of the year, what do you think it would be for 2020? So many possibilities, right? Sucks comes to mind, or, "You're on mute." But I think the phrase I've heard maybe more than any other, from people of all ages is, "I'm tired." We're just tired. Everything is harder these days so we're just tired.

Our Family Life Pastor, Colin, told me that they've had to have a couple of meetings just to try to figure out how we're going to do baptisms in this COVID time. So this thing that we never had to really think about before suddenly becomes a number of meetings because everything is harder for all of us. And so, we're just exhausted, but greater things are possible. We don't have to be exhausted.

I'm a lifelong runner. I've missed five days of running in the last 30 years. I love it. And there's this thing that happens when you're on a long run called a second wind and you kind of hit a wall and you think, "I can't keep going." But then the endorphins kick in and you get a second wind and it's this new burst of energy. And in a lot of ways, 2020 has felt like a marathon or an iron-man triathlon. And we're just exhausted, but greater things are possible. We can have that second wind, that new burst of energy and joy and courage and vision. You just have to learn how to breathe.

And that's the secret of running a marathon is breathing correctly because when you take in a deep breath, you feel this surge of energy because your body gets the oxygen that it needs to function. And that's what the passage I just read is talking about when it talks about the Holy Spirit and it mentions Holy Spirit 19 times in just this one little chapter. And the word for spirit in both the original Hebrew of the Old Testament and as well in the Greek of the New Testament, in both languages, the word for spirit can also mean wind or it can mean breath.

In fact, the Greek word for spirit is pneuma, from which we get pneumonia or pneumatic, it has to do with breath. And just like oxygen powers our body, we need the breath of God, the Holy Spirit of God to find a second wind. And when we make Jesus our leader and our forgiver, He sends His spirit to live inside of us. But a lot of us, we're not aware of His presence. A lot of us aren't cooperating with His presence, don't even know he's there.

So let's kind of look at this chapter to discover how we can have that second wind that the Holy Spirit can give us. It starts out therefore. So let's just stop there. What's the therefore? Therefore. Well, right before this chapter, the Apostle Paul who's writing this is talking about sin and right before our chapter, this is what he says. "I do not do the good that I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do. This, I keep on doing. What a wretched man I am. Who will rescue me from this body of death?" That sounds like a tired man to me. Tired of the cycles of lust and greed and anger and fear and worry. "Who will deliver me? Thanks be to God who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Then chapter eight. "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. No condemnation." And I think this is really important to finding a second wind, because a lot of what exhausts us is condemnation, shame or the fear of it and trying to avoid it, right? And there's all kinds of condemnation all over the place. Our culture condemns us, if we feel like we haven't achieved enough or look good enough or performed well enough.

When I taught at Stanford, my students would sometimes say, "I know my parents love me because I'm their kid and nature dictates a bond, but I think I'm a disappointment to them." And I think it's that sense of disappointment or that trying to avoid that disappointment kind of starts to drive us, to obsess over our looks, our grades, our job, our bank account. Have I done enough to avoid condemnation and to win other people's approval? That's how some of us think God treats us, right? "I have to earn His love." That makes us tired. All of that striving. It makes us tired, exhausted, but this text says, "There is now no condemnation."

And I looked up the word for no in the Greek. And it means no, none, nada, zero, zilch. It doesn't say there's now only just a little bit of condemnation left because of Jesus. There is now no condemnation in Jesus, and yes, we still screw up and yes, we make mistakes and yes, we sin, but that's not the truth of who you are. So when you hear that voice of culture or peers or whoever it is condemning you, right? "You failed the test. Now your future is gone. You screwed up the presentation. Everybody's mad at you. You lost the client because you're just a loser. You're not smart enough, good-looking enough, successful enough, popular enough. You're sinful. You're bad." You say, "Holy Spirit, remind me of the truth." And He says, "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Jesus."

On your worst day, on your worst day, you are good enough for God. Because Jesus took the punishment for our sin on the cross. And if we put our faith in that, if we believe that and trust that by faith, then we stand before God, holy and blameless and righteous, because the righteousness of Jesus, big theological word coming, has been imputed to us. He became what we are. So that we might become what He is, righteous and holy and blameless in the sight of God. "My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought. My sin, not in part, but the whole is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more. Praise the Lord, praise the Lord. Oh my soul."

And God's love is not some kind of consolation prize because we failed to win approval from someone else. It's better because it can never be taken away. Nothing can undo it. And when I experience that and I don't always, but when I experience that, it starts to free me from all that fear of condemnation and the striving to try to avoid condemnation and win approval. it frees me up from those things that make me so tired. And I get a second wind.

Let's keep reading. "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus, the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. The mind governed by the sinful nature is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace."

So the other way that the Holy Spirit gives us a second wind is He helps us choose life. This passage says, "Sin makes us desire things that bring death." So if we focus on money and start to obsess too much about it, it starts to eat away at us and it brings death. Or if a romantic relationship is the only thing we're focused on, then that's going to bring death because we're afraid of rejection or we're depressed if we don't have it. These things drain us of life. They drain us of energy. They make us emotionally, physically, spiritually tired, exhausted, but the Holy Spirit gives us power to choose those things that bring life and joy and energy.

See, sin tempts us, but most of the time, it's tempting us to do things that deep, deep down, we don't really want to do and be people that deep, deep down, we don't really want to be. We have these competing desires. It's like the guy who says, "I want to eat nothing but fatty foods, deep-fried, rolled in sugar," and then says, "Well, on the other hand, I'd like to live past 32." We have these competing desires.

On one level, a man may be on a business trip and be tempted to sleep with a coworker. And that brings death. It always wrecks the marriage. Even if the spouse doesn't find out, you know. And so you kind of have this secret so you start to hide a little bit, but in that same man, there's this other deeper-level desire for the things that bring life. And he wants a strong marriage and wants to be the kind of man that his kids can respect. That's the deeper Holy Spirit level desires implanted there by God. Now, he has to cooperate with that. He still has to choose that, but the Holy Spirit is there nudging, encouraging, cajoling, saying, "Come on, man. Choose the thing that's going to give you life. Choose the thing that's going to give you energy and joy. Not take away, not destroy." And so, he opts not to have the affair, not out of fear. And this is so important and not out of a spirit of fear of getting caught. No, no, no. This passage says, "The Spirit you received does not make you slaves so that you live in fear again, rather the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship and daughtership." We go from slaves to sons and daughters of God.

And the Holy Spirit motivates us to choose those things that bring life, but never out of a spirit of fear of getting caught or being punished or something like that. And it's at this point that religious people start to freak out. "Whoa, Dudley, careful about that spirit of fear thing, because what else is going to motivate people to be good if it's not the fear of going to hell?" Well, how about the motivation is choosing the things that help us thrive, not drag us down? And the other motivation is to live into who God says we already really are, which is the third way the Holy Spirit gives us a second wind. There's a lot of people out there, religious people, they're moral, but they're joyless. That's the spirit of fear. They're just afraid of getting punished. A lot of people try to break free of an addiction for fear of getting caught or because it's affecting their job. But that spirit of fear will not give you the power to break that addiction. Only the Holy Spirit can. Fear just makes us tired.

But the text says, "By Him, the Spirit, we cry, 'Abba, Father.'" And that word Abba is the most familiar word for father, it's the equivalent to daddy or papa, very familiar, very close. The Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now, if we are children, then we are heirs, heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ. It doesn't say we're God's servants. It doesn't say we're

God's slaves. It doesn't say we're God's employees. We are God's children. And we are heirs of the King. And when we remember that, who we really are, we begin to act that way.

I read a news story a couple of years ago, I remember seeing about a man named Jerry, had a tough life. He was addicted to drugs. He was homeless for a while, and then long story, but through a series of unlikely events, he discovered the guy that he thought was his dad, who had been an alcoholic and abusive, actually wasn't his dad. His real father was a wealthy businessman named Alfred, who had just died. And the name Alfred kind of caught his attention because his middle name was Alfred, and he always wondered where that came from because the only other Alfred he'd ever heard of is the butler on Batman. And so one DNA test later, turns out he really was Alfred's son and he inherited all of Alfred's money.

Now, the story's longer and more complicated than that. And there was healing that he had to do, but here's the interesting part. He gave half the money away to start a foundation that helps homeless people learn job skills. And then he began to behave differently. He got rid of the addiction to drugs. He became less angry, less toxically angry. He just started to act different. And he said, "My biggest thrill wasn't the money. It was finding out whose son I was." And knowing that he was the son of this entrepreneur somehow just kind of made him start to act differently, not out of a spirit of fear, which makes you tired, but out of a spirit of joy, because he knew who he was and he knew whose he was and he began to act that way.

The Holy Spirit reminds you that you are a daughter. You are a son of God. And the Christian life is living into who God says you already are, in Christ. Not who you can be someday. Not who if you just work hard enough, who God says you actually already are. Just live into it and that frees us from all those things that make us so tired. Plenty more I could say. This chapter's an amazing chapter. One of the most significant in the Bible, but for now, let's leave it there. And then turn to this question. So practically speaking, practically speaking, how do we access this second wind of the Holy Spirit? How do we find this power of the Holy Spirit? Well, here's where it's like breathing. In both Greek and Hebrew, the word for spirit can also mean wind or breath. And in order for our physical bodies to function, we have to breathe in and breathe out. And it's the same for us spiritually. We have to breathe in the Holy Spirit and we have to breathe out the Holy Spirit. And there are some things we can do to breathe in the Spirit and then there are some things we can do to breathe out.

So breathe-in exercises include prayer. And the Holy Spirit helps us do that. Later on in this chapter that we read, it says, "We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans." I love this verse. This is one of my favorite verses, right? And it's such good news because it means that when I'm too tired to pray, when I'm too depressed to pray, when I'm too anxious to pray, when I don't know what to pray and I go, "Oh Lord, oh." The Holy Spirit intercedes and takes that and says, "Oh, what Dudley meant to say was this."

Can you groan? Then you can pray. Can you be mad? Then you can pray because prayer is just being mad in Jesus' presence. Can you worry? Then you can pray because worrying in

Jesus' presence, that's just another name for prayer. Can you be thankful? Then you can be thankful to Him. Prayer is just being all these things in the presence of Jesus and then waiting, waiting for those thoughts that pop into our heads or pictures or memories or Bible verses or song lyrics that we maybe didn't generate but they came to us from God. Because when we hear God speak to us, that's like oxygen. That is spiritual oxygen to our souls. And it gives us a second wind.

And just by the way, today at noon in New Hope Revival, I'm going to be there. We're going to be praying for our country and for the election. And so, I'd encourage you to join us at noon by clicking on the New Hope Revival livestream. And we're going to pray. New Hope Revival-style. Prayer. That's one way to breathe in. Worship is another breathe-in exercise, where music opens our hearts up to feel emotions about God and where we hear God's word read and taught and that brings new life. And I know it's different online, worship is different online. We're all going to Bedside Baptist these days, as I heard it called a couple of weeks ago, but ask the Holy Spirit to help you experience His presence online, sing when there's music or at least focus on the words and reflect on them. Don't be multitasking, right? Watching worship while eating breakfast while checking up on the news and looking at Instagram. Are you doing that right now? Just stop, focus.

I know some of you have kids and that can feel distracting, but don't miss what God's doing here, because this is amazing. Your kids get to see you worship every week. And that is going to stick with them the rest of their lives, because you are showing them how important faith is. Worship is a breathe-in exercise.

Scripture is another breathe-in exercise. This chapter that we read says, "The mind governed by the sinful nature is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. The mind." The battle between what gives life and what brings death, the battle between what exhausts you and what gives you a second wind happens in the mind. And God doesn't want us to be anxious and worried and trapped in fear and lust and greed and all that stuff. And the Holy Spirit's job is to renew our minds. And the way we cooperate with that is to get God's truth, God's thoughts in our head by reading scripture.

So many of us, we leave it up to social media or the news to kind of determine reality. We look at our phones, we look at social media hundreds of times a day, and at best, maybe look at scripture once a day. And then we wonder, "Well, where's the power of the Holy Spirit? Why am I so anxious? Why am I so afraid?" I don't know. Maybe because you've been consuming toxic negativity all day, or maybe because you're comparing your real life to someone else's Instagram life, and you feel inferior. Those things enslave us and rob us of life and energy and joy. So to find that second wind, we have to hand the authority over our thought life to the Holy Spirit. He's not going to force us. We have to choose to do it, to hand the authority of our thought life over to the Holy Spirit.

And one of the best ways to do that is to get God's truth in scripture in our heads. And before you sit down to read scripture, ask the Holy Spirit to teach you from it. And there are some simple questions that you can ask of any passage of scripture that will help you get something

out of it. "What does this tell me about God? What does this tell me about me? What does this tell me about how I'm going to live going forward?" We ask those questions in our all-in groups every week to kind of teach us this pattern of reading scripture. And no, I do not get some huge insight every time I read the Bible, not every time, but lots of times I do. Lots of times I do. Prayer, worship, scripture, community, another breathe-in exercise.

For me, this was one of those weeks where I felt like I was failing at absolutely everything. Sort of, I felt like Charlie Brown in A Charlie Brown Christmas, when he puts the ornament on the tree and it falls over and he goes, "Oh, I killed it. Everything I touch, I ruin." That was my week. That's how I felt this week until I went to my all-in group and the guys in that group, they encouraged me, reminded me of some of the truths in scripture. And I found a second wind. Now, there are some other breathe-in exercises as well, fasting, Sabbath, but those are the big four. Big four breathe in. What about breathe-out exercises? Well, for this sermon, I decided to focus more on breathe in and I'll cover breathe out in another sermon. But let me just read, let me just lift some of the breathe-out exercises here briefly.

First is serving where I use what God has given me to help someone else and that brings meaning and purpose into my life. Giving where I give more of my money away than I'm comfortable with to God's purposes in and through my church. And then I see God provide for me. I see I can be happy on less than I thought I needed. And I get to see my money change people's lives. Encouraging, supporting, and praying for others is a breathe-out exercise. And it gets my mind off of me, my focus off of me and onto someone else, and that's a relief. And then advocating for justice, which connects my heart with God's heart and His passion for His people.

Breathe in and breathe out. And here's the thing, we need both. We need both, because if all you do is breathe in, you get puffed up, right? And you start to choke on CO2 that's building up in your blood because you're not exhaling. In other words, you become an old windbag full of hot air and gassy and unpleasant, right? It's the know-it-all in the Bible study who says, "Well, surely you know what Paul Tillich said about the eschatological imperative, right?" "No, I don't, you old gassy windbag." It's the Christian who obeys every rule, but is joyless and sour. If all we do is take in, we become windbags. But if all we do is breathe out, serve, give, support, then we run out of oxygen that we need to thrive. Breathe in and breathe out. And the Holy Spirit will give you a second wind.

I have a friend who got a job as a youth pastor. And he came prepared with every armpit balloon relay a youth pastor could ever want. And he was going to be the best youth pastor ever. Four months later, things were a disaster. The students were complaining, turned out the armpit balloon thing wasn't cool. It was just stupid. The parents were complaining, ministry shrank. It didn't grow. He felt like a complete failure. So shame, condemnation, he was exhausted, spent, tired.

Well, one weekend he was taking a group of students to a retreat, except he didn't want to be around any of them, which is not a good look for a youth pastor. So he drove to the retreat by himself, stopped for dinner at Pizza Hut. And he was eating a personal pan pizza by himself,

alone. And he thought, "I am the most pathetic person ever." Personal pan pizza. "This is a metaphor for my life." And he said right about then, he heard the closest thing to an audible voice he's ever heard. And it said, "Finally, you're here. You've been trying to be successful. But in the process you have drifted away from Me. I'm not calling you to success, I am calling you to closeness with Me." And he knew it was God.

And then passages of scripture that he had read started going through his head because he was doing breathe-in exercises that got the truth of scripture in his mind and about who he really is. And he felt God's love. And that sense of failure and shame and condemnation, it just started to lift and those voices faded. And then the Holy Spirit said, "Okay, now, get going. Because you've got a retreat to do." And he went joyfully. And from then on, he started doing ministry a little differently, using different measurements other than just how many people came. But things like, "Has anyone's life been changed?" He focused less on cultural standards of success and more on just being close to God, focused more on God's presence. And then over the years, his ministry, it grew. Students discovered Jesus. Some of them got off drugs. Some of them left gangs, but the turning point was his failure. He was trying to find life and success and career. And all he found was exhaustion, tiredness, death. Until the Holy Spirit reminded him of who he was and whose he was, and there was no condemnation in Jesus and led him to desire the things that bring life rather than the hamster wheel of achievement that was just making him tired.

Now, did he feel that way every single day after that? No, of course not. We need to be reminded constantly, constantly by the Holy Spirit of these things, but he found a second wind and continued to do so.

So where are you tired or sad or worried or angry? The chapter we read says, "He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of His spirit who lives in you. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead and conquered death lives in you. And He lives in me." So breathe in and breathe out and ask the Holy Spirit to give you a second wind and remind you daily what this chapter says, a few verses after the ones I read, "That in all things, God works for good. The good of those who love him." And what that means is regardless of what you did yesterday, regardless of your track record, no matter how many times you have screwed up, messed up, fessed up and then messed up again, no matter how many times you've done that, you belong to God. And as this chapter says, just a few verses later, in some of the most majestic words in the whole Bible.

"If God is for us, then who can be against us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or the sword? No, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us." For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any power, not COVID, not civil unrest, not divisive elections, not your finances, health, fears, worries. Not your triumphs, not your tragedies, not your victories, not your defeats. There is nothing, nothing, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all of creation that will ever be



able to sever you or sever me from the love we have in Christ Jesus, our Lord. So rejoice, be renewed. You're a child of the King.

So Holy Spirit, fill us up. Thank you that you renew us. Thank you that you give us a second wind and we need you. Every hour we need you because we forget. So Holy Spirit, fill us up and send us out with new joy and we will give you all the credit and we will give you all the glory for the life we find in you. We pray this in your name, Jesus. Amen.

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**Discussion Questions:** Please Read Romans 8:1-6

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1. Remind us what your application was last week. How did it go?
2. What stood out the most from the sermon this past week?
3. What do we learn about God (e.g., traits, personality, what matters, priorities) in this passage and sermon?
4. What do we learn about people, and ourselves in particular, this week?
5. What role does the Holy Spirit play in our lives?
6. What does it mean to "live by the Spirit" In light of what we've learned (application):
  - a. How might God want us to apply this to our own life and the lives of the community this week?
  - b. Who needs to hear this message/good news?