

## Romans

### Romans Chapter Eight

Romans 8:16-17 December 5, 2010

This is lesson number 68 in our exposition of the Book of Romans.

### The Theme of the Letter

Romans 1:16-17

“For I am not ashamed of **the gospel of Christ**, for it is the **power** of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the **righteousness of God** is **revealed** from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’ ” Romans 1:16-17

### “Joint Heirs with Christ”

#### Romans 8:14-17

**14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, " Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs -- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.**

Let's briefly summarize verses 14-17:

[14] The Holy Spirit is constantly leading the sons of God.

This is another way of describing those who are genuine believers in Jesus Christ {Cf. vs. 5-8}, as opposed to people who are Christians in name only.

The Holy Spirit guides and corrects the children of God primarily through the Bible or the Word of God.

The idea that being a Christian involves more than simply making a profession of faith is not popular in our ‘seeker sensitive’ or ‘felt needs’ churches because genuine Christianity demands consistent obedience to Christ out of love for Him; submission to each other and love demonstrated to one another.

[15] Believers will not again be in the bondage of fear of the law, which was the case when the Holy Spirit gave them the knowledge of sin by applying the spiritual character of the law.

Now the sons of God cry out, “Abba Father!” in acts of praise and worship.

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[16] The Holy Spirit bears witness with our human spirit that we are the children of God. Romans 8 is about assurance of the believer and this is as close as we will get to knowing that we are children of God; when God the Holy Spirit speaks to our human spirit. The Holy Spirit bears witness to our human spirit that He Himself has enlightened.

[17] The witness of the Holy Spirit also tells the children of God that they are to be inheritors. What is the character and the extent of that inheritance?

Paul is writing to Romans. He may assume that they are familiar with their own laws of inheritance. According to Roman law all of the natural and adopted children of a man were his inheritors, and they were all equal.

However, in Jewish law the first-born son had twice as much as any other children, but not so in Roman law.

So the Apostle is making sure that the Jews and Greeks {non-Jews} in Rome and by extension all believers understand that all the children of God are heirs or inheritors of God. And not only that, but Christians are joint-heirs with Christ.

There is a teaching that you can be a Christian but if you do not live a good enough life you do not become a joint-heir.

“Many years I've been lookin' for a place to call home  
But I still didn't find it so I must travel on  
I don't care for the fine mansions on earth's sinkin sand  
Lord build me a cabin in the corner of gloryland

Lord build me just a cabin in the corner of gloryland  
In the shade of his tree of life that it may ever stand  
Where I can hear the angels and shake Jesus' hand  
Lord build me a cabin in the corner of gloryland

Listen Lord I'm not askin' to live in the midst  
For I know that I'm not worthy of such splendor as this  
When I ask Him for mercy while humbly I stand  
Lord build me a cabin in the corner of gloryland.”

Bill Monroe

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With all due respect to Mr. Bill Monroe that song pictures the idea that you just barely make it into heaven and you will be a 'second class citizen.'

The Apostle does not teach that. Every Christian is a child of God and an heir of God. In fact, all believers are joint heirs with Christ!

The Scripture does teach about rewards and there are degrees of rewards in heaven in the same way that there are degrees of punishment in hell.

Do not confuse our inheritance in Christ with our rewards. They are not the same thing.

Comment on rewards and punishment:

Rewards:

Matt 16:24-27

<sup>24</sup> Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. <sup>25</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. <sup>26</sup> For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? <sup>27</sup> For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.

Eternal Destiny:

Matt 25:31-46

<sup>31</sup> "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. <sup>32</sup> All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides *his* sheep from the goats. <sup>33</sup> And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. <sup>34</sup> Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: <sup>35</sup> for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; <sup>36</sup> I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'

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<sup>37</sup> "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed *You*, or thirsty and give *You* drink? <sup>38</sup> When did we see You a stranger and take *You* in, or naked and clothe *You*? <sup>39</sup> Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' <sup>40</sup> And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me.'

<sup>41</sup> "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: <sup>42</sup> for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; <sup>43</sup> I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'

<sup>44</sup> "Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' <sup>45</sup> Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do *it* to one of the least of these, you did not do *it* to Me.' <sup>46</sup> And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Punishments:

Luke 12:47-48

<sup>47</sup> And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare *himself* or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*. <sup>48</sup> But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

All believers are heirs of God.

When we get to heaven we will not envy the person who has greater rewards. We don't deserve the least of God's blessings so we will be completely satisfied. We will be so joyful that there will be no thoughts of comparing rewards with one another.

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### Sons of God! Children of God!

Do we constantly remember our relationship to God?

Paul encourages believers to remember their relationship to God:

**Ephesians 5:1**  
**Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.**

Peter is even more direct:

**2 Peter 1:1-4**  
**Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ,**  
**To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our**  
**God and Savior Jesus Christ:**  
**2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our**  
**Lord, 3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and**  
**godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by**  
**which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through**  
**these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that**  
**is in the world through lust.**

That Christians are heirs of God should be one of the greatest encouragements to continue in the faith. In fact, the next thing that Paul is going to deal with in Romans 8 is how to deal with suffering and disappointment.

How do we know that God loves us as His children when things are rotten?

We will get sick and we will have serious situations to deal with; but the fact that we suffer with Christ holds the promise that we will also be glorified with Him.

In one sense 'to suffer with Christ' is to endure trials and not lose faith in Christ.

The Bible **does not teach** what the 'health and wealth' preachers preach. They preach that if you are sick or in debt you must have 'faith' and God will fix it for you. The 'faith' they are selling involves sending them money.

The Bible gives us something much better what the 'health and wealth' preachers preach. It gives us hope {confidence} in Jesus Christ no matter what happens in this life. We will share His glory!

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Before Jesus Christ came into the world there was a great distinction between Jews and non-Jews. This was a distinction made by God in the setting apart a people for Himself.

This was not a distinction in individuals {Cf. 2:11-12}. There were non-Jews like Rahab and Ruth and the widow of Zarephath to whom Elijah was sent; and Naaman the Syrian who was cleansed of his leprosy. All received grace.

But not many non-Jews were called to faith.

I must quickly add that the vast majority of Jews were unbelievers as well. Jews were never saved because they were Jews and they will not be saved because they are Jews when the Lord Jesus returns at the end of the age.

Something wonderful happened on Calvary's cross. The only Savior that this world will ever know shed His blood as the propitiation for the sin of His people. Whatever distinction there was between Jews and non-Jews was forever taken away.

### **Galatians 3:26-29**

**For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.**

You can just about sum up the teaching of the Old Testament by what Hebrews 11:13 says about the heroes of faith.

**These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.**

These OT saints died in the same faith of the Gospel looking forward to the promised Messiah. We have the same hope or confidence in Christ. We have the same Gospel of Christ! There is only one Gospel in the OT & NT.

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My challenge to preachers: Can you preach the Gospel from the OT? Remember how Paul began this letter. Cf. 1:1-3.

If a preacher cannot preach the Gospel from the OT it is because he does not know the Gospel!

In the New Testament we have the picture of Christ at the end of the age.

Read again:

**Matthew 25:31-35**

**"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. 33 And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:**

“Inherit the kingdom ...”

**Ephesians 1:18**

**... the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,**

My finite mind simply cannot grasp the full import of what it means to be a joint-heir with Christ. I know that God the Father has given everything to His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And God the Holy Spirit tells me that I will jointly inherit whatever belongs to Christ.

What should that knowledge do for me?

The end of verse 17 tells me what that knowledge will do for me.

**If indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.**

Why would Paul mention suffering?

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There is a translation matter that I will only touch on.

The KJV reads, “if so be”; NKJV “if indeed”; ESV “provided that”

The sense of the phrase is not an “if – then.”

If you suffer, then you will be glorified.

That would be ‘cause and effect.’

The sense of the phrase is ‘since you suffer with Him.’

The Bible has a lot to say about suffering.

Cf. Job {Job never quit God} & Psalm 119:71.

Ps 119:71

*It is* good for me that I have been afflicted,  
That I may learn Your statutes.

If you read your New Testament you will find that it says a lot about suffering.

These are a few examples:

### **Philippians 1:29**

**For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,**

### **1 Peter 4:12-13**

**Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;<sup>13</sup> but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.**

### **Rev 1:9**

**I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.**

“... we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.”

What is it to suffer with Christ? Suffer in a Christ-like manner.

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This is not stoicism, some denial of pain. We hurt and we may even complain a little but like Job, we don't quit God.

Lloyd-Jones gives what he calls an almost ridiculous illustration.

No child likes to be washed, but when he is going to a party his mother washes him, and is particularly careful. The child grumbles; he does not want her to clean out his ears, he does not want his neck to be washed. He objects to it all, but the mother insists upon it because he is going to the party, and the honor of the family is involved. The child does not like it, but it is done to him for his good and for the enjoyment of the party. God deals with us in that manner! We need to be washed and cleansed; God's purpose is to make us absolutely perfect, 'without spot or wrinkle or any such thing', faultless and blameless, holy and fit for His holy presence. And in order for such a work to be accomplished, it is not sufficient that the gospel be preached to us. We do not listen as we should; we are too busy and we forget. But God has other methods; He puts us on a sick bed; He gives us a disappointment; there is a loss, there is a setback. It's all part of His preparation of us for the great glory that lies ahead. Hence James says:

**James 1:2-4**

**My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.**

**Our text:**

**17 and if children, then heirs -- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.**