

## ROMANS 8 – Life Through the Spirit

The beauty of Romans 8 can be seen in two of its most prominent characteristics. First, there's a poetic beauty in the way this chapter begins and the way it ends. It begins with **No Condemnation in Christ** (verse 1) and ends with **No Separation from Christ** (verse 39). Second, the emphasis in this chapter on the Holy Spirit is obvious. The Greek word *pneuma*, translated "S/spirit", is found only 5x in chapters 1-7 and 8x in chapters 9-16, but it occurs **21x in chapter 8 alone**, more often than in any other single chapter in the New Testament.

Many people have called Romans 8 the greatest chapter in the Bible. It has been said that if the Bible is a ring, then the book of Romans is the diamond, and chapter 8 is the apex of the cut on that diamond. The focus of Romans 8 is the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer to enable one to live the Christian life. It is an entire chapter about the spiritual victory and eternal security that we have in Jesus Christ.

***We have the whole of the Christian life in this one chapter. In verses 1, 30, and 33, we have justification. In verses 2-17, we have sanctification. And in verses 18-39, we have glorification. Paul puts his arms around the entirety of our Christian life.***

Romans 8:31-39, helps us live triumphantly in time of trial and temptation with the knowledge that God is for us. When you have the right person for you, it doesn't matter who is against you.

That's Paul's point in this last section of one of the greatest chapters in all the Bible. He's been teaching us some great truths about triumphant(victorious) living. We've learned that it is both desirable and possible, in spite of the temptations and trials we face, because we have:

- The Spirit dwelling in us (Romans 8:1-13)
- An honored position in God's family (Romans 8:14-17)
- A glorious future to look forward to (Romans 8:18-30)
- God on our side (Romans 8:31-39)

All these things that Paul has been telling us so far, especially about the guarantee that God is going to turn our groaning into glory, some might be tempted to say, "Well, you can talk about God having a good purpose in every circumstance of life, and that all sounds well and good. But you have never walked in my shoes. You don't know what I'm facing." Others might be tempted to say, "You can claim that we can conquer sin by the power of the Holy Spirit who lives in us, but I haven't been able to. I've tried everything I know to do, and I've fallen flat on my face over and over again."

**Monday, 20 July 2020 – Read the following verses:**

- The Spirit dwelling in us (Romans 8:1-13)
- An honored position in God's family (Romans 8:14-17)
- A glorious future to look forward to (Romans 8:18-30)

As read and mediate through Romans 8, you'll see the believer's union with Christ (verse 1), liberation in Christ (verse 2), the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (verse 9), regeneration (verses 10-11), mortification of sin (verse 13), adoption by God (verse 15), assurance of salvation (verse 16), inheritance with Christ (verse 17), future glory (verse 18), the intercession of the Holy Spirit (verses 26-27), the providence of God (verse 28), foreknowledge (verse 29), predestination (verses 29-30), effectual call (verses 28, 30). This is a theological treasure chest. The vaults of heaven are contained in this one chapter. It is so rich, and yet so practical, as the whole chapter is about our daily Christian living.

Prayer: Forgiving God, thank you for forgiving my sins. Help me not to fall back into temptation. Be with me and keep my eyes focused on the Spirit, not on worldly things. Let me live a life worthy of no condemnation, and be an example to others. Amen.

**Tuesday, 21 July 2020 - We come to the magnificent and booming climax of assurance, hope, and encouragement. Paul has been bringing us along in Christian assurance. Let's recap Romans 8 before we look at the final verses of this chapter.**

- Paul kicked off this section with the grand thought that there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (8:1).
- The reason there is no condemnation now is because God has done what the Law of Moses could not do, that is, justify us (8:3).
- God sent his Son to deal with sin so that the righteous requirement of the Law might be fulfilled. But this hope is for those who live their lives according to the Spirit (8:4).
- Those who live according to the Spirit are those who set their minds on spiritual things, not fleshly, worldly things. Another way to say this is that Christ lives in us (8:10) and the Spirit lives in us (8:9).
- If Christ is ruling our lives and we are led by the Spirit by keeping the words he has revealed through his holy scriptures, then though we are dead because of our sins, God will give us life (8:11).
- God has called us to be sons of God, not to be enslaved (8:15).
- We have been adopted as daughters and sons, and we can cry out to God as our close, intimate Father who cares for us, just as Jesus cried out, "Abba, Father." If we have been adopted as children of God, then we are also heirs of God, prepared to receive the eternal inheritance. But we will suffer for Christ when Christ is living in us and our lives are governed by the will of God. But that suffering is not worth comparing the great glory that is to be revealed to us (8:17-18).
- Just as the creation eagerly longs for this glory to be revealed, so we also groan inwardly as we eagerly await the full benefits of our adoption as children of God (8:19-25).
- Even as we suffer and groan, we know that God knows our hearts and is working all things together for good according to God's purpose (8:26-28).
- God will not be swayed from his purpose. God knew in advance that he wanted a people for himself. Before the foundations of the world God chose in advance that to be his people we would have to be conformed to the image of his Son. God has called for people to be like Christ. Those who receive that call are justified and those that are justified are going to be fully glorified (8:29-30).

Prayer: Life-giving God, we gather in Your presence to offer You thanksgiving and praise for all that You have done for us. Through the life, death and resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ, we have been set free - free from the power of sin that leads to death, free to follow the leading of Your Holy Spirit, free to love You with all our heart and soul and strength, free to worship! May Your Holy Spirit inspire our praise and our prayers. Open our hearts and minds to Your presence among us and within us, and to the Word You have for us today. To You alone, life-giving God, belongs all praise and honor and glory and blessing, now and to the end of time. Amen.

**Wednesday, 22 July 2020 - Those who receive that call are justified and those that are justified are going to be fully glorified. With this hope, let's look at how the apostle Paul completes this thought.**

God Is for Us (Romans 8:31-32) - So what can we say about all that God has done for us? What can we say about the privileged position in which we stand? God is for us. Let those words sink in. God is not against us. God is not our prosecutor, but our vindicator. God is for us. God has shown that he is for us. There may be no better thought than to know that God is for his people. God is for us. God is on our side and God stands behind us. Who can possibly stand against us since God is for us? Paul is not saying that we do not have enemies or opponents. The

enemies of the cross are numerous. The opponents that we must combat are many. But these enemies and opponents cannot successfully wage war against us because God is for us. We have enemies, but no enemy can stand against us. There is no foe that can defeat us!

How do we know that God is for us? How can we have this confidence? Look at verse 32: He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? The proof is that God gave up his Son for us all. This is how we can know that God is for us: God did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for all humanity. There is nothing greater God could have done to prove to us that he is for us. Notice the point that Paul makes about this. God has done the hard part in giving his Son for us all. If God has already done the hard part, he will obviously graciously give us all things! God did not hold back his Son. He will surely not hold back anything else. We know that God will freely give us all things because we see that God gave his only Son. We will be glorified! We will receive the full benefits of our adoption as God's children! The sacrifice of Jesus is the proof.

Prayer: Life-giving God, we gather in Your presence to offer You thanksgiving and praise for all that You have done for us. Through the life, death and resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ, we have been set free - free from the power of sin that leads to death, free to follow the leading of Your Holy Spirit, free to love You with all our heart and soul and strength, free to worship! May Your Holy Spirit inspire our praise and our prayers. Open our hearts and minds to Your presence among us and within us, and to the Word You have for us today. To You alone, life-giving God, belongs all praise and honor and glory and blessing, now and to the end of time. Amen.

#### **Thursday, 23 July 2020 - God Is Our Defender (Romans 8:33-34)**

The next two questions both have the same general idea. They take us into the courtroom where we stand before the divine Judge. The prosecuting attorney is none other than Satan himself, the accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10). But we have a defender, a counsel for the defense.

"Who Shall Bring a Charge Against God's Elect?" (Romans 8:33) That's exactly what Satan tries to do. Just as he did with Job, he goes before the Judge and says, "You can't let that 5th Avenue UMC disciple into your heaven, Lord. Don't you know what a sinner he/she is, what rotten thoughts are in their minds, what unkind words come out of their mouths, what awful things they have done?" And the sad fact is that his accusations are valid. Satan knows what we're like.

But the point of the verse is that it doesn't matter. "It is God who justifies" - the Judge Himself has declared us to be righteous, with full knowledge of all our sins and shortcomings. If God has pardoned us knowing full well how terrible we are, then nobody, but NOBODY, can challenge His verdict. Satan has no court of appeal. He gets nowhere with his charges. The case is closed. "Who shall bring a charge against God's elect?" The next question is similar.

"Who Is He Who Condemns?" (Romans 8:34) There are plenty who try. Our own consciences try to condemn us at times. Unbelievers will point their finger at our inconsistencies and try to condemn us. And Satan is always there, leveling his charges. We all have our shortcomings. As valid as Satan's charges might be, he has no right to judge us. He himself has been judged.

Jesus Christ is the Judge of all humanity. He is the only one who has the right to condemn us. But rather than condemn us, he died for our sins at Calvary; rose from the grave to prove that His death was an acceptable payment for our sins; who intercedes for us with the Father. Jesus paid for our crimes. Do you think the Father is going to refuse to answer the intercessory prayers of His Son? Not on your life. How can we possibly be condemned?

## THE VERDICT - NO CHARGE AND NO CONDEMNATION

Prayer: Prayer: Life-giving God, we gather in Your presence to offer You thanksgiving and praise for all that You have done for us. Through the life, death and resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ, we have been set free - free from the power of sin that leads to death, free to follow the leading of Your Holy Spirit, free to love You with all our heart and soul and strength, free to worship! May Your Holy Spirit inspire our praise and our prayers. Open our hearts and minds to Your presence among us and within us, and to the Word You have for us today. To You alone, life-giving God, belongs all praise and honor and glory and blessing, now and to the end of time. Amen.

### Friday, 24 July 2020 & Saturday, 25 July 2020 – Who Shall Separate Us From Christ's Love (Romans 8:35-39)

This brings Paul to the final rhetorical questions. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Paul is not saying that there are not things that happen to the people of God that cause us to feel separated from God. We are afflicted with all sorts of issues. This is what verse 35 reveals. We can go through all kinds of afflictions, hardships, and tribulations. But these things do not separate us from the love of Christ. When we go through afflictions we may feel like God has left us and that we are outside of God's love. But the assurance is that we know this is not true. These things cannot separate us from the love of Christ. Distress and anguish cannot separate us from the love of Christ. Persecution for the cause of Christ does not separate us from the love of Christ. Persecution does not mean that we are doing something wrong or that God has left us. Famine or hunger does not separate us from the love of Christ. Not having food or not having clothing does not mean that we are separated from the love of Christ. Our lives being put into danger does not mean that we are separated from the love of Christ. Even being put to death (executed) does not mean that we are separated from the love of Christ. Not sickness, not cancer, not diseases, not syndromes can separate us from the love of Christ. These are things that can affect followers of Jesus. But the suffering of the righteous does not mean that we have been separated from God's love or that God is no longer for us. We are not any different from the apostles or the people of God in times past. They endured suffering for the cause of Christ. Will death separate us from God's love?

Paul's answer is clear in verse 37: No. No, in all things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. The one who loves us has given us the overwhelming victory. Paul is emphasizing the total victory that God gives to his people through Christ. It does not matter what happens to us, we still win. There is no condemnation and we are not separated from the love of Christ. Verses 38-39 drive this point even deeper. There is nothing that will be able to separate us from the love of God. Not death or all the mistakes we make in this life is able to separate us from God's love. No spiritual beings or physical powers can separate us from the love of Christ. Nothing currently happening now or anything that will happen in the future is able to separate us from the love of Christ. There is not one power that can separate us for God has power over all. God's love is greater than the vastness of the universe. Nothing in the world above or the world below can separate us from God's love. Nothing else in all the creation can separate us from the love of Christ. Do YOU feel the force of Paul's words? **NOTHING, NOTHING, NOTHING can separate us from the love of God.**

Prayer: Prayer: Life-giving God, we gather in Your presence to offer You thanksgiving and praise for all that You have done for us. Through the life, death and resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ, we have been set free - free from the power of sin that leads to death, free to follow the leading of Your Holy Spirit, free to love You with all our heart and soul and strength, free to worship! May Your Holy Spirit inspire our praise and our prayers. Open our hearts and minds to Your presence among us and within us, and to the Word You have for us today. To You alone, life-giving God, belongs all praise and honor and glory and blessing, now and to the end of time. Amen.

*Finally, Sisters and Brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. In the glorious name of Jesus. Amen. Pastor Clarissa*