

## Notes on Romans 8

**Intro: The theme of chapter seven is how man under the Law is brought under the power of sin and the results are devastating.**

***But now, with the help of the Spirit, the believer is set free from the law of sin (8:1-8:30).***

*The law of the Spirit sets the believer free from sin and death because God accomplished through Christ what the Law could not do (8:1-4).*

Now--This is in contrast to the condition of man under law, such as the Law of Moses. No condemnation.

The law of the Spirit of life has set you free from the law of sin and death! Law is used in the same sense here as in the description of the man under the "law" of sin. It is the idea of rule or indwelling. Just as sin "ruled" the man under Law; now the Spirit rules the man under grace; because he is "led by" the Spirit. The Spirit is the agent of the revealed gospel.

"In Christ Jesus" seems to suggest the sphere where this life exists. It is in connection with Christ! It is common to Paul's epistles to picture the Christian as a part of the spiritual body of Christ under his control. In 6:2 he says we are baptized into this sphere of rule!

"Has set you free!" Forgiven, but more than that, no longer under the control or power of sin! Compare the anguished cry of 7:24 with 8:1! Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me?

"From the law of sin and death." That is the dominion or rule of sin and death as effect or brought about by sin taking occasion by law to lead man into sin!

"What the law could not do"—The Law was intended to impart life or make righteous but could not because of the flesh working in man.

"God did"—makes us righteous, therefore, there is no condemnation. How does God make us righteous, by forgiveness and through that forgiveness empowering us to live in newness of life! How was this forgiveness effected?

"Sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh". Paul chooses words carefully. He is showing that Jesus bore all of the pain of temptation in possessing a human nature as well as the divine nature while not participating in sin itself!

"An offering for sin". As a result by placing our punishment on him, God condemned, not the sinner, but the sin, making forgiveness possible.

The end result being "that the righteous requirement of the law is fulfilled in us". That is in those who by the gospel's power walk no longer by flesh but by spirit!

*The Spirit leads those who walk by the spirit to put to death the deeds of the body and live (8:5-14).*

Our minds are set on the things of the spirit! v. 5f

**v. 5 This is the contrast between man's two inner voices, the flesh and the spirit! Some set their minds on the things of the flesh; some set their minds on the things of the spirit.**

**v. 6 Look at the difference in outcome!**

**v. 7-8 Here's why!**

Having our minds on the spirit puts us under the control of the Holy Spirit! (v. 9-11)

**Just as sin indwells the man by appealing to the flesh, the Spirit indwells the man by appealing to the spirit!**

**Letting the Spirit indwell us indicates that we are God's children!**

**v. 9**

**The result of this indwelling is that "Christ indwells us" (that is the character and nature of Christ dwell in us!). To say that the Holy Spirit indwells us is tantamount to saying that Christ dwells in us!**

**When Christ starts living in us, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is alive through the righteousness that comes from being forgiven.**

**But if the Spirit of Christ who powerfully raised Jesus from the dead indwells us then that power will also raise our "dead" bodies. This is not a physical resurrection but a spiritual one. In other words, the body that has been the instrument of sinning (cf. 7:24) now becomes the instrument of righteousness! It is alive for righteousness!**

We accept the obligation to live righteously. v. 12-14

**These verses are transitional but they complete the thought of v. 5-11. God's plan of salvation puts an obligation on us to live in the spirit so that the Holy Spirit will produce spiritual life in us, putting to death the flesh (the deeds of the body) and replacing these sins with the righteous deeds of Christ instead.**

**It is these righteous deeds that furnish proof of our sonship and our salvation.**

*The Spirit produces a spirit of sonship in believers, bearing witnesses that they are they are sons of God and joint-heirs of the eternal life He has promised (8:15-25).*

Paul contrasts the man under grace and the man under law as having two completely different attitudes toward God.

**The man under law realizes the need for perfection in order to be right. And so when he fails he is like a slave that has displeased his master. He can only anticipate punishment. His life is one of fear, due to the presence of sin.**

**The man under grace, and under the control of the Holy Spirit, is a man with the spirit of adoption. He has become incorporated into God's family. And he serves a loving father who forgives. In his sins he does not cower in fear of eternal torment but he**

acknowledges his sins to a loving father who forgives. We cry "Abba, Father".

The word "Abba" first was used by Jesus in his relationship to the father. Our use of it identifies us with him as a part of God's family.

The word itself convey the familiar person name of the head of the family. It might be the difference in the children saying, "Johnny Felker is my father. But I call him "Daddy". And I'll tell something about their Daddy. He's not waiting for them to make a mistake so he can kill them! And so it is with God. He is our spiritual father, but we may call him "Abba, Father".

The Holy Spirit bears witness to the relationship we have with God as his children!

**That is by his teaching. His word assures us that obedience to God's will makes us children of God!**

He is in fact an agent in the new birth that puts us in God's family. Jn. 3:5. As we obey the gospel his word testifies to our sonship!

It is one thing to say, "I think I'm a son of God. Its another to say. "I think I'm a son of God because the Holy Spirit has revealed such! Our faith rests not in our own testimony alone, but in the compound testimony of our spirit and God's agreeing together!"

From sonship it is natural to proceed to the blessings of sonship! particularly the inheritance that God has provide for his children! Paul moves from the love of a son that seeks forgiveness to the hope of the son that makes us persevere and keep on trying!!

If sons, then heirs. Joint heirs with Christ. We will share his glory!

If we join him in his sufferings, we shall join with him in glory.

**It is important for the Christian to see how this hope is grounded in the experiences of the fall of man!**

In the beginning God created a perfect world. It is hard to imagine but easy to appreciate the perfection of the world God created for the first human pair!

*That which God gave man for food continued his life. There were no thorns or thistles to burden the task of caring for the garden God had made.*

*No earthly disasters or calamities (earthquakes, tornadoes), no disharmony between man and the created order below him. The animals were companions and servants of man's purpose. No disease could overpower the body and take its life.*

*A wonderful companionship existed between the first human pair and God. Daily he would walk and talk with them. How He manifest himself is still a mystery to be solved perhaps by our own salvation. But clearly every physical and spiritual need of man was met in a world that was perfect in every way.*

**Surely all can see that this is not the world in which we presently live. What has happened to effect such a tremendous change in the world? The answer is found in Genesis three in the the fall of man.**

*Man chose to sin and that decision has brought change to the world. God could not leave man in the same state. Sewell Hall made a fine summary of this point: (Quote)*

*Thus a curse has come upon the world. Gen. 3 names some specific curses upon the serpent, the woman, and the man. But Paul and our experience indicate that those declarations do no exhaust the totality of what has happened to our world.*

**Listen to Paul: (v. 20-22)**

**"Futility" in that the lower order of creation does not serve its created purpose to give life to man. The food that man eats, the animals that serve him, the atmosphere that surrounds him cannot stop him from dying.**

*It was not through some act of the creation itself that this happened but through God's will and because of man's sin.*

*In this sense then the creation has become a servant to man's corruption, that is, his death rather than his life!*

*And what has this meant for man? We live in a world of sin and death. Consequently we live in a world of suffering and death. Some of it is due to personal sin, some to the sins of others, and some due to the sin of the first pair that has reordered the very structure of the universe!*

*Is there hope for a better life? Is there hope for the restoration of all things to that original perfection in which they were created? This is where Paul's thoughts lead us!*

*One day this corrupted order will give way to a glorious release in which we will participate. To use the words of Rev. 21, "There will be no more curse!" Man and his world are bound up together. Thus both man and the creation are pictured as longing for the day of release from corruption. Listen to Paul:*

**V. 19** Through striking personification Paul pictures the creation itself lifting its head and peering into the future for the day of redemption. It is groaning and suffering the pains of child birth in anticipation of a joyous deliverance! v. 22. That deliverance finds its expression in the "new heavens and the new earth" of 2 Pet. 3 and Rev. 21-22. We as Christians also join in this symphony of sighs! v. 22 But to what does it all point? What is the focus of this groaning? It is what God is doing for his children! The day of redemption, the culmination of the scheme of redemption that began in Gen. 3.

*The revealing of the sons of God! v. 19*

*The glory of the children of God! v. 22*

*The redemption of our body! v. 23 The mortality of our bodies will be exchanged for the immortal existence of eternal life.*

The Holy Spirit's present work in us is God's assurance of his future blessings. What we presently possess, that is forgiveness of sins, the quickening to a new life! The spirit of adoption, the leading through the word could be called the "first fruits" of the Spirit! This is derived from the Pentecost festival in which the "first fruits" were offered to God in anticipation of a great harvest! So our present blessings are but the beginning of what God has in store for us!

How should this effect us?

*An understanding of what God is doing should fill us with hope and endurance.*

This suffering that we endure is in imitation of the suffering of Christ himself! We suffer "with Him". Heb. 4:15 He knew every kind of pain, but particularly Paul may have in mind the pain that comes in trying to live right.

However difficult that might be, there is no human suffering whether physical, mental, or emotional, whether through catastrophe or meanness, that could begin to compare with glory that will be revealed in us!

This is what causes us to persevere in whatever suffering may come our way! v. 24-25

Hope itself has to do with the future! But it affects our present! v. 24

**With perseverance we eagerly wait for it!**

*The Spirit helps the weaknesses of those He leads by interceding in their behalf (8:26-30).*

The context suggests spiritual weakness--that is, man's inability to live the law perfectly (v. 3). Paul assumes that the power to overcome this weakness lies

in prayer to God. But there is still one problem. We do not know how to pray as we ought.

Is this saying God has not revealed to us what the concerns of prayer ought to be and how to make them known to God?

**No. It seems that Paul explores here something more. Even knowing God's will does not always assure us that we will be making the right request of God.**

**Cf. Paul's experience. What Paul sought of the Lord was not out of the will of God from the standpoint of the prerogatives of prayer. This is point 1. But it was out of the will of God in terms of what was in keeping with God's purpose for Paul's individual good.**

**So it is with us. I may know exactly that for which I may pray; but I may not know what God's will is for that particular situation. I may in fact ask for that which would work to the detriment of my spiritual life. And herein lies my "weakness" or "infirmity".**

Must I continue to ask God for that which would contribute to my spiritual weakness and sin?

**It seems out of context to think of the human spirit here! The flow of thought has been what the Holy Spirit is doing--leading, giving life, bearing witness. Would it make sense in this context to say "in the same manner" or "also", the Spirit intercedes!??**

**"Also" means then, in addition to these other things.**

**"In the same manner or way" means "in keeping with the same intent and purpose or goal".**

**So I cast my vote here for the Holy Spirit as the intercessor in man's behalf in spiritual weakness.**

In what sense does the Spirit intercede?

**He produces in us spiritual groanings that express need but cannot be put into words. However, we need not despair because God perfectly understands the "mind" of the Spirit, which has become our mind through the word! In this sense, then the groanings are the Spirit's because he produces them. They are his intercession because they stand between man in his weakness and God.**

**Perhaps Paul exemplifies this concept. In his suffering, he asked the Lord to remove the thorn. This uttered request had another back of it that was unuttered, the mind produced by the Spirit to do the will of God. God listened to the intercession of the spirit rather than the "weak" request of Paul. What God gave was not what Paul asked for verbally, but what he asked for in the depths of his soul.**

**Taking the thorn away was not in Paul's best interest. God told him why: to keep him from exalting himself above measure! To make him strong through dependence upon God!**

**The Spirit may intercede with groanings that are his own and that cannot be expressed by words. If this is the case then the Spirit by his groanings intercedes for those needs that we do not know how to ask for. God knows the mind of the Spirit such that those needs are met by God in answer to prayer. This position puts the Spirit in the role of a more obvious intercessor. I don't believe we have to eliminate this view because the Bible affirms that there is one mediator between God and man. There may be one mediator and more than one intercessor! Cf. 1 Tim. 2:1 where we become intercessors for others.**

**Knowing how the Spirit intercedes is not as important as knowing that he does!**

This is the ultimate effect of the Spirit's intercession. In my weakness I might pray for that which would be to my detriment spiritually. But what God does in answer is always for my good!

**The context defines what these all things are. Not everything that happens. Everything that happens cannot be said to be an answer to prayer. Everything that happens cannot be said to be according to the will of God. But everything that God does is certainly according to his will! And these are the all things of which Paul is speaking--God's response to the Spirit's intercession.**

**Work together--there is harmony in all of God's actions toward man.**

**For good--This is not the same as physical comfort, or what pleases me, but spiritually beneficial in achieving God's purpose of salvation.**

**To them who love God and are the called--Christians. Describing them first in terms of their attitude toward the Father and then secondly in terms of their response to the gospel!**

**All that God is doing is in accord with his eternal purpose manifest in five important words.**

**He foreknew--Not individually, but corporately; they were contemplated in his purpose**

**He predestined--Not individually, but descriptively (They would be like his son, sharing in his holiness, and thus, sharing in his inheritance!)**

**He called--through the gospel. They are the "church" of the Lord.**

**He justified--"made right by forgiveness"**

**He glorified--"made partakers of the glory of God first in life but ultimately in heaven!"**

*Because of God's gracious provisions, no one can lay a charge against His elect nor separate them from His love (8:31-39).*

There is no one who can successfully oppose the believer!

**So often we speak and act as if God is seeking our destruction.**

**The provisions of Rom. 8 make it clear that God is on "our" side.**

**Paul's question is not design to make us think of the devil or any other opposition. But rather to remind us that if God is on our side, it matters not "who" is on the opposing side! Cf. 1 Jn. 4:4 Look at what God has already given! He gave His Son. That is the consummate gift to meet the greatest need of man. God will provide "all things" that we need.**

**What is there then that God will not give that we need? Cf. 8:28 "All things" work together for good. These are the things God does!**

There is no one who can successfully charge the believer!

**I do not mean to say that sin is not serious. I do not mean to say that we are not accountable for our actions. I do not mean to say that we cannot sin so as to be lost! Cf. 2 Pet. 2:20ff I do mean to say that no sin of which God has forgiven us can be charged against us!**

**No man on earth may establish a sentence of condemnation against God's people. He is the Judge of highest authority and he has judged "acquitted" of guilt! Sometimes people will never let you forget what you have done that is wrong! But God knows how to forget and forgive.**

**But someone says, but that's the sins of the past that God has forgiven. What about now and what about the future? What if I sin again? Paul answers, "Jesus not only died but was raised. It is his death that brings forgiveness but it is his life that assures his intercession for us! Cf. Rom. 5:10**

There is no one who can successfully separate the believer from God's love!

**To say that God loves us and Christ loves us is to answer every challenge to faith that we experience. Look at all that we might go through! None of this can overcome us because of what God is doing in us! Remember? v. 25ff**

**Whatever might come to us in life can be successfully overcome.**

**It is not through human merit or even through human effort alone. But it is through what God's love has provided. "His love is all I need".**