

Romans 8 (Part 1) • The Law of the Spirit of Life

Pastor Paul LeBoutillier · August 02, 2026

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

We are going through the book of Romans here on Wednesday night. We're in chapter 8, so I'm going to have your turn there in your Bible. If you need a Bible to follow along with the study, just put your hand up, and one of the guys will come down and get you a Bible so that you can follow along with the study, which we think is very important, just to be looking at the Word at the time that we're going through and checking out all these verses. This is a wonderful chapter. Chapter 8.

I mean, well, you know, they're all wonderful chapters. It's all great, but there is just some really, really neat stuff that goes on in this chapter. So we're going to take it in two parts. We're going to read through verse 17 tonight. So follow along with me as I read the first 17 verses here.

It goes like this. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. And God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do, by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law. Indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. You however are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you.

One who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through the Spirit who dwells in you. So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die.

But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. And if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Stop there. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, as we get into these verses tonight and as we unpack them, we just really pray for your Holy Spirit to minister to each and every heart. Lord, we come to you with humble contrition, recognizing, Lord, it is through your Spirit and through that ministry that we can lay hold of the truths that are given to us here in the scriptures. And we ask you, Lord God, to do that.

We come hungry tonight, longing to be filled, longing to be nourished, longing to receive direction. We ask you to guide us in it. And we thank you in advance in the authority granted us through the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen. Amen.

What a wonderful chapter, as you've already seen, as we read through this section. You'll notice that the word law is used several times in these verses, but we need to be mindful of the ways that the Apostle Paul actually uses the word law, otherwise we might potentially be confused. Obviously, when you see the word law in the Bible, it can and often does refer to the Mosaic law, but not always. And there are some situations right here where it does not, because there are times in this section of scripture where the Apostle Paul uses the word law in a broader sort of a sense, just as you and I might speak of the law of gravity, all right? And you know, we think of the law of gravity as a law that governs the physical world.

The older you get, the more you realize gravity is governing your physical world. We won't get into that, but, you know, it exerts power over our lives, over every part of our lives. But just as we would speak of the law of gravity, the Apostle Paul will use the word or that word law in that same sort of a way. And you'll notice that he does it right there in verses one and two. Let's look at those again.

He begins by saying, there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. And here it is. For the law of the spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. Now, here's the interesting part. In both cases here, where Paul uses the word law, he's referring to that invisible rule that governs life.

He's not yet here talking about the Mosaic law. He will in just a moment. But when he talks about the law of sin and death, he is talking about the result of our inability to keep the Mosaic law. And because we are unable to keep the Mosaic law, it introduces another law. That is the law of sin and death.

And of course, that is the law that brings death, that condemns us, if you will, and from which we need to be saved. But then Paul tells us that we've been set free. Did you notice that? He says that we've been set free by a different law. And this he calls the law of the spirit of life.

So our immediate question is, what is this? What is the law of the spirit of life? Well, I'm going to put up kind of a little graphic that I think hopefully will help us to understand the law. First of all, the law of Moses, and then what he's talking about in the law of the spirit of life. The law of Moses is defined as an external revelation of the perfection of God as expressed through his righteous requirements.

It is a law which reveals our shortcomings. We've mentioned this many times already in our study of Romans, that that's what the law does. That's its function, is to show us how far we have fallen short of God's righteous requirements. But what is the law of the spirit? This is not an external law.

This is an internal revelation of God's righteousness and wisdom. It is expressed through the Holy Spirit, and it is a law which guides, empowers, and enables. And this is something that God planned, which is really cool. When you go through the scriptures, you realize that this was God's plan. He gave originally the law externally, and when I say that, I mean, he couldn't have done it in more graphic ways to show that it was external.

He carved it into stone, and it sat there. You could look at it, I suppose, and you could read it, but it was not a part of you. It was out there, but it was not God's intention to leave the righteous requirements of the law external to believers. He had a plan to bring it internal. In fact, he expressed that plan, as we've seen before, in the prophecies of Jeremiah.

Look up on the screen from Jeremiah chapter 31, for this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord. Look at this. I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And this is the beauty of the new covenant that we are in right now. The law has become internal.

It has been internalized for us through the Holy Spirit coming to indwell each and every believer. And now it's no longer external. And when we say that, when we say it is now internal, we're talking about the fact that it's now a part of us. It is an intimate part of us. You know, Paul made a reference in the last chapter of our study about this whole idea of now being being led by this internal law.

Let me put it on the screen to remind you from just the last chapter, Romans 7 v. 6. He says, "...but now we are released from the law..." meaning the one that brings a curse. "...having died to that which held us captive..." Look at this. "...so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of

the written code." So Paul now begins to help us understand that this work that God has done in us to bring his law internally into our lives is now the way we walk.

It's this new way he refers to, this new way of the Spirit, right? Paul actually explained this also in Galatians using a different term. On the screen, you can see he says, "...but I say, walk by the Spirit." And what he's saying is walk by the internal revelation of God's law in your heart. And he says there will be a wonderful byproduct of that. He says you won't gratify the desires of the flesh.

And so this is what God has prepared for us in the new covenant. And it's a beautiful thing. Well, now that we've talked about the differences of the law of sin and death versus the law of the Spirit, I want to go back here and just spend a moment in this statement that Paul makes in verse 1 where he says, "...there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." I don't want to pass up that statement because that's such an important statement. First of all, let's define those of us who are in Christ Jesus, okay? That very simply means those who have put their faith in Jesus and His finished work on the cross.

If you are trusting that what Jesus did on the cross was enough to pay the penalty of your sins and you have received Him as your Savior, you are in Christ, okay? Simple as that. So, "...there is therefore now no condemnation for anyone who is in Christ." Right? That's a wonderful promise. It's a wonderful thing.

Here's my question to you. Do you believe it? And I ask that question very purposely because, you know, we hear this from a theological standpoint. I was a sinner. Well, I mean, I remain a sinner in daily life, but as a sinner, I came to Jesus and I said, Lord, I know that I can't live up to the righteous requirements of the law and I need you to forgive me and cleanse me.

And I believe that what you did on the cross is that you took my condemnation. In other words, you took the condemnation that I deserved and you bore it for me on the cross. And now, you know, I wanna be a child of God. That's wonderful. You know, we lead people in a prayer that basically cover those bases and that sort of thing.

And we tell people, you know, that, hey, your condemnation has passed. What's crazy about it is that even though we hear that and believers, we hear it, we read it. In fact, we even memorize it in many cases. And yet, it breaks my heart as a pastor to find out how many born-again Christians struggle to hold on to it. And I know that they struggle because they'll often come and they'll confess during a time of failure, and we all fail in many ways, and they will speak of their failure as if they are condemned.

And they will feel that condemnation. And of course, and here's the deal. It's not coming from God, okay? That's the point. When you feel condemned, and I'm pretty sure that's a fairly universal feeling.

When we as Christians fall into sin, when we struggle, when we mess up, you know, we feel condemned. There's no question about it. We feel it. Here's the point. It's not coming from God.

Well, if it's not coming from God, who's it coming from? Well, it could be one of three sources. You can be condemning yourself. You could have people around you condemning you, or you could have Satan condemning you, which of course, you know, he absolutely loves to do. But I'm here to tell you it's not coming from God.

Why? Because there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Condemnation has passed. It's over. It's done, right?

It's finished. You cannot, you know, you will not, even though you mess up, even though you fail, and by the way, when I say that, when I admit that, that we fail and mess up, I'm not giving a license or trying to justify our failures. I'm simply talking about reality. When it happens, you need to remember that God is not condemning you. Jesus has borne your condemnation.

And so I wanna just really encourage you, don't let go of what Paul says here in Romans 8.1. Don't let go. Don't allow yourself to let go of it. Hold onto it, you know, and not only memorize it, but ask the Lord to put it in your heart in such a way that it never leaves you. Verse three goes on in the Apostle Paul says, for God has done what the law, and there he's talking about the Mosaic law, weakened by the flesh, meaning the flesh of man, could not do.

And you know, this simple statement here in the beginning of verse three is a great summary of the previous chapters that we've gone through here in the book of Romans. Paul has gone into great detail to explain the fact that what the law could not do, God has done. But what the law could not do, it could not do because of us. It was our fault. It was our sinful nature that weakened what the law was, you know, intending to do.

It goes on to say, by sending his own son, I'm in the middle of verse three, in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh. There you go. He condemned it. See, Jesus already condemned sin in the flesh. Okay?

It's condemned, it's done. It's been, that's why there is therefore now no condemnation for you because it's already been condemned, right? Through Jesus. Verse four, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us. Can you imagine guys here?

The righteous requirements of the law, which we could not keep, are now fulfilled in us. As Paul says, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit. And these two verses, three and four, are just incredible. But there are some important words and phrases that we need to take a moment to think about. And one of them is when Paul talks about Jesus coming in the likeness of sinful flesh.

And that, of course, doesn't mean that Jesus had any sin in and of himself. It simply means that Jesus had to come as a human whilst also remaining fully God and sinless. And by the way, when you hear that, when you hear that Jesus came and while on earth, and I believe remaining today, is fully man and fully God and without sin, if that makes your brain do back flips, welcome to the group. Because that's why we call it the mystery of the incarnation. It is beyond our comprehension.

I've had so many people ask, how could Jesus be fully God and fully man? And it just tweaks us. And we struggle to understand. People ask all kinds of questions related to that whole concept. If he's God, why did he pray to God?

Well, because he was also fully man, you know? And yet, because he's fully God, he did not sin, you know, and he was able to do what he did for you and me, which is condemn sin in the flesh. And this is such an important phrase, this whole idea that he condemns sin in the flesh, because it underscores the fact that mankind's sin, well, let me personalize it. Our sin had to be condemned in a man, okay? You hear what I'm saying?

In other words, if somebody's gonna bear your sin, your sin, my sin, it would have to be a man that did it. Because God, in and of himself, apart from being a man, God can't do it. God is not a man. Ultimately, he became a man in the person of his son, Jesus Christ. But God alone, in and of himself, is not a man to bear the sin of mankind.

And an angel couldn't bear our penalty either, because an angel's not a man. You know, if an angel would have said, hey, I'd like to go down and, you know, pay the price of the sin of mankind. I'm sorry, you're disqualified. Well, why?

Because you're not a man. You cannot represent what you are not. Okay. And so that is why God sent his son to become a man. And again, the brain goes, you know, just kind of goes, I don't get that.

But he also had to be qualified to bear our sin. You see, if I told the Lord, and I've told you this before, if I said to God, I want to pay for the sin of these people right here, or maybe this person here, the Lord would say, I'm sorry, Paul, you're disqualified. Well, why? Because you yourself have already sinned. So if you're going to pay for anybody's sin, it's going to be your own, right?

Okay, I'm disqualified. Well, who is qualified? Jesus, because he committed no sin. Because he committed no sin, he was able to do what you and I could not do, and that is represent. And he came to represent in the same way that Adam represented us in failure and sin, Jesus came to represent us in forgiveness of sin and the condemnation that goes along with sin.

So you see, Jesus had to be both God sinless and man, a representative of mankind. A man had to die on the cross. Now, in verse five, through the end of the chapter, Paul is going to use a lot of contrasting language to talk about the old life, our old life, and the new life that we have in Jesus. Let's look at some of these things. Let's look at three verses here, five through seven.

He says, for those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the spirit set their minds on the things of the spirit, for to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law, indeed it cannot. All right, these three verses right here, five through seven, help us to understand a little about where the battle takes place in our lives. Because even though we're saved and we are walking according to the spirit, not perfectly, but walking according to the spirit, because we have the spirit, we don't do it perfectly, we still mess up from time to time and so forth. So where is the battle for you and me?

Well, you can see in these verses, it centers in the mind, can't you? I mean, how many times did Paul make reference, you know, to the mind? Listen, even as believers, the flesh still longs to dominate the mind, your thoughts, right? And at the same time, the Holy Spirit wants to work in you and me to permeate our thoughts as well. And that's why Paul talks about these two contrasting ideas, but he says, where is this battle raging?

It's in your mind. Can you relate? I mean, does your heart kind of sense an agreement with what, you know, the apostle is saying here? I don't have this next passage on a slide, but I want to read this to you. This is why Paul wrote what he did to the Colossians when he said, listen, he says, if you've been raised with Christ, then seek the things that are above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

And then he said this, some of you guys have this passage memorized, set your minds on things above, not on things that are on the earth. And then he gives the reason why, for you died and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. So this is, this is the exhortation. We know that the battle rages in the, in the mind, because the person who lives after the flesh has their mind set, you know, on the things of the flesh. The person who desires to live after the spirit desires to have their mind set on the things of the spirit.

Verse eight goes on and it says, those who are in the flesh, or as the new King James says, those who live according to the flesh, I like that rendering a little better. He says, they cannot please God. Isn't that an interesting statement? He says, they cannot please God. And Paul is basically saying that those who live according to the flesh ultimately think and act according to the sinful nature.

And that's what he means, of course, by the flesh. He says there is a hostility toward God. Have you seen that in the world in which you live? Have you noticed a hostility toward the things of God? We see it all the time, don't we?

The people who live according to the flesh, they're hostile toward God. They're, they literally live in slavery to the flesh. And, and, and Paul says, because of that, there's nothing they can do to live a life pleasing to God. Nothing they can do, because it's all according to the flesh. And, and see, this is the thing that a lot of people fail to understand.

They'll, often people will ask, they'll say something like, okay, pastor, let me ask you a question. What about people who live a good life and they give to the poor and, and they do all kinds of good things, you know, during their life are you going to sit there and tell me that that person's going to wind up in hell just because they don't believe in Jesus and what he did on the cross? Listen, here's the, people do all kinds of things for all kinds of reasons. You know, when, when you see people giving away money and, and doing this and that, you know, who knows what their motives are? God knows what their motives are, but what they're doing is they're doing it in the flesh.

This is all done in the flesh. And, and he, and, and Paul tells us right here that when someone lives according to the flesh, when their mind is on the flesh and they're motivated through the flesh, there's, it's not possible to do anything that pleases God because it all comes from the flesh. Listen, if the spirit of God is not in someone that they're, then they're not doing it according to the spirit of God. Right? They're doing it according to the flesh.

And I know that that bothers people. It's like, well, he's a good person. Well, yeah, good compared to what? Good compared to somebody else? Maybe, but that's not how God, you know, sees us.

He's not grading us or judging us based on you versus your neighbor. We've seen here over and over in our study of Romans that we stand compared to the law of God, the perfection of God's righteous requirements, which we cannot obtain. We cannot fulfill. We cannot get to that because we're imperfect and we have a sinful nature. That's how God sees us.

You know, we're dead meat from the very beginning. You know, we don't even have a chance apart from Jesus. You know, I don't care how many good things you do. Isaiah tells us that the most righteous acts that we can possibly perform are to God like filthy rags. And that's the best you can do.

So we're not depending on ourselves. And Paul says elsewhere, we put no confidence in the flesh. I have absolutely no confidence in impressing God with what I can do in the flesh. You know, none at all. But now he goes on in verse 9 to talk about believers.

He talked about unbelievers. He says, but you, however, are not in the flesh. Now, I want to stop you there for a moment because Paul is not suggesting that when he says you're not in the flesh, he's not saying that you'll never mess up or that you'll never revert to the flesh, you know, for something. We can, we will, and we do. That is reality.

But you are different from an unbeliever in that you have the Holy Spirit living in you. And that's the point that he's saying. And due to the fact that the Holy Spirit is living in you, you now have access to a power and a wisdom that supersedes the flesh. We've talked about, you know, we started really dealing with this in Romans chapter 6. If you missed those studies, you can go back and catch up.

But this is where we learn that we've been given power through the Spirit and through the death that we shared with Jesus. And now we no longer live under the tyranny and the dominion of the sinful flesh. And so he reminds us here in the middle of verse 9, anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. And that's kind of a side note, but that's just the reality. you know.

Anyone who doesn't have the Spirit of Christ. Why? Because everybody who is in Christ receives the Spirit and that's really you could have put it in it. He did it in a negative way. He made that statement in a negative way.

You can say it in a positive way. The positive way is everybody who has come to Jesus has the Holy Spirit living in them. Even though people doubt it. I get notes all the time from people who express doubt that they have really received the Holy Spirit. And of course their doubt is not based on the Word of God.

It's based on their activity or failures. You know, Pastor Paul, do you think, in fact I had a guy write to me, I think we covered this in a Q&A, had a guy write and he said, I know that God speaks to us through dreams but I can't even remember my dreams. Does that mean I don't have the Holy Spirit? You know, I just, you either want to hug those people or slap them, one of the two. I'm not really sure.

It's like, wait a minute, what does that have to do with anything? There's a promise in God's Word that you receive the Holy Spirit when you come to faith in Jesus Christ. That's it. So stop doubting it, right? He goes on now in verse 10.

He says, but if Christ is in you, and he is, if you put your faith in him, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who indwells you. All right, this is interesting. When he talks about the fact that you're going to, you are going to be given life to your mortal bodies, does that mean he's talking about the body you have right now? No, unfortunately it doesn't.

I mean, if you're in the hyper-faith movement, you probably think it does, but it doesn't. These mortal bodies of ours, Paul calls them our corruptible bodies, and for a good reason, because we're on our way out. You know, we're all dying. Isn't that good news? Aren't you glad you came tonight?

You know, we are all going through this whole process, but when he talks here about the fact that if Christ is in you, if the Spirit of him is in you who raised Jesus from the dead, he's also going to give life to your mortal body, and he's talking about how you will be raised incorruptible. Your body, the one that you have now, will die, but it will be raised, and that's what he's talking about. And here's the reason. Jesus, and this is kind of hard to hear, but Jesus didn't come to redeem your mortal body. He didn't.

He came to redeem you, the essence of who you are, and you'll be given a new incorruptible body, but he didn't come to redeem your current body because your current body is corruptible and it's full of sin, and it is frankly where the sinful nature is attached. We've talked about this. When you die or when the Lord returns, you will be separated from your sinful flesh, and sin will no longer be an issue at that time, but that's one of the reasons why Jesus didn't come to redeem the mortal body. You're going to be given an immortal body, an incorruptible body. Do you ever think about what that's going to be like?

We can't relate because we're constantly, you know, I have to think about my early days as a kid when I never got tired and I could run forever. I can't do that anymore. I take naps, not nap, naps, and you get to a certain age where it's just like, this is life now. But do you ever think about what it's going to be like to have that? And here's what I wonder.

I wonder if with my new body I'm still going to crave chocolate. I'm just curious about that because I love chocolate. I could get pregnant on chocolate. When I see a piece of chocolate, I hear two voices. One of them says, eat that chocolate.

The other one says, you heard him, eat that chocolate. You know, there's no question about it. It's just, I kind of wonder, you know, will there be chocolate in heaven? Anyway, okay, here comes the conclusion, all right, that the Apostle Paul is going to make. Verse 12, so then brothers, he says, we are debtors, but not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.

And you can see here that this verse that live according to the flesh is still a possibility. He says, listen, listen, listen, we're not debtors to the flesh. The flesh is going to try to still dominate. Sin is still going to try to lay hold of your mind and fill it with desires of the flesh. But you're not a debtor anymore to the flesh.

You're not obligated to the flesh. We've talked about this in our study here in Romans. You're no longer obligated to the flesh. It doesn't mean you're not going to choose it from time to time, but it's not an obligation any longer, right? In other words, you owe the flesh nothing.

And then Paul reminds us in verse 13, for if you live according to the flesh, you will die. And we've talked about this before here in Romans. We've talked about that, you know, Paul said earlier, the wages of sin is death. And even though death is not, eternal death is not on your radar anymore, because Jesus saved you eternally, even though you mess up, you know, and that's not going to go away because you mess up. Your eternal salvation, there is a security.

And we're not going to get into weird, wacky, theological craziness here, but there is a security to your salvation in Jesus Christ. And sin is not going to challenge that security, right? The only thing that can challenge it is unbelief. But sin is not going to challenge it, all right? So you need to understand that.

But there's still a principle that comes into play, and that is the wages of sin is death. And I've told you before that as a pastor, I've watched things die in people's lives because they were given over as a believer to sin. I've watched marriages die. I've watched dreams die. I've watched goals die.

Relationships, family relationships, have died. And it's heartbreaking. And that can still happen in your life and in my life. And so Paul says, if you live according to the flesh, there's still a dying that can definitely take place in our lives. But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

And notice he says, if by the Spirit, and that might need to be underlined or highlighted in your Bible. How do you put to death the deeds of the flesh? By the Spirit. By the Spirit. I'll say it one more time.

By the Spirit. Why do I emphasize that? It's because we got a vast majority of Christians running around trying to put to death the deeds of the flesh by the flesh. And what that comes out in verbally is statements like, I'm just gonna, I gotta try harder to be a good Christian. That's not gonna work.

Or, you know, or making promises to God. God, I promise I'm never gonna do that again. No, that's trying to put to death the misdeeds of the flesh by the flesh. You can't conquer the flesh with the flesh. You can't will it away.

You can't grit your teeth and say, I'm not gonna do that anymore. You can't do that. Paul says the only way you can put to death the deeds of the body is through the Spirit. By the Spirit. That means the power of the Holy Spirit.

Following the Holy Spirit. Yielding to the Holy Spirit rather than yielding to the flesh. You might say, well, Pastor Paul, that's really hard. I know. I'm not saying anything that, you know, we don't all know.

But it's now, because you're a believer, it's now a possibility. Whereas as it wasn't before you knew the Lord. You didn't have the ability to yield to the Holy Spirit because you didn't have the Holy Spirit. You didn't have the power to live according to the Holy Spirit because you didn't have the Holy Spirit. You do now.

And you can choose. You can choose. I choose to yield to the Holy Spirit. He has given you that ability, that power. And so, you know, it's the only way we're gonna conquer the flesh.

It's through the power of the Spirit. It's okay to come to God and say, Lord, I need you to do this in me. You know, the Bible tells us that it is God who gives us the ability to will and to act according to his good purpose. To will and to act. Here's the deal.

I've talked to Christians and I've... I'm sure you can relate to this. There are times when we don't want to stop sinning. In other words, our will is set to doing what is wrong. Because as the Bible tells us, sin is enjoyable for a season.

So what do you do? What do you do when your sinful heart, you know that you know that your sinful heart wants to go there? What are you gonna do? Well, you have the power now to say no, but you're gonna have to ask God to do that work in your heart. It's like, Lord, listen, you know me.

You know every thought. You know my heart. You know the intent of my heart. I just don't have the will to break the power of this in my life. I need you to give it to me.

I need you to change my heart about this issue. And give me not only the ability to act, but the will. And I need to be willing to surrender that to the Lord. Verse 14, for all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God, right? For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you've received the spirit of adoption as sons by whom we cry, Abba, Father.

This word Abba in the Bible is one of the many words, frankly, that is not translated. This is not a, that's not a translation. This is basically a word that you're reading it, the English version of the Aramaic word. It just means Father, Papa. But he says, by the Spirit who has given us adoption now, which is a reference to the intimacy that we now have with God.

He is the one by whom we cry, Abba, Father. And it's so cool to, you know, when a person, to see a person who's come to faith, you know, in Jesus. And they stop talking about God in impersonal terms and they start referring to him as Father. It's just the most beautiful thing in the world. You know, have you ever had an unbeliever when they find out you're a Christian, they'll start talking about God and they use all these impersonal terms.

Oh, you're a Christian, you know. It's one that I hate to tell people sometimes that I'm a pastor because they have to put on their talk. You know, they start doing the God talk. Oh yeah, you're a pastor. Well, you know, and they start talking about the man upstairs or something like that.

And it's all very impersonal. As Christians, through the Spirit, we are enabled now to have that intimate relationship with God where we come to him and say, Papa, Father. It's like, it's that relationship. I want to run into his arms, don't you? I don't want to be distant.

I don't want to think of him as the man upstairs. I want to think of him as the man who dwells in my heart, who has made me new and who I can go to with all my fears and concerns and troubles. And I know that he's not going to condemn me because there is therefore now no condemnation for those of us who are in Christ Jesus. How do we know that he is our Father? Verse 16, the Spirit himself bears witness.

With what? With our spirit that we are children of God. This is so cool. The Holy Spirit who has now merged with your spirit, and by the way, you know that's the fact, right? We are one with him in spirit, the Bible tells us.

And so he communicates now. Do you know that he wants to communicate to you through his spirit? People sometimes will say, I've never heard the voice of God. I've heard other people say they heard an audible voice. I don't care if I ever hear an audible voice.

You know why? Because the communication of the spirit is so much superior to an audible voice. His spirit is in you, merged with your spirit. And do you understand he can communicate to you in ways that speaking audibly can't even begin to touch. He can communicate volumes in a fraction of a second through the spirit.

And one of the things he communicates to you and me is, you're mine. You are a son, you are a daughter of Christ. Now, I need to say something. If there is anyone here who is thinking or has thought, maybe even as I was sharing this, I don't know if the Holy Spirit has confirmed that in me. Well, here's what you have to do.

You have to ask yourself the question, first of all. Do I believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross for my sins? And if the answer to that question is yes, I believe that. I believe he died for me. If that's still you that says, I'm not sure the Holy Spirit has ever confirmed that I'm a child of God, you need to understand something.

Every element and work of the Holy Spirit in our life can be resisted by our own emotions, our own will, our own life. That's the thing about the Holy Spirit. He is the most gentle of gentlemen's that I have ever met in my life. And we can resist what he wants to say to us, even this thing where he says, you're mine. And so if you're one of those people, and I know that some of you exist because I've heard from you.

And if you're one of those people who knows that you know that you know that you are trusting Jesus for forgiveness of sins, but you don't have a heart or a sense of the confirmation that you are a child of God through the Spirit, ask him. First of all, know this. Know that his promise to you is that you have the Holy Spirit. Don't question that part of it, okay? Because it's his promise.

You come to faith in Jesus, boom, the Holy Spirit, it's there, he's there, okay? Now, come to him and say, Lord, I need that affirmation. Speak that affirmation to my heart and do it in a way that I'm gonna understand and hear. Listen, people, would I surprise you to say to you today that we struggle to tune into the Holy Spirit in our lives? Would I surprise you?

I don't think so. We are so tuned to our five senses. You know, what I can feel, touch, smell, taste, you name it. And now we've become Christians and we have this other sense. We have this other sensory perception that is through the Spirit, but we're so unaccustomed to using it, you know?

We don't sit around and think about, well, what's the Spirit saying? And I love to say that to people when they ask Bible questions or they, sometimes they'll come to me and I know this happens to other

pastors too. People will come and they'll ask questions that they should be asking God, but they're not tuned as much into hearing from him spiritually, so they'll come and they'll ask people instead. Pastor Paul, what do you think? Should I do this?

And I always like to ask them, well, what's the Holy Spirit telling you? And they're like, what? What do you mean? Yeah, what is the Spirit saying? Have you stopped?

Have you paused? Have you learned to listen? Have you quieted your heart to hear from the Holy Spirit? He wants to talk to you. He's communicating.

One of the things he wants to tell you is you belong to God. You're a child of God. You're a daughter, you're a son. He wants you to know that. He wants you to know that for sure.

Have you stopped long enough to listen? But you know what? If being a child of God sounds pretty good to you, and it is, it just gets better. Look what he says in verse 17. If you're children, then you're also an heir.

And you know, we read this and we kind of go, what? What did he just say? Because I happen to know what the word heir means. H-E-I-R. It means someone who is entitled to property or rank on the basis of a legal right.

And Paul is telling you and me that we are heirs and we are entitled. What are we entitled to? Everything. I want to show you, Jesus talked about this. You'd be happy to know.

Let me show you on the screen from Luke chapter 12. This is a great passage. He says, fear not little flock for it is the father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Yeah, that's your inheritance, the kingdom. And if your mind is blown sitting where you are, again, join the group.

because we really can't relate to what all this means, but it's just the truth. He's given us the kingdom. He says, and Paul talks about this in Corinthians. When they're starting to choose sides, I'm of Peter, I'm of Paul, I'm of Silas or whatever, he goes, you guys, they're all yours. Life and death are yours.

All things are yours in Christ Jesus. All things are yours. It's a mind blower, but that's the deal. We are heirs. Look what he says in verse 17.

We're heirs of God, heirs of God, goodness gracious, and fellow heirs with Christ. And then he says this, and this is an interesting sort of a deal. Provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be

glorified with him. And here's the deal. We've been talking today about all the wonderful benefits of what it means to be in Christ, and there are many wonderful things, and we'll continue talking about those.

But there's one other thing that comes along with being in Christ, and that is suffering. We are called to share in his suffering. Sometimes people will say to me, well, Pastor Paul, I don't know what my calling is. Well, you know, before you figure out your ministry calling let me share with you a couple other things that you're called to. You're called to suffer.

I didn't sign up for that one. Thanks, but no thanks. We are not immune from suffering. In fact, Paul tells us here, it is our destiny. Let me show you what Peter wrote.

In 1 Peter chapter two on the screen, it says, for what credit is it if when you sin and you're beaten for it or you're punished, you know, he says, what good is it if you endure? But if when you do good and you suffer for it and you endure, he says, now that's a gracious thing in the sight of God. Look at this, look at this. For to this you have been called. Why?

Because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example so that you might follow in his steps. Isn't that interesting? We're called to suffer. Now you'll notice, you know, he doesn't really give a whole lot of insight or, you know, detail on all the sufferings that may come into our lives. But what we see in this final verse that we're looking at tonight in Romans is that our present suffering is actually a condition of being glorified with him.

Because just as Jesus suffered and afterward was glorified, we follow in that same example. And there are many different flavors and ways that we suffer. Paul said to Timothy, anyone who wants to live a godly life following after Jesus will suffer persecution. All you got to do is want to live godliness. In some way, shape, or form, you will suffer.

And that's the reality. But it is also your destiny and it is also a condition of being glorified with him. Amen? So the first part of Romans chapter eight, we will cover the latter part of the chapter next time. Let's pray.

Lord, we have seen some pretty incredible things in this first half of Romans chapter eight. Much of it is very challenging to understand, but we pray once again that as we muse upon these words, as we meditate upon the things that we have heard, that you would just implant them in our hearts in such a way, Lord, that it would affect our daily life. Help us, Father God, to remember always that condemnation has passed for those who are in Christ Jesus. For our Savior, our Lord, our Redeemer has carried our

condemnation and born it for us. And now I pray, my Father God, that we would hold on to that and we would not allow the enemy to influence us otherwise.

Help us, Lord Jesus, to live what we have learned tonight, to walk it out, to reflect these beautiful truths in our daily life as we live for Jesus. Help us, Lord, to yield to the Spirit and resist the flesh. For we ask all these things and the authority granted us through the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and all God's people said together, amen. Amen.