

Romans 8:1-17

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[0 : 0 0] Now, you probably will remember, I'm sure you will remember that we had a talk in two, didn't we? Because I had prepared too much. And so we began last week by asking, what is unique about Christianity?

What is it that sets it apart? We thought of different things, the way of salvation, the work of Christ, the person of Christ. But actually what sets it apart is Christian experience.

It's that the Christian life at heart is an experience in which God, the living God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is at work in us by the Holy Spirit.

And we saw a number of things that the Spirit has done. We saw two things. We saw that the Spirit has set us free. Just look at verse 1. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

That sums up in many ways the first seven chapters. We're no longer heading for the judgment of God. Eternally. No condemnation now I dread.

[1 : 0 1] Jesus and Him, all in Him is mine. If I'm a Christian, I will feel convicted. I will feel often concerned at sin in my life. But I am not condemned by God.

No condemnation. So what does the Spirit of God have to do with it? Look at verse 2. Look at verse 2. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

And we notice there are two laws at work. Do you remember the illustration? There is the law of sin and death. It's a sense for power.

But there is also another power that is at work in the Christian. The Spirit of life has set us free. Things on this planet, we are subject, don't we, to the laws of gravity.

And so the law of gravity keeps us on the ground. You go to the airport. And you see those huge airliners. Remember we talked about that? Airplanes taxiing around.

[2 : 0 2] But when you get into one of those planes. And you go onto the runway. At a certain speed. You think of the law of aerodynamics. Another law takes over. And you are set free from the law of gravity.

And you soar up through the sky in that plane. As human beings we are subject to the law of sin and death. And it binds us to this world.

There is nothing we can do to counter it. But God in his great mercy has set us free. If you think of the Lord Jesus Christ as that plane. We need to be in that plane.

To get airborne. How do we get airborne? By the power and the work of the Holy Spirit. Without the Spirit's work we are left on the runway. And we are going nowhere. And so we see clearly that one of the roles of the Holy Spirit.

Is to apply what Jesus did on the cross. Two thousand years ago. To today. The Spirit provides the link. Now we notice that this particular liberation.

[3 : 1 0] We are in this plane. Can you see it's got a destination. Verse 4. In order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us. Who walk not according to the flesh. But according to the Spirit.

So that plane. That we are in. Is not just circling around the airport. It has a destination. And the destination. The destination is this new life. And then we saw that the Spirit has set us free.

But then we saw certainly that the Spirit has transformed our mindset. So look at verses 5 to 8.

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. It's not actually telling us to do something. It's saying this is the difference. Between a Christian and a non-Christian.

The non-Christian. In verse 5. They've got their mind set on the things of this world. They're preoccupied. But the Christian person is different. The sinful human machine.

[4 : 13] Has been pre-programmed. To constantly think of ourselves. To put our self-interest first. And one of the outworkings of that. Is that we are hostile to God.

Verse 7. For the mind that is set on the flesh. Is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law. Indeed it cannot. We do not want God.

And we do not want this man to reign over us. And yet. If you look at verse 8. It says those who are in the flesh. They cannot please God.

It's impossible to please God. Outside of Jesus Christ. Without the Holy Spirit. Being at work in you. And it results.

Verse 6. In spiritual death. Back verse 5. Those who live according to the Spirit. When we turn to Christ. He gives us a new mindset.

[5 : 12] You think of your computer. Through the Holy Spirit. It is as if. There is new software. That is downloaded. And installed. On your inner person. It's one of the miracles.

That we see in people's lives. That as they come to Christ. As they enter that plane. If I can put it like that. They begin to want. To live for him. And to obey him.

So Paul says. I delight in God. In my inner being. And we know peace. Verse 6. We know peace with God. And peace with others. And so if you wish your life was more Christ like.

If you wish. That you were more holy. That is the Holy Spirit's work. That is abnormal. That is not normal. And that is evidence.

That the Spirit of God. Is at work in you. So the Spirit has set us free. The Spirit has transformed our mindset. And then let's get into the third point. Verses 9 to 14. The Spirit has taken up residence.

[6 : 10] Look at verse 9. You however. Are not in the flesh. But in the Spirit. In fact. The Spirit of God.

Dwells in you. Anyone who does not have. The Spirit of Christ. Does not belong to him. That is saying that. All people in Ealing.

All people in this room. All people in the world. Fall into two camps. There are those who are in the flesh. Which is everyone by nature.

We belong to this age. And there are those who are in the Spirit. That is there are those who trust in Christ. They belong to the age to come. They are in that plane.

Heading to destination life. And if you are in the Spirit. The Spirit is in you. And that's very important. Because that is true of all those who trust in Christ.

[7 : 05] You do not become a Christian. And then at some later stage. Pray to receive the Spirit. If you do not have the Holy Spirit of Christ in you.

Then you don't belong to Christ. But if you are in Christ. Christ is in you. If you are in the Spirit. The Spirit is in you.

And this new resident in our lives. He brings new power. It's not a verse 10. But if Christ is in you. Although the body is dead because of sin.

The Spirit is life. Because of righteousness. These physical bodies of ours are dying. They are destined. Aren't they? For death.

And decay. It may take a skiing accident. It may take being knocked over by the E1 bus. It may take cancer. But sooner or later.

[8 : 04] These bodies of ours will die. But if Christ is in you. It says here. That your inner person has been made alive. By the indwelling Spirit.

And the same indwelling Spirit. Who has renewed our inner person. Will one day bring life to our physical bodies as well. Look at verse 11. 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 dwells in you. Pregnancy is a very odd thing.

Isn't it? I don't know how women do it. I really don't know how women do it. You have this seed of new life. Growing within you.

Getting bigger and bigger. And moving inside of you. It would freak me out completely. But as Christians. We have the Spirit of life. Within us.

[9 : 08] And his indwelling presence. Tells us. That there is not going to be a birth. But there is going to be a resurrection. To life in the age to come.

And that is very exciting. That is even more exciting. Than a birth. But it also brings with it an obligation. Can you see that in verse 12? 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 misdeeds of the body.

You will live. If we are in the Spirit. And the Holy Spirit is in us. We need to live accordingly. We can't live just any old way of life anymore.

We have. Can you see that? A debt. An obligation to live differently. So by the Spirit he says. That is looking to him for strength.

[10:10] We are to put to death. The deeds of the body. That is speaking about waging war. On sin in our lives.

We need to keep on battling. Even though we know that the sins that we put to death today. Are going to rise to life again tomorrow. That is how it works. Isn't it?

We put to death envy today. That doesn't mean you have seen the back of envy for good in your life. And you move on. If you put to death lust today. That doesn't mean lust is destroyed in your life. In fact when you wake up the next morning. You might find saying. Hello. It's me again. How about being a little bit easier on me today? But by the Spirit we need to keep on battling.

I guess it is the same way if you have got a garden. You don't give up weeding the garden. Just because a week later the weeds have returned. Are you sick at it? If you have got a lawn to mow.

[11:05] You don't give up mowing the grass. Because in a few days after you have mowed it. It has grown back again. You need to do it again. For we do so don't we? We fight sin at every turn.

Knowing that this process isn't going to last forever. The end is in sight. The day of resurrection will come. If by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body.

You will. The end of verse 13. Live. You will live forever. That is to live in the age to come. But how can Christians be sure?

How can you be sure this morning? This afternoon? This is going to happen. And our last point is the Spirit gives us assurance. The end of verse 14. For all who live.

Who are led by the Spirit of God. Are sons of God. For you did not receive the Spirit of slavery to fall back in the fear. But you received the Spirit of adoption. Our sons.

[12:12] 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. As Christians. We no longer relate to God. In abject terrified fear.

We relate to him as our heavenly father. And we find ourselves naturally praying. Using the language of father. Our father in heaven.

Hallowed be your name. We've got an inner conviction. A company and assurance. That we are not just forgiven by God.

But we are actually children of God. We are part of the family. It's not just that powerful people have intervened. To get us out of jail.

[13:11] To secure my release. But actually I have now been adopted into the family of my rescuer. Look at verse 15. But 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. And so if we are Christians.

We are no longer to fear condemnation. But more than that. We dare to call the creator. We dare to call the judge of all.

Abba father. And we find it normal. Natural to do so. Just as Jesus himself did. Now where does this come from?

It comes from the Spirit who lives within us. It is by the Spirit we cry Abba father. The Spirit himself. Verse 16.

[14:11] Bears witness with our spirit. That we are children of God. It is not just because we read it in the Bible. We know it to be true in our hearts.

It is not just read on a page. But it comes from the Holy Spirit. And I think if you have been a Christian for a while. Like I have.

Or if you have grown up in a Christian home. It is very easy to take this sort of thing for granted. We pray to God as Father. And we think nothing of it. But it is astounding. And it is unique to Christian experience.

And it is a mark of the Holy Spirit living within us. The religions of the world know nothing of this. You ask your Muslim friends. Would you ever call Allah Father? They wouldn't dare. And it is a remarkable privilege. And something of which the Spirit assures us. But just notice again. The full benefits of our adoption.

[15:14] That we need. Well we need to wait. For the age to come. That is how it ends. Isn't it? In verse 17. 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. Why do verse 14 and 15 speak about us being adopted as God's sons?

Are females excluded? It seems that way doesn't it? On the surface reading. Well you've just got to read on a little bit. And you see obviously not. Because verses 16 to 17.

Switch to speak of us as children. But in the ancient world. Only sons inherited. Only sons inherited. And so all Christians. Male and female. Are sons. There's no daughters. We are all sons. In the same way.

[16:11] That as the church. We are the bride of Christ. There's something sexist about that. Male and female. We are part of the bride. And so we are sons. We are heirs of God. Fellow heirs with Christ. And that we are heirs.

Means the best is yet to come. Our inheritance is to come. We don't have it all now. Life in this world. As we are going to see after Christmas.

In Romans 8. Involves hardship and suffering. As it did with Christ. But we have this. The Holy Spirit assuring us. That one day. One day. We will be glorified.

With Christ. We will be glorified. With Christ. And so do you see the work of the Spirit. The Spirit has set us free. There is now no condemnation.

For those who are in Christ Jesus. The Spirit has transformed our mindset. So that our minds are set on the things of the Spirit.

[17:09] The Spirit has taken up residence. In our hearts. Our minds. Our lives. We are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. And the Spirit.

The Spirit. Gives us assurance. And so then brothers. We are debtors. Therefore. We need to put to death.

The deeds of the body. So that you will live. Let's pray. Let's pray.