

**Romans Chapter 8**  
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**Romans Chapter 8: 14-25**

**<sup>14</sup>For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. <sup>15</sup>For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" <sup>16</sup>The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,**

**<sup>17</sup>and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. <sup>18</sup>For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. <sup>19</sup>For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. <sup>20</sup>For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup>that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. <sup>22</sup>For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. <sup>23</sup>And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. <sup>24</sup>For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? <sup>25</sup>But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.**

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In the first 4 verses of Chapter 8, Paul has stated that what the law could not do (free us from slavery to the law of sin and death) God has done for us through Christ Jesus so that we can be freed (no longer slaves) to walk in the Spirit. Paul writes that God fulfilled the Law (made us righteous) in us, through Christ.

**<sup>1</sup>Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup>For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. <sup>3</sup>For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup>so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.**

In seven Chapters of Romans, Paul has put the foundation of his theology in place. We were one (married) with Adam in sin and death, freed from that marriage through Christ who became Adam (Christ became sin on the cross) and through his death, we were freed to unite with the risen Christ and walk in the Spirit, led by the Spirit of God.

**<sup>14</sup>For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. <sup>15</sup>For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" <sup>16</sup>The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,**

We have been set free from sin and death now made sons of God. For the first time, Union with the Father has been made possible, but it is more than a union. In his letter Paul says that as we are led, the spirit we receive is one of adoption. Through this Spirit of adoption, we have been made sons of God. Christ and the Spirit are one. As we receive Christ, we also receive the Spirit – one of adoption as a son (or daughter) of God. It is the power of this Spirit

that allows us to cry out “Abba! Father!” Through Christ and the Spirit, we have a new identity. Our identity is that of adopted Children of God. For the first time in his letter to the Romans, Paul uses the designation Sons (children) of God. That is what he wants his brothers and sisters in Rome to understand. The Spirit has provided adoption to the believer as a child of God. Elsewhere (in Galatians 5) Paul will write that we become sons of God by faith in Jesus Christ.

The term son that Paul uses here concerns our spirit, which is the same for males and females. As spirit, we are the same -children of God and sons of God male and female, all the same.

Paul says that our spirit and God’s Spirit both testify to our adoption as God’s adopted children.

The spirit of adoption for the sons of God:

Adoption in Rome was a complicated process involving petition and statements of commitment before witnesses that could not be revoked. Adoption severed all ties with the old family and created full and permanent union with the new family. By law, an adopted son had all of the rights, privileges of natural born children within the family. Legally, they were full heirs to the property of the one who adopted them.

## **The Climax of Paul’s Letter to the Church in Rome:**

**<sup>17</sup>and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.**

As adopted children, we are more than family member. Full familial rights are given to us through our adoption (through Christ) by God. We are now, not only just children of God, we also are heirs to His kingdom. Like Christ, we have been granted rights to inherit the Kingdom. As Christ is glorified, so can we be glorified. There is a statement that must be made clear in what Paul writes

**“if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.”**

It is as we suffer with Christ that we may also be glorified with him. Suffering and glory are tied together. We may be glorified with Christ if indeed we suffer with him.

From Ray Stedman:

“So, our sufferings as believers -- physical, emotional, whatever they may be -- are directly linked with the glory that is coming. The important thing we need to see is that both the sufferings and the glory are privileges that are given to us.”

Paul writes that our suffering for Christ, and as Christ suffered are a privilege granted to us. The suffering is not a price we must pay to earn glory. There is nothing in this verse that indicates we earn glory. The glory that we will someday receive is a gift from God for His children. As heirs we inherit the same as Christ. As we are in Christ, we suffer. It is a privilege and not a task that must be done to earn glory.

**<sup>18</sup>For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. <sup>19</sup>For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.**

Whatever might happen to us in these days are not even worthy of comparison to what we inherit as God's family and His Children, fellow heirs to Christ. The theme of this verse and the next nine verses is that incomparable glory awaits us. It is glory beyond description; much greater than anything we can compare it with on earth. A magnificent and fantastic prospect awaits us. Paul writes that the "anxious longing" of the creation (everything) waits eagerly for what is revealed to the sons of God or the time when they are revealed.

Paul writes that what is to come is so much better that to even attempt to compare what happens to us here is not worthy to be considered against glory with Christ as fellow heirs of the Kingdom of God.

In The Weight of Glory, C.S Lewis puts it this way:

**We are to shine as the sun. We are to be given the morning star. I think I begin to see what it means. In one way, of course, God has given us the morning star already. You can go and enjoy the gift on many fine mornings, if you get up early enough. "What more," you may ask, "do we want?" Ah, but we want so much more. Something the books on aesthetics take little notice of. But the poets and mythologies know all about it. We do not want merely to see beauty, though God knows even that is bounty enough -- we want something else which can hardly be put into words -- to be united with the beauty we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it. That is why the poets tell us such lovely falsehoods. They talk as if the west wind could really sweep into a human soul. But it can't. They tell us that beauty, born a murmuring sound, will pass into a human face. But it won't -- or not yet, at least.**

**[Lewis sums it up in a previous sentence in this way]**

**The door on which we have been knocking all our lives will open at last.**

We are given all of this not because we have been faithful, not because we earn it, but because we are (have become) heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ. And also we are called and entrusted with the privilege of suffering for humanity.

**<sup>20</sup>For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup>that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.**

Creation has suffered the sin of Adam (our sinful nature) for all of history. We have been made slaves to his corruption. Now, creation has seen freedom (will be set free) from the slavery Adam brought to everyone. **"The freedom of the glory of the children of God"**

**<sup>22</sup>For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. <sup>23</sup>And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. <sup>24</sup>For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? <sup>25</sup>But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.**

All of creation groans in anticipation of the coming day, when our bodies are redeemed and we are sons to the kingdom. In fact, we groan too as we eagerly wait for that day of redemption of our body.

Spirit made us co-heirs with Christ and our bodies will be redeemed, made perfect, free from slavery to sin. And so we endure suffering with groans and perseverance that point toward that day of our hope.

Our lives consist of groans. We groan because of the ravages that sin makes in our lives, and in the lives of those we love. We groan because we see possibilities that are not being captured and employed. We groan because we see gifted people who are wasting their lives, and we would love to see something else happening. It is recorded that, as he drew near the tomb of Lazarus, Jesus groaned in his spirit because he was so burdened by the ravages that sin had made in a believing family. He groaned, even though he knew that he would soon raise Lazarus from the dead. So we groan in our spirits -- we groan in disappointment, in bereavement, in sorrow. We groan physically in our pain and our limitation. Life consists of a great deal of groaning. But the apostle immediately adds that this is a groaning which is in hope. As nature groans in hope, so we believers groan -- but we groan in hope too. For in this hope we were saved, in the anticipation that God has a plan for our bodies as well.

## **What are the first Fruits of the Spirit?**

Paul refers to the first fruits of the spirit that we have already received. With this, he refers to salvation from sin, what Jesus did on the cross. God's plan for us goes past that to adoption as sons and granting us privilege as heirs to the kingdom and redemption of our bodies in a new and vastly better place (with Him) that we call eternity.

And so we wait with perseverance for that day when we will be called to claim all of our rights as heirs to the kingdom that Christ is preparing for us.