

# Romans 6... 7... 8

DEVOTIONAL STUDIES FROM THE  
MEN'S MORNING FELLOWSHIP

**Romans 8:14** For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

**Romans 8:15** For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."

**Romans 8:16** The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

**Romans 8:17** and if children, then heirs - heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.

Your life in Jesus, your walk, has purpose and direction. In this life you are told **For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.**<sup>1</sup> You can be confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup>

Since God has a purpose and direction for you it stands to reason He will also lead you into it throughout your life. These next verses in Romans emphasize God's leading you in your life.

**Romans 8:14** For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. - being changed to bring change -

**Sons of God** is a phrase describing our relationship to God through Jesus Christ. When we are born-again we are born into God's family and considered His **sons**.

As members of the family we have the privilege of being **led by the Spirit of God**. The same Holy Spirit who regenerated us and indwells us can guide us. He can suggest, He can influence, or as we are putting it, He can lead us.

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<sup>1</sup>Ephesians 2:10

<sup>2</sup>Philippians 1:6

For as many differentiates us from nonbelievers. They are being drawn to Jesus Christ by Him. Only believers can be led by Him on a daily basis.

We often use the birth analogy to discuss our growth as Christians from baby to maturity. That's valid when it comes to things like our knowledge of the Word or our growth in wisdom. But when it comes to being led by the Holy Spirit we need not be old in the Lord. **Every** Christian can be led from the time of the new birth.

Paul used an analogy the believers at Rome would understand: Adoption.

**Romans 8:15** For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."

You may not be too excited about being **adopted**. In our own culture it isn't always seen as a positive thing. But in the culture Paul was writing to adoption meant something very different than it does to us.

A Roman father looked forward to the day that he publicly *adopted his own son!* Adoption meant that the son was entering into the full privileges of the father's resources. As Christians, you are sons and daughters who have also been **adopted** in this Roman sense.

- being choiced to bring choice -  
You are able therefore to draw from the full privileges of your heavenly Father's resources. The leading of the Spirit indwelling you is a resource immediately available to you.

The word **bondage** is suggested by the same analogy of the Roman household. Those in **bondage** were the household slaves. Paul contrasted the adopted son with the household slaves. **You did not receive the spirit of bondage** means you are not a slave in God's household of faith. You don't respond to God as a Master you must **fear**.

So much of what passes for biblical Christianity is really some sort of fear and slavery. I'd apply this to the Emergent Church. The Emergent Church is the current movement within Christianity to join a multitude of faiths and denominations in a new 'reformation' that

challenges the authority of scripture, the traditional structure and doctrines of the Church, discounts prophecy and encourages a socio-economic agenda above salvation through believing on Jesus Christ.

Part of what is going on in the Emergent Church movement is a return to ritual and ceremony. **But that is not how children discover and enjoy their Dads!**

It's not an advance to return to rituals and ceremonies; it's a retreat into a relationship of bondage and fear.

Yours is a full, and fully privileged, relationship. You cry **Abba, Father**. **Abba** is an endearing expression of sonship. **Father** is an expression of full adoption. In this relationship you have nothing to fear.

Even before the recent popularity of the emergent church movement there has been a movement towards greater formalism in the church. I reject it all as a denial of my sonship.

**Romans 8:16** The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

Far from feeling inferior an adopted child ought to feel privileged. He or she was especially chosen to receive the full benefits of the family. If we are sensitive to Him the Holy Spirit will tell us how special we are as adopted sons.

This is one reason why we should not seek to motivate people out of guilt for having fallen short of pleasing the Lord. We are kids in His family, not slaves working around the house.

Since all this is true, then why is it we sometimes misunderstand or even refuse to be led by the Spirit? One answer is that we are still on the earth, in the household of faith, and are not yet home with the Lord. Verse seventeen addresses the tension between **what** we are and **where** we are.

**Romans 8:17** and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.

An adopted child was a full heir of the future inheritance. Since God is our Father, we are heirs of God and are going to inherit Heaven and all that goes along with it for all eternity!

All this was made possible, of course, by Jesus Christ when He came to earth as God in human flesh. Jesus in His humanity still looks forward to receiving the full inheritance promised Him for His sacrifice on the Cross.

In the Revelation we read,

**Revelation 11:15** Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

It is in the future that the Lord will receive the kingdoms of this world. In fact, the Revelation tells the story of how Jesus receives His full inheritance at His Second Coming and (finally) at the creation of the new heaven and the new earth.

Jesus suffered as a man and will be glorified in the future when He receives His full inheritance.

We can expect no less. We suffer now, in God's household of faith on the earth, but will be glorified in the future. When Jesus returns and receives His inheritance we will return with Him and be glorified for all eternity.