

Sermon-Based Small Group Study Guide

Sunday, April 28th, 2024

“In Christ Believers Have”

Romans 8 Part 1 – Bro. Tim Brigham

Message from Sunday, April 21st

Verse of the Week: Memorize and Meditate on Romans 8:28

And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

THOUGHT OF THE WEEK: Romans 8 emphasizes the transformative power of the Spirit, freedom from condemnation, and the glorious future ahead for saints.

Monday – No Condemnation – Read Romans 8:1-4

condemnation n. — a legal decision of guilty in a criminal case; often with the ensuing punishment understood.¹

When we are questioned on many of the major doctrines of our faith, Romans 8 provides a significant part of the Scriptural background on which those doctrines are based. Our first point falls under the Doctrine of Salvation – there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Many times we misunderstand the meaning of no condemnation for the believer. It doesn't mean there will be no conviction for sin, because if the Holy Spirit lives in you, He will convict you of sin. It also does not mean there will not be consequences for sin. When we choose to sin, we will still face the consequences of those sins. Believers are not facing the ensuing punishment of their sin, because Jesus faced it on their behalf. F.F. Bruce explained, “There is no reason for those who are in Christ Jesus to serve sin as if they had never been pardoned and liberated from the prison - house of sin.”²

¹ Logos

² Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, 6;159.

ILLUSTRATION: *The Prisoner and the Pardon:* Imagine a courtroom scene where a guilty prisoner stands before the judge. The evidence against the prisoner is overwhelming, and the penalty is death. Suddenly, an unexpected turn occurs—the judge steps down from the bench, removes his robe, and approaches the prisoner. Instead of pronouncing judgment, he declares, “I will take your place. You are free.”

In this illustration, the judge represents God, the prisoner symbolizes humanity bound by sin, and the act of substitution mirrors Christ’s sacrifice on the cross. Romans 8:1-4 beautifully portrays this divine exchange: condemnation replaced by freedom through Jesus. (Illustration from sermoncentral.com)

Tuesday – No Defeat – Read Romans 8:5-37

Because of the work of Christ in us, the sin nature is conquered. There is a certain character in which every believer should live. In scripture, to be referred to as “a son of” meant to be in the character of the father. As believers, we are made brothers and sisters with Christ and children of God. As “sons and daughters of God” we should live in and reflect the character of our Father.

We can’t know for sure, but some biblical scholars believe that when Paul wrote verse 37 – “we are more than conquerors” – he may have been thinking about the Roman Coliseum. When a gladiator conquered in the arena, he would put his foot on the neck of those he had defeated. Paul says we are MORE than conquerors. Jesus put his foot on Satan’s neck when He rose victoriously from the grave, and now, as children of God, we should live and walk in victory, with our foot on the neck of fully defeated sin.

PERSONAL REFLECTION: Are you living in daily defeat, or daily victory? What’s keeping you from moving from one to the other?

Our victory in life comes from the work of the Trinity as explained in Romans 8. Each day for the rest of this week we will look at one provision for victory from each member of the Godhead.

Wednesday – Adoption of the Father – Read Romans 8:12-17, 28-30

ILLUSTRATION: *The New Birth Certificate:* Imagine a person holding a tattered birth certificate marked with guilt, shame, and condemnation. Then, a second document appears—a pristine birth certificate with the name “Child of God” written in bold letters.

Through faith, we receive a new identity—a legal declaration of righteousness—replacing the old birth certificate of sin. We are adopted by the Father from our old family (sin and rebellion) to His family (victory and obedience).

The Greek word for adoption is found only in the New Testament writings of Paul. In adoption, all previous relationships are severed. The new father exercises authority over the new son, and the new son enters into the privileges and responsibilities of a natural son. Similarly, our adoption into God's family transforms us. We move from being children of the flesh to being children of the promise. Through faith in Jesus, we receive the right to become children of God, no longer bound by fear but embraced by our heavenly Father. (Illustration from sermoncentral.com.)

Thursday – Righteousness of the Son – Read Romans 8:3-11

The Law accomplished its purpose of condemning us but failed to save us. God, because of His great love for us, provided Jesus to save us from our lost and hopeless state. At salvation, Jesus frees us from the penalty of sin, from the power of sin, and from the presence of sin (eventually). Jesus also frees us from the appeal of sin while we are still in the present fallen world.

This begs the question: If I'm still caught up the appeal of sin, am I truly in Christ? We should find Christ more appealing than anything on earth, especially sinful things, but even good things that distract us from obedience and surrender to Him.

Because of the work of Jesus, our sinfulness has been taken away and replaced with the righteousness of Christ. The righteousness of Christ is the product of the perfect obedience of Christ in His earthly life. The result of our putting on His righteousness should be evidenced by our walking in righteousness, made possible by the indwelling and intercession of the Holy Spirit.

Friday – Intercession of the Spirit – Read Romans 8:18-37

ILLUSTRATION: The Prayer Weaver: Imagine a skilled weaver sitting at a loom, creating a tapestry. Each thread represents a prayer—spoken, whispered, or even unuttered. The weaver's hands move deftly, selecting threads of different colors and textures. Some threads are vibrant and strong, representing fervent petitions. Others are delicate and faint, symbolizing silent longings.

As the weaver works, an unseen presence hovers nearby—the Holy Spirit. He knows the heart of the one praying. He understands the groanings too deep for words. When the weaver encounters a tangled thread or a broken strand, the Spirit intervenes. He mends, strengthens, and aligns the threads, weaving them into a harmonious design.

The finished tapestry is not only a beautiful work of art but also a representation of the Spirit's intercession. He takes our imperfect prayers, infuses them with divine wisdom, and presents them before the Father. (Illustration from spurgeon.org.)

Saturday – Reread Romans 8 using the outline/subheadings below. Makes notes of how the chapter has spoken to you this week, and review for Small Group.

1. Life Through the Spirit (Verses 1-4):
 - No condemnation for those in Christ Jesus.
 - The law of the Spirit sets us free from sin and death.
2. Living According to the Spirit (Verses 5-11):
 - The contrast between living according to the flesh and the Spirit.
 - Those controlled by the Spirit have life and peace.
3. Heirs with Christ (Verses 12-17):
 - Believers are co-heirs with Christ.
 - By the Spirit, we put to death the misdeeds of the body.
4. Present Suffering and Future Glory (Verses 18-25):
 - Present sufferings are incomparable to the future glory.
 - Creation eagerly awaits the revelation of God's children.
5. The Spirit's Intercession (Verses 26-27):
 - The Holy Spirit helps us in weakness and intercedes for us.
 - His groans express our deepest needs to God.
6. God's Purpose for Believers (Verses 28-30):
 - God works all things for the good of those who love Him.
 - Predestined, called, justified, and glorified.
7. God's Everlasting Love (Verses 31-39):
 - Nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus.
 - A triumphant declaration of God's unending love.

The purpose of sermon-based small group study is to encourage and equip us to apply what we learn during weekly sermons into our daily lives through discussion. Scripture teaches that we are accountable for our obedience to Biblical teaching, just as our leaders are accountable to teach. Hearing the Word of God taught through the sermon and then applying it makes us mature disciples and examples (witnesses) to others (James 1:22-25).