

Dear Church Family,

I hope this message finds you walking in the abundant life that Christ offers. What a joy it was to celebrate our graduates this past Sunday and to gather together as the family of God. I wanted to take a moment to recap the important truths we explored from Romans 8:12-17.

Summary:

The sermon explored our incredible transformation from slaves of sin to adopted children of God through union with Christ. Building on the hopelessness Paul expressed in Romans 7 ("Wretched man that I am!"), we saw how chapter 8 provides glorious assurances for those who are in Christ. We are no longer indebted to the flesh or enslaved to sin and death. Instead, through the Holy Spirit, we have been freed to live as sons and daughters of God. This is not about religious duty or self-reform, but about the Spirit's power working in us to put to death the deeds of the flesh and experience the abundant life Jesus promised. The Christian life is not one of joyless obligation, but of soul-satisfying freedom found in our new family relationship with God.

Takeaways:

- There is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Him, guilt as a reality is no more. No sin—past, present, or future—can ruin the righteousness of Christ in you because it's His righteousness, not yours.
- We are no longer slaves to sin but sons and daughters of God. The Holy Spirit dwelling in us both empowers us to put to death the deeds of the flesh and convicts us when we fall back into sin. If you have tasted the goodness of union with Christ, you cannot be content living in sin.
- The Christian life is abundant life. Jesus came that we might have life and have it abundantly. If you lack joy and freedom in your walk, examine whether you truly have the Holy Spirit or if you have simply broken fellowship with Him. Seek first His kingdom and righteousness, and everything else will be added to you.

If you have never surrendered your life to Christ, I urge you to do so today. Repent of your sin and place your faith in Jesus alone—the only One who conquered death and rose again. And if you are a

believer living out of fellowship with the Spirit, return to Him today. He is waiting with open arms.

In Christ's love,

Pastor Chuck

PS: Below is a five day devotional based upon the sermon this past Sunday for your edification.

5-Day Devotional: Living in Union with Christ

Day 1: Freedom from Condemnation

Reading: Romans 8:1-4

Devotional: "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." These words should anchor your soul today. Many believers live under the weight of guilt, constantly rehearsing past failures and fearing future judgment. But Paul declares a present reality—right now, there is no condemnation. This isn't based on your performance but on Christ's righteousness. When guilt whispers accusations, remember that your identity is no longer "sinner" but "saint in Christ." The law of sin and death has been replaced by the law of the Spirit of life. You are free. Let this truth transform how you approach God today—not as a fearful slave, but as a beloved child.

Reflection: What sins or failures are you still allowing to condemn you? How would your prayer life change if you truly believed there is now no condemnation?

Day 2: Dead to the Flesh, Alive in the Spirit

Reading: Romans 8:5-13

Devotional: Living according to the flesh leads to death, but living according to the Spirit brings life and peace. This isn't about trying harder to be good; it's about whose power is at work in you. The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you. Think about that staggering reality. You're not fighting sin in your own strength—you're empowered by resurrection power. When temptation comes, you have a choice: will you feed the old master you no longer serve, or will you walk in the freedom Christ purchased? The desires of your flesh no longer define you. Put to death those deeds by the Spirit's power, knowing you're no longer a slave but a son.

Reflection: What "deeds of the body" is the Spirit calling you to put to death? What would it look like to take that as seriously as Jesus described in cutting off a hand?

Day 3: Adopted as Sons and Daughters

Reading: Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 4:4-7

Devotional: You didn't receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. You received the Spirit of adoption. This changes everything about your relationship with God. You're not an employee hoping to earn approval or a prisoner fearing punishment. You're a child—an heir of God and co-heir with Christ. When you pray, you can cry "Abba, Father"—the intimate term a child uses. God isn't distant or harsh; He's your Father who delights in you. This adoption is permanent and secure. Your inheritance is guaranteed not by your faithfulness but by Christ's. Today, approach God with the confidence of a beloved child, knowing He hears you and cares about every detail of your life.

Reflection: Do you relate to God more as a harsh judge or as a loving Father? How might your prayers change if you truly embraced your identity as an adopted child?

Day 4: The Spirit Bears Witness

Reading: Romans 8:14-17; 1 John 3:1-3

Devotional: How can you know you're truly saved? The Spirit Himself bears witness with your spirit that you are a child of God. This isn't about emotional highs or perfect behavior—it's about the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit. Those led by the Spirit are sons of God. If you have a desire for God, a hatred of sin, a longing for holiness, and a love for Christ, these are evidences of the Spirit's work. Your assurance doesn't rest on your feelings but on God's promise and the Spirit's witness. If you're in Christ, you belong to Him forever. No sin can revoke your adoption. Rest in this assurance today and let it fuel your worship and obedience.

Reflection: What evidences of the Spirit's work do you see in your life? How does knowing the Spirit bears witness with your spirit affect your confidence in your salvation?

Day 5: Abundant Life in Christ

Reading: John 10:7-10; Matthew 11:28-30

Devotional: Jesus came to give you abundant life—not mere existence marked by religious duty and joyless obligation, but soul-satisfying fullness. The Christian life isn't about what you give up; it's about what you gain. When you taste the goodness of union with Christ, the pleasures of sin become empty shadows. Jesus invites the weary and burdened to find rest in Him. His yoke is easy and His burden is light because He carries the weight. Seek first His kingdom and righteousness, and everything else finds its proper place. If your Christian life feels like drudgery, return to fellowship with the Spirit. Abundant life isn't found in worldly pursuits but in knowing Christ and walking in His presence daily.

Reflection: Does your life in Christ feel abundant, or does it feel like burdensome religion? What would it look like to seek first His kingdom today?

Closing Prayer: Father, thank You for the incredible gift of union with Christ. Thank You that there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus. Help me to walk by the Spirit, putting to death the deeds of the flesh. Remind me daily that I am not a slave but Your adopted child, an heir with Christ. May I experience the abundant

life Jesus promised and live in the freedom He purchased. In Jesus' name, Amen.