

Romans Chapter 8

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Introduction:

Chapter 7 ended with Paul expressing despair for his sinful nature:

Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? (Romans 7:24 NLT.)

But his despair is gone now because he belongs to Someone else -- he belongs to Jesus. The headings in **green** trace the development of this marvelous and victorious chapter.

WE ARE UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP

Romans 8: NLT

(1) So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.

- We can't be **condemned** as we once were. In the great court of the universe, we **belong** to Someone who can protect us. We are no longer guilty.

(2) And because you belong to Him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death.

- This new ownership plan began on Pentecost at the end of Peter's sermon:

Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is to you, and to your children, and even to the Gentiles -- all who have been called by the Lord our God." (Acts 2:38-39 NLT.)

So now we know exactly when we receive the **life-giving Spirit** that Paul describes: when we are baptized into the name of Christ.

- This new ownership has freed us from the slavery of our past that was leading us to death. Romans 7:24.

(3) The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent His own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving His Son as a sacrifice for our sins.

- As Paul has before indicated, the **law of Moses** cannot save us. It was designed to show the will of God to those who would listen and it did not have power to take away the guilt of sin. Paul, preaching, said it to his listeners:

Everyone who believes in Him is declared right with God -- something the law of Moses could never do. (Acts 13:39 NLT.)

So God took another route to satisfy the needed sin payment: He sent **His own Son** to become one of **us** and become **a sacrifice for our sins**.

But when the right time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. God sent Him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that He could adopt us as His very own children. (Galatians 4:4-5 NLT.)

- ***How could one person pay for everyone else?***
 - ✧ Because He was worth more.
 - ✧ He led a perfect life.
 - ✧ He healed the sick and raised the dead.
 - ✧ He forgave sin on the spot.

- ✧ He was *tough* on the religious hypocrites who ruled Israel and *gentle* on those who had been caught up in sin such as the woman taken in adultery.
- ✧ In fact, He *made the earth* itself. That would speak of His value.
- ✧ Looking at His creative power, He *created galaxies* beyond our imagination.
- ✧ There was no one else in all of creation that could die in our place.

(4) He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit.

- The **law** required a payment for sin that we could not make, but Jesus could satisfy the **requirement** for us. Now we must **follow the Spirit**.

Christianity is not simply keeping a set of rules, it is desiring to please the Father more than you desire to please yourself.

OUR THINKING IS NEW

(5) Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit.

- Our thinking experiences need to be examined. They must **please the Spirit**. So
 - ✓ the books that we read,
 - ✓ the audio that we hear,
 - ✓ the music that we listen to and
 - ✓ the video that we watch all must be scrutinized -- by ourselves personally -- to be sure they **please the Spirit**.

(6) So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace.

- We are in **control** whether our **minds** lead us to eternal **death** or eternal **life** and **peace**. Paul is writing to believers! It is clear that an initial decision to follow Christ was not sufficient *by itself* to reach eternal **life and peace**.

(7) For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will.

- With the support of the Spirit, we must rise above our **sinful nature** and choose to **obey God**.

WE HAVE NEW PURPOSES

(8) That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God.

- **Pleasing God** is at the center of eternal life. It was the rule of Jesus' life:

And the One who sent Me is with Me -- He has not deserted Me. For I always do what pleases Him."

(John 8:29 NLT)

John, the disciple closest to Jesus also spoke of **pleasing God**:

And we will receive from Him whatever we ask because we obey Him and do the things that please Him. (1 John 3:22 NLT)

(9) But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to Him at all.)

- Key here is **control**. If we have the **Spirit** within, our **control** center is there with the **Spirit**.

(10) And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God.

- **Death** of the **body** began with Adam. Because of his **sin**, we all **die**. But for believers, there is eternal **life** because we have been made **right with God** by means of His **Spirit**.
- **Christ** and **Spirit** are used interchangeably here.

(11) The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, He will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

- **The Spirit lives** in every believer. The **Spirit raised Jesus from the dead** and **will give life** to our **mortal bodies**.

(12) Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do.

- We must point out that the translators, in their enthusiasm to be *inclusive*, have added "**and sisters**." The Greek text omits this.
- Because the Spirit is living in our bodies, we don't owe our **sinful nature** a thing. Let it complain! It has no bill collecting system and we must ignore it.

(13) For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live.

- The decision is up to each believer, but God supplies **power** to be successful *if we choose*.

WE BECOME CHILDREN OF GOD

(14) For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.

(15) So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when He adopted you as His own children. Now we call Him, "Abba, Father."

- Paul has discussed this **slavery** in Romans 7. It is past and we have been **adopted** into God's family. Now we can properly address him as "Daddy."

(16) For His Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children.

- How does **His Spirit** join with **our spirit to affirm that** we are **children of God**? Some read it as saying that His **Spirit** *tells* our **spirit** that we are God's. But **His Spirit** is **affirming** that we are His Children (as in verse 14) and **our spirit** is also **affirming** that we are God's. This is why we can say "Abba, Father" (verse 15). His Spirit and our spirit are **affirming** the same fact.

(17) And since we are His children, we are His heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share His glory, we must also share His suffering.

- **Glorification** is for later. Now is **suffering** time.
- *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* is filled with stories of believers being persecuted for their faith.

Symphorosa, a widow, and her seven sons, were commanded by the emperor to sacrifice to the heathen deities. She was carried to the temple of Hercules, scourged, and hung up, for some time, by the hair of her head: then being taken down, a large stone was fastened to her neck, and she was thrown into the river, where she expired.

With respect to the sons, they were fastened to seven posts, and being drawn up by pulleys, their limbs were dislocated: these tortures, not affecting their resolution, they were martyred by stabbing, except Eugenius, the youngest, who was sawed asunder.

(18) Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory He will reveal to us later.

- The Apostle John also knew a little about the coming glory:

Dear friends, we are already God's children, but He has not yet shown us what we will be like when Christ appears. But we do know that we will be like Him, for we will see Him as He really is. (1 John 3:2 NLT)

THAT CURSE EXTENDS TO ALL OF CREATION

(19) For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who His children really are. (20) Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, (21) the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay.

- When was this **curse** put in place? The curse that affected the whole earth was in Genesis:

And to the man He said, "Since you listened to your wife and ate from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat, the ground is cursed because of you. All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it. It will grow thorns and thistles for you, though you will eat of its grains. By the sweat of your brow will you have food to eat until you return to the ground from which you were made. For you were made from dust, and to dust you will return." (Genesis 3:17-19 NLT)

The **curse** was not just targeted at Adam and his lady. There was spillover that included much of **creation** because the *ground was cursed* also. Even the rocks and trees and bugs suffered. Paul picturesquely says the whole **creation** looked forward to a day when it, too, will be relieved from this **death and decay**.

- Verse 21 speaks of a day when there will be no **curse**. Here it is in Revelation:

No longer will there be a curse upon anything. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and His servants will worship Him. (Revelation 22:3 NLT)

GROANING IS STILL IN PROGRESS

(22) For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. (23) And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be

released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as His adopted children, including the new bodies He has promised us.

- The **creation** is still **groaning** under the burden of Adam's sin.
- We **believers also groan** under the same burden even though we have the Holy Spirit within us. We long to be released from **sin and suffering**.
- In the future, we will be entitled to **full rights as adopted children**. One of those rights will be a **new body**. Paul spoke of this **new body** in 1 Corinthians:

For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies. Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die [and our mortal bodies have been transformed into immortal bodies], this Scripture will be fulfilled: "Death is swallowed up in victory.

(1 Corinthians 15:53-54 NLT)

WE HAVE AMAZING HOPE

(24) We were given this hope when we were saved. (If we already have something, we don't need to hope for it. (25) But if we look forward to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.)

- This **hope** was not available to anyone **before we were saved** (spoken of in 5:10). Now we have it. **Hope** is always forward-looking and so requires **patience and confidence**.

(26) And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.

- While we are being patient, we can **pray**. What do we **pray for**? The **Holy Spirit** helps us with that to.

- I pray for things that are in reality not as I have described them, but the Spirit helps with my misunderstanding and makes the prayer right. I pray for things that God cannot do because people are free moral people, but I do it unthinkingly. But God is listening. He won't force them to become Christians, but He can make life scary for those who put it off.

(27) And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will.

- Pray, God will sort things out.

FOR BELIEVERS, EVERYTHING IS FOR GOOD

(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.

- Our **God** is master of the unlikely. He controls events of life in order that His will will be done.
 - The disciples were caught in a violent storm on Galilee in the night. Jesus “just happened” to be out for a 3:00 AM stroll on the lake and rescued them, teaching some lessons because of the event.
 - Philip met the treasurer from Ethiopia at a “T” in the road. The timing was so unlikely, yet the treasurer became a Christian and historians trace the expansion of Christianity in the treasurer’s homeland to this single incident. Acts 8:26-39.
 - Most believers can cite stories of a chance meeting that accomplished the purposes of God even though the meeting was so unlikely.

(29) For God knew His people in advance, and He chose them to become like His Son, so that His Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

- How did **God know His people in advance**? Did He pick them? No, in His foreknowledge He knew who would accept the

evidence about Jesus. Jesus became the firstborn (preeminent one) after His resurrection. Notice His request to Mary Magdalene:

"Don't cling to Me," Jesus said, "for I haven't yet ascended to the Father. But go find My brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.'" (John 20:17 NLT)

Jesus had not used **brothers** to describe believers before this. Mary delivered His request to the *Eleven*, not His earthly brothers from Nazareth. From this point forward, Jesus was the **firstborn** among millions who would become family members.

WE HAVE A ROUTE TO GLORY

(30) And having chosen them, He called them to come to Him. And having called them, He gave them right standing with Himself. And having given them right standing, He gave them His glory. (31) What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us?

- Enemies, critics, scoffers and other haters mean nothing when **God** is on our side **giving us right standing**.

(32) Since He did not spare even His own Son but gave Him up for us all, won't He also give us everything else?

- This God of ours paid the highest price imaginable for us, so He will **give us** what we ask for.

WE CAN'T BE ACCUSED OR CONDEMNED

(33) Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for His own? No one -- for God Himself has given us right standing with Himself.

- Satan is the great accuser. Consider Job:

One day the members of the heavenly court came to present themselves before the LORD, and the Accuser, Satan, came with them. (Job 1:6 NLT)

Now consider Revelation, the final book in the Bible:

Then I heard a loud voice shouting across the heavens, "It has come at last -- salvation and power and the Kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ. For the accuser of our brothers and sisters has been thrown down to earth -- the one who accuses them before our God day and night. (Revelation 12:10 NLT)

(34) Who then will condemn us? No one -- for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and He is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us.

- Jesus is at God's right hand. In the case of Stephen, He was standing. Stephen is quoted:

And he told them, "Look, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing in the place of honor at God's right hand!" (Acts 7:56 NLT)

(35) Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean He no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death?

- Nothing can **separate** us. Paul expands this in verse 39 below.

(36) (As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.")

- Paul reaches into the Jewish hymnbook for substantiation, quoting Psalm 44:22.

OUR VICTORY IS GUARANTEED

(37) No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.

- The “**all these things**” were listed in verse 35.

(38) And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow -- not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love.

- **God's love** is supreme. The events of life, **angels, demons, fears** or **even the powers of hell** cannot **separate us**. This is true eternal security's finest hour.

(39) No power in the sky above or in the earth below -- indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- An as a final crescendo, Paul extends the list of possibilities, but none of them have the **power to separate** believers from the **love of God** that has been **revealed by Christ Jesus our Lord**.
- This chapter opened with Paul saying there was no condemnation for believers (verse 1) and ends with news that believers cannot be **separated** from the **love of God** (verse 39).

MUSIC BOX

Come, let us sing to the LORD! (Psalms 95:1 NLT)

Verse	Link:	Put in Browser:
1	<i>Now I Belong to Jesus</i>	http://bitly.ws/pha4