



ROMANS 8

How God Loves Us

The book of Romans is a letter from Paul to fellow believers in the city of Rome. He encourages them and instructs them in how to live a Christian life. Romans 8 is full of truths that transform the life of a believer. In this study we look at some of the powerful ideas that Paul shares and how they affect our lives.

1 - Freedom from Our Flesh

Read - Romans 8:1-13

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death....but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.” - Romans 8:1-2,5

Reflect/Discuss

- Do you ever struggle to do the right thing?
- What do you think it means to live according to the Spirit?

Consider

Do you ever feel like you can't help but do the wrong thing, like you are powerless to change? In reality, we are powerless to change. When Paul talks about living according to the flesh, he is talking about the human condition. We were all born into a life of sin, in a fallen world. No matter how hard we try, we cannot change this. The good news is that Jesus died to do what we are powerless to do! Through His death and resurrection, we are able to live by the power of the Spirit and not our own human weakness.

Life by the Spirit means that we are honest about our struggles. Paul said in another one of his letters that God's strength is made perfect in our weaknesses (II Corinthians 12). When we have fellowship with the Holy Spirit, we allow Him to search our hearts and reveal the areas that are lacking. When we confess these weaknesses and struggles, the Bible promises that our God is faithful to forgive us and cleanse us of all unrighteousness (I John 1). It might seem scary to be honest with a perfect God about our sins and struggles, but the very first verse of chapter 8 assures us that there is, “no condemnation for those who are in Christ!” Jesus died for us and took on our sin so that we could freely accept His righteousness. He also died so that imperfect people could live lives that are holy and pleasing to God by the power of His Holy Spirit living in us!

Act

- What area of your life have you been struggling to change or improve? Surrender that issue to God in prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to work in you to make His desires your own.

Go Deeper

- [Why You Should Find Out About the Holy Spirit](#)

2 - No Longer Slaves

Read

“For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.” - Romans 8:14-17

Reflect/Discuss

- How would you describe your relationship with God?
- What does being called “God’s children” mean to you?

Consider

Before God intervened, we were His enemies. Mankind had no choice but to be slaves to sin. We lived only to please ourselves and to fulfill our own desires. When God redeemed us by the death of His son He could have chosen to make us His own slaves. But that is not the relationship that the Bible describes. We are not imprisoned by Him, or even just set free. We are invited to be co-heirs with Christ.

Paul says in this chapter of Romans that the follower of Jesus is adopted by God. During the time Paul wrote this letter to the church in Rome, parents were able to legally disown their children for a number of reasons. However, if a child was adopted, they legally could not be disowned and they immediately had access to all the rights, possessions, and wealth of their new family. In the same way, because God chose us, we have access to His, “glorious riches in Christ Jesus!” (Philippians 4:19) Now God is not just the ruler of our lives and hearts, but our loving and faithful Father.

Act

- When you turn to God in prayer, remember that you are His child. Pray honestly and confidently as a child of God.

Go Deeper

- [Praying to “Our Father”](#)

3 - Suffering and Hope

Read - Romans 8:18-25

"I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us... For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently." - Romans 8:18, 24-25

Reflect/Discuss

- Have you ever experienced good that came about because of suffering in your life?
- How can suffering help us to become more like Christ?

Consider

Sometimes when we go through suffering, we think that we are off track or that we did the wrong thing. The consequences of our own actions or the actions of others can sometimes cause suffering. However, for the believer, suffering is a reminder that better things are coming. In these verses, Paul compares suffering to the pains of a mother giving birth. In childbirth, labor pain is not the end, but rather the beginning. It is a sign of something great that is coming. In the same way, our suffering and trials draw us closer to God, refining us and preparing us for eternity. The pains of labor also serve as a physical reminder to prepare for what's ahead. Difficulties, suffering, and persecution can help us to remember our need for Christ. They can also give us an urgency to share the truth of the gospel with others around us.

Our "present sufferings" also allow us to experience hope. Hope is perfected during times of uncertainty or suffering. We are able to look at our circumstances and know that they do not have the final word. We have hope because of what Jesus did for us on the cross and because of what is promised to us in the Word of God. Hebrews 2:12 teaches us that Jesus was able to endure the suffering of the cross because He looked forward to joy that awaited him. In the same way, we can endure any trials on this earth by looking forward to the reality of spending eternity with our loving Savior!

Act

- Write down or memorize Romans 8:18. Carry it with you to encourage you in times of suffering.

Go Deeper

- [How Hope and the Glory of God Are Connected](#)

4 - When We Don't Know What to Pray

Read

"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." - Romans 8:26-28

Reflect/Discuss

- Are there situations or events in our world that you don't know how to pray for?
- Have you ever started to pray for someone but could not find the words?

Consider

Have you ever started to pray, but you were not sure what to say? Or perhaps you've been praying for a friend or situation that seems hopeless and you don't even know what to ask for. Paul reminds us in these verses that the Holy Spirit Himself helps us when we pray. Verse 26 says that the Spirit intercedes for us. The word intercede means to intervene on someone's behalf. The Holy Spirit who knows God's perfect will and knows the answer to every question - even the ones we don't know to ask - intervenes on our behalf. He knows the desires of our hearts and helps align those desires with the will and plans of God as we pray.

We can also pray with confidence because we know that God is working on our behalf. In verse 28, Paul reminds us that God works in all things for our good. God has a purpose for each of us that ultimately ends in redemption and the hope of eternity with God. No matter what we are facing, we can be confident that God is working to produce these things in our lives. It is not a shallow promise that guarantees only happiness and good things, but rather a powerful truth in all circumstances. No matter what we face, God's plans for us are plans of hope.

Act

- Read about how Jesus taught His disciples to pray in Matthew 6:9-13. Begin to pray these things over each area of your life.
- Consider starting a prayer journal for daily prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you in praying for God's will in each area of your life.

Go Deeper

- [Is There a Right Way to Pray](#)

5 - Nothing Can Separate Us

Read - Romans 8:31-39

"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." - Romans 8:37-39

Reflect/Discuss

- Do you ever feel like things in your past keep you from experiencing God's love?
- How would you describe the love of God?

Consider

Perhaps the most important part of Romans 9 are these final verses that teach us a powerful truth. When our life circumstances are not ideal, we may be tempted to think that God loves us less. This lie can cripple us into living discouraged and hopeless lives or to strive to earn something that we are not capable of earning. God's love is not like human love.

Our view of God's love is often tainted by relationships we have here on earth - with our spouses, children, family, or friends. These relationships always involve some level of disappointment. The love we feel and choose in these relationships is always based on something - a relation, a shared experience, or an attraction. The love of God has no beginning or end. It is not based on a circumstance or experience because it is a part of the character of God. Love is who God is. He simply cannot and will not stop loving us. Nothing can separate us from his unending love.

Act

- Thank God for His unending love for you. Write out a prayer of thanksgiving for His love.
- Find a way to reflect God's unending love to the people around you.

Go Deeper

- [What is God's Love Like?](#)

In life, we will face suffering and trials. Romans chapter 8 reminds us that because of Jesus, we have a reason for hope in every circumstance. No matter what we face in this life we can have confidence because we are children of God, His Spirit is at work in us, and His love for us is unending.

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