



Part 3
2 more studies in Romans

Study 1 – The Struggle with Sin

Romans 7:1-25

(Sermon on 21-Apr-2024)

Before we begin: Remind yourself what Paul said in Romans 6:15 about the law. What do you see as the purpose/role of God's law?

In Romans 6:15, Paul asks the question; now that we are not under the Law but under Grace (by God giving us the gift of grace in His Son); should we continue to sin? And His answer is of course: "By no means!"

Paul is not suggesting for one minute that God's Law is unnecessary or irrelevant, now that we have salvation in Jesus.

Paul is saying keeping the Law (which we can do anyway!) will NOT save us!

So, the purpose of the Law is to show us our sin and show us why we need Jesus to save us (who CAN keep the Law perfectly).

The Law therefore, shows us our sin – our need to repent – and our need to follow it and obey it and live to please God!

Read Romans 7:1-6

1. How does Paul use "**marriage**" to explain our relationship to God's Law in verses 1 to 3?

Paul uses the example of marriage by stating the law (7th commandment) of adultery. Paul says, the commandment of adultery is only applicable a wife whilst her husband is alive and she is still married to him.

A wife is legally tied to her husband while he lives, but if he dies, she's free. If she lives/sleeps with another man while her husband is living, she's obviously an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is quite free to marry another man in good conscience, with no one's disapproval.

2. What does Jesus' death do for us in verse 4?

Just like the example Paul just gave of the husband dying and releasing the wife from the law.

When Jesus died, he took down to the grave the entire "rule-dominated" way of life and left it in the tomb. Leaving us free to "marry" a new "resurrected" way of life – united/connected to Jesus.

Paul's making the point that we are dead to the law – in terms of it being a way that we can be right with God.

*And there is a **purpose** to this new life we have united to Jesus – end of verse 4 – in order that we might **bear fruit for God.***

So, we not free from the Law so we can live for ourselves and do what we please – we are to bear fruit for God – as ambassadors for Jesus!

3. What's the problem with the law in verse 5?

The law arouses sinful passions which lead to sin – which can only bear the punishment for sin – which is death! The law only bore the fruit of death – not fruit for God!

4. How are we delivered from the law in verse 6? By whom?

We die to what bound us – which is the Law – and we are released from it – by being united to Jesus – who gives us the Holy Spirit – which enables us to serve in a new way – and not in the old way of the written code (The Law).

Note: Paul is going to talk more about this “new way” in the Spirit – in chapter 8!

Read Romans 7:7-12

5. What outrageous question does Paul ask in verse 7? Why would he ask this question? And what is his short answer and longer answer in verse 7?

Because of his description of us being dead to the law and released from the law; and because the law aroused sinful passions in us; some might think that there is something wrong with the law and even that the law, in itself, is sinful! So, Paul asks the outrageous question in verse 7: “Is the law sinful?”

*The **short answer** is: “Certainly not!”*

*The **longer answer** is: Paul says, no, the law is good! Paul says he wouldn't have known what sin was if had not been for the law. For example, he says, he wouldn't have known what coveting really was if he didn't know the commandment “you shall not covet” (Exodus 20:17; Deut 5:21)*

6. How does Paul say sin uses the law (commandments) in verses 8 & 9?

Paul describes the dynamic where the warning “Don't do that!” may become a call to action because of our sinful, rebellious hearts. It isn't the fault of the law (commandment), but it is our fault.

In his book Confessions, the great theologian of the ancient church Augustine described how this dynamic worked in his life as a young man: “There was a pear tree near our vineyard, laden with fruit. One stormy night we rascally youths set

*out to rob it and carry our spoils away. We took off a huge load of pears — not to feast upon ourselves, but to throw them to the pigs, though we ate just enough to have the pleasure of forbidden fruit. They were nice pears, but it was not the pears that my wretched soul coveted, for I had plenty better at home. I picked them simply in order to become a thief. The only feast I got was a feast of iniquity, and that I enjoyed to the full. What was it that I loved in the theft? **Was it the pleasure of acting against the law? The desire to steal was awakened simply by the prohibition of stealing.***

In American history, the Prohibition Act didn't stop people drinking alcohol. In many ways it made drinking more attractive to people because of their desire to break boundaries set by the rule (commandment).

Once God draws a boundary for us, we are immediately enticed to cross that boundary — which is no fault of God or His boundary, but the fault of our sinful hearts.

7. What does Paul mean by “**once I was alive apart from the law**”, in verse 9? *When Paul says he was "alive apart from the law," he's referring to his state of innocence or lack of awareness regarding the full implications of the law. Before encountering the law, Paul may have felt a sense of moral security or self-righteousness, thinking himself blameless or spiritually alive.*

However, when he became aware of the commandments of the law, particularly the moral demands it placed on him, he realized his own sinfulness and inability to meet those standards. This awareness of the law's demands highlighted his own moral shortcomings and brought about a sense of spiritual death or condemnation. In other words, the law revealed the depth of his sinfulness and his need for salvation.

8. How does Paul say sin and the law (commandments) interact in verses 10 and 11? What is the result?

The commandment that was intended to bring life — actually brought death (v10) — because the sinful heart of Paul seized the opportunity to break the commandment and sin — and that brought death (v11) rather than life!

9. What conclusion does Paul make about the law and commandments in verse 12?

Paul answers his question from verse 7 “is the law sinful?” and the answer and conclusion in verse 12 is: “The law is holy and the commandment is holy, righteous and good”

Paul understands how someone might think he is saying that he is against the law — but he isn’t at all. It is true that we must die to sin (Romans 6:2) and we must die to the law (Romans 7:4). But that should not be taken to mean that Paul believes that sin and law are in the same basket. The problem is in us, not in the law. Nevertheless, sin corrupts the work or effect of the law, so we must die to both.

Read Romans 7:13-20

10. What does Paul say the law does with sin in verse 13?

Even though the law is good (holy, righteous and good in v12) – Paul says the law exposes sin and magnifies sin!

The MSG version says this for v13: I can already hear your next question: “Does that mean I can’t even trust what is good [that is, the law]? Is good just as dangerous as evil?” No again! Sin simply did what sin is so famous for doing: using the good as a cover to tempt me to do what would finally destroy me. By hiding within God’s good commandment, sin did far more mischief than it could ever have accomplished on its own.

We need sin to appear sin, because it always wants to hide in us and conceal its true depths and strength. “This is one of the most deplorable results of sin. It injures us most by taking from us the capacity to know how much we are injured. It undermines the man’s constitution, and yet leads him to boast of unfailing health; it beggars him, and tells him he is rich; it strips him, and makes him glory in his fancied robes.” (Spurgeon)

Paul says “utterly sinful” - Why didn’t Paul say, ‘utterly black,’ or ‘utterly horrible,’ or ‘utterly deadly’? Why, because there is nothing in the world so bad as sin. When he wanted to use the very worst word, he could find to call sin by, he called it by its own name, and reiterated it: ‘sin,’ ‘utterly sinful.’” (Spurgeon)

11. How does Paul describe himself in verse 14 and what battle does he describe in verses 15 to 20?

Paul describes himself as unspiritual (literally carnal or flesh) and sold as a slave to sin, whereas the law is spiritual.

In verses 15 to 20 – Paul describes his sense of helplessness and expresses the inner conflict keeping God's law and struggling with sin.

Paul acknowledges that even though he desires to do what is good, he finds himself doing the very things he hates. He recognizes that the problem lies within himself, for the good he wants to do, he fails to do, and the evil he wants to avoid, he ends up doing. This inner conflict demonstrates the presence of sin dwelling within him, a force that seems to overpower his will to do what is right.

Paul explains that if he does what he does not want to do, it is no longer he himself who does it, but sin dwelling within him. He highlights the struggle between his mind, which delights in God's law, and his sinful nature, which leads him to disobey.

These verses illustrate the tension between the desire for righteousness and the reality of human sinfulness. It reflects the universal struggle that believers face in their journey of sanctification, emphasizing the ongoing need for dependence on God's grace and the empowering work of the Holy Spirit to overcome sin.

12. **Ponder:** How does the reality of Paul's battle here, encourage you in your Christian walk?

- *Knowing that even an apostle like Paul faced similar struggles can be reassuring, reminding us that we are not alone in our journey.*
- *Paul's honesty validates the struggles that Christians face. It acknowledges the reality of human weakness and the ongoing battle against sin, dispelling any notion of perfectionism or self-sufficiency in the Christian life. This validation can bring comfort to believers who may feel discouraged by their failures or shortcomings.*
- *Paul's acknowledgment of his dependence on God's grace underscores the central role of grace in the Christian life. Despite his struggles, Paul does not despair but instead looks to God for deliverance. This encourages Christians to*

rely on God's grace rather than their own efforts, understanding that it is through Christ's work on the cross that victory over sin is ultimately achieved.

- *While Paul candidly expresses his ongoing struggle with sin, his writings also point to the hope of transformation and victory through Christ. Later in Romans chapter 8, Paul emphasizes the power of the Holy Spirit to help believers overcome sin and live in freedom. This hope of transformation encourages Christians to persevere in their faith, trusting that God is at work in their lives, conforming them to the image of Christ.*

Read Romans 7:21-25

13. What war is does Paul describe raging inside him in verses 21 to 23?

Paul describes a spiritual war raging inside him between the law of his mind and the law of sin.

*Paul is expressing the internal conflict between his desire to obey God's law and the persistent influence of sin in his life. The "law of sin" refers to the sinful inclinations and desires that reside in his human nature, while the "law of his mind" refers to his renewed inner self, which delights in God's law and seeks to obey it. This conflict illustrates the ongoing struggle between the flesh and the spirit, highlighting **the tension between the sinful nature inherited from Adam and the new nature received through Christ.***

14. How does this war make Paul feel in verse 24? And what question does he ask in verse 24?

Paul feels like he is a wretched [literally afflicted from enduring toils and troubles and therefore miserable or wretched through the exhaustion of hard labor) man! Paul is completely worn out and wretched because of his unsuccessful effort to please God under the principle of the Law.

So, he asks the question: "who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?"

15. In verse 25, what's the answer to Paul's question in verse 24?

God delivers Paul from this wretchedness through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Paul sees Jesus standing between himself and God, bridging the gap and providing the way to God. Lord means Paul has put Jesus in the right place — as Lord and master of his life.

16. How does Paul see himself in verse 25b?

Paul acknowledges the state of struggle – in his mind a slave to God's Law and in his sinful nature (flesh) a slave to the law of sin. But Paul thanks God for the victory in Jesus. Paul doesn't pretend that looking to Jesus takes away the struggle — Jesus works through us, not instead of us in the battle against sin.

17. **Ponder:** Why is it liberating to be able to be honest about your wretchedness and certain about your forgiveness? What happens if we forget one or other of these truths?

Being able to be honest about our wretchedness and certain about our forgiveness is liberating for several reasons:

Freedom from Pretense: *When we acknowledge our own wretchedness and sinfulness, we no longer need to pretend to be something we're not. We can be authentic and transparent about our struggles and shortcomings, which fosters genuine relationships and allows for true personal growth.*

Relief from Guilt and Shame: *Honest acknowledgment of our wretchedness is the first step towards seeking forgiveness and redemption. It relieves the burden of guilt and shame that often accompanies sin, allowing us to experience God's grace and mercy in a profound way.*

Humility and Dependency on God: *Recognizing our wretchedness fosters humility and a deeper reliance on God's strength and guidance. It reminds us of our need for God's help and sustenance in overcoming sin and living a life that honors Him.*

Assurance of Forgiveness: *Being certain about forgiveness provides a sense of peace and assurance in our relationship with God. It removes the fear of condemnation and assures us of God's unconditional love and acceptance, regardless of our sin.*

If we forget or deny our own wretchedness, we might become self-righteous or complacent in our faith. We might rely on our own efforts rather than recognizing our continual need for God's grace and forgiveness. This can lead to pride, spiritual stagnation, and a lack of empathy towards others who struggle with sin.

If we forget or doubt our forgiveness, we might struggle with ongoing guilt and condemnation, hindering our ability to experience true freedom and joy in Christ. This can lead to feelings of unworthiness, fear of judgment, and a sense of distance from God.

Read Psalm 32

18. How does David describe the blessedness of sin forgiven in verses 1 & 2?

David expresses the blessedness (happiness and joy) of transgressions forgiven by using some phrases like:

- **Sins are covered:** *This imagery suggests that the guilt and shame of sin are removed or concealed, symbolizing God's mercy and grace in blotting out the record of wrongdoing*
- **Whose sin the Lord does not count against them:** *This highlights the aspect of justification, where God does not hold the forgiven individual accountable for their sins but instead imputes righteousness to them through faith in Jesus.*
- **In whose spirit is no deceit:** *This describes the honesty and sincerity of the forgiven person's heart before God. They have come clean about their sinfulness and are not deceiving themselves or others about their need for forgiveness.*

This state of forgiveness gives David a profound sense of relief, freedom and joy.

19. How does David describe the agony of unconfessed or hidden sin in verses 3 & 4?

Paul describes the agony of unconfessed or hidden sin in a few ways:

- **Like his bones have wasted away:** *This imagery suggests physical and emotional deterioration, showing the deep effect of guilt and inner turmoil David has*
- **Groaning all day:** *David describes the constant inner distress and anguish he experienced as a result of keeping silent about his sin.*
- **Your hand was heavy on me:** *David perceives God's discipline and conviction as a heavy burden pressing down on him day and night. He feels the weight of God's judgment and disapproval due to his unconfessed sin.*
- **My strength was sapped as in the heat of summer:** *David's strength and vitality were drained away, like we might feel on an oppressive hot summer's day that just exhausts and weakens us. The presence of unconfessed sin sapped David's spiritual and emotional resilience, leaving him weary and depleted.*

20. What does David describe in verse 5?

David describes **repentance** in verse 5. He **acknowledged his sin** – he **did not cover it up** – he **confessed** his transgressions to the Lord. And the Lord forgave the guilt of David's sin.

21. What blessings for those pardoned, does David describe in verses 6 & 7?

V6 - Those who are pardoned will not be overwhelmed like we would feel if mighty flood waters were coming and threatening to drown us!

V7 – David glorified God in the protection he now felt as one in fellowship with God and under His care. God Himself was his hiding place, a secure shelter. A good hiding place has strength and height, is not easily seen, and is reliable. In today's language – we might say that Jesus is our safe-room or panic-room.

David found security surrounded by God's own songs of deliverance, sung in the joy and confidence of victory.

22. What appeal does David make on behalf of God in verses 8 & 9?

Here David prophetically spoke in God's voice to God's people. Through this, God promised to instruct, teach, and guide His people (v8) and God promised to counsel His people with His loving eye on them. Just like a butler waiting for his master's instructions at dinner; the master need only look at the salt shaker and the butler understands that he wants it. God promised that for those who diligently seek and focus on God, He will also guide.

God through David, also tells His people they must not be like the horse or mule that are not easily guided and need a bit or bridle to control them. In other words, they are not to be stubborn animals. Like a stubborn animal, David did not come near to God until he was confronted with the sinful episodes in his life. God speaks to us through David's experience and says, "Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding and fail to come." We must come to God and repent.

23. What blessings are described in verses 10 & 11 for those who trust in the Lord?

***God's unfailing love surrounds those who trust Him (v10)** – which conveys a sense of security, protection, and care.*

*Because those who have been forgiven are **righteous** (right with God and approved by God) and have **an upright in heart**; God tells them to rejoice in the Lord and sing His praises (v11)*

24. How does **Psalm 32** relate to **Romans 7:1-25**?

*Both passages emphasize the **importance of acknowledging and confessing sin**. In Psalm 32, David describes the agony of unconfessed sin and the relief that comes in receiving God's forgiveness. In Romans 7, Paul candidly admits his struggle with sin and his inability to overcome sin through his own efforts.*

Both passages express the blessings of forgiveness.

*Both passages describe the **inner conflict that believers experience between the desires of the flesh and the desires of the spirit**. In Psalm 32, David reflects the turmoil he went through when he remained silent about his sin. Paul describes that inner struggle by saying he is a wretched man!*

*Both passages point to **the need and dependency on God's grace**. We cannot do anything ourselves to resolve sin in our lives – we rely on God's grace and mercy to forgive us and makes us right with Him, through Jesus!*

What's the **BIG IDEA** of **Romans 7:1-25**?

The struggle between sin and the law

OR

The inability of human effort to overcome sin and the need for salvation in Christ!



What **light globe moment** did you have in this study?

What **questions** do you have about the passages in this study?

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

Romans 7:25a - Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Finish in prayer: Give thanks to God for the victory over sin and deliverance we have through Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 7:25)

Study 2 – Fighting Sin with the Spirit

Romans 8:1-17

(Sermon on 28-Apr-2024)

Before we begin: Remind yourself of the struggle Paul described in Romans chapter 7? What hint of a solution was given in Romans 7:22?

The struggle in chapter 7 is between our Physical being (flesh/body) and our Spiritual being (inner being). Because of this struggle, Paul says we do the things we shouldn't do (i.e. break God's Law) and we don't do the things we should (i.e. keep God's Law) and so he describes himself as a "wretched" man (7:24) – tired of the hard labour of trying to keep God's Law and failing by disobeying it and sinning.

*Paul uses **4 pairs** to describe this struggle - Two egos, two laws, two cries and two slaveries*

*1st – there's **two egos** – the "I" who wants to do good and the "I" beside me who is evil (v21)*

*2nd – there's **two laws** – the law of my inner being (that is the real saved me) that delights in the law (v22) which is also described in v23 as the law of my mind – and then there's the law of sin (v23) at work within me*

*3rd – then there's **two cries** – the cry in v24 – "what a wretched [wretched here means literally miserable and exhausted from hard labor] what a wretched man I am" – and there's the cry of v25 – "Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!"*

*4th – the **two slaveries** – both of at the end of v25 – a slave to God's law and a slave to sin*

Paul gives two hints to a solution

*Firstly in 7:6 - ... we have been released from the law so that we **serve in the new way of the Spirit** ...*

This new way of the Spirit is because we receive the Holy Spirit dwelling in us when we become a Christian.

Paul refers to this indwelling of the Spirit as his "inner being" in 7:22

Read Romans 8:1-17

1. What wonderful promise and assurance do we have in verse 1?

When we are in Christ, there is no sentence or verdict of guilty leading to condemnation [the sentence of death as the punishment for our sin]. We are safe from the punishment of our sins – not because of anything in ourselves but because of our association with Jesus – IN Jesus - and because of what Jesus has done through His death on the cross (as the once and for all sacrifice for sins) and through His resurrection (which defeats death – and offers eternal life to all who believe).

Since God the Father does not condemn Jesus, neither can the Father condemn those who are in Jesus. They are not condemned, they will not be condemned, and they cannot be condemned.

The fact that Paul says there is “now” no condemnation, means we have that guarantee of salvation right now, in the present, if we are in Christ, as opposed to being in Adam (5:12ff).

2. What have Christians been set free from in verse 2?

Christians have been set free from the law of sin and death (the punishment for sin). And that’s because we are now in a new life in Jesus – and a Christian’s association with Jesus means we have the law of the Spirit which sets us free.

3. What contrast is made between the life in the flesh and life in the Spirit, in verses 2 to 4?

Life in the flesh

v2 – trapped in the law of sin & death

v3 – law was powerless to save us

v4 – stuck living in the flesh and trying to keep the requirements of the

Life in the Spirit

v2 – freed from the law of sin & death

v3- Jesus condemned sin in the flesh by fulfilling the law perfectly and taking the punishment of sin on Himself. Jesus saves us!

v4 – Jesus allows us to live according to the Spirit

Law

V2 - Here, Paul introduces the concept of the "law of the Spirit of life," which refers to the principle or rule by which the Spirit operates in the life of believers. This law (principle) brings freedom from the "law of sin and death," which is the principle of sin which breaks God's Law leads to the punishment of sin, which is death. Life in the Spirit liberates believers from the power and penalty of sin. **Another way to look at this "law of the Spirit of life" is to refer to it as the Gospel or the Ministry of the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:8).**

V3 - Paul explains that the law, although holy and good, was unable to overcome the power of sin because of human weakness ("through the flesh"). However, God intervened by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, in human form ("in the likeness of sinful flesh"). Jesus lived a sinless life, fulfilling the requirements of the law, and by dying on the cross, He became the ultimate offering (sacrifice for sin) and He condemned sin in the flesh, thereby providing a solution to the problem of sin and its consequences.

"condemned sin in the flesh" means - sin was condemned in the flesh of Jesus as He bore the condemnation we deserved. Since we are in Christ, the condemnation we deserve passes over us.

V4 - Paul emphasizes that through Christ's sacrifice, believers are enabled to fulfill the righteous requirement of the law. This fulfillment is not achieved by striving in the flesh but by walking according to the Spirit. Life in the Spirit empowers believers to live in obedience to God and to experience the transformation of their hearts and minds.

4. What contrast is made in verses 5 to 8?

Life in the flesh

v5 – minds set on what flesh desires

v6 – mind governed by flesh = death

v7 – mind governed by flesh = hostile

to God and does not submit to God's Law

Life in the Spirit

v5 – minds set on what spirit desires

v6 – mind governed by Spirit = life and peace

v8 – cannot please God!

5. Why do you think Paul uses the word “***mind***” in verses 5, 6 and 7?

Our minds govern our action.

It's our mindset that determines what our behaviour will be like.

So, if our minds are governed by the flesh which is our sinful being, then our minds will disobey God, be hostile to God, not want to submit to God's Law and will not want to obey God or care to obey God and will not want to or be able to please God!

6. What conclusion does Paul make in verse 8?

Those who are not in Christ Jesus are still in the realm of the flesh and not in the realm of the Spirit – and so they are unable to or cannot please God!

7. What realm are we now in as Christians according to verse 9?

Christians are in the realm [kingdom] of the Spirit – because the Spirit of God lives in them! Christians belong to the Kingdom of God/Heaven and not the Kingdom of this World.

8. According to verses 9 to 11, what empowers Christians to live and how?

*V9 – the hallmark of an authentic believer is the possession of or indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Jesus describes the Spirit in John 14:17 as: **The Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.***

V10 – The Spirit gives Christians life because of Jesus' righteousness

V11 – Because God's Spirit raised Jesus to life, we can be sure that God will give life to our mortal (subject to death) bodies because we have that same Holy Spirit living in us.

9. What obligation and choice does Paul present in verses 12 & 13?

Our obligation is not to continue to live our “old life” in the flesh – that just leads to death and separation from God. Our obligation is to live our “new life” in the Spirit, which puts to death the wicked deeds of our body (by our sinful flesh submitting to the Spirit) and that allows us to live as people, led by the Spirit and in step with the Spirit.

10. **Ponder:** Is there a sin you are “**playing games with**” instead of seeking to mortify (put to death) it?

People might “play with” sins rather than mortifying them, indulging in behaviors that they know are wrong but rationalize or minimize the seriousness of them.

Here are some common examples:

Lust: *Engaging in sexually provocative behavior or consuming sexually explicit content while dismissing the moral implications or harm it may cause.*

Greed: *Pursuing wealth and material possessions at the expense of ethical principles or the well-being of others, justifying excessive consumption or hoarding.*

Pride: *Seeking recognition, praise, or status, even at the expense of humility and genuine connection with others. This may involve boasting, self-promotion, or looking down on others.*

Anger: *Holding onto grudges, harboring resentment, or allowing anger to control one's actions and relationships instead of seeking forgiveness and reconciliation.*

Gossip: *Spreading rumors, sharing sensitive information about others, or engaging in idle talk that damages reputations or undermines trust, all while dismissing the harm caused by such behavior.*

Gluttony: *Overindulging in food or drink, ignoring the negative effects on physical health and well-being, or using food as a source of comfort or escape.*

Sloth: *Being lazy or apathetic in fulfilling responsibilities, neglecting personal growth or development, and avoiding necessary tasks or challenges.*

Dishonesty: *Telling lies, deceiving others, or engaging in unethical behavior for personal gain, while downplaying the importance of honesty and integrity.*

Envy: *Coveting what others have, feeling resentment towards their success or possessions, and allowing jealousy to fester rather than cultivating contentment and gratitude.*

Addiction: *Continuing to engage in addictive behaviors such as substance abuse, gambling, or excessive gaming, despite the negative impact on oneself and others, and making excuses to justify the behavior rather than seeking help and recovery.*

11. Who are the “**children of God**” (verse 14)?

Those who are led by the Spirit of God are God’s children. We need to note when can only be led by the Spirit of God, if the Spirit is dwelling in us; and the Spirit can only dwell in us; if we believe in Jesus’ death and resurrection and are born again (John 3).

12. What does the Spirit do for us in verse 15?

Having the indwelling of the Spirit means we are no longer slaves to sin (and the law) and we no longer need to live in fear should of sin and breaking the law; we are free from that freedom. Instead, we receive adoption as sons (and daughters) of God. So that we can call God, “Abba” Father. This is possible because as Paul keeps reminding us, we are IN Christ.

13. What communication takes place in verse 16? Is this encouraging?

Paul says that those who are God’s children, born again by the Spirit of God, know their status because the Holy Spirit testifies to our spirit that this is so. This is very encouraging. We don’t have to wonder if we are really Christians or not. God’s children KNOW they are, because the Holy Spirit communicates it to them!

14. What privileges are there in being a “**child of God**”?

Because we are in Christ, we have the privilege of relating to the Father as Jesus does. Therefore, we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

Being a child of God also means having an inheritance. In Luke 18:18 the rich young ruler asked Jesus, “what must I do to inherit?” But the rich young ruler missed the point because inheritance is not a matter of doing, it is a matter of being — of being in the right family.

Also, because we are in Christ, we are also called to share in His suffering. God’s children are not immune from trials and suffering.

In fact, our sharing in present suffering is a condition of our future glorification [ultimately Heavenly glory]. As far as God is concerned, it is all part of the same package of sonship, no matter how much our flesh may want to have the inheritance and the glory without the suffering.

15. **Ponder:** What’s the difference between an unbeliever sinning and a Christian sinning?

An unbeliever who sins remains dead in their sin and a slave to sin and the law and separated from God. A Christian who sins has been justified by Jesus; is right with God; has the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; and is a child of God; and living a new

life in the Spirit. When they sin, they come and repent their sin; and continue to walk in step with the Spirit.

Also, an unbeliever and a believer have a different mindset. An unbeliever has a mindset of the world and a believer has a mindset of Christ and heavenly things.

16. **Ponder:** How do you feel knowing you are a “**child of God**”?

I feel privileged and safe and secure knowing I am a child of God and have the certain hope of the glory of Heaven to look forward to; and in the meantime, I have the indwelling Spirit guiding me and helping me to walk God’s way and not the world’s way!

Read Ezekiel 36:24-27

17. How does **Ezekiel 36:24-27** relate to **Romans 8:1-17**?

Ezekiel looks forward to a day when God’s people will be:

- *Gathered from amongst the nations*
- *Cleansed from all their impurities and from all idolatry*
- *Given a new heart and a new spirit*
- *Removed their heart of stone and given a heart of flesh*
- *Given God’s Spirit which will move them to follow God’s decrees and be motivated to be careful to keep God’s laws*

In Ezekiel 36:24-27, God speaks through the prophet Ezekiel, promising a future restoration and renewal for the nation of Israel. He declares that He will gather His people from among the nations, cleanse them from their impurities, give them new hearts, and put His Spirit within them. This transformation will enable them to walk in obedience to His commands.

In Romans 8:1-17, Paul, focuses on the freedom believers have in Christ and the role of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Paul begins by proclaiming that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, emphasizing the freedom from the law of sin and death. He then discusses the contrast between living according to the flesh and living according to the Spirit. Believers are called to set their minds on the things of the Spirit, which leads to life and peace. The Holy Spirit, who dwells within believers, empowers them to live in righteousness and obedience to God.

*The connection between these passages lies in **the promise of spiritual renewal and transformation through the work of the Holy Spirit**. In Ezekiel, God promises to cleanse His people, give them new hearts, and put His Spirit within them, enabling them to obey His commands. In Romans, Paul describes how believers, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, are set free from the power of sin and empowered to live in accordance with God's will.*

*Both passages **highlight the central role of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers, bringing about spiritual renewal, transformation, and the ability to live in obedience to God**. They emphasize the contrast between **life in the flesh, characterized by bondage to sin, and life in the Spirit, marked by freedom and empowerment to live as children of God**.*

What's the **BIG IDEA** of Romans 8:1-17?

Freedom and transformation found in Christ through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.



What **light globe moment** did you have in this study?

What **questions** do you have about the passages in this study?

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

V1 - Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

V14 - For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.

V16 - The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

Finish in prayer: Thank God for His Spirit who dwells within us, empowering us to live according to the Father's will, guiding us along paths of righteousness, and reminding us that we are His children?