

# Romans 8:15-39

---

August 31, 2008

# The Spirit of Sonship

## *Romans 8:15*

*15For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."*

- The Bible tells us over one hundred times not to fear!
- We have received a spirit of *sonship* or *adoption* (see 8:23)
- *Abba* is an Aramaic word, here and Mk 14:36, Gal 4:6
  - Note that *Abba* and *Father* always occur together
- “In the Gemara (a Rabbinical commentary on the Mishna, the traditional teaching of the Jews) it is stated that slaves were forbidden to address the head of the family by this title.” [Vine’s]
- “Abba is the word framed by the lips of infants, and betokens unreasoning trust; “father” expresses an intelligent apprehension of the relationship. The two together express the love and intelligent confidence of a child.” [Vine’s]

# God's Children

## *Romans 8:16*

---

*<sup>16</sup>The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.*

☉ The Spirit testifies with our spirit

- Note, with our spirit, not to our spirit.
- Speaks of our union with God.

☉ We are God's children

- There is no universal fatherhood of God!
- There are two spiritual families: God's and Satan's (Jn 8:31-47)
- A Christian has not merely the legal standing of a forgiven sinner, but an intimate, loving, relational standing with God!

# God's Children and Co-Heirs with Christ

## *Romans 8:17a*

*17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs--heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ,*

☉ Heirs of God (Gen 15:1; Ps 73:25; Lam 3:24)

☉ Co-heirs with Christ

- Many of us are heirs of those who have very little to bequeath in earthly possessions, and our human inheritance will amount to little. [MacArthur]
- But just as God's resources are limitless, so our spiritual inheritance is limitless, because, as His fellow heirs, we share in everything that the true Son of God, Jesus Christ, inherits. [MacArthur]
- God the Father has appointed Jesus Christ the "heir of all things" (Heb 1:2), and because we are fellow heirs with Him, we are destined to receive all the He receives! [MacArthur]

# Sharing in Christ's Sufferings and Glory

## *Romans 8:17b*

---

*17if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*

- ⊙ We share in His sufferings (2 Cor. 1:5; Philip. 1:29; Philip. 3:10; 1 Peter 2:21; 1 Peter 4:1; 1 Peter 4:13; 1 Peter 5:10)
- ⊙ We will share in His glory (1Cor 15:43; 2Cor 4:17; Col 3:4; 1Jn 3:2)
  - Man lost glory through sin (Rom 3:23)
  - What glory remains for man is temporary (Isa 40:6)
- ⊙ Some have suffered that they might obtain a better resurrection (Heb 11:35)

# The Glory to Be Revealed

## *Romans 8:18*

---

*18) consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.*

Ⓒ In the same way that our eternal inheritance will be incomparably greater than any earthly inheritance we might receive, our earthly sufferings are not worth comparing with the eternal glory that will be revealed in us. (2Cor 4:17)

# The Groaning of Creation

## *Romans 8:19-22*

*<sup>19</sup>The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. <sup>20</sup>For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup>that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God <sup>22</sup>We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.*

- Verse 19 has in mind the revealing of the sons of God (Col 3:4)
- In Romans 5, we saw that Adam's sin lead to his fall and to the fall of the entire race after him
- It is true, however, that Adam's sin lead to the fall of the physical world as well (Gen 3:14-19; Heb 1:10-12)
- In much the same was as man himself is subject to death as a result of sin (Rom 6:23), the universe likewise must "die" before being set to its eternal state (2Pe 3:10-14)
- In this personification of nature (cf. Isa 35:1; 55:12), the created universe is described as *groaning*

# The Groaning of Believers

## *Romans 8:23-25*

*<sup>23</sup>Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. <sup>24</sup>For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? <sup>25</sup>But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.*

- We have the firstfruits of the Spirit
  - “Firstfruits” speaks of an expectation of more to come
  - **Speculation:** God has given us the fullest measure of His Spirit that is appropriate to our unredeemed bodies
- We groan inwardly, trapped as we are in “this body of death”
- We await the redemption of our bodies (1Cor 15:35-57; 1Jn 3:2)

# The Groaning of the Holy Spirit

## *Romans 8:26-27*

*26In 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 with groans that words cannot express. 27And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.*

- “In the same way” probably refers back to the way the believer groans inwardly (v.23) as he awaits the redemption of his body
- “The Spirit helps us in our weakness” (cf. Heb 4:16) probably refers generally to our human weaknesses, though that would include all specific weaknesses (1Cor 10:13)
- “We do not know what...to pray for” because we are finite, frail, imperfect and limited in our partially-redeemed humanness
- “but the Spirit intercedes...with groans that words cannot express”
  - Suggests communication within the Godhead that is beyond our comprehension.
  - Suggests something even beyond what a fully redeemed human could do

# God Works...

## *Romans 8:28a*

**28** *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.*

- God wants us to **know** these things!
- God is not uninvolved with His creation
  - In Him we live and move and have our being (Acts 17:24-28)
  - We are controlled and led by the Spirit (v.9,14)
  - All things hold together in Christ (Col 1:17)
  - God “works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will” (Eph 1:11)
- When we humanly work one or two things together, we take pride and say that we’ve “killed two birds with one stone”
- God doesn’t just work one or two things together, He works **all** things together!
- “Work together” renders the Greek *sunergeo* from which we get *synergy*

# ...for Our Good

## *Romans 8:28b*

***28 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.***

- This is how and for whom God is working
  - For the good (Gen 50:20; 2Cor 12:7-10)
  - Of those who love him (1Pe 1:8; 1Jn 4:7,10,19)
- We see some of God's purposes in verses 29-39

***The supreme illustration of God's turning "all things," even the most evil of things, to the good of His children is seen in the sacrificial death of His own Son. In the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, God took the most absolute evil that Satan could devise and turned it into the greatest conceivable blessing He could offer to fallen mankind--eternal salvation from sin. [MacArthur]***

# Salvation, End-to-End

## *Romans 8:29-30*

---

*<sup>29</sup>For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. <sup>30</sup>And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.*

- These two verses speak of our salvation experience in its entirety
  - Foreknowledge (1Pe 1:20)
  - Predestination (cf. Eph 1:4-12) [for holiness, (v.29, Eph 1:4)]
  - Calling (Jn 1:13,6:44,65,15:16; Eph 2:8-9)
  - Justification (5:9,16,18)
  - Glorification (1Jn 3:2; Rom 6:5; 1Cor 15:49)

# Salvation, End-to-End

## *Romans 8:29-30*

---

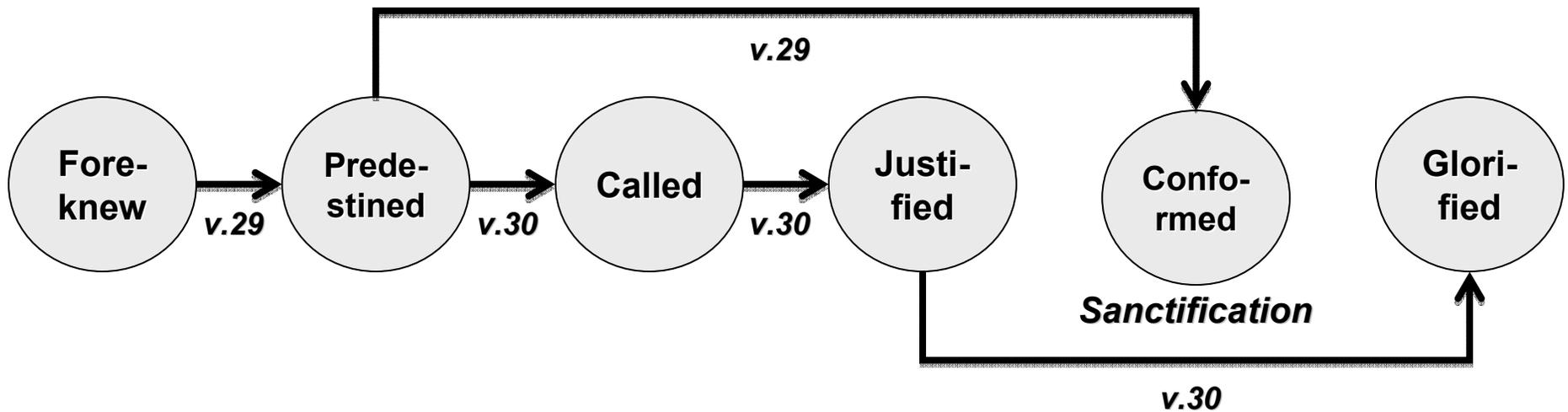
*<sup>29</sup>For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. <sup>30</sup>And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.*

### ○ What about sanctification?

- We have asserted previously that Romans 6-8 deals with the subject of sanctification
- Verse 29, “conformed to the likeness of his Son” speaks of sanctification without using the word
- Notice what it is that we’re predestined to:
  - Conformity to the likeness of God’s Son!

# Salvation, End-to-End

*Romans 8:29-30*



# Is There Anything God Won't Give?

*Romans 8:31-32*

---

*<sup>31</sup>What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup>He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?*

- ⦿ God spared Abraham's son, but not His own son!
- ⦿ Having given us His Son, is there anything He won't give us?

# No Condemnation

*Romans 8:33*

---

*<sup>33</sup>Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.*

⦿ Echoes the sentiment of 8:1 where we first talked about “no condemnation”

- Because there is no condemnation from God, there is *in fact* no condemnation.
- Lesser powers (Satan, others, self) may try to condemn us, but God declares that there is no condemnation for us

# Christ's Ministry

## *Romans 8:34*

---

*<sup>34</sup>Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died-- more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.*

☉ Here we have a fourfold ministry of Christ on our behalf against anyone who might condemn us:

- Christ died (4:25)
- Christ was raised to life (4:25)
- Christ is at the right hand of God (Acts 5:31; Eph 1:19-20, 2:6; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3-4, 10:12, 12:2; 1Pe 3:22)
- Christ is interceding for us (Acts 7:55-56; Heb 7:25)

# More Than Conquerors

## *Romans 8:35-37*

*<sup>35</sup>Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? <sup>36</sup>As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." <sup>37</sup>No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.*

- None of these things have power to separate us from the love of Christ
- Not only so, but we are in fact more than conquerors
  - Not in ourselves, but through him who loved us
  - It would have been sufficient to have been made conquerors
  - But that would have been too little!
    - God has made us more than conquerors (cf. Eph 3:20-21)!

# Nothing Can Separate Us

*Romans 8:38-39*

---

*<sup>38</sup>For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, <sup>39</sup>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.*

- Verses 38-39 complete the thought that began in verse 31.
  - If God is for us, who (and what) can be against us?
  - In the end, the answer is no one, and no thing in all of creation can be against us in such a way as to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord!

# Bibliography

---

- [1] Scripture from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION Copyright 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society
  
- [2] J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible, Volume IV*, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville TN, 1982.
  
- [3] John F. MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Romans 1-8*, Moody Press, Chicago, 1991.
  
- [4] Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies From the Greek New Testament, Volume I*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI, 1973.
  
- [5] A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament, Volume IV, The Epistles of Paul*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1931.
  
- [6] Randolph O. Yeager, *The Renaissance New Testament, Volume 11*, Pelican Publishing, Gretna, LA, 1983.
  
- [7] W.E. Vine, M. F. Unger, W. White, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, TN, 1985.