

“Children Of God”
Romans 8:12-17

Introduction:

1. Even Though This Week:
 - Is Thanksgiving Week:
 - It Seems Like A Lot Of People:
 - Are Already Focused On:
 - The Next Holiday:
 - Christmas!
 - Perhaps Its Because:
 - With All Of The Challenges:
 - That We've Faced This Year:
 - Christmas Reminds Us:
 - That There Is Still Hope!
 - And The Lights:
 - And The Colors:
 - And The Memories:
 - Make A Year That Has Seemed Rather Dull:
 - Bright Once Again!
2. Of Course - Along With:
 - Everything Else:
 - People Enjoy Christmas:
 - For The Opportunity That Gifts Provide!
 - To Show Love:
 - By Giving! And:
 - To Experience Love:
 - By Receiving!
 - Well - As We Return In Our Bibles This Morning:
 - To Romans 8:
 - We Find One Of The Greatest Gifts:
 - And The Greatest Blessings:
 - Of Being A Christian!
 - And That Is:
 - The Gift Of The Holy Spirit Of God:
 - Who Indwells:
 - Those Who Belong To Jesus Christ, Through Faith In Him!
 - He Makes Your Heart:
 - His Home!
3. With This In View:
 - As We Come To Romans 8:12 - We Read These Words:
 - “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh!”
 - Once Again - The Apostle Paul:
 - Calls Those Fellow Believers In Christ:
 - There In The City Of Rome:
 - “Brethren!”
 - Not Only Is This:
 - A Term Of Endearment:
 - It Is Also:
 - A Term Of Identification!
 - The Holy Spirit:
 - Who Is Given To Them:
 - Is Also The Spirit:
 - Who Unites Them Together:
 - As A Family!
4. And So - Together:
 - They - And We:
 - Have A New Obligation!
 - Because - Along With This New Relationship:

- Comes A New Responsibility!

- This Is Implied:

- When Paul Writes:

- "Brethren, We *Are* Debtors!"

- Just - "Not To The Flesh" Anymore:

- "To Live After The Flesh!"

- Instead - "We Are Debtors" To:

- The Lord Jesus Christ - And:

- To His Spirit:

- To Live After & To Live For:

- Him!

5. After All - Remember What It Means:

- To Have The Indwelling Presence:

- Of The Holy Spirit?

- It Means That God Himself:

- Healed You! (8:9)

- Helps You! (8:10)

- And - Gives You Hope! (8:11)

- And With Such A Gift:

- 8:12 - "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh!"

- So - What Should We Do?

- What Is Our New Obligation:

- Which We Can Now Freely Render To The Lord?

- "Live After The Holy Spirit!"

6. And - Through 8:17:

- We Find Three Reasons & Three Ways To Do So:

- 8:12-17 - "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. / For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. / For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. / For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. / The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: / And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with [him], that we may be also glorified together!"

* The First Reason We Should "Live After The Spirit" - Is Because Of:

1. *The Activity Of The Holy Spirit!*

- Which We See In 8:13:

- Because - The Holy Spirit Is:

- The Spirit Of Life!

- 8:13 - "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live!"

- In This Verse:

- The Apostle Paul Wants To Remind Us:

- First Of All - About:

- What Happens When You Are:

- Left To The Flesh!

- As An Unbeliever:

- If You Are Left To The Flesh - So That:

- If "Ye Live After The Flesh" - The End Result Of That Kind Of Life:

- Is That - "Ye Shall Die!"

- "About To!"

- This Is Something That:

- The Apostle Paul Has Already Emphasized:

- In Romans!

- Living Is Actually Dying:

- If You Are Living:

- According To The Desires Of:

- Your Fallen Human Nature!

- **IE:** How Many People Do We See This Happening To In This World? For Them - Their Living

- Is Dying! The Death That Is In Them Already Will Surely Catch Up To Them!
 - But - The Death That They Experience:
 - Is Not An Escape! It Is:
 - An Entrance Into The Judgment Hall Of God!
 - And So - If You Are:
 - Left To Your Flesh:
 - Your “Living” Is Indeed Dying!
 - But - What Happens When You Are:
 - Living In The Spirit?
 - As A Believer In Jesus Christ:
 - If You Are Living In The Spirit:
 - His Activity Will Be Seen In Your Life!
 - 8:13b - “But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live!”
 - If You Are A Christian:
 - You Have A New Assignment For Your Life!
 - And That Is To:
 - “Mortify The Deeds Of The Body!”
 - Colossians 3:5 Too - “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry!”
 - To “Mortify” Means:
 - To Put Something To Death!
 - To Cause The Life And Breath:
 - In Something To Cease!
 - And Here - Your Assignment:
 - Is To “Mortify The Deeds” – Those Sinful Desires & Deeds – “Of The Body!”
 - What Does This Mean?
 - Earlier - In 6:12:
 - “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof!”
 - Later - In 13:14:
 - “Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof!”
 - To Mortify Means:
 - To Suppress / To Starve / To Strangle:
 - To Do Whatever It Takes:
 - To Eliminate Those Sinful Desires & Deeds!
 - But - We All Know:
 - Just How Hard That Can Be!
 - And So - You Need To Also Remember That:
 - If You Are A Christian:
 - You Have A New Author In Your Life!
 - And That Is:
 - The Holy Spirit! 8:13b - “But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live!”
 - God Does Not Leave You Alone, Christian!
 - God Does Not Leave You To Yourself!
 - This Is One Of The Great Ministries:
 - Of The Indwelling Holy Spirit!
 - He Continues To Help You, If You Will Let Him!
 - And So - This Means That - For The Believer In Christ:
 - Dying Is Actually Living!
 - If You Are Mortifying:
 - Through The Power Of The Holy Spirit:
 - The Fallen Desires And The Deeds Of Your Body!
 - Your “Dying” Is Indeed Living!
 - “Ye Shall Live” - Paul Writes!
- So - Remember Your New Obligation!
 - Live - Not After Your Flesh!

- But - Live:
 - According To:
 - The Spirit Of Life:
 - Who Has Given You & Imparted To You:
 - His Own Spiritual Life!
- And Keep On Mortifying:
 - The Deeds Of Your Body!

* The Second Reason We Should “Live After The Spirit” - Is Because Of:

2. *The Adoption Of The Holy Spirit!*

- Which We See In 8:14-15:
 - Because - The Holy Spirit Is:
 - The Spirit Of Adoption!
 - 8:14-15 - “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. / For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father!”
 - This Is Another Great Truth:
 - For Those Who Have Been Given The Gift:
 - Of The Holy Spirit!
 - You Have Been Adopted:
 - Into The Family Of God!
 - You Are Either A Son:
 - Or A Daughter Of God Himself!
 - And:
 - The Evidence Of Your Adoption:
 - Is That You Are “Led By The Spirit Of God!” (8:14)
 - “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God!”
 - If You Have Been Given:
 - Life From God’s Spirit:
 - Then - You Will Experience:
 - The Leading Of God’s Spirit!
 - And That Leading Is Evidence That You Are A Child Of God!
 - And There Are Many Ways:
 - In Which The Holy Spirit Leads You:
 - If You Are A Christian!
 - The Holy Spirit Leads You:
 - By His Comfort!
 - But Also By:
 - His Correction!
 - The Holy Spirit Leads You:
 - By His Clarification!
 - But Also By:
 - His Conviction!
 - The Holy Spirit Leads You:
 - Not Just By Pointing Out The Way:
 - But Also By:
 - Persuading You Of The Way!
 - The Holy Spirit Leads You:
 - Always In Connection With:
 - God’s Revealed Word!
 - And - Never Contrary To It!
 - Most Of The Time:
 - In A Still Small Inaudible Voice:
 - Saying - “This is the way, walk ye in it!”
 - If You Are A Christian:
 - Then You Have Sensed The Spirits Leading In Your Life - And:
 - You Know What It’s Like!
 - John 10:27 - “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me!”
 - This Leading:

- By The Holy Spirit:
 - Is Evidence That:
 - You Are Truly:
 - One Of The “Sons Of God!” - General Term:
 - For A Special Relationship With God!
 - This Was Even Why:
 - Jesus Himself Came Into This World!
 - John 1:12 - “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name!”
- But - Along With This Evidence - Also Comes:
 - The Experience Of Your Adoption!
 - 8:15a - “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption!”
 - Here - God Tells Us:
 - That The Holy Spirit Is The One:
 - Who Brings You Into His Family!
 - When You Receive The Holy Spirit:
 - He Does Not Come To You:
 - As A “Spirit Of Bondage” - Like:
 - The Bondage You Were Under:
 - To Sin / Satan / Flesh:
 - Or Even Law!
 - He Does Not Come To You:
 - To Coerce You To Follow Him:
 - Through Fear!
 - Instead - The Holy Spirit Comes To You:
 - As The “Spirit Of Adoption!”
 - Not Just In A Legal Sense:
 - As The Romans Understood It!
 - **IE:** Julius Caesar Adopted Octavian - Caesar Augustus!
 - But In A Loving Sense!
 - Because - This Experience Brings With It:
 - The Expression Of Your Adoption!
 - 8:15b - “Whereby we cry, Abba, Father!”
 - This Is The Heart’s Cry:
 - Of A Child Of God!
 - Whenever Your Heart Is Moved:
 - Whether Out Of:
 - Joy Or Sorrow:
 - You Cry Out - Instinctively:
 - To God!
 - Not Merely:
 - As Your Lord And Master:
 - Which He Is!
 - Not Just:
 - As Your Sovereign And King:
 - Which He Is!
 - But Even:
 - As Your Father In Heaven:
 - “Whereby We Cry, Abba, Father!”
 - When You Are Adopted Into A Family:
 - You Belong To That Family:
 - Forever!
 - So It Is In The Family Of God!
 - The Spirit Of Adoption Makes Sure Of It!
 - Paul Uses Both:
 - The Familiar Jewish Name:
 - As Well As The Familiar Greek Name:
 - For Father!

- Abba - Aramaic!
- Pater - Greek!
- Perhaps Using One:
 - To Explain The Other!
 - Or - Perhaps - As More Of An Emphasis:
 - Than An Explanation!
- As If Those Roman Christians Can Say:
 - “Thy God Is My God!”
 - Thy Father Is My Father!
- What A Glorious Truth!
 - And That Is Why - As Paul Told Us Back In 8:12:
 - We Have A New Obligation!
 - To Live - Not After Our Flesh!
 - But - To Live:
 - According To:
 - The Spirit Of Adoption:
 - Who Leads You Because He Has Brought You:
 - Into The Family Of God - Forever!
 - So Now - Keep On Following:
 - The Desires Of Your Heavenly Father!
 - Keep On Following:
 - The Quiet Leading:
 - Of The Holy Spirit!

* But Then - The Third Reason We Should “Live After The Spirit” Is Because Of:

3. ***The Assurance Of The Holy Spirit!***

- Which We See In 8:16-17:
 - Because - The Holy Spirit Is:
 - The Spirit Of Truth!
 - 8:16-17 - “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: / And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with [him], that we may be also glorified together!”
 - Here - We Discover:
 - How We Can Know & Be Certain Of:
 - Our Adoption Into The Family Of God!
 - **IE**: No Written Birth Certificate! Something Better! You Can Have Assurance By:
- The Witness Of God!
 - 8:16 - “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God!”
 - This Is A Beautiful Verse!
 - But - It Remains A Difficult One:
 - To Fully Comprehend!
 - The Holy Spirit:
 - Is Indeed A Witness!
 - And Because He Is Holy:
 - His Witness Is True!
 - But - Does This Verse Mean He:
 - Bears Witness:
 - **To** Our Spirits - Or:
 - **With** Our Spirits?
 - If He Bears Witness:
 - **With** Our Spirits:
 - Then - It Means That:
 - He Adds His Own Testimony:
 - To Our Own Spirit’s Confession That:
 - We Are God’s Children!
 - If He Bears Witness:
 - **To** Our Spirits:
 - Then - It Means That:

- His Testimony Convinces Us Of The Truth That:
 - We Are God's Children!
- I Think This Is Probably The Better Way
 - Of Looking At This Verse:
 - Because Of The Weak Condition Of Our Own Spirits!
- I Don't Know About You:
 - But I Constantly Need:
 - Reassurance Of This Comforting Truth!
- But - How Does He Do This?
 - We Are Not Told Exactly How:
 - But - Simply That He Does!
 - Perhaps, Though:
 - When In The Throws Of Trials Or Temptation:
 - You Cry Out From Your Heart:
 - "Abba, Father!"
 - That Is The Clear Witness:
 - From The Holy Spirit:
 - With Your Own Spirit:
 - That You Are His - And He Is Yours!
 - Charles Hodge - "Those Who Have Filial Feelings Towards God, Who Love Him, And Believe That He Loves Them, Cannot Doubt That They Are The Children Of God!"
 - But - Along With This Witness:
 - You Have The Assurance Of:
- The Wealth Of God!
 - 8:17a - "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ!"
 - This Reminds Us Of The Hymn We Will Sing Shortly:

My Father is rich in houses and lands,
He holdeth the wealth of the world in His hands!
Of rubies and diamonds, of silver and gold,
His coffers are full, He has riches untold.
I'm a child of the King,
A child of the King:
With Jesus my Savior,
I'm a child of the King!
- What A Change Takes Place:
 - When You Turn To & Trust In:
 - Jesus Christ As Your Savior From Sin!
 - From A Slave:
 - To A Son / Daughter:
 - To An Heir!
- You Are An Heir *Of* God!
 - All That God Has - And:
 - All God Is:
 - Is Your Inheritance!
 - Genesis 15:1 - "Fear not, Abram: I [am] thy shield, [and] thy exceeding great reward!"
 - This Reward Is So Much Greater - And:
 - Of More Value:
 - Than Any Inheritance In This World! **IE:** Can Be Lost Quickly!
 - But - This Inheritance:
 - Is Provided By A Living God:
 - Through His Dying Son!
 - So That Also:
- You Are An Heir *With* Christ!
 - All That Christ Received:
 - From His Father:
 - You Too Receive!
 - Though Not In "Equal Shares" - Yet - "Shares" Nonetheless!
- And - Even Though:
 - The Inheritance Is Not Here Itemized For Us:

- We Get A Hint Of What Is Involved:
 - When We See In The Rest Of 8:17:
- The Wonder Of God!
 - 8:17b - "If so be that we suffer with [him], that we may be also glorified together!"
 - Now - This Is Not:
 - A Condition:
 - For Your Inheritance:
 - But - A Conformation Of It!
 - If There Is In Your Life:
 - An Experience Of "Suffering" With Christ:
 - Then It Is Evidence That You Are:
 - In Truth - An Heir With Christ!
 - Suffering:
 - Is An Experience:
 - That Every True Believer:
 - Will Go Through!
 - This Certainly Includes:
 - External Suffering:
 - Through The Persecution:
 - Like Jesus Went Through!
 - 2 Timothy 3:12 - "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution!"
 - But - I Think This:
 - Also Includes:
 - Internal Suffering:
 - Through The Passions:
 - Like Jesus Went Through!
 - As The "Man Of Sorrows!"
 - When We "Suffer With Him" - It Means That:
 - We Feel As He Felt!
 - And This Is The Spirit's Work In Our Hearts!
 - It Is The "Birthmark" Of A Christian!
 - How Do You Feel About Sin?
 - How Do You Feel About Service?
 - But - You Must Not See:
 - Your Suffering - In Terms:
 - Of Punishment:
 - Any Longer!
 - 8:1 - "No Condemnation!"
 - Instead - You Can See:
 - Suffering - Internal / External:
 - As Preparation!
 - God Is Preparing You Like He Prepared His Own Son:
 - To Participate In His Glory!
 - 8:17b - "If so be that we suffer with him – It Is So That – we may be also glorified together – With Him!"
 - The Apostle Puts It This Way:
 - In 1 Peter 1:6-9 - "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: / That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: / Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see [him] not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory / Receiving the end of your faith, [even] the salvation of [your] souls!"
 - This Is Why - As Paul Told Us Back In 8:12:
 - We Have A New Obligation!
 - Not One Of Drudgery:
 - But One Of Delight!
 - To Live - Not After Our Flesh!
 - But - To Live:

- According To:
 - The Spirit Of Truth:
 - Who Brings Assurance Into Your Heart:
 - That You Belong To God & Are Part Of His Family!
- And That - Even Any Suffering You Experience:
 - Is To Prepare You:
 - For The Glory:
 - That Will Follow!
 - And - What Else Does He Say About That?
 - 8:18 - “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time [are] not worthy [to be compared] with the glory which shall be revealed in us!” - Look More At This Next Week!

Conclusion:

1. But - For Now:
 - Keep On:
 - Mortifying:
 - The Deeds Of Your Body:
 - Because The Holy Spirit Within You:
 - Is The Spirit Of Life!
 - Keep On:
 - Following:
 - The Desires Of Your Heavenly Father:
 - Because The Holy Spirit Within You:
 - Is The Spirit Of Adoption!
 - And - Keep On:
 - Living:
 - In Light Of Your Future Inheritance:
 - Of Glory!
 - Because The Holy Spirit Within You:
 - Is The Spirit Of Truth!
 - And “Beareth Witness With Your Spirit” That:
 - You Are A Child Of God!
 - 2. This Is Our New Obligation!
 - To Live According To:
 - The New Spirit:
 - Who Indwells You!
 - But - By God’s Grace:
 - You Are Not Left:
 - To Fulfill This New Obligation:
 - On Your Own!
 - Instead - He Who Indwells You:
 - Enables You:
 - To Do So!
 - Keep Living:
 - “After The Spirit!”

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