

# LifeGroup Study

Date: August 6, 2023

Text: Isaiah 44:6-8; Romans 8:12-25

Theme: id—A Closer Look at Romans 6-8

Adopted...into hope

## Belong

Last week we gave thanks to God for the amazing gift of the Spirit, which provides us eternal life, as we are liberated from death and sin. Today, we will dive deeper into the meaning of the wonder of the Spirit within us. *"If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31)* No one! By grace and with our faith we are children of God. We are adopted into hope for eternal love from God, the most amazing Father. Let us dig deeply into our family ties with the one true King who suffered and died for our sins.

**Prayer...** Dear Heavenly Father, we come to you as your children, awakened by the Spirit, ready to live our lives as part of the body of Christ. Guide us to use our bodies for your purpose. Open our hearts to the Spirit of life. Guide us through your Word and help us understand the meaning of being a Christian, a child adopted into your family. Give us life, eternal freedom from the fear of death due to sin. Through your grace we ask you to adopt us into hope—hope only you can fulfill with the Spirit of life and liberation from death. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## Believe

You may recall the reading and discussion from last week where in Romans 8:1-11, the Apostle Paul teaches us that we are alive through the Spirit of life; liberated through God's great love that freed us from sin and death. Paul continues his letter, teaching us what we are in the loving family of God with God's grace and our faithful following of Jesus Christ.

Read Romans 8:12-14. Paul concludes his discussion of the sinful nature that we could fall under if we do not live by the grace of God through the Spirit living a life of faith in Jesus Christ.

- *Do you feel the Spirit within? Do you take time to listen and feel the wonder of living a life of faith in Jesus Christ? Explain.*
- *Share a time when you were stirred by the Spirit.*
- *How do you ensure you are not overcome by weakness and fall prey to temptation and sin?*

Read Romans 8:15-17. Paul shares the great gift of hope as we live with Christ; we are adopted into the family of God.

- *If you were adopted or have adopted a child or a dear friend into your family, speak to the wonder of the love you share.*

- *We can only imagine the wonder of the love that God has for each of us who have faith in God's Son. What are some of your thoughts when you provide thanks to God for the gift of eternal life?*

Read Romans 8:18-25. Paul continues to teach us what it means to be a child of God; to have faith in Christ, hope for salvation in the midst of suffering, and eternal life and salvation.

- *Share your experience of the glorious moment when you knew you were a child of God living with the Holy Spirit.*
- *What can we do for those who are not sure or who have not yet found their place in God's family?*
- *Most of us have suffered or have shared the suffering of those we love. What have you done to make it through difficult times?*
- *How do you maintain your loving relationship with God and grow your faith in Christ during times of difficulty and distress?*

We are dead in our sin. Through God's grace we are forgiven, we are free from the death of sin. Through faith in Jesus Christ, we are saved. We will suffer and we will love, we will celebrate and we will cry. As we live we experience all of the wonders of life. What we know and can be thankful for is hope, for our God adopted us and we are one of God's children.

## Become

Romans provides us with an opportunity to learn of the richness of God's greatest gifts through many important themes of Christian theology. Sin and death, salvation, grace, faith, righteousness, redemption, and life glorified through the resurrection of Jesus Christ who sent the Spirit to guide us. Commit to reading more of Romans, taking one chapter at a time to understand the wonder of all of the gifts God has given to you. Use this remarkable book to strengthen your relationship with God, and build on that relationship through prayer, Scripture, and meditating on God's Word. Talk to others as you learn to share and grow in Christ's community.

**Prayer...** Jesus, open our hearts to your Word, allowing us the opportunity to know you better. Help us strengthen our relationship with you and share our growth with others in the wondrous family of Christians. We are adopted into your family and we sing praise to you in thanks for the hope only you can provide. Keep us close to you so that we can weather any storm we face. We need the Spirit of life to keep us free from the temptations that lead to sin and death. Thank you for your guidance, your love, your Spirit, and for suffering for our sin. In your name we pray. Amen.

# Devotionals: Daily Walk on the Rock

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**Day 1: Monday —A Precious Gem** Philipp Jakob Spenser (1635-1705) wrote, "If the Bible was a ring and the Book of Romans its precious stone, chapter 8 would be the sparkling point of the jewel." This is our second of three weeks to dwell in Romans 8. Begin by reading the entire chapter. Rejoice in the proclamation, "There is therefore now no condemnation..." (8:1; see also 8:33-34). In Romans 8:6, Paul mentions that the Spirit gives life (and peace). What other insights into this gift of life do you find in Romans 8? Did you notice all the references to us as God's children? Ponder Paul's teaching about God's love. Pray through the part of Romans 8 that has most stirred your heart to praise.

## Day 2: Tuesday —Spirit Life!

Read Romans 8:5-13. Notice what Paul says about living lives controlled by and yielded to the Spirit. How do Spirit-controlled lives differ from lives lived according to the flesh or sinful nature? Do we sometimes trade the full, abundant life God desires for us for something far less, because we don't trust that God knows best what will fill our hearts and lives with purpose and joy? Read Romans 8:31-39, and pray you will grow in your trust of the One who loves you so eternally and sacrificially. Talk to God honestly about your desire to yield to the Spirit.

## Day 3: Wednesday —Created, Re-deemed, Adopted, and Infinitely Loved

In Genesis 2:7, we see God as the giver of physical life. God is also the giver of spiritual life. Ponder this spiritual birth and the position it gives us in God's family as adopted children and heirs, as you read John 1:12-13; 3:5-7; Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 4:4-7; and Titus 3:4-7. Now consider the cost of our redemption as you read 1 Peter 1:18-20, and remember that God loves us with a passionate, eternal love (Isaiah 49:15-16a; Luke 15:17-24; Romans 8:31-39). When we ponder all this, how can we possibly deny God's rightful ownership of our hearts and lives! Spend time talking to God as the Father who loves you so completely, sacrificially, and eternally.

## Day 4: Thursday—Our Father

Reading the Gospels, we notice that Jesus always addresses God as Father (*except when, on the cross, he cries out with the words of Psalm 22:1a*). We are invited into that same intimate relationship with our Father God. Read Romans 8:14-23 and notice the references to us as God's own children. What part of our inheritance as God's children are

we already experiencing; what is yet to come? Do you know God as your "Abba Father" (Mark 14:36; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6)? Humbly consider how truly amazing it is that the Almighty Creator God became flesh so that we could live forever as his children and heirs (John 1:1-3, 12-14, 16-18). Worship God.

## Day 5: Friday—Suffering and Glory

Read Romans 8:17-18. Notice that suffering is not an 'if' proposition. Other Scripture passages help us understand both the suffering and the promise of glory. Read John 15:18-21; 16:33; 1 Corinthians 4:12; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18; 2 Timothy 1:8; 3:12; Titus 2:11-14; and Hebrews 12:1-3. We live in the world, and we will suffer, but Christ lives in us, and he is our hope and glory (John 17:13-18, 22; Colossians 1:24-27). Take all your questions, thoughts, concerns, and fears about this to the Lord in prayer. Rejoice that the Spirit lives in you.

**Day 6: Saturday—Waiting with Hope!** Read Romans 8:18-25 several times. We live in the tension between 'already' and 'not yet,' and the hope we have is not wishful thinking but eager expectation and longing. It is a hope that embraces God's plan for all of creation. Genesis 3:1-24 introduces the destructive curse of sin, but Romans 8:18-25 and 1 Corinthians 15:54-58 look ahead to the glorious newness of which we read in Revelation 21:1-5, 22-26; 22:1-6a. What is our guarantee of God's sure promises (Romans 8:23; Ephesians 1:13-14)? As you wait with hope, pray you will live for Jesus.

## Day 7: Sunday—One Story: God's Redeeming Love

As we finish our time in Romans 8:12-25 and anticipate abiding in 8:26-39, consider that the truths of Romans 8 echo back to the time of the Exodus and also look ahead to our eternal future as God's children. N.T. Wright (*Paul for Everyone: Romans, 2004, Westminster John Knox Press, 145-147*) parallels the Exodus experience and ours: The Israelites were freed from slavery to be God's own possession; so are we. They were led through the desert by God's cloud and fire; we are led by the Spirit. They journeyed to the Promised Land; we are pilgrims longing for our eternal home. They were sustained by a yet unrealized hope, and so are we. Throughout Scripture, we see God's redeeming love and grace; we are God's people. Meditate on Exodus 19:3-6 and 1 Peter 2:9-10.