

Daily Reflections

Week of May 31, 2021

Day 1: Romans 8

In Romans 8, Paul gives us, in a sense, a view from the mountaintop. From the pinnacle, we see the immeasurable greatness of God's love for us, the oceans of hope we have in Christ, and the richness of our inheritance as God's children. We feel the fresh breeze of the freedom we have as Christians, and we receive the assurance of the Spirit's constant presence to guide us, pray for us, and teach us how to live in relationship with the one we can call "Abba Father." Read Romans 8 several times, allowing the Spirit to quicken your heart to new truths or to awaken a fresh spirit of gratefulness within you. Thank God for such extravagant love and grace.

Day 2: The Victorious Christian Life

What does the phrase "victorious Christian life" mean to you? Do you think of a life without struggle and heartache, or do you picture a life like that of the apostle Paul, who lived triumphantly in spite of incredible hardship? Our week's text is Romans 8:12-17, but since verse 12 begins with "so then" or "therefore," it is helpful to read what comes before. As you read Romans 8:9-17, notice the references to the Spirit. What difference does it make that the Spirit actually dwells "in" us (*see also 1 Corinthians 6:19-20*)? Tell the Spirit you want to learn more about what it means to live a Spirit-led life. Use Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3:14-19 as yours.

Day 3: Confident in the Father's Love

Some have earthly fathers who point us to our heavenly Father. Others have fathers who cause one to cringe at the name "Father." God wants us to know what it means to be loved and cherished; God's love is vast, pure, and eternal. God invites us to call out to our "Abba Father" with complete trust. Read (and memorize) John 3:16; read John 17:20-26; Romans 5:8; 8:12-17, 31-39; and 1 John 1:1-4; 4:9-10. What do these passages tell us about God as our Father? Talk to your Father God; tell your Heavenly Father all that is on your heart.

Day 4: Adopted as God's Children

God's love is manifest in our status as God's children and heirs. Do you see yourself as a child of the eternal King? Do you live with the realization that, as God's child, you are a prince or princess and heir to the most glorious inheritance in the world? Read John 1:12-13; Romans 8:12-17; Galatians 4:4-7; and 1 John 3:1-2. How would we live differently if we began to see ourselves as God's precious, adopted children? Would we live more fully in light of eternity? Would we have greater trust in God's abiding presence in our lives each day? Would we care more about honoring our Heavenly Father? Ask God to teach you what it means to be God's child.

Day 5: Faith Overcomes Fear

Do many things in life frighten you; do you often have anxious thoughts? Or do you rest in your heritage as God's beloved child and, therefore, have peace, even in the midst of distressing life circumstances? Is this even possible? Read Deuteronomy 31:8; Joshua 1:9; Isaiah 26:3-4; John 14:1; Romans 8:15; Philippians 4:4-7; and 1 John 4:17-18. We will never live this perfectly, because we are human, but God gives us the Spirit so we might live with faith, not fear, and have the peace that passes understanding. Today's circumstances, in the world and in our lives, do not have the final word; God does! Read John 14:27 and 16:33. Pray and tell Jesus you love him.

Day 6: A Fearful Slave or An Obedient Child?

Do you see God's laws as oppressive and restrictive, or do you view God's commands as "safe boundaries," given by a loving Father, who knows best what will bring you lasting joy, blessed hope, and purposeful, abundant living? Do you live as a slave to sin, as someone who fears God as a harsh taskmaster, or as a child who trusts your beloved Father God? Do you dwell in sin or flee from it? Consider your identity; read John 14:23; 15:9-17; Romans 6:6-11; 8:1-17; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, 17; and 1 John 1:5-9. Ask the Spirit to teach you what it means to be a child of God, guide you in your life journey, and help you behave as if you believe you are beloved by God.

Day 7: What's This About Suffering?

Read Romans 8:17-18. To be a child and an heir and to share glory sounds wonderful, but suffering??? Is suffering really part of being a disciple of Jesus Christ? Today, in the 21st Century, many around the world die because of their faith in Jesus. Sometimes, however, Christians suffer because they offer themselves as living sacrifices (*Romans 12:1*). Read John 15:18-20; 16:33; 2 Corinthians 4:7-18; Philippians 1:20-21; 2 Timothy 1:7-10; and Hebrews 12:1-3. Live by faith, not fear; offer yourself to God; pray aloud several verses from Day 5.