

## of Discipleship

June 19, 2022

### Day 1: Romans 8:12

***So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh***

Beginning with vs. 12 and continuing to vs. 17 Paul offers a description of the present Christian existence, rooted in God's past action in Jesus Christ and as an assurance of God's future action (being with God in eternity) for God's people. "We are debtors" because God has redeemed us from death. God made us both children and heirs.

**Question:** What would be some examples of living according to the flesh?

**Challenge:** Think of the term above, "debtors." It usually denotes something we do not want to be. What different word could you use?

**Scripture:** Romans 7:23-8:8

### Day 2: Romans 8:13

***for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.***

In fact Paul warns that going back to a former way of life is dangerous because our former way leads to death. The body is something that is passing (from dust you came and to dust you shall return). The spirit is life, not the body. Paul is not suggesting that we ignore our body but that we do not put our trust in it for eternity. When we plant a garden if we allow the weeds to overrun the garden then the flowers will be choked out. We must root out the weeds so that the flowers can grow. In the same way we need to watch to be sure the deeds of the body do not choke out the spirit.

**Question:** Do you think Paul is talking about having a longer life?

**Challenge:** How is your garden? Are there too many weeds? Do you need to plant some more good seed? How can you go about planting good seed?

**Scripture:** Philippians 3:16-4:5

### Day 3: Romans 8:14

***For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.***

The way to root out the weeds is to overrun the garden with good fruit and flowers. We get rid of the weeds by enriching the soil, watering regularly and planting so much good grain that the weeds have no room to grow. The Spirit of God leads us just as the Spirit of God led the people of Israel in the time of the Exodus. As God's presence was seen and felt by those in the wilderness so we today see and feel God's Spirit and that Spirit assures us that we are the children of God.

**Question:** Can we actually feel the Spirit of God in us or is it a matter of faith that the Spirit is with us?

**Challenge:** What do you recall was the greatest challenge to those in the wilderness?

**Scripture:** Romans 9:3-13

### Day 4: Romans 8:15

***For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, 'Abba! Father!'***

The God who sends the Son now sends the Spirit of the Son to assure those who are in Christ that they are adopted. Those who are in Christ are now sons and daughters in whom the Spirit dwells. Paul, thinking again of the Exodus, says we do not go back to Egypt - to slavery - but ahead to the Promised Land. A slave is fearful because they are not able to decide their future nor can they hope for a new land where they are free. Our debt to God is not a new form of slavery but it is the spirit of sonship.

**Question:** What does Abba mean?

**Challenge:** If we are the children of God through Christ – what is our main obligation as children?

**Scripture:** Galatians 3:15-29

### Day 5: Romans 8:16

***it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God,***

The Holy Spirit itself comes along side of our human spirit to bear witness that we are God's children. We become children of God not through biology but through adoption. This allows the family of God to potentially include the whole world. Our God is Lord over all the earth. Though that day has not come, one day every knee shall bow and tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God.

**Question:** How do you think the Spirit bears witness with our spirit?

**Challenge:** Think of three ways you can witness to the love of God. Choose one to do this week.

**Scripture:** Romans 8:16-26

### Day 6: Romans 8:17

***and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.***

The conclusion of Paul's agreement comes in this verse. If we are in fact children of God then we will inherit just as Christ inherited; namely to be with God in eternity. The Holy Spirit bearing witness to our spirit assures us constantly that we are children and heirs of the promise. Paul closes with a word of caution that if Jesus suffered so might we. This caution is followed by the assurance that if we suffer with him it just shows we are in Him and this suffering becomes a sign that we are God's children/heirs of the promise of eternal life.

**Question:** Why is it a good thing to be joint heirs with Christ?

**Challenge:** Think about a time you "suffered" for your faith (even if it was just a small amount). What happened?

**Scripture:** Romans 9