

Secured

April 19, 2020

Romans 8:12-25

We are living in strange times. We're hiding in our homes, venturing out only when essential. Ground we once thought of as stable— grocery store ground, doctor office ground, school ground, even church ground—is shaking beneath our feet.

Many of you who grew up in Hampton Roads in the '50s, '60s, and '70s lived at ground zero should a nuclear war occur. Yet, even then, children went to school, parents went to work and churches were filled with baby-boomers. Not now. What's different? Have we lost hope?

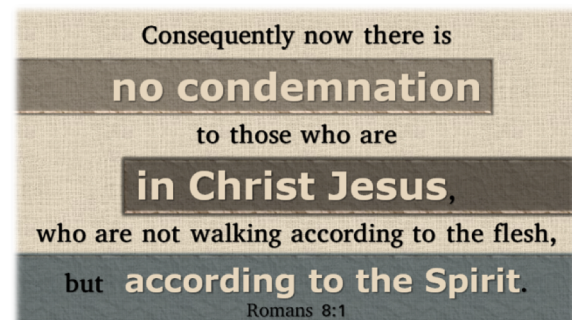
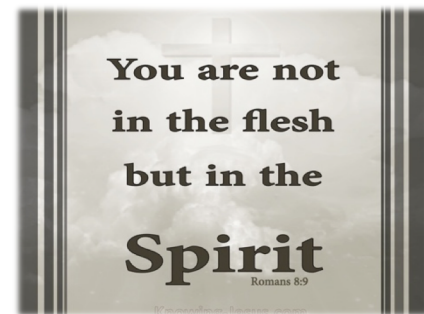
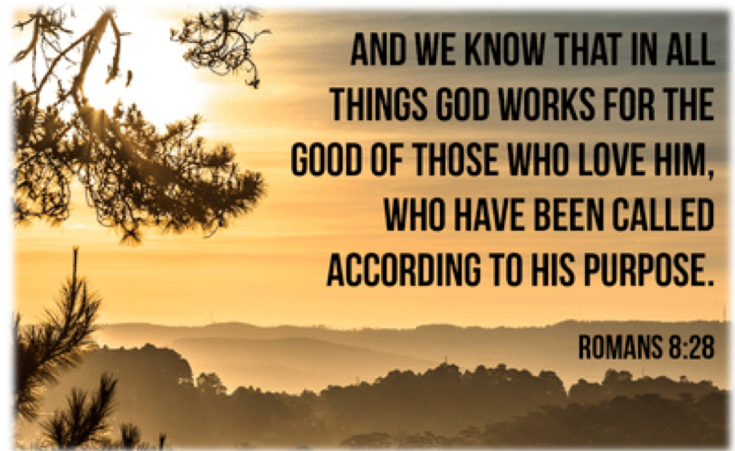
In today's study of Romans, Paul emphasized the security we Christians know in Christ: *"The Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give you life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you."* Rom. 8:11. Paul highlights the role of the Holy Spirit in our sanctification and assurance of salvation. The children of God have the Spirit of God living within which produces life and righteousness in the believer.

We can endure the suffering of the current pandemic, even the fear of it, knowing that as God's children, our inheritance outweighs any uncertainty brought about by the human experience. We are God's children. We will inherit the kingdom of God. We are now awaiting what God in Christ has eternally secured for us. Remember the definition of our faith: *"Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen"* (Hebrews 11:1). [Excerpts by Glen Schmucker]

External Future (Romans 8:12-13)

- In the prior verses, Paul contrasted a life lived in the flesh and a life lived in the Spirit. *"To be spiritually minded is life and peace"* Rom. 8:6
- **"We are debtors not to the flesh!"**
 - Debtor – someone who is financial debt or under moral obligation
 - As Christians, we are under obligation to the Spirit of God.
- **"For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live."** Rom. 8:13
 - This death involves God's final judgment on sin and eternal punishment.
- Paul uses an if-then style. Live after the flesh, ye shall die. Put away deeds of the body = life.
 - Not physical death but Spiritual. Believers put away deeds of the flesh because of the Spirit.
- Paul uses the word flesh to refer not just to our physical appetites but also to our whole life.
- Our world is in rebellion to God. Our obligation is not to the flesh but to the Spirit within us.
- **"You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you."** Rom. 8:9a
 - **What does living in the flesh look like?**
 - **What does living in the Spirit look like?**

"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 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." Romans 8: 38-39



Eternal Inheritance (Romans 8:14-18)

- **“led by the Spirit of God”**
 - Believers are to allow the Spirit of God to provide direction for their lives.
 - Paul reminds us that we have been adopted into God’s family.
 - Both slaves and children were part of the family unit in Paul’s day.
 - Christians enter God’s family as sons and daughters not slaves (bondage).
 - To understand our full status as children of God, we have the ability to address God as **“Abba, Father”**. Translated as ‘Father, dear Father’.
 - Adding to the blessing of being children of God, we are also **“heirs of God.”**
 - We will receive an inheritance from God – eternal life.
 - Paul encouraged believers to remain strong in their faith.
 - On his first missionary journey, Paul was stoned and left for dead.
 - Our present sufferings (including our COVID-19 pandemic) pale in comparison with the **“glory which shall be revealed in us”**. The glory awaiting us is beyond our comprehension.
- **How do the sufferings of this day compare to eternal life with God?**

Creation Restored (Romans 8:19-22)

- Paul describes a suffering that is beyond human suffering. In fact, when Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden God cursed the ground because of Adam (Gen. 3:17).
 - All of creation waits eagerly in anticipation of restoration.
 - **“the creature was made subject to vanity”** – through no fault in creation but due to sin.
 - But the subjection of creation to vanity (futility) is not God’s last word.
 - Hope is possible because God will set free creation itself.
 - God promises and new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness will dwell (Isa. 65-66).
 - The present fallen world will be replaced.
- **What is the responsibility of believers towards the physical world?**

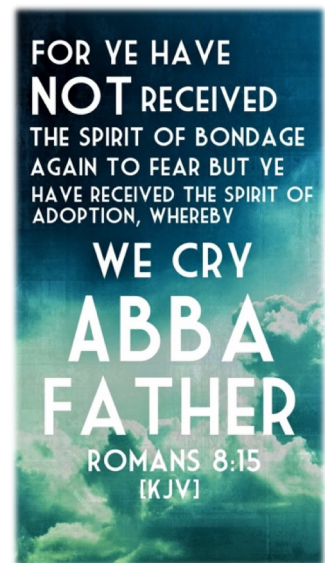
Humanity Restored (Romans 8:23-25)

- What Paul said about creation he now applies to believers.
 - Just as creation groans so do we **“groan within ourselves”**.
 - We are susceptible to the same decay as the rest of creation.
 - We are crippled by sin and relationships often characterized by ego and pride.
 - But Paul has made it abundantly clear that we are children of God.
 - We live in a fallen world but believers (God’s children) are filled with the Holy Spirit – we will be free of decay and corruption.
 - Hope by its nature is something that is not yet received.
 - Our hope is the full completion of our salvation when we receive glorified bodies and dwell in heaven forever.
 - As believers, we can approach the suffering and trials of this present life with patience as we eagerly wait.
- **How does the Holy Spirit help us as we wait for Jesus’ return?**

Biblical Truth:

***All who accept the gospel have a sure hope
for a future as children of God.***

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. Hebrews 4:14



*But if we hope for what
we do not yet have,*



we wait for it patiently.

Romans 8:25 (NIV)