

Adopted as Sons of God (Romans 8:12-17)

I. You have been Freed from Slavery (12-14)

A. The Flesh is no longer your master (12-13)

1. We are no longer "in debt" to the flesh (12)

- a. You don't owe your sinful flesh anything
- b. The flesh sometimes makes you feel like you need something it offers to be happy or satisfied, but it is a lie. The flesh never fulfills its promise.
- c. You are no longer the slave of the flesh
 - i. you now realize sin as sin in your life
 - ii. you now desire to turn from sin
 - iii. you are now free from its hold
- d. We no longer live "after the flesh"
- e. This doesn't mean sinless perfection
- f. It means there is now a war going on between flesh and spirit
- g. Those outside of Christ are only able to live in the flesh but those who are saved have new desires to live after Christ.

2. Slavery to the Flesh brings Death (13)

- a. Those under the flesh's dominion are lost
- b. "death" here is not physical death but eternal separation from God
 - i. later it will say those who are after the Spirit will live, implying that they won't die
 - ii. All men die physically, but the saved will never die spiritually

B. The Spirit Has Become Your Master (13b-14)

1. Living after the Spirit brings Life (13b)

- a. The ones who are killing "mortifying" the acts of the body (i.e. flesh) are those who are living by the Spirit
- b. This is not sinless perfection – the present tense (do mortify) signifies an ongoing action. (you are killing)
- c. The killing of Sin by the Spirit inside the believer is the evidence that he is indeed the son of God

2. Living after the Spirit is the Evidence of Adoption (14)

- a. All who are saved are led by the Spirit to kill (mortify) the deeds of the flesh
- b. This is evidence that you are a believer
- c. This doesn't mean a believer cannot sin – it means that the Spirit inside a believer won't allow him to remain in unrepentant sin
- d. As any good father, God disciplines His children
- e. There are no exceptions – all who are led by the Spirit (to mortify the flesh) are sons of God and there are no sons of God who are not led by the Spirit.

II. You Have Been Adopted As Sons (15-17a)

A. Believers are no longer slaves but Sons (15)

1. You are no longer fearful slaves (15a)

- a. The Spirit you received is not one of bondage and slavery
- b. The Spirit you received is not one that brings obedience through fear

2. You are now Adopted Sons (15b)

- a. The Spirit you received is one that brings you into a relationship with the Father
- b. "Abba" – term Jesus used for Father – signifies close personal relationship
 - i. Abba used as Father occurs only three times in the NT (Mark 14:36, Rom. 8:15, Gal. 4:6) and not at all in the OT
 - ii. It IS NOT the exact equivalent of saying "daddy," (which I think borderlines on disrespect) but it does show the close family relationship that believers have now through Jesus Christ.
 - iii. God is no longer just a supreme omnipotent being imposing His law on the universe – He is our loving Father.

B. Believers Have Proof of Their Adoption (16)

1. The Spirit testifies to Our spirit

- a. How does the Spirit testify to us? – by leading us to mortify the deeds of the body
- b. all those who are led by the Spirit are God's son
- c. Believers alone have a desire for the God of the Bible – to serve Him, to obey Him, to Love Him – this is evidence of the Spirit's work within us.
 - i. NOTE: many people serve and love a God of their own design and they may even think this is the true God. But the believer accepts God as He has revealed Himself in Scripture and turns his entire life to come into relationship and obedience to the true God.

2. The Spirit's testimony Confirms that We are God's children

C. Believers are Heirs of All God Owns (17)

1. If we have been adopted and are His children then we are heirs

- a. The adopted son has rights to the Father's estate
- b. The adopted son is not a second class son
- c. The adopted son is as much a son as the natural born son
- d. We are fellow-heirs with Christ
- e. What the Father sees in Christ – He now sees in us through Christ

2. If we have been adopted we are united to Christ

- a. We are united in his suffering too
 - 1. We suffered as He suffered when we were united with Him in His death

2. We continue to suffer with Him as His name is mocked and persecuted throughout our lives
3. We are not saved just because we want a good life, we are saved because we understood our wickedness and called out to a Savior
4. We are united together with His suffering but we will also be glorified with Him
 - i. There will come a day when God says, "Well Done"
 - ii. There will come a day when we are glorified in the presence of God because of what Christ did for us on the cross.
 - iii. As sure as we are being led by the Spirit now to do battle against the flesh, we are heirs to the glorification of Christ.