

Spirit of Adoption

Romans 8:15-18



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FOCAL Read Responsively Romans 8:15-18 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. (16) The Spirit (Himself) beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: (17) And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. (18) For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

There are many “spirits” mentioned in the Holy Scripture, most of them are *negative* or spirits that should be avoided. There is the **spirit of slumber (Romans 11:8)**, a punishment given by God to unbelieving Israel. God's Israel refused the Savior, preferring instead to work their way into Heaven through the forms and fashions of the Mosaic Law. Israel has many who accompany them in this slumber, many who believe themselves to be “good” though the Scripture resolutely declares **there are none righteous, no, not one (Romans 3:10)**. There are many who slumber today among the non-Jews, ignoring the message of the Gospel of Christ.

We see in another place **the spirit of the world (1 Corinthians 2:12)**, a spirit that capitalizes on unbelief and sin. Satan came to Jesus in the wilderness and offered Him this spirit. **“I will give You all the kingdoms of the world, all of their glory and power if You but fall down and worship me (Matthew 4:9)”**. The spirit of the world says that the things of this life are

what should be pursued above all else. It whispers, “he who dies with the most toys wins”. Though the Word of Christ plaintively warns:

Matthew 16:26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

the spirit of the world still tricks millions into chasing nothing while losing everything. Oh, that God would open the eyes of their hearts!

There is the **spirit of fear (2 Timothy 1:7)**. How terrible this spirit is, and useless its force! God frees His people from the spirit of fear, and replaces this useless thing with His power, His love, and soundness of mind. It is the **love of Christ that constrains us (2 Corinthians 5:14)**, the **love of Christ that protects us (Romans 8:35)**, the **love of Christ which passes all knowledge (Ephesians 3:19)**. Fear has no place in the Christian's walk with the Lord. We have not been given the spirit of fear.

We have **received the Spirit of adoption** if we have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is commonly thought that God is the *universal Father of all*. This, indeed, is the **spirit of error (1 John 4:6)** and not the **Spirit of truth**. The Bible is very clear in its assessment of mankind. **There are none righteous. There are none good but God (Matthew 19:17)**. Our

Lord Jesus Christ Himself, God Incarnate, rejected the title “good” when He was regarded by the sayer as no more than a mere teacher. The **Spirit of truth** declares that we are all orphaned from God because of Adam's failure. Man refused to obey God in the Garden of Eden, and continued to refuse to obey God even after he was cast from that Garden. Man was orphaned from God – not because God died (as Voltaire and many other atheistic fools have believed) but because man died. When we fill our hands with the forbidden God cannot put the best in them. We must empty our hands and come to Him on bended knee, recognizing that He alone is good, He alone is our Savior, **Jesus alone is the Christ, the Son of the Living God (Matthew 16:16)**. Orphaned by sin we all need the Savior. God requires that all who would be in His family **repent, calling upon the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 10:13)**. The genuine Christian is the person who has seen themselves as orphaned, alone in this world without God. The genuine Christian realizes that they need to be received into God's Family by Grace. The genuine Christian looks upon the Cross of Calvary with swelling heart, knowing the price that Jesus Christ paid for them. The genuine Christian has thrown themselves on God's mercy – and has not been ashamed. On the day that you believed **you received the Spirit of adoption**. God the Holy Spirit came to live within you the day you called upon the name of Jesus. **He now lives in you**, just as Jesus has promised (**John 14:17**).

The Spirit of Adoption – God's Holy Spirit – Empowers The Believer Toward An Intimacy With God

FOCAL Romans 8:15-16 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but **ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.** (16) The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

How can I know that I am in a right place with God?

God's answer to this question is the **Indwelling Holy Spirit**. We are told **you have¹ received the Spirit of adoption**. This is *past time* – **you HAVE received**. At the point of salvation the Christian **receives or is given** the Holy Spirit of God, also called **the Comforter** by Jesus. God's Holy Spirit empowers the true believer by *giving us a certainty in our hearts that God is our Father*.

Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, WHEREBY or through Whom we cry ABBA, FATHER.

The Christian, saved by grace and indwelt by the Spirit of God *knows himself to be God's child*. We who believe

1 Aorist Active Indicative of G2983, λαμβάνω, lambanō, lam-ban'-o, A prolonged form of a primary verb, which is used only as an alternate in certain tenses; to *take* (in very many applications, literally and figuratively [probably objective or active, to *get hold of*; whereas G1209 is rather subjective or passive, to *have offered* to one; while G138 is more violent, to *seize or remove*): - accept, + be amazed, assay, attain, bring, X when I call, catch, come on (X unto), + forget, have, hold, obtain, receive (X after), take (away, up).

cry unto God **Abba², Father³**. This is no *hypothetical faith*, but is a very real adoption, a binding to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Look at that phrase **Abba, Father**. This is literally the word “**Father**” in two different languages, **Chaldean and Koine Greek**. **Chaldean** was the prominent language *of the Gentile or non-Jewish person* in the early Church, and **Koine Greek** was the common language of the people – including the Jews. The Jew would not normally speak **Chaldean** because its origins were in ancient Chaldea or Babylon. The Chaldeans and Syrians were awful idolaters, as were many Gentiles, and the Jew shunned the language of these people. Yet here is an amazing thing:

Mark 14:32-36 And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray. (33) And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; (34) And saith unto them, **My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch. (35) And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. (36) And he said, Abba, Father, all things [are] possible unto thee; take away this**

2 G5, Ἀββᾶ, Abba, ab-bah', Of Chaldee origin [H2]; *father* (as a vocative): - Abba.

3 G3962, πατήρ, patēr, pat-ayr', Apparently a primary word; a “father” (literally or figuratively, near or more remote): - father, parent.

cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.

The *first use* of **Abba, Pater, “Father”** in Chaldean and “**Father**” in Koine Greek was when our Lord used the phrase in the Garden of Gethsemane. The first Adam when confronted with temptation in a Garden called *Eden* failed miserably. That was not the case with our Savior and Lord. Jesus saw the cup of suffering before Him.

Hebrews 2:9 **But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.**

The first Adam tasted the forbidden and brought all under sin. The second Adam, Jesus Christ our Lord, **tasted and drank deeply of the cup of death.** He came into the world to die for us. He took death to His breast, so that we, who embrace Him, will receive life into our souls. Look into this dark Garden called Gethsemane. Look at Him kneeling in prayer. Hear His Voice as He cries out to our Father. **Abba – Father. Abba – Pater. There is nothing that You cannot do. Will You not take this cup of death from Me? Yet Abba – Pater, it matters not. I will do as You will, Blessed Father. I will drink of this cup if You so bid!**

Jesus cried unto the Father in two languages, Greek and

Chaldee, and the Word of God would remind us of His great sacrifice later through the epistle to the Romans. **Abba, Father.** The Bible testifies that:

Galatians 4:4-7 But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, (5) To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (6) And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. (7) Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Here we see the **Spirit of adoption** once more. We who have believed on Jesus have no *hypothetical* faith. Jesus in the Garden cried out **Abba, Father**, and His cry was one of resignation and grief. What Jesus did *after* the Garden on Calvary's Tree brought all who believe in Him a very real salvation. **The Spirit of His Son, the Spirit of adoption** cries in the hearts of each of God's people **Abba, Father.** Before Jesus we were divided, different peoples, Jew and Greek, bond and free, male and female. But believing on Jesus we are all now **under the adoption of sons.** We have the testimony of Scripture:

Galatians 3:28-29 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. (29) And if ye

[be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

We who believe are **all heirs together, one in Christ Jesus**. We *know ourselves to be the children of God*. The Spirit Who indwells us touches our hearts and teaches our hearts. We are told:

FOCAL Romans 8:16 The Spirit (Himself) beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

There is a *knowing* in the Christian's heart because the Spirit **bears witness with our spirit**. God speaks to the heart of every believer reminding us **“you are mine. I bought you with a great price. Follow Me, not the world.**

“I suffered much for thee,
More than thy tongue can tell,
Of bitterest agony,
To rescue thee from hell;
I've borne it, borne it all for thee,
What hast thou borne for Me?
I bring, I bring rich gifts to thee,
What hast thou brought to Me?”⁴

You who are saved by faith in Him have a *know so* salvation.

We Who Are Adopted Children of God Are Heirs of God and Joint Heirs With Christ

In the ancient world as today, heirs of an estate do not necessarily inherit equally. A dying parent may have a favorite child who inherits the greater portion of the estate. In the ancient world the *firstborn* often received power of attorney over the parent's estate. In **Genesis chapter 27 Jacob would plot with his mother Rebekah to trick Esau** out of his birthright. Esau was the firstborn, and thus was supposed to receive the *double inheritance* of his father's estate. **Jacob went to his father Isaac** wrapped in the skins of dead goats so that when **blind Isaac** reached out his hand he would feel what he thought was his hairy son Esau. Oh, what lies were told and tricks done so that the double portion of the firstborn could fall on that old deceiver Jacob.

We who believe need not wrap ourselves in lies and deceit in order to receive our inheritance from God. Look at what our focal text states:

FOCAL Romans 8:16-17 The Spirit (Himself) beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: (17) **And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ;** if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

I want you to notice **two phrases** in this text, **“heirs of God”** and **“joint-heirs with Christ”**. Let's look at this last phrase first,

⁴ *I Gave My Life For Thee* by Frances R Havergal, 1858. Tune Kenosis, Philip P Bliss, 1873. Verses 3 and last stanza of verse 4

A The Christian is a **joint-heir⁵ with Christ**. You who believe are **heirs alongside of Christ**. We are bound to Jesus in all things. This goes *both ways*. If I am an heir alongside of Jesus, then Jesus is an heir alongside of me. Though He be God's **Only Begotten Son (John 3:16)**, and though He is

Colossians 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

Our Lord Jesus does not receive the *greater portion* and we who believe the lesser. **We are joint-heirs with Christ**. Our interests are bound together now, and into eternity. What a joyous statement this is. **We ARE joint-heirs with Christ**. This is the current state of the Christian. It is not *we will be joint-heirs*, but *we are* – but only **with Christ**. Unlike Jacob we do not have to deceive God, nor should we try. We are not covered with the skin of goats, and we do not stand before a blind God wanting the double portion. The Christian is covered with something much greater than the skin of a goat, and his inheritance is not the pittance of Isaac. No Beloved, the Christian is *covered by the righteousness of Christ*. You are **joint-heirs with Christ**. As the Scripture says:

1 Corinthians 1:30-31 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us

⁵ G4789, συγκληρονόμος, sugklēronomos, *soong-klay-ron-om'-os*, From G4862 and G2818; a *co-heir*, that is, (by analogy) *participant in common*: - fellow (joint) -heir, heir together, heir with.

wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: (31) **That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.**

Jesus Christ is your covering. God covered fallen Adam with the skins of dead animals before He cast man out of Eden. You are not covered with the mortal, but you are covered by Jesus Christ. When God looks at the believer He sees a Son *because of the Son*. When the Father looks at the Christian He sees the Blood of the Lamb of God, manifest to take away our sin. **Jesus is our wisdom, our righteousness, our sanctification, our redemption**. We belong to God because of what God in Christ has done for us.

Romans 4:7-8 [Saying], Blessed [are] they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. (8) **Blessed [is] the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.**

You are **joint-heirs with Christ**. When trials come – and they will come – you are still joint-heirs with Jesus. Joint-heirship means a sharing. Jesus told us:

John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

The devil tempted Jesus, he will tempt you. **You are**

joint-heirs. The devil struck at the Savior in the wilderness. Shortly after our Lord ascended unto Heaven the devil struck at the Church through a man **named Saul.** When Jesus came and **knocked Saul down on the Damascus Road** He told him:

Acts 9:4-5 ... **"Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"** (5) **"Who are You, Lord?"** he said. **"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,"** He replied.^{HCSB}

You might ask, "When did Saul persecute Jesus?" I tell you, he persecuted Jesus when **he persecuted the Church and the Christian that Jesus so loves. We are joint-heirs with Christ!** When the world and the world attacks the joint-heir *with Christ* then it is the same as attacking Christ. Listen Beloved,

James 1:2-3 **Consider it a great joy, my brothers, whenever you experience various trials, (3) knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.**^{HCSB}

When you go through a trial the **joint-heir** goes through it with you. God knows what you suffer. Trust in Him Who goes with you. **C.H. Spurgeon** stated:

"Would you take Job's jewels but not his dung hill? Would you have David's crown, but not his caves of

HCSB Holman Christian Standard Version of the Holy Scriptures

Adullam and the rocks of the wild goats? Would you have your Master's Throne, but not His temptation in the wilderness? ... when you refuse the one, you relinquish all claim to the other. The co-heir is heir to the entire estate. ... The joint heirship reaches from the gloomy patina of deep affliction up to the bright ineffable splendor of the throne of bliss."

or as our focal text tells us:

FOCAL Romans 8:17 ... And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; **if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.**

The Christian way of life is Christ's way of life. We suffer with Him, He suffers with us. We inherit with Him, He inherits with us. Yet we also need to remember this:

FOCAL Romans 8:18 For **I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.**

Yes, Beloved, we do suffer in this world. But this suffering is nothing compared to **the glory that shall be revealed or uncovered in us.** One day we shall be with Jesus, **joint-heirs with Christ.** The Bible says:

Hebrews 1:2 In these last days, He has spoken to us

by **His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things** and through whom He made the universe.

Jesus will one day inherit all things. We are **joint-heirs with Him, and we will inherit all things**. Will Jesus rule over many things? Then we will rule over all things. Is Christ a Priest unto God? Then we are priests unto God. Is Christ a King? Then we are kings! We are joint-heirs with Christ.

Revelation 1:5-6 ... **Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, (6) And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father;** to him [be] glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

We who believe shall rule and reign with Him – blessed be His Holy Name! **All that He has, all that He is, belongs to us. We are joint-heirs with Christ.** Secondly,

B The Christian is an **heir of God**. The ancient Levite Priest had no inheritance with God's Israel. The priest's inheritance *is God Himself*. You belong to God, Beloved, and God belongs to you. **He is, to you, Abba, Father.** The Lord your God is your fortress, the place you should hide. Nothing comes into your life that has not come under His review. The Psalmist said:

Psalms 91:2-7 **I will say of the LORD, [He is] my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. (3) Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, [and] from the noisome pestilence. (4) He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth [shall be thy] shield and buckler. (5) Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; [nor] for the arrow [that] flieth by day; (6) [Nor] for the pestilence [that] walketh in darkness; [nor] for the destruction [that] wasteth at noonday. (7) A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; [but] it shall not come nigh thee. ...**

You are an heir of God if you have believed on Christ.

Psalms 16:5 The **LORD [is] the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup:** thou maintainest my lot.

And again

Psalms 73:25-26 **Whom have I in heaven [but thee]? and [there is] none upon earth [that] I desire beside thee. (26) My flesh and my heart faileth:**

**[but] God [is] the strength of my heart,
and my portion for ever.**

If the Lord is your portion, your inheritance, your focus, then no matter what may come you will endure. You are the **heir of the Infinite, the heir of the Omnipotent, the heir of the Omniscient, the heir of the Creator of all that you see.** Step forward in faith, and take possession of what is yours by faith.

Conclusion and Call To Adoption

FOCAL Romans 8:15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

We began today by talking about the different Spirits that are mentioned in the Scripture – but we'll end by talking about the **Spirit of Adoption.** Are you saved by faith in Christ? Does the Holy Spirit testify to your human spirit that you are **heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ?** If so, then in closing I exhort you to consider the *other Names of God's Holy Spirit.* **He is the Spirit of Life (Romans 8:2).** Follow after the things that are life giving. **He is the Spirit of Christ and of God.** There is no sin in the Godhead. Do not follow sin, but follow light and salvation. You are called to a life of **meekness, grace, wisdom in Christ, and truth.** If you are joint-heirs with Christ, then be ...

A **Be loving one toward another.** We are heirs **TOGETHER** with Him and because of Him.

B **Be gracious, not grumbly.** Trolls belong under the bridge! Remember, the first generation of Israel died complaining. If we die, let us die glorifying Him.

C **Be students of God's Word.** Read it, study it, pray over it. Remember, Jesus defeated the devil with the Word. You are joint-heirs with Him – you can do no less.

D **Be frequent in prayer.** The Spirit of God guides you as you pray – but you *must* pray. And most importantly:

E **Be sure you are a joint-heir with Christ.** Does the Spirit of God whisper in your hearts that you are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ? If not, the Spirit and the Bride bid you to come to the Water of Life. Drink of Jesus, trust in Him.

May God touch your hearts with His Word.