

Heirs with Christ; Romans 8:12-17

- I. Debtors
 - a. Under obligation morally or socially
 - b. We understand debt
 - i. Most of us have a house note, car note, credit cards, etc.
 - ii. Every month we pay companies for their services: gas, electric, water, cell phones, etc.
 - iii. We are obligated to pay these debts
 - c. Paul says we are obligated to live by the Spirit – to ‘put to death the deeds of the body’
- II. Spirit versus Flesh
 - a. Romans 8:12–13 (ESV); ¹² So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. 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.
 - b. When Paul talks about the ‘deeds of the body’ he is not talking about living your normal lives – he is talking about living a life without God as your center
 - i. In the previous chapter Paul talks about the war that is waging inside our bodies – wanting to live a life dedicated to God, but giving into sinful temptations
 - ii. Romans 7:21–23 (ESV); ²¹ So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. ²² For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, ²³ but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.
 - c. Then Paul begins chapter 8 talking about the Spirit and its indwelling
 - i. Romans 8:5–6 (ESV); ⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶ For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.
 - ii. Romans 8:9–11 (ESV); ⁹ You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.
 - d. Those who have the Spirit have God as their center
 - i. Everything we do is centered around God and His will, not our own will
 - ii. We live according to our center (God)
 - iii. This can be difficult – there are many distractions that move us away from our center
 - iv. Satan is right there pulling us away from our center – I think of Job, Peter (both his denial of Christ and his fear of the Judaizers)
- III. Spirit versus Fear

- a. Fear is often what pulls us away from our center
- b. Fear of loss (family, possessions, employment, etc.)
- c. Right now we are in the constant presence of the fear of death (corona virus)
- d. Romans 8:15 (ESV); For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!”
- e. Fear is slavery (or slavery is fear)
- f. Romans 6:16–18 (ESV); ¹⁶ Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, ¹⁸ and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.
- g. We must recognize where fear comes from
- h. Fear is being afraid of something that hasn’t happened yet
- i. We must face our fear – ‘cry out, “Abba, Father”’ asking Him to intercede on our behalf, to help us get through the fear, to remember that no matter what happens to our flesh, our soul belongs to Him
- j. Facing our fears will cause us suffering

IV. Spirit versus Suffering

- a. Romans 8:16–17 (ESV); ¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.
- b. This does not mean that God desires our suffering – it is just a plain fact that if your center is God through Jesus then you will suffer
 - i. 2 Timothy 3:10–12 (ESV); ¹⁰ You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, ¹¹ my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. ¹² Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,
 - ii. John 15:18–19 (ESV); ¹⁸ “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.
- c. It is always interesting to me to see how the early church grew
 - i. Acts 4:1–4 (ESV); ¹ And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, ² greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ³ And they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. ⁴ But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand.
 - ii. The beginning of Acts 5 details the events of Ananias and Sapphira

- iii. Acts 5:14 (ESV); And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women,
 - iv. The beginning of Acts 6 details a problem of prejudice against the Greek speaking Jews
 - v. Acts 6:7 (ESV); And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.
 - vi. In Acts 12 we read about Herod taking the glory of God for himself
 - vii. God “struck him down, because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms” Acts 12:23 in part
 - viii. Acts 12:24 (ESV); But the word of God increased and multiplied.
 - d. Persecution is a regular part of our lives – suffering with (and for) Jesus is part and parcel (an integral, essential piece) of our Christianity
- V. Sons of God
- a. Romans 8:14 (ESV); For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.
 - b. This is what it is all about – being children of God, heirs of the promise, co-heirs with Christ
 - c. Heirs of the promise of eternal life with God
 - d. Heirs of the promise of sanctification, salvation, washing away our sins
 - e. We have to walk with the Spirit and not the flesh
 - f. We have to walk in confidence not in fear
 - g. We have to walk knowing we will suffer persecution not in ease and comfort
 - h. The Trail Life organization has a motto from Colossians 1:10, “walk worthy”