

Sent: Wednesday, February 07, 2018 9:29 PM
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study on Romans 8:14-17

"For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God! For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father"! The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him!" (Romans 8:14-17)

Douglas Moo says these verses provide an "effective transition" from the believer's present standing to his or her future state--a pattern Paul uses elsewhere in his writings. In Galatians 4:3-7, for example--in a parallel passage--Paul actually covers the full cycle of "salvation history"! We were once in bondage under sin, but when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' Therefore, you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God!"

And so, the past, the present, and the future standing!

As believers, we have been redeemed! Freed from the penalty of sin! Justified by faith! And we've received the "Spirit of adoption," the Holy Spirit, who now dwells within us, enabling us to be freed from the power of sin in our lives! And, even better, we are now declared "children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God, and fellow heirs with Christ"! Destined for glory! And so, the best is yet to come!

And so, the Holy Spirit continues to be the dominant subject in this passage, although Paul also talks about "sonship" and "adoption" and "heirs" and "suffering"--all somehow tied together!

One of the evidences of being believers, and therefore "children of God," is that we're "being led" by the Spirit of God in our walk with the Lord! Shepherd's Notes states that such leading is not a series of "highs and lows" in a believer's life, but a, "day-by-day response to the leading of the Holy Spirit. It's part of the process of sanctification!

And while He leads us through circumstances and in other "wondrous ways," the most important way is through Scripture and the illumination of His Word, by the Holy Spirit! In John 17:17, we see Jesus praying to the Father--just prior to the cross--that He would sanctify His disciples, "in the truth. Your word is truth." Luke, the apostle, records how Jesus, in giving His Great Commission (in Luke 24:44-45), "opened the minds of his disciples to understand how all that was written about Him in the Law of Moses and the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

Ephesians 1:15-19 describes how Paul, "after having heard of the faith" of Ephesians believers prayed that "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ... might give them a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him... and that the eyes of their heart might be enlightened, so that they might know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe!"

The psalmist wrote: "Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Word," (Psalm 119:18) and, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105), and even pleaded, "O that my ways may be established to keep Your statutes!" (119:5)

John MacArthur put it this way: "The Spirit-filled life does not come through mystical or ecstatic experiences, but from studying and submitting oneself to Scripture. As a believer faithfully and submissively saturates his mind and heart with God's truth, his Spirit-controlled behavior will follow as surely as night follows day."

Well, there's lots more to the Spirit's working in our lives revealed by our text!

Our memory verse: "The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ..." According to Dr. Constable, the Holy Spirit, "confirms the reality of the believer's position as a "son of God." Such an awareness should influence the way we choose to live and provide peace and security in our lives! Hence the doctrine of "eternal security"!

And then the "spirit of adoption as sons" recognition and the "opportunity of a lifetime" to cry out to God, not in fear, but as "Abba! Father!" Just as Christ did in His prayer, in the garden of Gethsemane, just prior to the cross! (In Mark 14:36) All of which conveys a great sense of intimacy and security never before known by mere mortal men!

Well, what about the idea of suffering with the possible (mis)interpretation that salvation and the ultimate, "glorification of the believer," are in some way dependent upon suffering and persecution? After all those verses assuring security of the believer?

Scripture makes it clear that we're saved and kept (saved) by grace alone and not by works, or anything we could do! Romans 8 starts out with the words: "Therefore, there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus!" And Jesus Himself said in John 10:20, "I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. And no one will snatch them out of My hand."

It's good to be reminded that our salvation is based on Christ's suffering alone and not ours! And yet, Scripture is also clear that, as believers, we should expect suffering and persecution in this life! In fact, the apostles Paul and Peter seemed to look forward to it and rejoiced that they could, "participate with Christ in His suffering." Peter said in 1 Peter 4:12-13, "But to the degree that you share the suffering of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation." And so, while our text is not teaching that our salvation depends on, "suffering for Jesus' sake," it is a clear indicator that we are, in fact, believers. And, as Dr. Constable and other Biblical scholars suggest, it has something to with our inheritance and rewards in glory!

And so, the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives as believers and the on-going process of sanctification that's taking place! And more to follow as we move on next week to Romans 8:18-29!

Well men, walk with the King this week and be a blessing!

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