

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

SPREADING THE SOUL-SAVING MESSAGE OF JESUS

ROMANS LESSON 7 (Chapter 8)

Introduction by narrator accompanied by a cappella singing:

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST. Spreading the soul-saving message of Jesus. And now, Timothy Sparks and Ben Bailey.

Ben Bailey:

“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ” (Rom. 8:1). I’m Ben Bailey.

Timothy Sparks:

And I’m Timothy Sparks. Welcome to our study of the Book of Romans. This message is brought to you by individuals and congregations of the church of Christ. We hope that you will visit the church of Christ in your area. We also hope you will visit us on our website at www.thegospelofchrist.com. We have streaming video and audio lessons available, which you may download to aid you in your study of God’s Word. We also make available DVDs and CDs of our broadcasts. If you would like to have some of these for your person use, please contact us. Send us an e-mail, write us, or call us. We will be glad to send these items to you absolutely free, with no obligation. We’ll even cover the postage. We also make available Bible correspondence courses. We want to help you in any way we can as you study God’s Word.

We now come to Romans 8. We learned from Romans 6 that we are free from sin. We learned from Romans 7 that we are free from the Old Law. Romans 8 is going to teach us that we are “free in Christ” to do His will—that is to say, we are empowered and enabled to live for Jesus. We learn from Romans 8 what it means to be “in Christ.” As Paul put it, “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus” (vs. 1). First and foremost, there is no condemnation. How did Paul begin the Book of Romans? The theme and thesis of the Book is Romans 1:16-17, where we learn that the Gospel is God’s saving power. If the Gospel saves, then naturally there is “no condemnation in Christ.”

Ben Bailey:

In Christ, we have so many varied blessings. As Paul wrote Romans 8:1, it’s very likely that he was thinking back to the writings of the Old Testament. This seems to be especially true when he refers to that writing in Galatians 3:10, “Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things written in the law, to do them.” No one could keep the law perfectly. And if you didn’t keep the law perfectly, you were accursed. There was a condemnation placed on those who could not keep the Old Law. No one could keep it perfectly, so everyone at one point or another stood condemned in God’s sight. But as Christians, we have so many wonderful blessings that our God has given us. Think about the blessing of prayer. Jesus said in Luke 18:1, “Men ought to always pray and not

lose heart.” When you get down, when life doesn’t seem to be going your way, realize that you have the blessing of praying to God and asking for His help. We have the beautiful blessing of forgiveness of our sins. Jesus said in Matthew 26:28 as He instituted the Lord’s Supper, “This is My blood of the New Covenant which was shed for many for the remission of sins.” Thus, we have prayer. We have the forgiveness of sins. And we also have God’s mercy. Titus 3:5 tells us, “According to His mercy He saved us.” The writer of Lamentations said, “Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not” (3:22). God’s mercy stimulates us and motivates us to live every day for Him. So, Romans 8 presents in a very beautiful way several blessings that we, as the children of God, possess.

Timothy Sparks:

Notice Romans 8:6—“ To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” This is one of the blessings that is presented in Romans 8. The fleshly mind is that which caters to the flesh. It is found in people who allow their flesh to control them; whatever feels good, that is what they do. Paul says that that leads to misery and spiritual death. But to be spiritually minded—to have the spiritual mind that seeks to do God’s will—brings life and peace. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (Jn. 14:6). Jesus is the way; without Him there is no going. Jesus is the truth; without Him there is no knowing. Jesus is the life; without Him there is no living. He came that we might have life and have it more abundantly (Jn. 10:10). So to be spiritually minded is to gain life and peace. We learn from Colossians 1:20 that Christ made peace through the blood of His cross. He is the One Who makes life and peace possible. Peace is a great blessing for the child of God. It’s a “peace that passes understanding” (Phil.4:7). Do you know the God of peace? Do you have the blessing of being “in Christ”? You see, spiritual blessings are only available to those who are in Christ (Eph.1:3). The spiritual blessings that come from God are available only to His children. Physical blessings come to Christians and non-Christians alike, as we learn from Matthew 5:45—“He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.” But spiritual blessings come only to those who are in Christ. A study of the various passages throughout the New Testament about being “in Christ” makes for a marvelous study indeed. As you look at the Book of Revelation, it has much to say about living and dying “in Christ.” Consider Revelation 14:13, for example. “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. ‘Yes’ says the Spirit, ‘that they may rest from their labors and their works follow them.’”

Ben Bailey:

One of the blessings that we see elucidated in Romans 8:14 is the blessing of being led by the Spirit of God. “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.” Many in the religious community today take this to mean that if you feel “nudged” to do something, or if you get “a funny feeling in the middle of the night,” you can claim that it’s the Spirit telling you to do something. That’s not what Paul is saying. “Being led by the Spirit of God” means that we are led through His inspired Word. In John 16:13, Jesus promised that the Spirit of truth would come, and would guide us into “all truth.” That truth is what we have today. Peter said, “God has given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness” (2 Pet 1:3). Being “led by the Spirit” doesn’t mean that we get “a gentle nudge,” or that we get “a funny feeling in the middle of the night.” We are led by the Spirit when we read and understand the Spirit’s words—in the Bible. How can I know I’m a child of God? How can I really **know**? By reading and studying the Word of God.

John said that we can **know** we are saved (1 Jn. 5:13). Think about this. If you did receive a “gentle nudge” that made you think that you were a child of God, how would you **know** that was the Spirit of God, and not some evil spirit? You see, there’s really no way you could know. But by reading and studying the Bible, you **can** know—beyond the shadow of a doubt. You can know what is, and what is not, God’s will. You can know exactly what you must do. We can know we are children of God when we read the Bible, and when we follow the Spirit of God found in the Word of God.

Timothy Sparks:

Have you ever had somebody tell you that the Spirit led them to a good parking spot at Wal-Mart? That’s not how God guides us today. We learn from 2 Thessalonians 2:14 that we are “called by the Gospel.” It’s the Gospel that guides us. It’s the Gospel that calls us. God’s Word is able to direct our feet. Even under the Old Testament, the people recognized that it was the Word of God that was able to show them the way. Psalm 119:105 states, “Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path.” God guides us through His Word. The Holy Spirit inspired men to give us God’s message. However, we are not to revere those men above any other human, because the **Author** behind the message is **God**. So how, exactly, are we “led by the Spirit of God” today? We are led by the Spirit of God as we keep the will of God. God has given us specific instructions. It’s not something that is “better felt than told.” Some people say, “I wouldn’t trade this deep-down feeling in my heart for a thousand Bibles.” Such an attitude is not in keeping with God’s Word. That type of attitude is not from God, because God has given us His Word, and He has commanded us to obey it (Jn. 14:15). God wants us to apply ourselves, just as the people of Berea did. Paul said of them, “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica in that they received the word of God with all readiness of mind and searched the scriptures daily to learn whether these things were so” (Acts 17:11). We have to be people who come to the Word of God with an attitude which says that we are willing to allow God to direct us through that Word.

Ben Bailey:

Another beautiful blessing that we discover in Romans 8 is that of being children of God. There are many children in the United States who are orphans—children who don’t have a father or mother. They **really** understand what that’s like. In Romans 8:16-17, we read, “The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then joint heirs with Christ if indeed we suffer with Him.” What is one of the greatest blessings for the Christian? It is the privilege of being able to call God our Father. Jesus taught in Matthew 6, “Pray, ‘Our Father, who art in Heaven.’” God has given us the privilege of calling Him by the name “Father,” a loving term of endearment for which we, as His sons and daughters, should be ever grateful. John said, “Behold, look see what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we could be called children of God” (1 Jn. 3:1). What an awesome responsibility and privilege it is to have the heavenly Father as **our** Father, the One Who cares for our souls. When we become God’s children, we are adopted sons and daughters. Paul said in Galatians 4:4-7, “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’ Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” Think about the countless number of orphan homes we have in our society. Think about the countless number of single-parent families where children are be-

ing reared without a father. Imagine what that must feel like—for a child to not have a father in his or her life. Yet, many in the spiritual world don't have God as their Father. There's no less a feeling of void for them than for those who don't have an earthly father. There is a void that isn't being filled if God is not our Father. We learn from Romans 8:16-17 that it is a great blessing to be a child of God.

Timothy Sparks:

We need to realize that when we are led by the Spirit of God, we will become the sons of God, because God has told us what we must do to be obedient to His will. Jesus tells us that He is the Son of God, and that we must believe that He is the Son of God (Jn. 8:24). Otherwise, we will die in our sins. Jesus also tells us, "Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish" (Lk. 13:3). Repentance is essential if a person wants to become a child of God. Also, we are commanded to confess Christ as the Son of God (Rom. 10:10). This is something that a person does joyfully because of the far better way that God has revealed to us through His Word. He has given us the good news, the glad tidings, the Gospel of Christ. Once we make that confession, then we can be baptized into Christ—immersed in water to access the cleansing blood of Jesus, "the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29). Then we arise to walk in newness of life, continuing to be led by the Spirit through the Spirit's instructions as given in God's Word. In his discussion in Romans 8, Paul makes it clear, "If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him" (vs. 9). Having the Spirit of Christ is, in essence, going where Christ would go, and doing what Christ would do. So, to be led by the Spirit is to follow what God has given to us in the New Testament. Then we become the sons of God, and we continue to remain God's faithful children.

Ben Bailey:

Romans 8:18 is sometimes foreign to our way of thinking. Paul says, "I consider that the sufferings of this present world are not worthy to be compared with the glory which will be revealed in us." There can be no doubt that we live in a world of suffering. In keeping with the context of Paul's comments, we see that when we follow the directions of the Spirit, that will make us "different" from those in the world. That, in turn, means that because we are following the guidelines of the Bible, we're going to be persecuted, and suffering will inevitably follow. Paul says, "I consider that the sufferings of this present world are not worthy to be compared with the glory which will be revealed in us." As you think about this old word of sin, sorrow, death, and pain, think, too, about Heaven. Doesn't that make the Christian life seem worth living? Yes, we may have troubles. Yes, we may have problems. Death, sorrow, loss, pain, and sin—all of those are things that we may have to endure. But Heaven will be worth it all! That's what Paul is trying to get across to these brethren in Rome. Some of them may have been so dependent on the Old Law that they had given up on their salvation. Because they were Jews who came out of the Old Law and into the New Law, they very likely were suffering at the hands of their Jewish brethren. They very likely were being persecuted because they were Christians. So Paul is offering them a word of encouragement. "Although you're suffering, Heaven will surely be worth it all!" The same is true for us today. When I have problems in life—when life just doesn't seem to go like it should, when a friend or a loved one dies, when someone I know gets cancer—what makes this world and all the suffering that we endure worth it? Why not just commit suicide and end my life? Why keep going on? Because Heaven will surely be worth it all! That is the overriding theme of Romans 8:18. Job serves as a perfect example of someone who persevered through suffering. You

remember the life of Job. Job was an upright man. Satan caused him severe problems. He lost his business and his wealth. He lost all of his children. His own wife tormented him. And when all of that didn't work, Satan afflicted him with a disease, likened to what we today might call leprosy. The Bible tells us the only comfort he could get was by taking a piece of pottery and scraping the dead skin from his body. Job suffered terribly. But in Job 42, we learn that it was worth it all. God restored all that he had—and then some! That's the case in Christianity. When we suffer, Heaven makes it worth it all in the end.

Timothy Sparks:

As Paul continues his discussion (Rom. 8:19-23), he tells us more about this. He talks about how the Creation expectantly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. Here, Paul is using the word that Christ used in Mark 16:16 when He said, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all the **creation**." Notice how Paul continues to use this terminology when says that "the whole creation groans" (vs. 22). The New Testament uses the word creation to speak about humans, not inanimate objects. This is going to remove much of the difficulty from what Paul says. God has chosen humans to be the means by which the Gospel is disseminated. The world around us, which is groping and dying in sin, desperately needs the Gospel. Notice Romans 8:24-25, where Paul says, "Hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what he sees. But if we hope for what we do not see, then with patience we expectantly wait for it." This is a great lesson on hope—desire plus expectation. We have a desire to do God's will, and a desire to go to Heaven. But we also have an expectation that God will honor His promise. So, regardless of the tribulations that we endure in this life, Paul says, "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which will be revealed to us." Christians are promised that we **will** undergo persecution. As Paul told Timothy, "All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (2 Tim. 3:12). Paul's point, however, is that, in the end, the extent to which we are persecuted is going to turn out to be irrelevant. It's not even worthy of comparison to the great glory that will be revealed to us in Heaven. The biggest dreamer among us is dreaming too small when it comes to what God has in store for those whom He redeems. He redeems those who are willing to obey His will (Heb. 5:8-9). Jesus has thus become the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him. **You** can be among those who are redeemed—those who can call God their Father.

Ben Bailey:

The plan of salvation is a plan that God established from the very beginning. God knew that humans would sin. Thus, before the world was created, God had begun to prepare a way for us to be saved. Sin is that which separates us from God, but God's grace and God's mercy reach out to us, a sinful people. The Bible tells us clearly that we have to be willing to study the Word of God. I must hear God's Word. I must be willing to accept it as the final authority on all religious matters. That means that the writings of men—the catechisms, the manuals—those are not where salvation will be found. I have to be willing to come to the Bible alone. Paul told Timothy, "Study to show yourself approved unto God" (2 Tim. 2:15). We must be willing to study the Bible in such a way that we're going to obey from the heart what God tells us to do. The Bible makes it clear that we must be willing to believe in Jesus as the Son of God. In Acts 8, as the Ethiopian nobleman was being taught by Philip, they came to water, and the nobleman said, "Here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" Philip's answer was, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." Do you today believe with all your heart that Jesus is the Son of God? If so,

you're on the way to salvation. Belief alone, however, is not enough, as we learn from James 2:24. I also have to repent. In Luke 13:1-5, Jesus told a story. Certain people came to Him and said, "Lord, what about these people whose blood Pilate had mingled with the sacrifices? Were they worse sinners than all the rest? And what about the eighteen men on whom the Tower of Siloam fell? Was that the wrath of God against those people?" Jesus said, "I tell you no, but unless **you** repent, you shall all likewise perish." So I must believe. I believe so much that I'm willing to repent; I turn from sin to God. I then confess the beautiful name of Jesus before men (Rom. 10:10). And I'm baptized into His death, burial, and resurrection. Romans 6:1-4 makes it clear that I cannot access the death of Christ unless I also die to sin, bury myself in the watery grave of baptism, and rise to walk in newness of life. Throughout the New Testament, it is clear that baptism is essential. Jesus said in John 3:3,5, "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God." Nicodemus asked, "How can I be born again? Can I go a second time into my mother's womb?" Jesus made it clear that He wasn't speaking about a physical birth. He was talking about a spiritual birth by water that put one into the kingdom of God. So our Lord said in Mark 16:16, "He that believes and is baptized will be saved." Once we access the blood of Christ, then we begin our Christian walk. After that, we must "be faithful unto death" (Rev. 2:10). We have to live a life of faithfulness every day of our life. Jesus said in Luke 9:23, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." Christianity is a religion that requires effort. It requires great dedication and constant cleansing. It requires that we make sure that we're right by walking in the light. In Romans 8, we see the great benefits that come by being a child of God. Romans 8:1 doesn't apply to you if you're not a child of God. There is only condemnation for those who are outside of Christ. We live in a world that doesn't like to think about negatives. But the "negative" of not being in Christ is that you'll be lost for all eternity. We love your soul, and we don't want you to be lost. Hell is too horrible a place to even think about. Jesus said in Mark 9:44 that is a place where the worm dies not, and where the fire is not quenched. In the New Testament, God reveals His will to us. We **can** have the blessings of being sons and daughters of God.

We'd like to thank you for joining us for our broadcast. We hope that you'll visit our website and e-mail us. We'll be glad to send you a free DVD or CD of today's lesson, at no cost to you. Also, we have a correspondence course that you can complete through the mail, and that can help you as you study God's Word. If you have a Bible question that you'd like us to answer, please send it to us. We will be happy to try to answer it for you from the Scriptures. It is our prayer that you will continue to study God's Word with us as we endeavor to discover more of "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

Narrator accompanied by a cappella singing:

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST is brought to you by loving, caring members of the church of Christ. The McLish Avenue church of Christ in Ardmore, Oklahoma, oversees this evangelistic effort. For a free CD or DVD of today's broadcast, please write to:

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST
607 McLish Ave.
Ardmore, OK 73401

You may call **580-223-3289**. Please visit us on the web at www.thegospelofchrist.com. We encourage you to attend the church of Christ, where "the Bible is loved and the Gospel is preached."

STUDY QUESTIONS FOR ROMANS LESSON 7 (CHAPTER 8)

1. What is the main thrust of Romans 6?
2. What is the main thrust of Romans 7?
3. What is the main thrust of Romans 8?
4. Explain the point of Galatians 3:10, “Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things written in the law, to do them.”
5. According to Luke 18:1, what is one of the spiritual blessings of being a Christian?
6. In Romans 8:6, Paul discusses another spiritual blessing. What is it?
7. How does Romans 8:6 related to Philippians 4:7?
8. According to Ephesians 1:3, where are “all spiritual blessings”?
9. Revelation 14:13 presents a very specific blessing that is reserved for Christians. What is it?
10. How does one get “in Christ?” Support your answer with Scripture.
11. According to 1 John 5:13, there is one thing that the Christian can know with certainty. What is it?
12. In 2 Peter 1:3, what did Peter say that God has given us?
13. How does the Spirit guide us? Support your answer with Scripture.
14. What is one way that we can prove our love for Christ, according to John 14:15?
15. What did the people of Berea do that made them “more noble than those in Thessalonica?”
16. How does Acts 17:11 apply to Christians today?
17. Paul discussed in Romans 8:16-17 another spiritual blessing reserved for Christians. What is that blessing?
18. Explain the meaning of the phrase “heir of God through Christ” in Galatians 4:7.
19. In Romans 8:18, Paul referred to “the sufferings of this present world.” What did he have to say about the suffering we may have to endure as Christians?
20. According to Romans 8:24-25 (“...with patience we expectantly wait for it”), what would be a good definition of “hope”?