

Romans 8:1-11
The Reality of Two Mindsets

Introduction: Up till now Paul has referred to the Holy Spirit 4x, but in chapter 8 he refers to the Spirit 19x. But as important as this may be, the main theme of chapter 8 is the guaranteed security of the believer.

1) We live in only one of two possible spiritual locations—8:1-8

- a) There is no guilty verdict and intended punishment for Christians—8:1 ¹
*There is **therefore now** (emphatic; absolutely) no condemnation [kata,krima] (guilty verdict) for those who are in [evn] Christ Jesus.*
 - i) Many older MSS include: “*who walk [pres. act. ptc. peripate,w] not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*”
 - ii) Notice it does NOT say: no sin, no failure, no mistakes, nothing condemnable, etc.
 - iii) Let me ask you this, do you harbor a sense of shame or a guilty conscience about things for which you know you have been forgiven?
- b) We have been liberated—8:2
 - i) ²For [ga,r] *the law of the Spirit of life has set you (singular, individually) free [aor. act. ind. evleuqero,w] (cf. 6:18, 22) in [evn] Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.*
- c) How did this liberation take place?—8:3-4
 - i) ³For [ga,r] *God (the Father) has done what the law, weakened by the flesh (human inability), could not do [avdu,natoj].*
 - (1) Emphasis on Christ’s person, work, and purpose: *By sending his own Son (one of the exact same nature as Himself) ...*
 - (a) His person: *in [evn] the likeness [o`moi,wma] of sinful flesh*
 - (i) His human nature was protected and preserved from the indwelling principle of sin that has plagued all other human beings since Adam (cf. Luke 1:35). (Witmer, BKC)
 - (b) His work: *and for [peri,] sin (as a sin offering), he condemned [katakri,nw] sin in [evn] the flesh (in Jesus’ physical body),*
 - (c) His purpose of the condemnation of sin: ⁴*in order that [i[na] the righteous requirement [dikai,wma] of the law might be fulfilled (by God) in [evn] us,*
 - (2) Who is the “us”? *who walk [pres. act. ptc. peripate,w] not according to [kata,] the flesh but [avlla,] according to [kata,] the Spirit.*
 - (a) All believers have a new lifestyle, new thinking patterns, and new spiritual capability. There is no neutrality.
 - (b) There is not a spiritual subgroup of super-Christians who walk according to the Spirit.
- d) The distinguishing significance of your habitual mind-set—8:5-8
 - i) A contrast of **lifestyle**; flesh or Spirit—8:5

- This explains why this freedom is not true of the ones walking according to the flesh.
 - (1) ⁵ *For [ga,r] those who live* (lit. “those who are”) *according to [kata,] the flesh set their minds [pres. act. ind. frone,w] on the things of the flesh,*
 - (a) This is a broader concept than “walking.”
 - (2) *but [de,] those who live according to [kata,] the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.*
 - ii) A contrast of **mindset**; flesh/death or Spirit/life—8:6
 - This explains why this freedom is not true of the ones thinking according to the flesh.
 - This is a worldview, not merely preoccupation. It includes the general direction of the will, or, as Calvin said, “all the faculties of the soul—reason, understanding, and affections.”
 - (1) ⁶ *For [ga,r] to set the mind [fro,nhma] on* (mindset of) *the flesh is death,*
 - (2) *but to set the mind [fro,nhma] on* (mindset of) *the Spirit is life and peace.*
 - iii) Further description of the unsaved mindset—8:7-8
 - This explains why the mindset of the flesh is death.
 - (1) **Hostility:** ⁷ *For [dio,ti] the mind [fro,nhma] that is set on* (mindset of) *the flesh is hostile [e;cqra] to God,*
 - (a) It hates what God loves and loves what God hates. It is against His being, His existence, His perfections, His Word, His gospel, His people, etc.
 - (2) **Insubordination:** *for [ga,r] it does not submit to [u`pota,ssw] God’s law;*
 - (3) **Inability:** *indeed [ga,r], it cannot [du,namai].*
 - (a) ⁸ *Those who are in [evn] the flesh cannot [du,namai] please [avre,skw] God.*
 - (4) If one cannot think thoughts that are anything but hostile to God and that lead to a walk in the flesh, then those with such minds (who are in the flesh) cannot please God. (Jay Adams)
- 2) We need to understand a startling contrast that leads to hope—8:9-11**
- a) His clear statement—8:9 ⁹ **You** (emphatic), *however, are not* (solely by God’s grace) *in [evn] the flesh but in [evn] the Spirit,*
 - i) Positive: *if in fact [ei;per] the Spirit of God (the Father) dwells [oivke,w] in [evn] you.*
 - (1) As opposed to sin dwelling in the unsaved (7:17)
 - ii) Negative: *Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.*
 - iii) Note the Spirit comes from both the Father and the Son (John 14:26; 15:26)
 - b) His interrupted thought—8:10 ¹⁰ *But if Christ is in [evn] you,*
 - i) On the one hand: *although [me,n] **the body** (emphatic) is dead because of [dia,] sin,*

- ii) On the other hand: [de,] *the Spirit is life because of righteousness.*
- c) His completed thought rooted in the Tri-unity of God—8:11 ¹¹ *If (assumed true, 1st class condition) the Spirit of him (God the Father) who raised Jesus from the dead dwells [oivke,w] in [evn] you*
 - i) Regarding the past, physical resurrection: (then) *he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead* (i.e. God the Father)
 - ii) Regarding the future, physical resurrection: *will also give life to your mortal bodies through [dia,] his Spirit who dwells [oivke,w] in [evn] you.*

3) Things we need to remember:

- a) Contrast: All believers have a new lifestyle, new thinking patterns, and new spiritual capability. There is no neutrality.
- b) Comfort: There is not a spiritual subgroup of super-Christians who walk according to the Spirit. Every believer has the same Spirit. Don't view yourself as second class compared to some other professing believers.

Romans 8:12-17
God's Grace Demonstrated Toward His Children

Introduction: Just for trivia's sake, London pastor David Martyn Lloyd-Jones spent 25 sermons on this paragraph from May 1960 through April 1961.

1) God reveals our Spirit enablement—8:12-15

- a) Our obligation identified—8:12-13
 - i) Stated **negatively**—8:12-13 ¹² *So then, brothers, we are debtors (under obligation), not to the flesh, to live according to [kata,] the flesh.*
 - (1) Clarify that before salvation, we were under the control of sin.
 - (2) Too often, we are like slaves who have been freed from the relationship to our old owner, but, out of long-standing habit, we still occasionally listen to our old master when he issues orders.
 - ii) Implied **positively**: we are in a new relationship to the Spirit
 - (1) This is not, however, a luxury or merely an ambition
 - iii) Contrasting outcomes for two opposing standards—8:13 ¹³ *For [ga,r] ...*
 - Note the shift from “we” to “you^{pl}”.
 - (1) **Negative**: *if (1st class condition) you live according to [kata,] the flesh you will (are about to) die [avpoqnh,skw] (eternal separation from God),*
 - (2) **Positive**: *but if (1st class condition) by the Spirit you put to death [qanato,w] the deeds [pra/xij] (practices) of the body, you will live.*
 - (a) This is same as the old term “mortification”. This is the practical side of Romans 6:11.
- b) A clear statement regarding sanctification—8:14 ¹⁴ *For [ga,r] all who are led [a;gw] by the Spirit of God (these) are sons [ui`o,j] of God.*
 - i) This is not a subjective guiding to determine the will of God.
 - ii) This is the objective work of the Spirit of God moving us toward sanctification throughout our Christian journey.
- c) The reason we are God's sons—8:15 ¹⁵ *For [ga,r] ...*
 - i) **Negative; not fear**: *you did not receive [lamba,nw] the spirit of slavery [doulei,a] to fall back into fear [fo,boj],*
 - (1) We have been set free from fear.
 - ii) **Positive; intimacy, but not informality**: *but [avlla,] you have received [lamba,nw] the Spirit of adoption as sons [ui`oqesi,a], by [evn] whom we (intensely emotional) cry [kra,zw], “Abba! Father!” (like Jesus in Mark 14:36)*
 - (1) Adoption includes 2 aspects:
 - (a) A total break with one's former family
 - (b) A guarantee of all the privileges and responsibilities of a legal son.

2) God reveals our gracious inheritance—8:16-17

- a) We are God's offspring by spiritual birth (regeneration)—8:16 ¹⁶ *The Spirit himself bears witness with [summature,w] our spirit that we are children [te,knon] (born ones, family members) of God,*
- i) The Spirit not only **makes** us God's sons, but He also **makes us aware** that we are God's sons.
 - ii) As the believer studies the Word and sees his life transformed (cf. 8:13), the Spirit impresses upon his mind that he belongs to God.
(Vanlaningham in Moody B.C.)
- b) We are part of God's family as heirs by legal declaration—8:17 ¹⁷ *and if (1st class condition) children [te,knon], then heirs [klhrono,moj]—*
- i) On the one hand: [me,n] **heirs** [klhrono,moj] (emphatic) *of God*
 - (1) We will inherit what God has promised for us.
 - ii) On the other hand: *and [de,] fellow heirs with [sugklhrono,moj] Christ,*
 - (1) **Negative:** *provided [ei;per] we suffer with him [sumpa,scw]*
 - (a) Part of being a disciple of Jesus Christ
 - (2) **Positive:** *in order that [i[na] we may also be glorified with him [sundoxa,zw].*
 - (a) Note the sequence: suffering always comes before glory. One of the conditions for inheriting is suffering with and for Christ.

3) Things to remember:

- a) The great privileges we possess by God's grace (indicatives, facts) involves great responsibility (imperatives, commands) by God's grace.
- b) Don't base your assurance of salvation on your own evaluation of your spiritual progress in sanctification, because your progress will be slow and inconsistent.

Romans 8:18-25
One's View of Suffering Reveals One's Worldview

Introduction: Do you view the universe as a “closed system”, therefore without ultimate hope or purpose? Or do you view the universe as an “open system” in which God actively works as the Sovereign to accomplish His purposes? We won't be following ML-J's example of spending 9 sermons in this paragraph.

1) Don't try to make an impossible comparison—8:18

- a) An undeniable clear reality: ¹⁸ For [ga,r] I consider [logi,zomai] (rather than a merely emotional response) that the sufferings [pa,qhma] of this present time ...
 - i) Suffering is real and painful, but it is not eternal.
- b) An undeniable certain truth—*are not worth comparing with* (emphatic) *the glory that is* (me,llw, about) *to be revealed* [avpokalu,ptw] ① to [eivj] us. (cf. 2 Cor. 4:17)
 - i) Glory is real but is delayed, for now. The time will come when we will see Christ in all of His glory and will reflect that glory as the moon reflects the light of the sun. (Moody BC)

2) Remember that non-human creation is waiting expectantly for God's good design—8:19-22

- a) Remember creation's anticipation: ¹⁹ For [ga,r] the creation waits [avpekde,comai] ① with eager longing [avpokaradoki,a] (in suspense) for the revealing [avpoka,luyij] ② of the (true nature of the) sons [ui'o,j] of God.
- b) Remember God's design of giving creation hope—8:20-21
 - i) The what? ²⁰ For [ga,r] the creation was subjected [aor. pass. u`pota,ssw] to *futility* [mataio,thj] (by God; Gen. 3:7-19),
 - (1) Adam's sin affected his environment also. It was not creation's fault that Adam sinned.
 - ii) The how? *not willingly* [e`kw,n], *but* [avlla,] *because of him who subjected* [aor. act. u`pota,ssw] it,
 - (1) God functioned as the Judge of Adam's sin. The subjection was not a voluntary act by creation.
 - iii) The why? *in* [evpi,] (on the basis of the) *hope* [evlpi,j] (given by God)...
 - (1) ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free [evleuqero,w] (by God) from its *bondage* [doulei,a] to *corruption* [fqora,]
 - (a) and obtain [eivj] the freedom [evleuqeri,a] of the glory of the children [te,knon] of God.
 - (2) Creation will benefit from what God's children receive.
- c) Remember creation's temporary groaning—8:22 ²² For [ga,r] we know [oi;da] that the whole creation has been groaning together [sustena,zw] ① (with other parts of creation *in the pains of childbirth* [sunwdi,nw] (for the birth of the new age designed by God) *until now*.

i) Eventually the baby is born, but the process is painful.

**3) Remember that believers also wait expectantly for God's good design—
8:23-25**

a) Groaning while waiting—8:23

i) Negative: ²³ *And not only the creation,*

ii) Positive: *but [avlla,] we (emphatic) ourselves, who have the firstfruits [avparch,] of the Spirit, groan [stena,zw] ② inwardly (cf. 2 Cor. 5:2) as we wait eagerly [avpekde,comai] ② for adoption as sons [ui`oqesi,a], the redemption [avpolu,trwsij] of our bodies.*

(1) The “firstfruits” refers to the initial gift and work of the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation. There is a guarantee of more to come!

(a) We will experience more of the life by the Spirit than we experience today even though he already indwells us. (SLJ)

(2) The groaning may arise from frustration and/or anticipation.

(3) Many of God's children, when they encounter hardship, have uttered a groan and said, “How I wish Jesus would come back *right now!*” Unbelievers do not express such sentiments, and the fact that believers do should serve to remind them that their utopia is not found in this life. (Vanlaningham, Moody BC)

b) Hope is closely related to faith—8:24-25 ²⁴ *For [ga,r] in this hope [evlpi,j] we were saved [sw,zw].*

• This gives the reason for the waiting and the groaning. Remember Abraham as the example of genuine hope n 4:18.

i) Negative: *Now [de,] hope [evlpi,j] that is seen is not hope [evlpi,j]. For [ga,r] who hopes [evlpi,zw] for what he sees?*

ii) Positive: ²⁵ *But [de,] if (1st class condition) we hope [evlpi,zw] for what we do not see, we wait for it [avpekde,comai] ③ with [dia,] patience [u`pomoh,].*

(1) Godward endurance makes our present troubles manageable for His glory.

4) Things we need to remember:

a) Suffering is not inconsistent with sonship and being heirs. (SLJ)

b) One day, many believers who enter into the fullness of their adoption as children of God will look back and wonder how they could have felt so at home in a world so full of groaning. (Ken Boa)

c) The thesis of this section is that the future glories are so stunning and magnificent that they render present sufferings inconsequential. (Schreiner)

d) The radiance of the coming glory will put the present sufferings in the shadows. (A.T. Robertson)

Romans 8:26-30
There is Hope!

Introduction: Note the work of each person of the Triunity of God.

1) There is help—8:26-27 (The Father and the Spirit, 6x)

- a) The Spirit takes His share of the load—8:26a ²⁶ *Likewise the Spirit helps* [pres. mid. ind. sunantilamba,nomai] *us in our weakness* [avsqe,neia].
 - i) But thankfully He does not condemn us for our weakness. Weakness describes the whole of our earthly existence in general, and weakness in prayer specifically.
 - ii) Illustrated by the only other use of this verb in Luke 10:40.
- b) Note the contrast in those who pray—8:26b
 - i) Our ignorant prayers: *For [ga,r] we do not know [oi=da] what to pray* [proseu,comai] *for as we ought [dei]*,
 - (1) We do not know what we should pray as is necessary to pray in view of our situation. We do not know the right thing to ask with regard to the situation we are praying about. (Magill)
 - (2) Do we know our real needs as God sees them, and do we know the needs of others? Going deeper, do we know the will of God respecting these things? (E. F. Harrison, Expositor's B.C.)
 - (3) We even pray for things that are not good for us.
 - ii) The Spirit's helpful prayers: *but [avla,] the Spirit himself intercedes* [pres. act. ind. u`perentugca,nw] (to God the Father) *for us with (the Spirit's) groanings too deep [stenagmo,j] for words [avla,lhtoj]*.
 - (1) The Father knows the thoughts behind the groanings.
 - (2) One does not have to become eloquent in prayer; even his stumbling prayers are heard and shaped and made acceptable to God. All that is necessary is their genuineness. (J. Adams)
- c) A confidence in the Hearer of these prayers—8:27
 - i) The Father's omniscience: ²⁷ *And he (the Father) who searches* [pres. act. ptc. evrauna,w] (all human) *hearts knows* [pf. act. ind. oi=da] *what is the mind (mindset) [fro,nhma] of the Spirit,*
 - (1) God is the searcher and knower of the heart (1 Kings 8:39; 1 Chron. 28:9; Ps. 44:21; 139:23; Jer. 17:10; Acts 1:24; Heb. 4:13; 1 John 3:20; Rev. 2:23)
 - ii) The Father's purpose: *because [o[ti] the Spirit intercedes* [pres. act. ind. evtugca,nw] (to God the Father) *for [u`pe,r] the saints [a[giou] according to the will of God (the Father).*
 - (1) Unlike us who do not know how or for what to pray.

2) There is hope—8:28-30 (the Father and the Son, 12x)

- This is one of the popular favorite verses in the NT.

- a) The Father's perfect plan for His people—8:28 ²⁸ *And we know [oi=da] that [o[ti] for those who love [avgapa,w] (i.e. all believers) **God (the Father)** all things work together [sunerge,w] for [eivj] good [avgao,j], for those who are called [klhto,j] according to **his (the Father's)** purpose [pro,qesij].*
- i) While we may express ignorance in our prayers, we are not ignorant of this fact.
- b) Five aspects of God the Father's perfect plan for His people—8:29-30
- This applies to all of Jesus' brothers
 - These five verbs are all in the aorist (summary, helicopter view) aspect.
 - Note also it says "whom," not "what." This is personal.
- i) ²⁹ *For those whom **he (the Father)** foreknew [proginw,skw] (determined ahead of time)...*
- (1) Cf. Acts 2:23
- (2) This is God's foreknowledge of what **He** will do.
- ii) *he also predestined [proori,zw] ...*
- (1) What? *to be conformed [su,mmorfoj] (similar) to the image [eivkw,n] of **his (the Father's) Son,***
- (2) Why? *in order that [eivj] **he (Christ)** might be the firstborn [prwto,tokoj] (the preeminent one) among [evn] many brothers.*
- iii) ³⁰ *And those whom **he (the Father)** predestined [proori,zw] **he (the Father)** also called [kale,w] (effectively summoned),*
- iv) *and those whom **he (the Father)** called [kale,w] (effectively summoned) **he (the Father)** also justified [dikaio,w],*
- v) *and those whom **he (the Father)** justified [dikaio,w] **he (the Father)** also glorified [doxa,zw].*
- (1) The hoped for future glory is just as certain as the already evident work of calling and justification. (Faithlife Study Bible)

3) Things we need to remember:

- a) **Be encouraged:** the will of God is being fulfilled in their lives despite their weakness and inability to know what to pray for. God's will is not frustrated because of the weakness of believers. (T. Schreiner)
- b) **Be challenged:** Christians who are unduly anxious about their relationship to the Lord are failing to let the Spirit exercise that ministry. It is by committing ourselves anew to the life of devotion—prayer, Scripture reading, Christian fellowship—that we enable the Spirit to have this ministry of assurance in our hearts. (D. Moo)

Romans 8:31-39
Safe and Secure

Introduction: Let me begin with a question: Have you who are Christians here this morning ever faced the temptation to consider that you could somehow be lost again? That you could lose your salvation?

1) The infinite superiority of God—8:31-37

a) **Concluding question:**—8:31a ³¹ *What then shall we say to these things?*

b) **Key assumption:**—8:31b *If (1st class condition) God is for [u`pe,r] us, ...*

c) **Answered questions:**—8:31c-36

i) Will there be successful **opposition**?—8:31-32 *who can be against [kata,] us?*

(1) Proof of God the Father working on our behalf:

(a) Stated negatively: ³² *He who did not spare [fei,domai] his own Son*

(b) Stated positively: *but gave him up [parade,dwmi] for [u`pe,r] us all,*

(i) There is no substitute for the Substitute. (SLJ)

(c) Stated negatively: *how will he not also with him graciously give [cari,zomai] us all things?*

(2) God is by nature a giving God.

ii) Will there be a successful **accusation**?—8:33 ³³ *Who shall bring any charge [evgkale,w] against [kata,] God's (the Father's) elect [evklekto,j]?*

(1) *It is God (the Father) who justifies [pres. act. ptc. dikaioiw].*

iii) Will there be a successful **guilty verdict**?—8:34 ³⁴ *Who is to condemn [katakri,nw]?*

(1) The past activity of Christ

(a) Death: *Christ Jesus is the one who (having) died*

(b) Resurrection: *—more than that, who was (having been) raised—*

(2) The present activity of Christ

(a) Session: *who is at [evn] the right hand of God (the Father),*

(b) Intercession: *who indeed is interceding [evntugca,nw] for [u`pe,r] us.*

(i) Both the Spirit (8:26) and the Son are praying for us.

iv) Will there be a successful **separation**?—8:35-36 ³⁵ *Who shall separate [cwri,zw] us from the love [avga,ph] of Christ?*

(1) Possible variety of **visible** difficulties: *shall ...*

• Note that Paul personally experienced all of these (2 Cor. 11:23-28)

(a) *tribulation [qli/yij],*

(b) *or distress [stenocwri,a],*

(c) *or persecution [diwgmo,j],*

(d) *or famine [limo,j],*

(e) *or nakedness [gumno,thj],*

(f) *or danger [ki,ndunoj],*

(g) *or sword [ma,caira] (threats of violence)?*

(2) Scriptural proof of persistent difficulties: ³⁶ *As it is written* (Ps. 44:22),
“*For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as
sheep to be slaughtered.*”

- d) **Confident assurance**:—8:37 ³⁷ *No* [avlla,], *in all these things we are more
than conquerors* [u`pernika,w] (completely victorious) *through* [dia,] *him* (the
Son; 8:35) *who loved* [avgapa,w] *us*.
- i) Christians are still here today, while the Empire who persecuted them in
Paul’s day no longer exists.

2) An explanation for our confident assurance—8:38-39

- a) The **invisibles**: ³⁸ *For* [ga,r] *I am sure* [pf. pass. ind. pei,qw] *that ...*
- i) Parameters of **existence**: *neither death nor life*,
- ii) Parameters of **spirit beings**: *nor angels nor rulers* (probably demons),
- iii) Parameters of **time**: *nor things present nor things to come*,
- iv) Parameters of **spiritual enemies**: *nor powers* (human or demons),
- v) Parameters of **space**: ³⁹ *nor height nor depth*,
- vi) *nor anything else in all creation*,
- b) The **impossible**: (nothing) *will be able* [du,namai] *to separate* [cwri,zw] *us from
the love* [avgaph] *of God* (the Father) *in* [evn] *Christ Jesus our Lord*.

3) Things we need to remember:

- a) May I suggest a helpful quote:
- i) It is inconceivable that a true believer, who at times might not be able to
keep his own shoe tied or balance his checkbook, could undo the eternal
purposes of God that include His foreknowledge and their glorification.
The believer is not nearly that powerful, nor the Spirit and the Savior so
incompetent. (Vanlaningham, Moody B. C.)
- b) May I suggest a helpful prayer similar to the following:
- i) Heavenly Father, how I thank you for the freedom and security I have in
you! You have made it possible for me to have a clear conscience at the
end of the day, and to awaken to a life free from fear each morning. By
giving your Son for my salvation, you have proven that you are willing to
give all that is necessary for my life both now and for eternity. In
gratitude to you, may your Spirit who lives in me find my mind set on
what he desires that I may be more than a conqueror today. Amen. (Ken
Boa)