



World Christian Fellowship

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Romans 77

Holy Spirit confirms Adoption!

Romans 8:14-16

Romans 8:14-16, *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶ The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,*

One of the most beautiful and rich theological concepts of the Scripture is this theme of adoption.

Adoption refers to a legal action by which a person takes into his family a child not his own and usually not even related to him for the purpose of treating him as and giving him all the privileges of his own child. A legal action by which we take someone who is not a part of our family in to grant them all the privileges of being our true child.

Now throughout the Bible there are some marvellous illustrations of adoption.

In Exodus, we come to the first great story of an adoption.

Exodus 2:1-10, *And a man of the house of Levi went and took as wife a daughter of Levi. ² So the woman conceived and bore a son. And when she saw that he was a beautiful child, she hid him three months. ³ But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the river's bank. ⁴ And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him. ⁵ Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river. And her maidens walked along the riverside; and when she saw the ark among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it. ⁶ And when she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby wept. So she had compassion on him, and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." ⁷ Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for you?" ⁸ And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the maiden went and called the child's mother. ⁹ Then Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him. ¹⁰ And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. So she called his name Moses, saying, "Because I drew him out of the water."*

This is the first adoption we come to in Scripture and it is the adoption of Moses. Notably God allowed Moses to be adopted into Pharaoh's family so he might rise to the leadership that he did and lead the children of Israel out of the 400-year captivity.

In the process God in His wonderful, providential ways allowed Moses to be nursed by his own mother. It was in God's plan to place him in a strategic location for future leadership and He did that by having him adopted into the family of Pharaoh.

We could see all the way back then adoption was a significant thing.

We would also note that adoption didn't produce any kind of second-class status or Moses would not have risen to the heights that he did in the leadership of Egypt.

The book of Esther gives us insight into adoption.

Esther 2:5-7, *In Shushan the citadel there was a certain Jew whose name was Mordecai the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite. ⁶ Kish had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captives who had been captured with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away. ⁷ And Mordecai had brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter, for she had neither father nor mother. The young woman was lovely and beautiful. When her father and mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter.*

Here was Hadassah, her Hebrew name, Esther her other name, her name given in that culture.

He obviously was related to her, but her father and mother had died, and she had become an orphan. So, Mordecai took her as his own daughter.

Esther 2:15, *Now when the turn came for Esther the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her as his daughter, to go in to the king, she requested nothing but what Hegai the king's eunuch, the custodian of the women, advised. And Esther obtained favour in the sight of all who saw her.*

Mordecai had taken her as his own daughter. She was the adopted daughter of Mordecai.

In tender care for this orphan girl, he did all he could to care for her and protect her as his very own. As the story of Esther unfolds it becomes apparent the extent to which Mordecai would go for the care of this lovely Jewish girl.

David adopts a son and in fact David adopts the son of his evil, proud, jealous, murderous enemy. We have in this adoption is a wonderful picture of God's grace.

2 Samuel 9:1, *Now David said, "Is there still anyone who is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?"*

Saul had become the great enemy of David. Saul had tried on repeated occasions to take David's life. Saul's son Jonathan of course had befriended David and they had become knit together in heart and Jonathan often warned David about the approaches, the deadly approaches, of Saul.

But David, wanting to show kindness to the house of Saul because of Jonathan, says is there anyone left of the house of Saul.

2 Samuel 9:2-10, *And there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba. So when they had called him to David, the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" He said, "At your service!"³ Then the king said, "Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, to whom I may show the kindness of God?" And Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan who is lame in his feet."⁴ So the king said to him, "Where is he?" And Ziba said to the king, "Indeed he is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, in Lo Debar."⁵ Then King David sent and brought him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo Debar.⁶ Now when Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, had come to David, he fell on his face and prostrated himself. Then David said, "Mephibosheth?" And he answered, "Here is your servant!"⁷ So David said to him, "Do not fear, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father's sake, and will restore to you all the land of Saul your grandfather; and you shall eat bread at my table continually."⁸ Then he bowed*

himself, and said, "What is your servant, that you should look upon such a dead dog as I?"⁹ And the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, "I have given to your master's son all that belonged to Saul and to all his house.¹⁰ You therefore, and your sons and your servants, shall work the land for him, and you shall bring in the harvest, that your master's son may have food to eat. But Mephibosheth your master's son shall eat bread at my table always." Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

When David took over as king everything that was Saul's became his and he now gives it back to this grandson.

2 Samuel 9:12-13, *Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Micha. And all who dwelt in the house of Ziba were servants of Mephibosheth.¹³ So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, for he ate continually at the king's table. And he was lame in both his feet.*

Why is that mentioned at the beginning and at the end?

Because in that culture he would have been a deformed outcast, but David adopted him as a son, and he ate at the king's table.

Do you see the picture of grace there?

Do you see the imagery of the Lord Jesus Christ who picked us up in our deformity and brought us to the king's table?

What a magnificent story of adoption this is and how beautifully analogous it is to our being adopted into God's family.

The parallels in this story are striking.

a) David took the initiative.

David sought out any remaining sons of Saul. In our adoption the Lord took the initiative.

b) David showed mercy

To the one who was unworthy, who had descended from an evil enemy, and so does the Lord. The Lord doesn't seek those that somehow have something to commend themselves but the evil and the worthless and the useless and the spiritual outcasts.

c) David sought

David sought one who was socially outcast, who was socially rejected and even despised, one who normal kings wouldn't want in their presence. So has God chosen us with our deep sinful deformity.

d) David was motivated by love.

He had a love for Jonathan. In our case God was motivated by love. It was God's love for Christ that made Him come and redeem us and adopt us.

Ephesians 4:32, *"For Christ's sake God has forgiven you."*

David did it for Jonathan's sake.

God did it for Christ's sake.

e) David showed kindness.

David desired to show kindness, to extend magnanimous kindness, to pour out blessing. So has God, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies and adopted us as His own sons to inherit the fullness of His kingdom.

David chose the one, who was outside the standard of perfection.

Do you know what Mephibosheth means?

It means “a shameful one.”

From the time he was born he bore that name, “a shameful one.” He lived in Lo-debar.

Do you know what Lo-debar means, Hebrew?

It means the place with no pasture.

It was a desert, or a wasteland.

So here was an outcast from no place. Shameful and given the name shameful one.

The Lord has chosen us, outcast, shameful, crippled spiritually, living in a wilderness with no food and no water.

David brought him to his table and made him one of his own.
The Lord brings us to His table and gives to us life and peace and inheritance and provision and an honoured position.

Wonderful analogy!

That's how God has adopted us. We are the Mephibosheths.
We are the shameful ones that He has graciously brought into His palace and seated at the King's table.

We inherit the kingdom.

Adoption in the New Testament then, can be understood by the richness of that picture.

Paul in **Romans 9** talks about the Jews, the Israelites to whom belongs the adoption as sons.

God brought first the Jews in as His own adopted children but that wasn't going to be the end of it.

Galatians 4:4-5, *But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.*

Paul was writing to Gentiles.

God reached out and adopted first the Jews and then He went beyond and adopted the Gentiles to become sons.

Ephesians 1:5, *having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,*

When God in eternity past before time began chose to be predestined them not only to be redeemed and not only to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ but to become His sons according to the kind intention of His will.

All of us who are believers then in the truest spiritual sense have been adopted by God into His own family.

2 Corinthians 6:17-18, *Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you." ¹⁸ "I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty."*

Turn from your sin, come to Me!
I will make you My sons and daughters.

Now with that background let's go back to the 8th chapter of Romans.

V 14, *"We are the sons of God,"*

V 15, *"we have received the spirit of adoption as sons,"*

V 16, *"we are the sons of God."*

In verse 1 identifying a no-condemnation status. We have a no condemnation status before God, we will never be finally judged. We will never be punished for our sins. The Holy Spirit who secures that.

Holy Spirit frees us from sin and death, verses 2 and 3.

Holy Spirit enables us to perfectly fulfil the law by imputed righteousness, verse 4.

He changes our nature and regeneration, verses 5 to 11.

He empowers us for victory, verses 12 and 13.

He guarantees our glory, verses 17 to 25.

He intercedes for us, verses 26 and 27.

Today we are looking at He confirms our adoption.

V 15, *"We have received the Spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, Abba Father."*

It is by the Holy Spirit that we have been made sons of God.

It is the Holy Spirit who brings us into the family. The Holy Spirit transfers us from the alien family into the family of God. He makes us sons of God.

Galatians 4:6, *And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"*

The spirit made us sons and the Spirit confirms that sonship by prompting us to cry out, Abba Father.

The term “adopted”

It may sound somewhat second class to some people.

There are some tragic things being said about adoption. There are some who have been teaching you should never adopt a child from an unconverted family. You ought to be careful who you ever adopt.

I have read some material on this. It is quite frightening material because they say this, you don't ever want to adopt anybody because of what the Old Testament says, "The sins of the fathers are visited upon the third and fourth generation." It may be that you are adopting a cursed childbearing a curse from several generations before. There are some who go to great length to warn us lest we adopt some cursed child.

This is totally a misrepresentation of what that means in the Pentateuch, when it says the sins of the fathers are visited upon the third and fourth generation. It does not mean that somebody three or four generations down the line is going to be cursed by God because of something done in their background, genealogy.

What it means is plural. The sins of the fathers are visited upon the third and fourth generation simply means that when you

have corrupt fathers, when you have the corruption of the leadership of a nation it will take three or four generations before you will ever root that out. It becomes systemic and endemic.

Wickedness in a generation will be passed down because of evil influence. It is not saying that the sin of some person will cause a curse on some other person.

Ezekiel chapter 18

God never hold anybody responsible ever for any sin but their own. No father will be punished for the sins of his sons. No son will ever be punished for the sins of his father.

Ezekiel 18 lays out individual responsibility very clearly. Because some people have put a huge cloud over adoption. Some have gone so far to say you might even get a demon-possessed child because of some curse in ancient times somewhere. Nothing could be further from the truth. No child is going to pay for the sins of any parent.

Adoption needs to be put back in the lofty position it belongs biblically. It has suffered greatly because of this seriously erroneous teaching. People don't need to be frightened about that.

In the first century when Paul was writing this adopted child were in many cases more honoured than natural children.

In many cases, it was seen as an act of honour to be adopted. To be able to say in a world of illegitimate children and in a world of orphaned children I was chosen by someone. I wasn't just born into a family. I was chosen. Being adopted was a noble thing.

An adopted son was deliberately chosen by the adopting father to perpetuate that father's name and to inherit that father's estate.

When a father in the Greek world didn't have a son, he would go find the noblest available son and adopt him and give him all the rights and privileges. He was in no way inferior.

In fact, he was chosen because he may be superior. There were many fathers who had sons, but their sons didn't meet their qualifications to pass on the estate, so they went out and found one that did. An adopted son may have well received the joy of his father's affection more than a naturally born son and he may well have reproduced his father's moral standards more perfectly than natural sons.

This is the whole point of biblical adoption.

We become children of God by sovereign, divine choice. We are the preferred choice of God. That's a remarkable thing!

Based on free and voluntary election God has chosen us to be adopted as His sons. We will never be condemned this is part of our no-condemnation status.

We will never be condemned because God has chosen us to be His children forever by His free grace and His uninfluenced sovereignty. We have been lifted to this place of honour and He will fulfil in us the good purpose bound up in that choice.

Roman adoption.

Roman adoption was always rendered more serious and more difficult by the Roman law called ***patria potestas***.

Patria potestas, that Latin phrase, meant “the father's power.”

In the Roman law the father had absolute power over his family. He even had power of life and death over his family. He had the absolute power of disposal and control.

The Roman Empire he could take his child's life with absolutely no recourse against him. Regarding his father, a Roman son never came of age. That is to say that no matter how old he was he was still under **patria potestas**.

So were the daughters for that matter. No matter how old they were they were still under the absolute control of the father.

This made adoption into another family very difficult and very serious unless the person was an illegitimate child or an orphan.

If a man saw a son that he wanted, and that son belonged to another father he had to go through a very formidable operation to get that person to pass out from under patria potestas into his own control.

There were two steps.

1. **Mancipatio**
2. **Vindictio**

1. **Mancipatio**

From which we get the word emancipation/liberation.

Mancipatio was carried out about a symbolic sale. If the father would agree to let this son be adopted by another man, there was this symbolic sale.

They had some scales and some copper, and they used this symbolism to carry out sort of a transaction like I am selling this young man to you. They did it three times. Twice the father

symbolically sold the son and twice he bought him back and then the third time he didn't buy him back and the **patria potestas** was broken.

2. Vindicatio.

After the sale there was ceremony called **Vindicatio**. The adopting father goes to the Roman magistrate and presented a legal case for the actual legal transference of the person to be adopted into his own patria potestas.

When all this was complete the adoption was done.

Four main consequences in a Roman adoption.

a) Lost all the legal rights of his own family.

The adopted person lost all rights in his own family and gained all rights in his new family. He gained all the rights of a fully legitimate son in his new family.

b) Becomes the legal heir of the family

He became full heir to his new father's estate. Even if other sons or there were no sons.

Even if other sons were afterward born into the family who were real blood relations it did not affect his right to be the primary one.

He was an inalienably identified heir.

c) Old life wiped out completely.

According to Roman law, the old life of the adopted person was completely wiped out.

- If he had any debts, they were cancelled.
- If he had any record of crime it was abolished.

They wiped out all the records as if that person never had existed, as if they had never been born.

The adopted person was regarded as a new person entering a new life with no past.

d) Son of the new father in every way.

In the eyes of the Roman law the adopted person was literally and absolutely the son of his new father in every sense.

Now when you think of our adoption like that it's a wonderful thing.

- ✓ We have lost all the rights and all the claims of our past.
- ✓ We have gained all the rights and privileges of our new family.
- ✓ We have become heir to our Father's estate.
- ✓ Our past life is obliterated, blotted out.
- ✓ We are literally and absolutely the sons of God.

Throughout the New Testament we can see this imagery repeatedly that when you become a Christian you enter the very family of God.

- You did nothing to earn it.
- You did nothing to deserve it, and
- You did nothing to choose it.

God the great Father in His amazing love and mercy has taken the initiative to reach out to you. To draw you into His family and wipe out your past and give you a new life.

- You look at salvation from God declaring us righteous on the merits of Christ.
- You could look at salvation as regeneration, which looks at salvation as the new birth.
- You could look at salvation under the term “sanctification,” which means you are set apart from sin onto holiness.
- You can look at salvation as adoption.

Those are all facets of salvation. It's like one diamond with many facets.

You can look at from many angles and see its beauty.

- ✓ We are regenerate,
- ✓ We are justified,
- ✓ We are sanctified,
- ✓ We have been converted and
- ✓ We have been adopted.

So, in one sense we are sons by adoption, and we are also sons by birth. Regeneration.

You shouldn't be confused.

Are we adopted or are we born?

Both.

Those are just images.

Those are just magnificent ways to look at what happened to us.

The New Testament introduces adoption is because adoption was such a remarkably lofty thing. To say that you were born into the family of God might not be something very special but to say that out of all the world of people God Himself chose you and lifted you to the status of an heir and a joint heir with Jesus

Christ to become His own son forever that says something unique.

That is why the issue of picture of adoption, is given for us in the New Testament, because it opens up and enriches us with this tremendous dimension of salvation.

How does the Holy Spirit confirm our adoption?

- 1. We are led by the Spirit,**
- 2. Freed by the Spirit,**
- 3. Instructed by the Spirit.**

These are the three ways in which the Holy Spirit confirms our adoption.

1. Led by the Spirit of God.

V 14, *"For all that are being led by the Spirit of God these are sons of God."*

The Spirit confirms our adoption by leading us. Sometimes people get confused with various things about the leading of the Spirit and led by Him.

Because if you have ever been led by the Holy Spirit then you have been adopted into God's family because the Holy Spirit only leads the children of God.

- If the Spirit of God has ever led you into the path of righteousness,
- if the Spirit of God has ever led you into the understanding of Scripture,
- if the Spirit of God has ever led you to love the Lord your God,
- if the Spirit has led you to honour Christ,
- if the Spirit has led you to fall on your knees and repent,
- if the Spirit has led you to prayer and intercede on the behalf of someone else,
- if the Spirit has led you and prompted your heart to worship God,

You are being led by the Spirit is evidence that you are one of the adopted children.

The word simply says to us here that the Spirit leads.

Backwards.

The sons of God are led by the Spirit of God.

It's kind of a circle.

- If you are being led by the Spirit, you are sons of God.
- If you are sons of God, you are being led by the Spirit of God.

The Spirit dwells in you and the Spirit is in the process of leading you and that very leading is confirmation. As you go through

your life, and you see the amazing unfolding of the Spirit's work in your life.

You go into some environment and before you know God has unfolded an entire scenario there in His purpose. You can say that you are there because the Holy Spirit brought you there. Spirit of God is the one who leads me to the Scripture, who leads me to understand the Scripture.

The Spirit is the one who leads me to want to honour the Lord and worship Him and to serve Him.

God's Spirit and man's sonship are interwoven.

The way the Holy Spirit leads you is not by violence against your inclination but it's by bending and changing your will.

God does lead His children; you find that all throughout the Old Testament.

Proverbs 3:5-6, *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; ⁶In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.*

God leads His children. He leads them not only externally by the Word, which shows them the path to walk in, but internally by the presence of the Spirit.

Psalm 25:4-5, *Show me Your ways, O Lord; Teach me Your paths. ⁵ Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation; On You I wait all the day.*

Psalm 25:9, *The humble He guides in justice, And the humble He teaches His way.*

So, the Spirit confirms our sonship by leading us. As you look at your life you see the evidence of that all around.

How does the Holy Spirit lead the sons of God?

It occurs in two ways.

- i) Revelation and illumination
- ii) Sanctification.

He leads us by helping us understand the Scripture.

- If you are going to be obedient to God,
- If you are going to walk in the will of God,
- If you are going to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit,

You must know the Scripture because that's initially how He leads.

Pharaoh and Joseph.

Genesis 41:37-41, *So the advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants. ³⁸ And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the Spirit of God?" ³⁹ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph,*

“Inasmuch as God has shown you all this, there is no one as discerning and wise as you. ⁴⁰ You shall be over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you.” ⁴¹ And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt.”

Since you know what God wants, you are the wisest guy around. He leads us through the Scripture and the understanding of Scripture.

- ✓ Revelation brings us the Scripture.
- ✓ Illumination makes it clear.

Ephesians 1:17-19, *that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, ¹⁸ the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power*

The Spirit that opens the Word to us.

1 Corinthians 2:10-16, *But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. ¹¹ For what man knows the things of a man except*

the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. ¹³ These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. ¹⁴ But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵ But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. ¹⁶ For "who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

Paul is talking about inspiration here.

He is saying that we are teaching you truth that has come to us by the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God being the author of Scripture. We come to you with both words and thoughts taught by the Spirit.

I am writing to you the inspired revelation that the Spirit of God gives me that reflects the mind of Christ.

So, the Spirit opens our mind by first putting the Word in front of us and then secondly illuminating it.

Psalm 119:18, *Open my eyes, that I may see Wondrous things from Your law.*

I have the law right here. It is right in my hands. Open my eyes so that I can grasp its truths.

Colossians 3:16, *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

New Covenant passage in **Jeremiah 31**, Jeremiah says in the New Covenant there's going to be a distinction from the Old Covenant. The distinction is going to be everybody is going to know Me. Everybody's going to know the truth.

You are all going to be instructed,
You are all going to have the truth from the greatest of you to the least of you.

So, the first way the Holy Spirit leads us is through the revelation of Scripture which when we study it is illuminated to our hearts by His marvellous work.

Colossians 1:9, *For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled*

with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

The Spirit leads us through revelation, that's the scripture, and through illumination.

The Spirit leads us through sanctification.

Sanctification is the inner powerful process by which the Holy Spirit allows us to practice the Scripture.

Whenever you do what is right, whenever you obey the Lord, whenever you put the Word of God into action, whenever you obey scripture in the sense of holy living duty toward God, service rendered, it is because of the energy of the Holy Spirit.

This is the mysterious subjective work.

He not only gives us the Scripture and grants us the understanding but then He begins to work the Scripture into us.

Jeremiah 10:23, *O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps.*

I can't do it. The Holy Spirit does it. He stirs conviction.

His conviction, guilt when I am disobedient,

He stirs my heart with love for God,

He stirs my heart with love for Christ,

He stirs me to do what is right,

He prompts my heart to do that noble thing,
He is the one that moves on my mind, moves on my will, he's
the one that can make me go in the path of God's
commandments.

He is the one alone who can disallow iniquity from having sway
over me. This is a constant and efficient work He's doing all the
time.

So, He enables us to become more and more victorious over sin,
which he was talking about earlier in the chapter as we
remember from our study of verse 12 and 13.

Holy Spirit is the one who gives us that triumph.

Whatever goes on in our life that honours God the Holy Spirit
does it, but He doesn't do it apart from your will. He must
activate your will.

He will lead you constantly, regularly, but not apart from your
will. If you are not willing, He will chasten you and you will
forfeit blessing to make you more willing.

How does the Holy Spirit work?

He works on our conscience.

He providentially opens up experiences for us to accomplish His purpose. Sometimes He uses suffering, because we need to be refined, but the Holy Spirit leads us.

Galatians 5:16, *I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*

He is leading but we have got to be following!

Who wrote the book of Romans?

The Holy Spirit wrote it,

The Holy Spirit authored it,

The Holy Spirit determined what would be said, every word was inspired by the Spirit of God.

Yet at the same time Paul wrote it and he wrote every word, and it came out of his vocabulary and expressed what was in his heart.

Every major doctrine in the Bible has an apparent paradox that is un-reconcilable here to our finite minds.

Scripture says that we are kept by His power unto glory and yet it tells us to persevere and not turn out back.

Scripture tells us that God chose us in Him before the foundation of the world and yet it cries out to us to repent and

believe and if we don't, we perish and we are responsible for that rejection.

The first facet of our sonship is that we are being led by the Holy Spirit.

What a tremendous privilege and promise and he leads us through revelation and illumination, and He leads us through the sanctifying process by which He leads us to obedience and conforms us from one level of glory to the next into the image of Jesus Christ.

2. Freed by the Spirit.

We have been freed by the Spirit.

V 15, *"For you have not received the spirit of slavery leading to fear again but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, Abba Father."*

The emphasis here is on our freedom from our former slavery. We are no longer under bondage. The Holy Spirit freed us from the bondage, fear of punishment, and death.

We have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear.

We don't need to live in an attitude of terror.

We have been delivered out of the slavery to sin because we have received the Spirit of adoption who now lives in us and He has made us sons by which we can cry out, Abba Father.

Before salvation all of us lived in slavery, slaves to sin, and we lived in fear of judgment. The ungodly are afraid of judgment. That is the reason why they hate the gospel.

They are in bondage to fear.

They are in fear of death.

Hebrews 2:15, *and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

They have problems with guilt.

They have deep-seated fears.

The law hammers away about sin and death. Men live all their lifelong in the fear of death. The thought of God aggravates guilt, the thought of God aggravates fear, grief, so that the slaves of sin live in a constant fear and a kind of apprehension of the righteous judgment of God, and they try to hide from it but that only confirms its reality.

But we don't do that!

We are not living in terror or in fear.

We have been delivered. We don't look at God and duck.
We look at God and say, Abba Father. Abba means Papa. We
come to God not in terror but as a loving Father.

We are no more slaves.

We are now sons, huge difference.

We have received literally the Spirit of adoption.

He is called the Spirit of adoption because He is not only the
agent of our adoption, but He is the indwelling source of our
freedom.

Freedom means peace, joy, hope, it means the absence of
terror, freedom from fear and anxiety and depression in the
face of judgment.

We have a no-condemnation status.

We don't fear going before God.

We go to God and say, "Papa."

Abba! That's the Aramaic word for "father" but it's like "daddy"
or "papa." It was a word used by our Lord in deep agony in the
garden when He cried out to the Father.

It is a word of love, intimacy, dependence, very personal.

The Holy Spirit frees our hearts from the fear of God's judgment
and that's how we know we are sons.

Before God I am a son. Once I was a trembling sinner living in fear. Now I am a son, basking in the love of my Father.

Once I was a stranger and now, I am family.
Once I was shut out and now, I am intimate.
The Holy Spirit confirms that to my heart.

3. We are instructed by the Spirit.

V 16, *"The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God."*

The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.

God witnesses with our spirit.
Remember about the Roman adoption ceremony.

Historians tell us that the adoption ceremony was finally carried out in the presence of seven witnesses. They wanted seven witnesses so that in case anything ever happened, and the father may have died, and the son may have tried to claim his rights the family might have moved against him. They wanted to make sure there were seven witnesses to affirm that this adoption really took place.

A lot harder to corrupt seven witnesses of course because they were many and varied. Should a few witnesses die, there would be some remaining. Should anybody try to claim that they weren't a true son the witnesses would rise to their defence.

What does Satan spend his time doing?

Going to the throne of God and accusing the brethren, like he did with Job.

What is the Holy Spirit doing but interceding for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

The Spirit is witnessing before the throne of God that we are in fact God's sons, and He is not only that but he is witnessing with our spirit that we are the sons of God.

He is a witness of our adoption into the family.

He can bear testimony.

The Holy Spirit comes alongside our own spirit and gives His witness.

How does that work?

It is a confidence, assurance that He just gives to us.

He just speaks it to our hearts.

You are secured eternally but you may not always have assurance of your salvation because if you want to make your calling and election sure.

2 Peter 1:10, *Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;*

When you are obedient the spirit blesses you with assurance. We are not under condemnation because the Holy Spirit has adopted us. The Holy Spirit who has adopted us leads us, frees us, and assures us.