

Week Seven: Romans 8:1–17

Key Verse

“And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, then he who raised Christ from the dead will also bring your mortal bodies to life through his Spirit who lives in you.” - Romans 8:11 (CSB)

Key Principles

- God’s Spirit dwelling in us gives us a life free from sin and death.
- We can have some victory over sin if we partner with God’s Spirit in putting sin to death in our lives.
- God’s salvation brings us from being condemned enemies of God to being perfected sons and daughters of God and everything necessary within that process.
- You will find that the greatest part of the gospel is the intimacy you can have, now and forever, with your Creator.
- It is crucial for us to remember that the heart of the gospel, the blessing that comes with all these benefits, is a relationship with God.

Read

Romans 7 left us contemplating the vicious cycle of sin, death, law, and condemnation. We know we are justified by faith in Christ's death, yet we are still trapped in deteriorating bodies that wrestle with sin. We are still left to face a broken world that afflicts us both from the outside and from within. And we are still left with the shame of failing our great God by our sinful behavior. Thankfully, Paul didn't conclude his letter to the Christians in Rome on that note. There is hope for our condition! Romans 8 will show us that we have eternal life, elevated status, victory, inheritance, God's love, and an incredible hope that breaks these cycles in our natural condition—all because Christ justified us by his death and resurrection.

Where do we get these incredible benefits? From God's Spirit who now dwells within us. Paul has already alluded to this new life we have in the Spirit in 5:1–11 and 7:6, but in this chapter, Paul makes it abundantly clear. Christians, it is crucial for us to remember that the heart of the gospel, the blessing that comes with all these benefits, is a relationship with God. God, the Spirit, now dwells inside of us because we are believers in Christ. The Spirit provides what we need to battle sin, to pray to our Father, to live a righteous life, and to be conformed to Christ's image. Now that you have God's Spirit inside of you, cultivate that relationship. You will find that the greatest part of the gospel is the intimacy you can have, now and forever, with your Creator.

So, let's look deeper into what the Spirit is doing in our lives according to Romans 8:1–17. First, if we live according to the Spirit, then our minds and bodies can move beyond the evil "law" at work inside of us (7:21–23). We can start to live lives full of life and peace. We begin our eternal life now, here on

earth, through the Spirit. We won't be able to do this perfectly, or have complete victory over our sinful natures this side of heaven, but we can begin to put sin to death as the Spirit leads us.

Looking back on all eight chapters in Romans thus far, notice how important the resurrection is to our salvation. In Romans 4:25, Paul says that Jesus was raised from the dead "for our justification." Apparently, it is not just Jesus's death that activates the gospel story. In Romans 5:17 and 21, and 6:4, we receive eternal life because of the union we have in Christ's story of death and resurrection. Romans 6:4-5 also makes it clear that Christ's resurrection leads us into our new life. Romans 6 continues by saying that we can now be alive in God, set free from sin and death. In Chapter 8, the Spirit of the resurrected Jesus can also give life to our earthly bodies.

The resurrection confirms our hope in the future blessings of the gospel as well, as it points to how one day we will live forever with God and be completely conformed to Christ's image. And notice in Romans 8 who plays a vital role in all of this. The Spirit is the member of the Trinity who applies all these benefits of the resurrection to our lives right now and allows us to begin living for eternity today.

Lastly, the Spirit confirms the truth of the gospel. It is an incredible thing to consider that we would ever gain the status of adopted son or daughter of God. Romans 8:14 says, "For all those led by God's Spirit are God's sons." It goes on to say that the Spirit testifies together with our spirit that we are indeed the children of God (8:16). The Spirit helps us believe that what the gospel says is true and helps us pray to the Father who we are only beginning to understand. The Spirit confirms that everything in God's Word about heaven will be true and

that we will share in that inheritance. In other words, so often we focus on the work of God the Father and God the Son, but here in Romans 8, we see that God the Holy Spirit also plays an incredible role in our union with Christ.

The trajectory of Romans 8 is astounding. At the beginning of the passage, we get the declaration that we no longer stand condemned for our sinfulness (8:1). By the end of the passage, we are so far from condemned sinners that we are actually children of God, inheriting what Christ deserved by his obedience. The final verse of our target passage for this week (8:17) actually says that we will be glorified with Christ. In the space of these 17 verses, we see the complete gamut of the gospel. We, who were once enemies of God, have now been justified—we will no longer be judged for our sin. But God did not leave us there, he sent his Spirit to help us overcome sin and become freed from its slavery (sanctification), and with Christ, we also receive sonship.

And that's not even close to the end of the story. One day, we will become fully new creations, dwelling with God in heaven, being perfectly righteous in all that we do (glorification). Glorification is not a word that we often focus on when it comes to our blessings in the gospel, but it is one of the most exciting aspects of what we have in Christ. We will become like him in so many ways. We will become the best versions of ourselves, and we ourselves will become glorious creatures, reflecting God's image perfectly. Oh, how great is the salvation of our God! He brings us from enemies of God to perfect reflections of his image, destined to live forever in peace and harmony!

Study Guide

The following study questions are meant to help us wrestle with the text of Romans and see how the gospel displays God's righteousness. Set aside some time this week to meet with God and answer these questions for yourself. Complete each question before your weekly small group meeting. Then, when you gather with your small group, be prepared to discuss your answers together.



Read Romans 1:16–17 to remain focused on Paul's major points. Then, read Romans 8:1–17 in preparation for this week's study.

Highlight

1. Compare and contrast main ideas and differences you see between Romans 7 and Romans 8 so far.

2. Make a list contrasting life according to the Spirit with life according to the flesh from Romans 8:5–11.

3. How does Paul describe the identity of believers in Romans 8:14–17?

4. What does this passage teach about the work of the Holy Spirit?

Explain

5. What has the Spirit of life done for all Christians that the law could not do? Why is this significant?

6. Is the power of the Spirit available to all Christians according to verse 9? Why or why not?

7. According to Romans 8:1–17, what does it mean that we are glorified with Christ?

8. What difference does it make for believers to relate to God as Father and not simply as Master?

Apply

9. Many Christians feel condemned because of their sin. How does Romans 8:1–17 encourage you and release you from feelings of condemnation?

10. How does Romans 8:1–17 encourage you to cultivate your relationship with God?

11. What practical steps can we take to have our “minds set on the things of the Spirit” (8:5)?

12. What is one truth from this passage that you can pray over your One?

Respond in Prayer

Each week of this study guide will include a recommended Scripture passage that helps us focus on the faithfulness of our great God. Set aside some time this week to read through the selected passage and use the prayer prompts below as your guide. We recommend praying through this passage on your own at home and together with your small group.

This Week's Prayer Passage: Romans 8:1–17

Read Romans 8:1–17.

Pray through the following prompts, according to the A.C.T.S. method.

- **Adoration:** Praise God because he is a triune God, that he is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and that he has invited us into relationship with all three members of this Trinity (Romans 8:1–17). Praise God because he is a God of life and peace, not hostility (8:6, 11). Praise God that he is not a God that enslaves, but, rather, sets free (8:1, 14). Praise God that he has resurrection power at his disposal (8:11).
- **Confession:** Ask God's forgiveness for how often we dwell on the flesh and do not commune with his Spirit who dwells inside of us (Romans 8:5). Confess to God that we have done things that necessitated Jesus' death for us to be able to live absolved from our sins (8:3–4). Confess to God the ways you have chosen the path toward death and have not pleased him with your actions (8:5–8).

- Thanksgiving: Thank God for sending his Spirit to dwell within us (Romans 8:11). Thank God for sending his Son to give us freedom and life by his sacrifice (8:2). Thank God for including us in his family so that we could become heirs alongside Christ (8:15–17).
- Supplication: Ask God to help you set your mind on the Spirit instead of the flesh (Romans 8:4–8). Ask God for the courage to suffer for Jesus’s sake, where that becomes necessary (8:17). Ask God for the ability and opportunity to point your One to life and freedom in Christ.

who's your **ONE?**

Who's Your One? is about each of us leading one non-Christian to faith in Christ this year. Read back through your notes from this week's study on Romans 8:1–17. How would you share the truths of Romans 8:1–17 with someone who is not a Christian? What words and phrases would you use?

This week, pray for your One. Update your small group's prayer journal with specific prayer points and look for opportunities to build friendships, initiate to the spiritual, share the gospel, and help them make a decision.