

Romans: A Study on Reformation
Lesson 16 “The Spirit of Adoption”

I. Introduction - We are continuing our series on the book of Romans today. Paul wrote this letter from Corinth to the church in Rome to bring reformation to this church in 57 A.D. We are studying verse by verse through the book with our focus being on “Reformation.”

A. The main problem Paul wanted to reform with the church in Rome was the relationship between the Jews and Gentiles. They were in strife about beliefs and practices associated with their faith and trying to impose their will on each other. Paul did not want to revive this church. He wanted to reform it, which means bring change.

B. Last week we studied about the Spirit of Life in Christ and we saw how the spirit of God will set us free from the law of sin and death and its consequences. We learned how to live the Christian life in the power of the spirit in practical ways.

C. Today we are going to continue studying on the Holy Spirit as we talk about “The Spirit of Adoption.” They answer to the spirit of fear is the spirit of adoption.

1. This is important because probably the number one issue facing our nation today is fatherlessness. There’s a difference between being a sperm donor and being a father. Father’s love, care for, protect, nurture, and train their children.
2. In 1950 less than 5% of children were born out of wedlock. Today that number is somewhere around 40%. And we wonder why our nation is in the shape it is in. We’ve had a several generations of kids who were neglected and/or had to raise themselves. What did we expect? It’s an epidemic.
3. **Malachi 4:5-6** describes the nature of John the Baptist’s ministry. I always thought the emphasis was repentance and while that’s true, his main theme was turning the hearts of Israel’s spiritual fathers (the Sadducees and Pharisees) toward the spiritual children. Their children were spiritual orphans who were abused and neglected (they represented God as harsh, added extra rule and burdens, etc), which warped the people’s view of their Father and their own identity. This is the situation Jesus entered into in His ministry.
4. **In Paul’s day, legalistic religion continued to steal people’s identity and leave them as orphans. This is why God gave them the spirit of adoption. This is a major manifestation of the Holy Spirit.**

II. The Spirit of Adoption

A. **Romans 8:12-17**

1. **Romans 8:12-13** Immediately after **Romans 8:1-11** after Paul finishes talking about he spirit of life in Christ he then tells them to put to death the deeds of the

flesh (legalistic religion and living worldly). This can now be done because of the power of the Holy Spirit.

2. **Romans 8:14-17** give the why. Because as many as our led by the Spirit of God these are the sons of God.

a. What was the first thing to hit Adam and Eve when they sinned in the garden? The spirit of bondage to fear. **Genesis 3:7-15**

i. They ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil which represents the law. Why? It reveals good and evil, but it doesn't give the power to change.

ii. They were immediately afraid and realized something had changed. They were alone and naked. They then tried to make provision for themselves to cover their own nakedness (out of fig leaves - this is why Jesus cursed the fig tree - spirit of religion).

iii. In the midst of this God comes looking for them not withdrawing from them. He asks, "where are you?" He's not trying to find their geographic location. He's trying to determine where are in relationship with Him. Do they still see Him as a good Father (because they are hiding)?

iv. In the midst of this, God made new clothing for them (prophetic of robes of righteousness) and prophesied Jesus in the garden. God wasn't against them, He was for them, but religion lied and said they needed to be afraid of their father. **People disconnected from the spirit of God make up worldly and religious systems to try to cover or fill the void in their lives.**

c. huiōthēsia - adoption of sons. If we feel fear or alone, we have to remember we have been adopted by God. This is important because no one has ever been accidentally adopted. God was very intentional in His planning and pursuit of us. **Remember, the legalistic part of the church Paul was writing to thought God was a harsh taskmaster/abusive.**

d. Litmus test for how you see your relationship with God.

i. **Matthew 13:44** What's the treasure in the field? **Matthew 13:36-38** - the field is the world. We are the treasure. God sold Jesus to get us.

ii. **Matthew 13:45-46** Pearl of great price. Didn't Jesus come to seek and save that which was lost?

iii. **Matthew 13:47-48** who initiated the dragnet - us or God?

iv. God is the initiator in the search process because He sees great value in us. He wanted to adopt us back into the family. All we have to do is say yes.

e. Abba means daddy. It's an affectionate term. God not the head of some some state ward for runaway kids. He's a daddy. Our relationship with God is supposed to be affectionate.

3. *Verse 16* God sends His spirit to bear witness that we are the children of God. The spirit gives a testimony of what He has seen. **We may not have seen it yet, but that's ok. He's got the convicting evidence that God loves us!**

4. *Verse 17* We are joint heirs with Christ Jesus. We inherit that which He inherits. What does He have? Salvation, healing, provision, purpose, joy, wisdom, you name it!

a. In Roman culture, a child was given over to Roman tutors and schoolmasters until they reached maturity. When they reached maturity they went through a ceremony of adoption of sons and they were recognized as mature sons in the family. This meant they had full use of the family name and assets.

b. Whose name did Jesus tell us to pray in? His! We pray in His name and can speak boldly to use the family assets (finances, healing, angels, etc).

c. This does come with suffering because Jesus said in this life we will suffer persecution. Religious people always persecute the righteous.

III. Conclusion - Jesus told His disciples He wouldn't leave them as orphans in *John 14:18*. This is a big deal because all they ever knew of the Father they learned from Jesus and He was going away. Jesus He told them He would send the Holy Spirit who would take what was His and declare it to them.

He told Paul to write about this so we would leave an orphan spirit behind and receive adoption of sons into the family of God. I believe many of the dads who have walked away from families and/or been absentee fathers would be able to change if they got a revelation of these truths and received from the spirit of God.

A. Call Up Prayer Team

B. Pray Closing Prayer