

Rom. 8:1 *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

“condemnation” = adverse sentence, judge against, damn; Webster—dooming to punishment. In other words—guilty and awaiting execution.

“in” Christ = position, relation of rest, give self wholly to

There are three main points to this verse:

1. There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.
2. Those in Christ do not walk after the flesh.
3. Those in Christ walk after the Spirit.

This verse brings to mind the verses in John 3.

John 3:16-18 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. **He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already,** because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

There are two categories of people in the world:

1. Those who believe on the Son of God and are not condemned.
2. Those who do not believe on the Son of God and are already condemned.

To be “in Christ Jesus” means that you believe in Him as the Son of God, the Savior, the Messiah, have given yourself wholly to serve Him, and you are in a position of fellowship and peace with Him. We addressed the subject of walking in the Spirit in verses 18-21 of chapter 7. Walking after the flesh is described in chapter 1:24-32.

Again, this is not saying that the believer will never sin. It is saying that the believer will not practice sin as a way of life. “Walking” is a continuous motion usually toward an intended destination or with specific purpose. The one who truly loves the Lord will strive to do what Jesus said to do; he will *walk* in obedience to the Lord.

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words:

1John 2:3-5 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

The Holy Spirit convicts the believer of sin and the Father chastises the child He loves. The loving child will respond with repentance, and the loving Father always forgives the repentant child.

Hebrews 12:6-7 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

1John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

I had a note from somewhere that makes another important point regarding condemnation. If Christ does not condemn us, we have no right to condemn ourselves. I have had to go back to this principle many times. Satan knows our weaknesses, and one of mine is regret about my past. I have made many choices in the past of which I am ashamed. Satan loves to beat me up with my thoughts. I've learned to turn my thinking around to realize that I am belittling what Jesus did on the cross any time I allow the enemy to give me grief about something that has totally been covered by the blood of the cross. Jesus is sufficient; there is nothing I can ever do to add anything to what Jesus has already done for me. All I need to do is "stay my mind on Jesus," and the enemy will be defeated.

Isaiah 26:3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

We shouldn't waste time and energy grieving over the past. We should, instead, be motivated to use that time and energy to serve the Lord in love.

Rom. 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

A person cannot be dead and alive at the same time. The believer has died to the flesh and has become a new creation in Christ with new life. That life is provided through the shed blood of Jesus and is protected through the indwelling of the Spirit.

*Ephesians 1:12-14 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were **sealed with that holy Spirit of promise**, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.*

The word *sealed* means "stamped for security or preservation" in the Greek.

The believer is no longer ruled by the sin nature he inherited from Adam. He is empowered through the Spirit to gain victory over sin—over the flesh.

Rom. 8:3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

Rom. 8:4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

One purpose of the law was to guide us into righteous living. It provided loving guidelines, but had no power to make us obey those guidelines. Obedience was subject to the flesh, the choice of the person as to whether to obey or not—and we discussed earlier our natural response to the forbidden (cf 7:8). In His great mercy God decided to make a way for us to be able to fulfill the righteousness of the law. He sent “His own Son” to earth as a man. The word *likeness* means “resemblance, similar.” He was born without the sin nature (just like Adam was first created) inherited through Adam; He was born the seed of the woman—not the man.

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

It is the seed of the man that penetrates the egg of the woman to initiate life and determine the gender of the child. It is through the man that the sin nature is passed to every child. Mary’s egg was supernaturally completed by the Holy Spirit to bring about the birth of Jesus. He did not inherit the sin nature that was a consequence of Adam’s transgression.

“for” sin – through (all over); (to “pierce”); through (as adverb or preposition), i.e. across:—beyond, farther (other) side, over.

I was a bit surprised when I looked up this word. It seems to be saying that God’s Son, Jesus, was sent in the flesh to get man beyond the reach of sin, to “pierce” the sin nature. How? By condemning sin in the flesh through His victorious life of righteousness and obedience. He was tempted in every way that we are tempted; He can truly empathize with every struggle or sorrow or frustration or _____ with which we are confronted in this life. Yet, He responded in victory—never yielding to sin.

*Hebrews 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in **all points** tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*

Through His willing sacrifice on the cross and glorious resurrection, we (believers) can now experience victory over our own sin nature. Our choice is to walk (live our life) in obedience to the guidance of the Spirit of God that indwells us. Our desire is to live so as to reflect the character of Jesus and the righteousness of the law.

Rom. 8:5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

This verse seems pretty simple. Before being born again a person “sets his affections on” (minds) the things of the flesh (cf 1:27-32). One who is born again “sets his affections on” the things of the Spirit (cf notes on 6:22). I couldn’t help but think of the following verse when I saw that definition for “mind.”

Colossians 3:2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

I am reminded of the verse that tells us to examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith (2Corinthians 13:5). This is a litmus test verse—Are we minding the things of the flesh or the spirit?

Rom. 8:6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Carnal is another word for flesh. Paul is repeating an important truth. In the flesh we are ruled by sin, and sin results in death. The believer who has placed his faith in and is focused on serving Jesus has overcome death and will experience life and peace.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Isaiah 26:3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

Rom. 8:7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

Rom. 8:8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

“enmity” = hostility, hatred

These verses immediately brought to mind the following verse.

Matthew 6:24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Paul is staying on point. You either serve the law of sin or the law of the Spirit. As Jesus stated in Matthew, you can only have one master, one authority on the throne in your life. In the flesh, before one is born again, you are in the position of an enemy of God. You cannot attain the righteousness that the law of God outlines as His purpose for your life. Until you choose to die to the flesh and accept the gift of God in faith, you cannot please God.

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Rom. 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Paul is addressing a body of believers in Rome, a group of fellow believers that have accepted God’s gift of life and are indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

“if so be...” - After all that he has presented up to this point in his letter, he seems to be saying that they should examine themselves as to whether they really belong to God. Look at your life. What does your life reflect? Is your life dominated by the deeds of the flesh—by sin, or does your life reflect the fruit of the Spirit? If the Spirit of God is dwelling in you, there will be evidence of His presence. Just the fact that you struggle to do right gives evidence to the sincerity of the profession of your faith. However, if your life is not showing evidence of His presence, then you may have head knowledge of the truth about Christ but not a true relationship with Christ.

Rom. 8:10 And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness.

The person who has accepted Jesus as Savior and has the Holy Spirit dwelling in him has crucified or killed his body of flesh. I think “to” would have been a better choice than “because of” sin. Again Paul is stating the truth, that faith in Christ makes you a new creation with new life; you can now have victory over the sin nature that you inherited in the flesh from Adam. The physical body of the believer will one day die and/or be changed to a glorified body to house our reborn spirit.

1Corinthians 15:51-53 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

Again, I think “to” would have been a better choice than “because of” righteousness. Our spirit has been reborn to live according to the righteous direction of the Holy Spirit (as was God’s intention from the beginning).

Rom. 8:11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Who raised Jesus Christ from the dead? God the Father.

Acts 13:30 But God raised him from the dead:

Romans 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)

Ephesians 1:17&20 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him....Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places...

Paul is basically saying that if the Holy Spirit of God is dwelling in you, God will give new life to your physical body just as surely as He gave new life to the resurrected body of His Son Jesus Christ. God gives life through His Spirit. The word for *Spirit* is *pneuma*; it means “current of air, breath.” When God breathed into man the breath of life, He was giving him His Spirit.

Genesis 2:7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

When man chose to rebel against God, he died spiritually; he lost the Spirit, the sustenance of his spiritual life. When we choose to turn to God in faith, we are again privileged to have His Spirit giving us spiritual life.

“quicken” = (re-)vitalize, give life, make alive

Rom. 8:12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

Rom. 8:13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

“debtor” = an ower, i.e. person indebted

As a believer, a person of faith, we are debtors. We owe a debt we can never repay. We owe a great debt of gratitude for the great mercy and grace of God in providing His Son Jesus as the sacrifice for our sin to give us the opportunity to experience spiritual rebirth.

We do not, however, owe anything to the flesh, our old sin nature. Its claim on us was voided at the cross.

Those who choose to reject God’s gift and live in their own power in bondage to the flesh are dead spiritually and will die physically as well. Spiritual life and death has ever been the crux of the argument. The body will one day be resurrected to join the spirit—whether in life or death.

“mortify” = kill, put to death

If we, however, choose to accept God’s gift of life through faith in His Son, we are given the Holy Spirit to indwell us and empower us to kill the desires of the flesh, to gain victory over the flesh. We are alive spiritually as well as physically. That faith will result in spiritual life forever in the presence of God the Father and His Son Jesus. I hadn’t really thought about it before, but the Spirit will be part of our life for eternity; He is the source of spiritual life breathed into us by the Father.

Rom. 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

“led” = to lead, to bring, drive, go

This is another statement that reinforces the truth that your actions prove your faith. The Spirit doesn't lead one into doing wrong; the Spirit always leads us into truth and obedience.

John 16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth....

1Peter 1:2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

When our lives evidence the leading of the Spirit, we can be sure of our position in God's family—sons, heirs, joint-heirs with Christ (see verse 17).

Though we will still sometimes sin, will choose to be disobedient, we are assured of forgiveness upon confession of that sin.

1John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Rom. 8:15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

The effect of the law in our lives results in bondage / slavery. Sin multiplies—one sin leads to another to another etc. It places us in a position of fear before Almighty God. As a new creation in Christ with the Holy Spirit indwelling and leading us, we have become children of God. We have been adopted; we can approach the Father in confidence as His child. Sometimes we have to come to our Father in shame for our actions in repentance, but we don't fear His response. We are assured of His love and forgiveness.

1John 3:1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God:

The fact that we call out to God as Father is evidence that the Spirit is indwelling us. It is the Spirit that places those words in our prayer.

Galatians 4:6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

I found a statement from Harry Ironside's "Lectures on Romans" that I wanted to include here.

"Adoption is to be distinguished from new birth. We are children by birth, but sons by adoption. In the full sense we have not yet received the adoption. It will be consummated (as verse 23 shows) at the Lord's return. When a Roman father publicly acknowledged his child as his son and heir, legally in the forum, this ceremony was called 'the adoption!' All born in his family were children. Only those adopted were recognized as sons."

Rom. 8:16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

This is a very interesting verse. It is basically saying that one knows whether or not he is a child of God. One who is a child of God has the witness of the Spirit to his own spirit. How does the Spirit testify to a person's spirit? A witness is one who testifies to evidence or proof of the truth. The Spirit testifies to our spirit through the fruit/evidence that is produced in our lives.

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance...

Ephesians 5:9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

I know I am repeating myself in some of these explanations, but I feel in good company since Paul repeats the same truth in so many different ways.

Rom. 8:17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

It stands to reason that if we are children of God, we are heirs to all that He possesses, joint-heirs with Jesus His Son.

Hebrews 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds...

“suffer” = to experience pain of the same kind (especially persecution; to sympathize)

This verse can be very disconcerting to someone who has been so blessed in their Christian life as I have. What does it mean to suffer with Jesus? I have never really suffered persecution. I have faced testing and temptation. One of Webster's definitions of “suffer” helps.

3. To feel in consequence of what another feels; to be affected by feelings similar to those of another, in consequence of knowing the person to be thus affected.

As I thought about that definition, I began to relate to my attitude toward sin and sinners in this world. Does sin/wickedness grieve me? Am I active in promoting cultural values that honor God? Do I have compassion for the sinner? Do I desire to share the truth with others? Am I willing to sacrifice my comfort or pleasure to share the gospel and/or reflect Jesus in my life? The true child of God may not be consistently victorious in every area, but he/she will be striving to follow Christ's example in all areas. I think to *suffer* includes desiring what Jesus desires and striving to imitate His example in this fallen world.

Paul closes the verse with the wonderful promise, that those who *suffer* with Jesus will also be glorified with Him. We will share in His position of honor,

praise and admiration. This made me think of the letter to the church at Laodicea.

Revelation 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne....

Rom. 8:18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

It's not easy to think about suffering, and Paul knows this. He is very quick to point out that the position of glory to which we can look forward is so great that the little bit of suffering we endure now, relatively speaking, will be quickly forgotten. As a mom, I can't help but think of the following verse from John:

John 16:21 A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

Frankly, I think the joy of the believer when he reaches heaven will far surpass the joy of a mom at the birth of her child—and that is really hard to imagine.

“this present time” – I couldn't leave this verse without making comment on this phrase. Its truth is simplistic but very important to our outlook on life. There is going to be a future time for every person ever born on planet earth. It is so important that we hear and understand the truth about that future time through the word of God. Satan has gone to great extremes to put forth false teachings about the future of man after death and has deceived many. Believers should be burdened to do everything they can to share the truth of God's word and reveal the deceptions of the enemy. The sad thing is that Satan has been able to use many that claim to be part of the church to work his deceit.

Rom. 8:19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

It would seem that the primary thought of this verse (in context with the following verses) is regarding an eager anticipation for the time when God's glory is restored to the earth through the presentation of believers as His redeemed children. Paul is giving voice to the creation that was negatively impacted by the sin of man.

As I checked out the Greek for this verse, I thought the NLT stated truth as well: *For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are.*

The scripture supports the truth that not all who claim His name are true believers.

Matthew 7:22-23 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful

works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Matthew 13:24-30 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

[The wheat references true believers. The tares represent pretenders / fakes; they look like the real thing, but they are not.]

Rom. 8:20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope,

Rom. 8:21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

When you read through the first few chapters of Genesis, it is obvious to me that God created the earth and all it contains for the benefit of man.

Genesis 1:26-28 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and **let them have dominion** over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and **have dominion** over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

When man chose to sin against God, his judgment included new difficulties in coping with his now imperfect environment. He would have to labor hard to get food to grow from the ground. At first man only ate plants, but after the flood God stated that “Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you” (Gen 9:3).

Every decision God made was based on His dealings with man. The plants and animals weren’t given a choice. (Much to the dismay of animal activists—animals are not on par with man in God’s creation.) It was God who placed creation in subjection to man—who linked the judgment of man with judgment on the rest of His creation. When the believers are revealed to be in fellowship with God and allowed to return to earth in glory with Him, the creation itself will experience healing and restoration to much of its original glory. These are the times described in Isaiah.

Isaiah 11:1-9 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of

wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

Rom. 8:22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

Rom. 8:23 And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.

“travaileth in pain together” = to have (parturition = The act of bringing forth, or being delivered of, young; the act of giving birth) pangs in company (concert, simultaneously) with, i.e. (figuratively) to sympathize (in expectation of relief from suffering):

Paul is painting a word picture. Just as a woman groans through experiencing the pains of childbirth, the whole creation, including believers, are experiencing the pains necessary before our adoption is publicly declared legal, so to speak. The proof of our position in the family of God will be the redemption of our bodies to a glorified state. Just as God affirmed Jesus as His Son through the resurrection to glory, so too will our position as His children be affirmed by our resurrection to glory.

Romans 1:4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead....

Firstfruits are the first items able to be harvested, the first of more to come. The indwelling Spirit is the first benefit we reap as children of God, but He is not the last. There is much more to come.

Rom. 8:24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

Rom. 8:25 But if we hope for that we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for *it*.

“hope” = (to anticipate, usually with pleasure); expectation (abstractly or concretely) or confidence:—faith, hope.

These verses build directly on the previous verses. It was through faith, the confident anticipation and expectation of our adoption into God's family through the resurrection, that we were saved. *Hope* describes anticipation/expectation of something we haven't yet seen. I compare this to a child who is promised a wonderful gift for acting according to his parents' expectation. That child lives in hope, in confident expectation of that wonderful gift. Once that gift is in sight, it is basically in his possession; there is no longer a place for hope. The time spent waiting to receive that gift is a time of eager anticipation and cheerful endurance (from the Greek for patience).

Rom. 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

I think *also* is a better choice from the Greek for the word *likewise*. One of the benefits of having the Spirit is that He is there to give us strength when we are weak, to give us direction when we are not sure which way to go, to give us comfort when we are in pain, etc. He helps us in any area of weakness of the mind or body (from the Greek). How does He help us? He intercedes for us in prayer. He expresses our needs to the Father more perfectly and effectively than we can. He puts into the right words the things we struggle with putting into words. The Spirit intercedes for us with earnestness and intensity to get us through our difficult times. His prayers for us are beyond words we can articulate on our own.

I love this verse. There are so many times that I feel I just don't know how to present my requests before God without sounding repetitive or rote. There are requests that are dear to my heart and always on my lips when I pray; I sometimes fear that they are beginning to sound rote or insincere. The Spirit is a part of me. He knows how to express those prayers in the proper way to the Father. Many times I ask for His intercession on my behalf in prayer, but He is interceding whether I ask or not.

Rom. 8:27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Who is "he that searcheth the hearts?" The Lord God.

1Chronicles 28:9 ...for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts:

Psalms 44:21 Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.

Jeremiah 17:10 I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

Paul affirmed the intimate connection with the Spirit and God in his letter to the Corinthians.

1Corinthians 2:10-11 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

The “spirit” is the rational part of our being—our mind, our thoughts, the part of us that is able to communicate with God. Paul is simply saying that just as the spirit of a man knows the thoughts of the man, the Spirit of God knows the thoughts of God. The Spirit of God knows the thoughts of God and in turn knows our thoughts. When the Spirit intercedes for us, it will always be according to what He knows is God’s will for us. That is a wonderful comfort to this child of God.

Rom. 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

What a wonderful verse and probably one of the most quoted verses by believers everywhere.

“**We know**” – can be sure

“**that all things**” – ALL (any, every, the whole)

“**work together**” – cooperate, co-labor

“**for good**” – to our benefit and to God’s glory (Greek gives comparison to word for beauty, value, worth)

“**to them that love God**” – As I looked at the Greek, this love is an act of the will as a matter of principle, duty, and propriety. It is a response to truly knowing and embracing all the truth about God and His provision for us.

“**to them who are the called**” – The Greek for the word *called* speaks of an invitation and an appointment. The scripture doesn’t contradict itself. The Lord makes it clear in scripture that He is not willing that any should perish.

Ezekiel 18:32 For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.

Ezekiel 33:11 Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

2Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

John tells us that ALL will be taught of God

John 6:45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

The desire of the teacher is that his students learn, and Paul started this book to the Romans saying that man was without excuse.

Romans 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

All that said to say this. Salvation isn't just for some people; Christ died for all; but only those who accept the invitation, who *learn* the lesson, will be appointed (are called) to salvation.

“according to His purpose” – A wonderful truth. We are His for a purpose. Life has meaning. The experiences God allows to touch us have a reason—not just any reason, a special purpose in the plans of God. What a privilege!

This is a beautiful truth. It's just really hard for the believer to grasp when going through really hard times in life—e.g., death of a child, debilitating and/or terminal illness, the unfaithfulness of a spouse, etc. I think the key to embracing this truth is to recognize and embrace the character of Father God. His ways are far beyond our understanding. Faith is trusting when we don't understand, because we know our Father is love and truth; He is faithful. We know that we can obey, endure, and sacrifice as required by our circumstances because of who He is. Abraham pictured it beautifully through his willingness to sacrifice Isaac. He believed God even though he did not understand why God was asking him to make such a sacrifice. He knew without a doubt that God would honor his promise to him through Isaac.

Rom. 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

To *foreknow* means to know beforehand. *Predestinate* is to “limit in advance, determine before.” Because He is God, He knew everything that ever would happen before He ever created one thing. (That truth alone poses many questions that I can't begin to discuss.) The fact is that He knew in advance every person's response to Him—whether it would be in faith and obedience or rejection and disobedience. Those who fell into the category of faith and obedience were predestined to be likened to His Son Jesus. *Conformed* means to be “jointly formed, similar.” I think this is talking about being redeemed in a glorified body and restored in fellowship as was intended at creation. Jesus' obedience to His Father and resurrection from the dead made Him the “firstborn among many brethren.” Although the scripture states that there will be few in comparison to the potential that will find salvation (Matt 7:14), this verse assures

us that from the human perspective the Lord will have many brethren—people who choose salvation.

Matthew 7:14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

The word *firstborn* also positions Jesus in the privileged position among the heirs in the family. The scripture states that the firstborn is to occupy the position of spiritual and legal leadership in the family.

Rom. 8:30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

This verse uses a different Greek word for *called* than is used in verse 28; this word simply means “to call forth, to bid.” It makes me think of the Lord as He called each of His 12 disciples. Those who have been predestined are called, singled out for service, and are *justified*; they are declared innocent and righteous, which means that they are no longer under condemnation. Being declared righteous assures us of the position of glory discussed in verse 18. (cf notes on 1Corinthians 6:11)

I may be simple, but I truly think people try to make the whole concept of predestination much more complicated than it is. If you just take the scripture for what it says, it makes good sense. For God to sovereignly choose to give man a will of his own and the ability to make choices in no way detracts from the fact that everything about our salvation is a work He does in us. Even our faith is His gift, we just have to accept it. Forced love is not real love. Forced faith is not true faith (and I am sure many Muslims would admit to that truth).

Rom. 8:31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

I think Paul is saying, “So what should we conclude?” Although the next part of the verse is stated as a question, the answer is obvious. If God is for us, no one can be against us. Obviously, this is not saying that we will not face enemies and temptations. It does mean that whatever we do face, we have the power to be victorious. Our job is to keep our focus on Jesus, to run the race of life with the focus on the finish line and the reward that awaits.

Rom. 8:32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

“He” = God the Father

I like the way it is stated in the Complete Jewish Bible: *He who did not spare even his own Son, but gave him up on behalf of us all — is it possible that, having given us his Son, he would not give us everything else too?*

The Father gave His very best, His most precious possession, His only Son, to redeem us from our sin. He valued our fellowship so much that He gave all. In light of that sacrifice, how could we possibly think that He would not follow through on the rest of His promises! The gift of His Son was offered to all without cost; one just has to accept the gift. Through acceptance of that gift, one becomes a joint-heir with Christ. Heirs do not pay for what they inherit. It is freely given to them.

Rom. 8:33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is God that justifieth.*

“elect” = select, favorite, chosen

Verses 29 and 30 have already explained the process of being elect/chosen. Once God has declared us righteous, no one has any grounds upon which to accuse us. God is the righteous judge; His judgments are true.

Psalm 19:9 ... the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

Psalm 96:13 Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.

Jeremiah 9:24 But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

Revelation 16:7 And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.

Rom. 8:34 Who is he that condemneth? *It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

John tells us that the Father has committed all judgment to the Son.

John 5:22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son....

In a court of law, the judge is appointed the task of declaring guilt or innocence, of pronouncing condemnation or absolution. Who is the judge? Christ. The same Christ, the Son of God, that died on the cross and rose from the dead three days later and who now sits at the right hand of God.

Matthew 22:42-44 Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? (cf Psalm 110:1)

Mark 14:61-62 But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

Mark 16:19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

Jesus boldly declared that He was the Christ who would sit at the right hand of God the Father. The Spirit declares through the scripture that Jesus took His position at the right hand of God when He ascended to heaven after communing with His disciples for 40 days after the resurrection.

Hebrews 7 affirms the truth that Jesus is interceding for us (His brethren, those who come to God through faith in Him, God's Son) before the Father.

Hebrews 7:25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Why is Jesus always interceding for us? Because we are not yet perfect; we are still in bodies of flesh with a sin nature. We still do things that are wrong. As our intercessor, Jesus is always pleading on our behalf and working to reconcile us in fellowship.

As I read through this section this time, I was reminded of Jesus' prayer for His disciples. I believe they tell us much about how He is interceding for us now.

Luke 22:31-32 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, **that thy faith fail not:** and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

John 17:15, 17, 21, 24 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but **that thou shouldest keep them from the evil....Sanctify them through thy truth:** thy word is truth....That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, **that they also may be one in us:** that the world may believe that thou hast sent me....Father, I will **that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory,** which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

Just a thought—Yes, Christ will make the formal declaration of condemnation or absolution. But the scripture basically tells us that we condemn ourselves if we choose to reject the Savior, Jesus, the Son of God.

John 3:17-19 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: **but he that believeth not is condemned already,** because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

Rom. 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

Paul loves to ask rhetorical questions. The obvious answer is that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. (He answers his own question in the last two verses of this chapter.) Some of my favorite verses regarding the security of my relationship to God are found in John 10.

John 10:27-30 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one.

I also love the verses in 1Peter.

1Peter 1:3-5 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

According to these sections of scripture, I am secure in the grasp of the Father's hand and I am kept by the power God. No grasp is stronger and no power is greater.

As I looked back over this verse, I checked the Greek for "who" and feel it would be better translated "what" in context of the rest of the verse.

Rom. 8:36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

"As it is written" – Where?

Psalm 44:22 Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.

At first I couldn't make a connection with this verse. As I continued to read the different translations, it hit me that this is in direct reference to the verse before. The child of God will face tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword either singly or in varying combinations. That can make one feel like they are facing death daily, like they are sheep being driven to slaughter.

Rom. 8:37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Paul now declares the glorious truth; we need fear nothing that life may throw at us. We are *more than conquerors* through Jesus. What does it mean to be more than a conqueror? At first thought, it would seem you are either a conqueror or you are not. I'm from a family that loves athletics. In sports, you can either

squeak out a win or you can win decisively. I think the same application can be made to the Christian life. You can either get to heaven “so as by fire” or you can look forward to great reward based on your service in love and obedience before God.

1Corinthians 3:14-15 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Rom. 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, **Rom. 8:39** Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Paul now gives an emphatic answer to his question in verse 35. Nothing and/or no one can separate us from the love of God. Reminder – Paul is talking to the believer, the person of faith. *Death* certainly can't separate us from God's love; it is just a graduation into His presence for eternity. *Life* may throw us many obstacles and testings, but it is filled with many evidences of God's love for us as He provides, comforts, sustains and strengthens. *Angels* are God's messengers to us; they were created to minister to and serve the child of God; they are another one of the benefits of the love of God.

Hebrews 1:13-14 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

Principalities and powers seem to represent the evil forces of wickedness that are ever on the attack against the child of God. No matter how vicious their attack, the child of God is empowered for victory through the love of God.

Ephesians 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

1John 5:4-5 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

I'm not sure how *things present and things to come* differ from life. Maybe it is a reference to the new challenges the child of God will encounter as man continues to advance in technology and false teaching becomes more prominent and all the “birth pains” associated with His coming begin to be more intense and frequent. Again, if our hearts are focused on the Lord, then we will view the fulfillment of prophecy as another affirmation of the love of God. We will grow in eager anticipation of physically being in His presence and ruling with Him as priests and kings.

“nor height, nor depth” – As I thought about these two words, I thought about the many levels of society and the difference in the wealthy and poor. God’s love is the same for each and every believer, no matter how powerful or how weak, no matter how rich or how poor. These words can also reference distance. There is no place on earth that the believer can go that will separate him from the love of God. That makes me think of those wonderful verses in Psalms.

Psalm 139:7-10 Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

“nor any other creature” – This takes me back to the verses in John 10 quoted above. Not one thing in God’s creation can deprive the child of God of His love.

What is the primary evidence of God’s love for us? The gift of His Son, Christ Jesus our Lord. Without His loving sacrifice, we could never experience the wonderful love of God; in fact, we would be forever separated from the love of God.