

Anglican Church Noosa
August 2, 2026 - Sunshine & Tewantin
Romans - From Grace to Glory
Romans 8:1-17 - The Spirit-Led Life
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No condemnation.

Those two words change everything, don't they?

Imagine a family packed in a car. The kids are crying in the back seat. The parents are exhausted. They've been driving through a winding mountain road in a blinding storm in the middle of the night.

I reckon that's a bit like Romans 7.

The pull of the sinful nature wants to explode so we can let it all out!

But then we'd be like Paul.

Do you remember what he cried out in ch 7 "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?"

Well, today, we turn the page to Romans 8, and it's like the car suddenly bursts out of the dark, and out of the storm into brilliant, warm sunshine. The peak of the mountain is in view.

We've called this series from Grace to Glory.

We are nearing the end of our 11-week journey from Grace to Glory.

It has been said that Romans is like the Himalayas of the New Testament. And it has also been said that chapter 8 is like Mt Everest! It's the highest peak in the highest mountain range of Scripture.

Chapter 8 shifts our vision away from our weakness, and points us directly to God's power.

In chapters 1-7 we've been constantly reminded of the insidious nature of our human condition, and how incredible God's grace is in effecting a change for us.

And now as we come into chapter 8, we find that God has SO much **more** in store for us.

If we are in Christ Jesus, our legal status has changed forever.

Today, we come to see what it means to live a Spirit-led life. And in these verses today it comes through three life-changing realities:

- **status, mindset and identity**

1. Our New Status: Set Free (Romans 8:1-4)

Paul begins with a massive declaration: "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

Notice the word **now**. It marks a permanent shift in history and in your standing before God.

It's like being in a courtroom, and your life's sins, and anger, and hidden thoughts are all read out loud. You know you are guilty, and everyone else does too.

But suddenly, the Judge slams down his gavel, and yells out just one word: "Acquitted!" And the charges are completely erased from your record.

- No condemnation: The ultimate Judge has thrown out your charges.
- In Christ Jesus: You are safely hidden inside the perfect life of Jesus.

Why couldn't the law of God save us? Paul says it was "weakened by the flesh."

Think about the rules that you have around your home. You might have a particular rule for the kids: No yelling, and share your toys.

But does that rule magically give a four-year-old the power to share?
And does that rule mean a 10 yr old is never going to yell?
No. The rule shows them what is right, but it can't change their selfish heart.

You see, the law of God is like a mirror. It shows us that our face is dirty, but it doesn't wash the dirt off. It requires perfection but it doesn't give us the power to be perfect.

But God did what our willpower and the law could never do. He sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful human flesh to be a sin offering.

Think of a lightning rod on top of a house. When a violent storm hits, the lightning doesn't smash the home. It strikes the rod. The rod absorbs the entire deadly shock and grounds it safely into the earth.

Jesus is our spiritual lightning rod. On the cross, He absorbed the full, righteous judgment against our sin.

- He condemned sin in the flesh: Jesus took the execution we deserved.
- The requirement met: Christ's perfect record is now credited directly to your account.

You don't try to live the Christian life to earn God's approval.
You live it because you already have His approval.
The Spirit-led life doesn't start with your performance.
It starts with Christ's finished work.

2. Our New Mindset: Life and Peace (Rom 8:5–11)

Because our status has changed, our daily mindset must change too. Paul divides humanity into two distinct categories - the flesh focussed mind and the spirit focussed mind.

- **The Flesh-focused Mind:** To set the mind on the flesh means letting your old, selfish human nature dictate your desires. It is a life lived for self-gratification. Paul says this mindset is actively hostile toward God. It refuses to submit. It leads straight to spiritual death.
- **The Spirit-focused Mind:** To set the mind on the Spirit means to consciously align your thoughts with God's desires. It means filling your home and your heart with His truth. The direct result is life and peace.

Think of your mind like a garden. If you leave a garden alone and do nothing, what grows?
Weeds. Horrible, horrible weeds. I know that ONLY too well!!

If we do not actively cultivate a Spirit-led mind, our thoughts naturally drift toward anxiety, comparison, and anger. Cultivating the Spirit means planting the seeds of God's Word into our minds daily through prayer and Scripture.

Paul makes a vital clarification for every believer: "You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you." v.9

If you belong to Christ, the Holy Spirit is not an occasional weekend guest. He is not a visitor who stays for a night and leaves. He has a permanent lease. He has moved into your heart forever.

Even though our physical bodies still age and face physical death because of the broken world we live in, our spirits are vibrant and alive. And God's work does not stop at death.

If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, He will also give life to your mortal bodies. The exact same resurrection power that walked Jesus out of the tomb at Easter is at work in your ordinary, tired, daily life right now.

3. Your New Identity: Adopted as Heirs (Rom 8:12–17)

This final section reveals the deeply personal, beautiful heart of the gospel. We are not just acquitted criminals left standing alone on the courthouse steps. We are brought directly into the Judge's private home.

Paul writes, "Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it." v.12

We owe our old, sinful nature absolutely nothing. It doesn't bring us lasting joy. It doesn't build healthy relationships. It doesn't give us peace.

Instead, Paul calls us to a daily battle: "If by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live." v.13

The Puritans had a name for this, they called it the mortification of sin. It means we don't negotiate. We don't treat it like a harmless pet.

Many years ago now, we lived in Bellbowrie when we were leading the parish of Moggill. We came home with the shopping one day, we had two little kids, and Chris had taken some things into our bedroom, while I started putting the shopping away. He came running to the kitchen when he heard me dry reaching, which I was doing because there was an Eastern Brown snake in the dining room just at the entrance to the kitchen.

Now interestingly, neither of us thought this was a good thing. We didn't try to domesticate it, put it in a cage and hope it behaved when the kids were playing.

Now we don't have time to go into exactly what we did, or what happened next, but the point is, that sin, is a lot like have an Eastern Brown in your house. It's not good, and you need to get rid of it.

Paul is saying here, that by the power of the Spirit, we must put our sin—our sharp tongues, our secret lusts, our grumbling—to death.

It's that serious.

Paul goes on to answer the question - Who are the children of God? In v.14 he says "For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God."

The Holy Spirit doesn't drive us with a whip, he leads us gently by the hand, the way a loving father guides his child through a crowded, dangerous street.

We received the Spirit of adoption, and by him, we cry, "Abba, Father."

Abba is a beautiful word. It's the Aramaic for deep intimacy, with trust, and absolute safety. It is the very first word a Middle Eastern toddler would learn to say to their dad. It's just like crying out "Daddy" or "Papa."

When your child has a nightmare in the middle of the night, they don't push a letter under the bedroom door seeking formal permission to enter, do they? They burst in and throw themselves on the bed, and cry out "Daddy!" or "Mummy!"

That is the instant, unconditional access we have to the Creator of the universe. The Holy Spirit works deep within our hearts to confirm this reality. His Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are God's precious children.

And that makes all the difference.

The slave's mentality is driven by fear -- "Will I be punished?"
But a child's mentality is led by the Spirit -- "Abba, Father!"

And if we are children, then we are legal heirs. v.17

- We are heirs of God: We inherit all that God has—His eternal presence, His boundless love, and His unshakeable kingdom.
- but there's more because we are co-heirs with Christ: so everything that belongs to the risen Lord Jesus is shared with us - His church.

From Grace to Glory. Isn't it incredible?

But, even if we come to a conclusion today, we need to notice the realistic truth that Paul brings in at the very end of v.17: "if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory."

The path from grace to glory always passes directly through the cross.

For all of us today, walking this path means the exhausting work of counter-cultural living.

It might mean rejection from neighbours,
financial sacrifices to honour God,
or the simple, daily exhaustion of serving your family when you feel completely depleted.

Suffering is not a sign that God has abandoned us. It is a sign that we are walking the Jesus path.

The suffering is temporary; the glory is forever.

Next week, we will finish our 11-week series by looking at our final destination: the ultimate, unshakeable glory.

Today, as we begin chapter 8, we see a glimpse of it while we live in the messy reality of the here and now.

- We have been set free from condemnation.
- We have been given a brand-new mindset of life and peace.
- We have been formally adopted into the family of the King, securing our place as heirs of glory.

So, let's not go back to the insidious sinful nature, that so easily takes over; don't live in fear, or anger or be shaped by worldly comparisons.

Remember what is true about your status, and renew your mind daily through the Scriptures.

When you're exhausted at the end of the day, collapse into the arms of your heavenly Father and cry, "Abba."

And let's walk by the power of the Holy Spirit, knowing that he who began this good work in you by grace will bring you into absolute glory.

Amen.