

REMNANT CHURCH SERMON NOTES – ROMANS 8: 14 - 17
PREACHED ON MAY 3, 2026, BY REV. B.B. ANUM-HIGHER

¹⁴ For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. ¹⁵ The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “*Abba*, Father.” ¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. ¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

➤ **INTRODUCTION**

- Last week in verses 12-14 of chapter 8, apostle Paul told us about a third truth about Christians. He stated that every true Christian has an obligation to God. The Spirit that resides in the Christian places an obligation on the person. It is an obligation to radically fight sin in our lives. We must kill sin, or it will kill us.
- Earlier in verses 1-4, he told us that the Christian is freed from God's condemnation. No true believer will experience hell. Secondly, in verses 5-11, he told us that Christians have the Holy Spirit living inside them. What actually makes you a Christian and distinguishes you from an unbeliever is the Spirit of God coming to take residence in your life at your conversion, that very moment you became born again.
- We are going to study one more truth about the Christian from our text today. In verses 15-17, the apostle tells us that the believer is an adopted child of God. God Himself chose the believers to be His sons and daughters. The Roman Christians who were the original recipients of this letter understood that adoption is the legal action by which God takes believers into His own family. God decided ahead of time that He would adopt certain people into His own family, as put clearly in Ephesians 1:5. “He predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will.”

➤ **LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT**

- Before we do so, I want to revisit verse 14, which I explained last week, and provide a detailed understanding of what Paul meant when he stated that “For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.” What is the meaning of being led by the Holy Spirit?
- Paul is identifying who the sons and daughters of God are and who are not. The evidence of being a son and daughter of God is that I am led by the Spirit of God; it means I am led by God’s Spirit to deal radically with sin in my life and to see my character changed. The verse has two elements. The first element is this: All Christians and only they are led by the Spirit of God. The second element is this: All Christians and only they are sons and daughters of God. Both elements are

true of every Christian, not a select few. Every Christian is led by the Spirit and is a child of God, with no exceptions.

- When Paul used the word “led”, he was not talking about the Holy Spirit giving us advice, direction, or guidance. The Holy Spirit does all that, but that is not what Paul is saying here. Paul used “led,” which was also used of Jesus when He was led into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil. It was used when Jesus was led like a lamb to be slaughtered. It was used at Stephen's trial when he was seized and led to the Sanhedrin.
- The word means laying hold of someone and bringing them to a certain point. So the Holy Spirit that dwells in the believer leads us to where He wants us to be. He governs our lives. The Holy Spirit does not dwell in us only to offer counsel, but He rules, empowers, and enables us to do God's will in our sanctification.
- It is important to know that being led by the Spirit doesn't mean that the believer is passive and the Spirit does all the work. Both the physical and mental powers of the Christian are awakened by the Spirit and not made dormant when the Holy Spirit leads. The Spirit empowers the believer to do God's will and to glorify and honor Him. This is the point the Holy Spirit is leading every believer to.
- How does the Holy Spirit lead us into holiness? In the Bible, the name of a person and the name attributed to the Godhead describe the character of the person or God. The name has an implication. I want to consider three names attributed to the Holy Spirit with you.

❖ **THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH**

- The way the Spirit leads is always consistent with His own nature; He doesn't work inconsistently with His own nature. How does the Spirit lead believers in all truth? In John 14:26, we read “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.” And in John 16:7 we read, “Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.” He does so in two distinct ways: teaching and remembrance of the Truth. He does so for the apostles and then the rest of the believers.

1. FOR THE APOSTLES. The Holy led the apostles by teaching and reminding them. He helps the apostles both to remember what Christ told them and to reveal to them the Truth they have not yet heard from the lips of Jesus Christ. John 16:12: “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.” The apostles wrote what they heard from Christ and what the Spirit revealed to them, and wrote them for us as the Scriptures in the New Testament.

2. FOR THE REST OF BELIEVERS. The Holy Spirit does not make us write Scripture, but He leads us in the Truth in a different way. He inspires us and leads us to understand Scripture and obey it. The Spirit leads us to understand Scripture as written by the apostles. The Spirit therefore does not lead Christian's contrary to Scripture; He always leads us in conformity with Scripture.

❖ THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS

- Paul wrote in Romans 1:4, “and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,” The preoccupation of the Holy Spirit is with the holiness of God’s people. The Spirit leads Christians to obey the Moral Law of God, the Ten Commandments.
- By the first century, the feast of Pentecost celebrated the giving of the Law. In the Old Testament, Moses ascended to the presence of God on Mount Horeb, and God sent Him back with the Ten Commandments written on Tablets of stone. The Ten Commandments are God’s perfect standards of holiness, and that was what God gave to His people when Moses ascended to His presence. The Israelites could not keep the Ten Commandments perfectly. However, Ezekiel and Jeremiah prophesied that, in the New Covenant, God would no longer write the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone but on the hearts of His people.
- We are now in the New Covenant, and Jesus Christ is a type of Moses. Like Moses, Jesus also ascended to the very presence of God, and He poured out the Holy Spirit with the purpose that the Spirit would write the Law of God on the hearts of God’s people. Jesus was fulfilling the prophecies of Ezekiel and Jeremiah. “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” Jeremiah 31:33.
- So the Holy Spirit came down when Christ ascended, not to do away with God’s Law nor tell us that God no longer has an interest in the Ten Commandments; instead, He came down to write the Law on the hearts of believers in order that we might be changed to keep them and obey God. Paul wrote in Romans 8:4: “in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.” The Holy Spirit is therefore first of the Spirit of Truth and secondly, the Spirit of Holiness. Thirdly, He is also the Spirit of Christ.

❖ THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST

- Paul wrote in Romans 8:9: “You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ.” The Holy Spirit in the believer focuses all of our attention on Jesus Christ. He makes us see Jesus as our savior, as the one through whom all of God’s blessings flow to us, His glory, majesty, etc.
- The Holy Spirit empowers the believer to become more and more and more like Jesus Christ by progressively working in us. In 2 Corinthians 3:18, Paul wrote: “And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” The Spirit leads the believer by making him or her more

and more like Christ daily until Christ returns or the believer departs from this world.

➤ **CHRISTIANS ARE THE ADOPTED CHILDREN OF GOD**

- True Christians will show, by their ruthless battle against sin in their lives, that they are adopted into the family of God. We are not God's children by nature; God has only one son by nature, Jesus Christ, His only begotten. Christians were freely chosen by God to become His children. We were adopted to become sons and daughters of God.
- Paul wrote this letter to believers under Roman law, which gave adopted children the same rights as natural or biological children. Paul is telling believers that God has given believers equality with Christ in His family. All the privileges Christ has, all the blessings He has, all that belongs to Him has become ours.
- In verse 15, Paul reveals the intimate relationship God has with His children. It is a relationship not based on fear. He wrote: "The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The word "Abba" is a baby word. It is a word for a little child calling the father. It is the same as 'daddy', 'dada', or 'dad'. Two weeks ago, my daughter told me about her unhappiness with one of her classmates for calling her father by his first name instead of dad. For the most part, calling your father dad, daddy, or dada conveys a level of intimacy you have with him. God is not a distant father but one who is always available to comfort His children, provide for them, and do all things for their good.
- In those days, under Roman law, the father was a respected figure who had the power of life and death over his children. By calling God our Father, Paul is telling Christians to see God as our Father in heaven, to be respected and treated with reverence, and that intimacy with Him can never be lost. He is not just a father, but Abba. He is a daddy. He is not far away from us, a very intimate dad and loving father. He is not cold to us, but near us all the time.
- Paul also indicated in verse 15 that God is not a slave master, but a loving, intimate father. The desire of the believer to obey God does not come from fear, insecurity, or uncertainty, but from the intimacy between a child and a father. We see an example of our relationship with God in the parable of the prodigal son recorded in Luke 15.
- After the prodigal son had come to his senses, he returned home with an idea of being one of the slaves of his father. He came to his father, wanting to be hired as a slave, and I could hear him saying to the father multiple times, "I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants." But the father said to him, I won't make you one of my slaves, but I will re-establish you as my blessed chosen son.

- It is recorded that the father did everything to assure the prodigal son that he still loved him. “But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. The father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.” What an intimate, loving father. He is our Abba, not a slave driver.

➤ **HOW THEN SHOULD THE CHILD OF GOD PRAY TO HIS OR HER FATHER?**

- One of the places Jesus used the word Abba was in His prayer at Gethsemane in Matthew 26. In verse 39, “After walking a little farther, Jesus quickly bowed with his face to the ground and prayed, 'Father, Abba, if it's possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. ' " But let your will be done rather than mine.”
- In the same manner, when we pray, we come to a loving, intimate Father to speak to Him. The child of God has an active prayer life. He or she comes to the Father always for comfort, direction, provision, among other things, because he or she takes delight in having an intimacy with the Father. We come to Him in prayer, not in fear. He knows all that we need even before we pray, but it pleases every loving father to hear His children speak to Him with their needs.
- God uses means to accomplish His work in our sanctification. Prayer, meditation on Scripture, fellowship with true believers, and suffering are all means God uses to sanctify us. So we pray because God uses the prayers of believers to accomplish His purposes among His people and in the world.
- Prayer, whether in private or corporate, must not be repetitive for God to hear. We don't have to be babbling, saying many words to our Abba Father, thinking that we would be heard that way. There have been countless times when I have done things for my children simply because of their actions. Sometimes I could tell what they wanted by their warm embrace, the look on their faces, and how they called me 'dad'. They do not need to tell me multiple times before I feed and clothe them.
- Because we are God's children, we should come to Him with childlike confidence and simplicity rather than with craven fear or uncertainty. While we should maintain reverence and godly fear when we approach Him in prayers, we should also approach with boldness, knowing we have access to the Father. Our prayers must not be cold and always formal because of our intimate relationship with God; He is our daddy. God is more ready to give than we are to receive, and knows what we need before we ask.
- All you have to do is relate to God as your Abba Father, and He knows what you need before you ask Him. Even if all you could tell Him is to call His name Father, He will hear you. During our prayers to our Abba Father, the Spirit himself

testifies with our spirit, our inner being, that we are God's children. The Holy Spirit gives us the assurance that we are God's sons and daughters. As we kill sin in our lives and pray to God, the Holy Spirit, in ways we cannot comprehend, gives us peace and the assurance that we are God's adopted children. On the contrary, when we grieve the Holy Spirit by entertaining sins in our lives, we lose the assurance of our salvation and the peace of God. However, when we confess and repent of those sins, the peace of God returns, and assurance returns.

➤ **MANY BLESSINGS FOR CHRISTIANS**

- In verse 17, Paul wrote: "Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory." As God's adopted children, the apostle says we are legally entitled to everything Christ has. We are in the same position as Christ. Christ is our co-heir, our fellow heir. What does Christ have that we would share with Him? He is king of all the nations, so we will be kings. He resurrected with a perfect body that shone like the sun, among others, and so will we.
- As co-heirs with Christ, at His second coming, we will also have glory and have a resurrected body that is free from sin, free from all the weaknesses and troubles we experience in this body. Listen to Jesus Christ Himself reveal these things to John in the Book of Revelation about what God has prepared for believers in Christ's second coming.
- In Revelation 2: 26-28. "To the one who is victorious and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations— that one 'will rule them with an iron scepter and will dash them to pieces like pottery' —just as I have received authority from my Father. I will also give that one the morning star." Also in Revelation 3: 21, Jesus said: "To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne."
- While being co-heirs of Christ is enough blessings for the Christian, what actually amazes me is that we are also heirs of God. This means we have God Himself as our own. You have God Himself as your inheritance if you are a Christian. It is a great thing to have the blessings of God as your inheritance, but it is a greater and better blessing to have God Himself as your inheritance. No wonder the hymn writer wrote: Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! God is the inheritance of the believer. The Psalmist sang: "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." Psalm 73:26.
- I am His, and He is mine. My brothers and sisters in Christ, kindly think about these promises. How can you compare anything in this world to what God has promised us in heaven? Even if you are the president of a nation, the CEO of a multinational organization, or a very great person, they are all temporary, just like any other thing in this world. They come and go, but the promises of God that await us, the blessings that we would share with Christ in heaven, are eternal; they are forever. What can be compared to having God as your inheritance?

- Paul ended verse 17 with a condition to becoming heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ. In the second part of the verse, he wrote: “if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.” Suffering is part of the Christian experience. At the beginning of your Christian experience, Jesus warns that it is all about suffering. “Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.’” Matthew 16: 24-25.
- Suffering includes deliberately making some painful decisions to keep you holy. It includes denying yourself some pleasures that might lead to sin. It includes doing everything to obey God, even at a cost, such as losing relationships or a career.

➤ **CONCLUSION**

- These verses emphasize that our relationship with God is irreversible, grounded in God's mighty legal act of adoption, which cannot be undone. Justification is likewise an irreversible legal declaration of our not-guilty status before God. Adoption places us in God's own family, a decision God made before the world began. Therefore, Christians should not worry about worldly events, since they are children of God who owns and controls all.
- Not everyone listening to me is a child of God. There is no such thing as the universal fatherhood of God. Some of you are not God's children yet. As we have heard multiple times, the Bible divides humanity into two families: the children of God and the children of the Devil. All of humanity fits into these two distinct groups. You are either a Christian and belong to God's family, or you do not and belong to the other. Your father is either God or the Devil. If you are not yet a child of God, hear this good news: anyone can become a child of God. This good news is: “But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.” John 1:12.
- You could leave here today as a child of God. You do not have to remain in the Devil's family. Becoming God's child is simple: “But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.” John 1:12. Membership in God's family is open to all who seek a savior from sin. Jesus Christ stands ready to welcome you once you repent and believe in Him. At that moment, the Holy Spirit resides in you, and you are born again. Why reject such an offer? Choose to repent and believe—receive forgiveness, righteousness, and acceptance as God's child.
- True Christianity brings many blessings, both now and in eternity. Everything God has will be for the Christians, God's adopted sons and daughters. However, being a Christian is not a license to continue in sin or live a passive life or the way you want. It comes at a cost, with an obligation that includes personal holy living, a prayerful life to our Abba Father, and suffering to live a holy life.
- May this be true of you, and may it be true of me.