Standing in the Security of His Grace  
The Spirit of Adoption

**Introduction:** Chapter eight, as we learned earlier, is the chapter of the Spirit that prominently highlights the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

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- Spirit (pneuma) 21 times in Romans 8
- Spirit’s work to confirm in the believer the privilege and blessing of being a Christ-follower
- Work of great assurance
- Spirit of Life in v. 1-13 (Spirit in us)—Makes us free from condemnation, fulfills righteous requirement of law, both IN the Spirit/Spirit IN us, assured of resurrection, and have a responsibility/obligation to the Spirit to yield to Him!

**IMPORTANT:** Life is the ruling idea in v. 1-13 but being sons/daughters (sonship/adoption) is dominant in v. 14-17.

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- This dominating theme is linked to what precedes and what follows,
- As sons of God we are in the dimension of the Spirit awaiting anxiously the resurrection.

**But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.**  
Romans 8:11 NKJV

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- Also places us squarely in the “already-not yet” which leaves us longing for the completion of our sonship!

**For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.**  
Romans 8:19-20 NKJV

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For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. 23 Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. Romans 8:22-23 NKJV

So, in this short section we are not just given LIFE in/by the Spirit, but also Adoption/Sonship as a child of God.

**NOTE:** This new status is part of the assurance we have as believers.

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- In Chapter 5—new position “In Christ” not “In Adam.”
- In Chapter 6—no longer slaves to sin but now slaves to righteousness
In Chapter 7—struggle of one who goes no further—still trying to obey in the power of the law.

In Chapter 8—spirit the key to victory, and assurance

Part of that assurance is to be aware of our new status—Child of God

Two Key Truths about the Reality of this New Status

1. It is a revelation of both divine favor and divine patience.

   **Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 1 John 3:1-2 NKJV**

   2. It is a revelation of divine purpose.

   **And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Romans 8:28-29 NKJV**

   NOTE: This text possibly the greatest explanation of divine adoption in all of Scripture.

4 Great Truths

I. The CERTAINTY of our Sonship

**For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. Romans 8:14 NKJV**

Pre-supposed question: How do I know for certain that I am really a child of God (NOTE: Whole section to some extent deals with this but this verse very profound).

Certainly is tied to a theological truth: “As many as are led by the Spirit.”

A. Need to remove the weirdness of this term—“led.”

   1. An excuse for disorganization and chaos (Spirit-led)
   2. An opportunity for subjective action, experience, and bogus spirituality. “Spirit led me.”
   3. Not what Paul had in mind.

B. Led by the Spirit’s presence, work, and influence.

NOTE: Not a life of irrational, out of order interruptions or decisions

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C. When the Spirit leads (dominates) my life…

1. The world will lose its ability to satisfy me.
2. My inner man will long to be with God.
3. I will find strength and refreshing from time with God, His people.
4. The Word of God will stir my intellect and heart.
5. Thoughts of Jesus and a desire to please Him will be present.

NOTE: Spirit points to Jesus!

When those are present (not perfected) I am being led by the Spirit—I am a child of God!

II. The LIBERTY of our Sonship

For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." Romans 8:15 NKJV

A. Being a child of God does not return us to a point of anxious fear or judgment.

But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods.

9 But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? 10 You observe days and months and seasons and years. Galatians 4:8-10 NKJV

1. Inner sense of dread that I can’t perform.
2. Replaced by a sense of peace and security before God.

B. Liberty to call Good Father (Abba—Aramaic term that Jesus Himself used)

And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will." Mark 14:36 NKJV

NOTE: Adoption in Roman—Graco world was special choice to carry on name

C. Fully revealing Sonship

1. My disappointing Him does not lead to Him disowning me (2 Timothy 2:13).
2. My missing His expectations does not lead to Him doubting my potential.
3. My doubting my own significance does not lessen my value to Him.
4. My failing to represent Him adequately does not change His promise to represent me.
III. The WITNESS of our Sonship

*The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.* Romans 8:16 NKJV

A. The Holy Spirit is not only instrumental in making us God’s children. He makes us aware that we are.

B. Old Testament required two witnesses.

*One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.* Deuteronomy 19:15 NKJV

C. Holy Spirit bears a strong, inward witness to our spirit that we are a child of God.

*Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.* Romans 5:5 NKJV

D. IMPORTANT: Paul is emphasizing that our awareness of God as Father comes not from rational consideration nor external witness alone, but from a deep truth deeply felt and experienced!

1. Crying out Abba Father (crying out has to do with emotions in the Greek)
2. Some err by basing salvation on feelings alone.
3. Others err in basing it on facts and argument alone.

E. Somehow the witness of the Spirit will affect our emotions

IV. The PRIVILEGE of our Sonship

*And if children, then heirs — heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.* Romans 8:17 NKJV

A. We are heirs/joint heirs with Him.

*Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ. 17 And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed*
before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. 18 For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Galatians 3:16-18 NKJV

And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Galatians 3:29 NKJV

1. The promises of Abraham to Christ.
2. In Christ we receive the same promise.
3. A promise of covenant through unilateral sacrifice.
5. Joint-heirs has to do with it being through Christ only.

B. We suffer with Him

1. Suffering is a gift.

For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, 30 having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me. Philippians 1:29 NKJV

2. In suffering we know Christ better.

That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death. Philippians 3:10 NKJV

3. Through suffering we experience both the glory and the power of Christ.

Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; 13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. 14 If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. 1 Peter 4:12-14 NKJV

And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. 8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 NKJV

4. Through suffering we experience the comfort of God.
For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ.
2 Corinthians 1:5 NKJV

C. We will be glorified with Him.

Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 NKJV

This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. 12 If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. 2 Timothy 2:11-12 NKJV

Conclusion: God’s purpose in Christ was to bring us into full sonship—full rights of adopted ones.

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. 10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren. Hebrews 2:9-11 NKJV

A sonship that:

1. Is certain—Spirit leads me.
2. Brings liberty—no fear.
3. Produces assurance in our Spirit.
4. Provides great privileges.