

# DEVOTIONAL

WHEN IN ROME VIII  
ADOPTION  
JUNE 19, 2022

GRACE  
FELLOWSHIP

**Discussion Starter:** In what ways has being a part of God's forever family through faith in Christ given you hope? A new purpose? A new future?

**Key Text:** "So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. <sup>13</sup> For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. <sup>14</sup> For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. <sup>15</sup> For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!' <sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup> and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him." (Romans 8:12-17)

Christian recording artist Steven Curtis Chapman has been recognized as the most awarded artist in the history of Christian music. He has received 59 Dove Awards, 5 Grammys, and has recorded more than 25 albums with 49 No.1 hits. He and his wife, Mary Beth, founded "Show Hope," a charity designed to care for orphans by engaging Christians, reducing barriers to adoption, and providing adoption grants around the world. In addition to their own three biological daughters, the Chapmans have three adopted daughters from China. Steven, who calls adoption "visible gospel," said, "Until we adopted Shenandoah, I didn't fully understand the depth of what Jesus has done for us. Without Christ I was hopeless, without a future, without a name. Then Jesus came into my life, gave me hope and a future. He gave me a new name."

One of the great blessings of Christianity is being adopted into God's forever family through faith in Christ. In today's text, we'll see three evidences that we belong to God.

## 1. We know we belong to God when we follow the Spirit's leadership.

"So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. <sup>13</sup> For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. <sup>14</sup> For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God." (v.12-14)

We don't have a debt to pay to our old sinful nature since all it did was alienate us from God, bring us misery, and lead us toward death (v.12-13). We experience life when, by the Spirit's power, we put away those sinful actions (v.13) and follow the leadership of the Spirit (v.14). One of God's greatest gifts is the privilege of being led by His Spirit through life's journeys. Paul says that following the Spirit's leadership and guidance is evidence that we belong to God (v.14).

**Discuss:** Read and discuss these verses that indicate various resources God has provided so we can be led by His spirit: The Bible (Ps.119:105); Wisdom through Prayer (Jms.1:5), Circumstances (Acts 16:6-10); and Counselors (Prov.11:14). When has one (or all) of these resources benefitted you when you needed guidance?

## 2. We know we belong to God when we receive the Spirit's assurance.

*"For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!'"* <sup>16</sup> *The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God."* (v.15-16)

When we accepted Christ, not only did God completely forgive our sins, He also established a new relationship with us—we are His children now! Now we relate to God not as a slave to an impersonal taskmaster, but as a child to a loving Father. Paul describes this relationship in two different languages in v.15: "*Abba*" is an Aramaic word that means "Daddy" and emphasizes intimacy, and "*Father*" is a Greek word that emphasizes family relationship.

We enter into this intimate relationship with God through the new birth (Jn.3:7), in which we become "*partakers of the divine nature*" (1 Pet.1:23)—that is when God indwells us by His Spirit. At that moment, we are "*adopted as sons*" (v.15) into God's forever family! We are legal children with full rights as God's heirs!

In v.16, Paul tells us that God's Spirit assures us again and again to our spirit—the deepest part of our soul—that we belong to Him. God does not want us to wonder and worry each day if we are truly saved. He not only saves us, He repeatedly assures us that we are saved.

**Discuss:** What are some differences in the way children relate to their fathers and the way slaves serve their masters? Which one better describes your attitude toward God?

**Discuss:** Read and discuss these verses that show God's assurance of our salvation: John 10:28-29; Romans 8:1; Hebrews 13:5; 1 John 5:11-13. Why is assurance of salvation so important to the Christian?

## 3. We know we belong to God when we suffer with Christ.

*"And if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him."* (v.17)

It is an indicator that we belong to Christ when we share in His sufferings, such as experiencing persecution for our identity with Him (Jn.15:20) and faithfully enduring daily life in our sin-ravaged world (Rom.8:22-23). These sufferings ultimately lead to being glorified with Christ when this life has ended.

**Discuss:** Read Romans 5:3-5. How does the fact that suffering is never meaningless for the Christian inform your thoughts and emotions in tough times?

### For Further Study:

Free online commentary of the Book of Romans at [www.enduringword.com](http://www.enduringword.com)

"How Can I Stop Questioning My Salvation?" article at [www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org)

"What Does it Mean to Be Heirs with Christ?" article at [www.christianity.com](http://www.christianity.com)