

## The Christian's Confirmation – Part 2

By David Harrell

**Bible Text:** Romans 8:14-17

Will you take the inspired and infallible record of the Word of God and open to Paul's epistle to the Romans? We come, yet again, to Romans chapter eight where we are looking at the second part of a discourse that I began last week concerning the Christian's confirmation. We saw, first, the Christian's obligation in verses 12 and 13 of Romans eight and now we come to the Christian's confirmation in verses 14 through 17. Let me read this to you this morning.

Romans eight beginning at verse 14.

For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.<sup>1</sup>

I continue to be amazed at the appalling ignorance and even arrogance of many in the Church today. The result is not only a lack of doctrine, but, therefore, a lack of discernment when it comes to living out the Christian life. There is a shocking superficiality that we see in the Church today.

I recently warned folks about the danger of allowing their children to be exposed to what is called the twilight vampire romance novels and movies that were inspired by a demon that visited a Mormon woman in a dream and inspired her to write such wickedness, stories of lust and immorality and demon possessed vampires consulting the dead, werewolves, all of these types of things, satanic themes that are utterly reprehensible to a holy God, yet marketed to impressionable teens. And it is inconceivable that Christians would need to be warned about things so vile. And it is even more appalling that some professing Christians find that such criticism is in their mind an over reaction.

What a testimony of Satan's ability to disguise himself as an angel of light. What a testimony of how the father of lies can deceive and seduce with doctrines of demons. It is staggering. Think about it. The very evil that damns men's souls, the very evil for which Christ had to die is found by some to be a source of entertainment. That is incomprehensible to me.

And now some deceived entrepreneurs are using this demonic drivel as a basis for Bible studies if you can imagine that. At a website entitled [?] all about spiritual connection there is an article entitled "Bring Excitement of Twilight Bible Study to your Church."

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<sup>1</sup> Romans 8:14-17.

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In an interview with the author, her name is Jane Wells, the interviewer says that basically despite the vampires and the werewolves she says, quote, “There is a deeper connection that Christians can make with the series.”

Actually this is the author, Jane Wells. “There is a deeper connection Christians can make with the series. These stories can be seen as allegories of eternal love and how love seeks us out and how we must face hard choices on this journey towards God’s love,” end quote.

And when asked why some Christians are opposed to this by the interviewer she responded, quote, “In many denominations clergy are predominantly male and twilight is a hugely female phenomenon.” She went on to say, “I think some mainline Christian leaders also are wary that Stephanie Meyer is a woman.” She, by the way, is the author of the twilight series. She went on to say, “There are some differences in belief between mainline Christianity and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints,” end quote.

That is the understatement of the century. Mormonism is a demonic cult that is utterly reprehensible to God and antithetical to biblical Christianity. Another author, Elaine Heath, has written her Christianized version of twilight. It is entitled, “The Gospel According to Twilight: Women, Sex and God.”

The Amazon description reads as follows. Quote, “This book offers both a feminist critique of twilight and a theological review of the stories, ideas about salvation, heaven and hell, power, reconciliation, resurrection and organized religion. The book includes questions for youth and adult groups or for classroom discussions,” end quote.

Inconceivable. How can Christians be so undiscerning? And, frankly, these are not true believers. These are tares amongst the wheat. You must understand that. You see, a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God. They are foolishness to him. He cannot understand them because he is spiritually appraised.

May I remind you, before we look at our text here this morning, that these are the types of things that God absolutely forbids and unless people are taught the Word of God and obey the Word of God, they will never understand this. And so what we are seeing today is the result of several generations of people who are utterly bereft of an understanding of the Word of God and most of them are bereft of the Spirit of God because they are not saved.

Deuteronomy 18 beginning in verse nine, God speaks through Moses and says:

“When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations.”<sup>2</sup>

Literally, those things that are loathsome to God.

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<sup>2</sup> Deuteronomy 18:9.

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There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For whoever does these things is detestable to the LORD.<sup>3</sup>

And, beloved, I would submit to you that God has not changed his attitude. Make no mistake. If something is detestable to the Lord, it will be detestable to those in whom he inhabits.

Paul has given us various tests here in Romans eight to help us understand how we can be secure, how we can have assurance of our salvation, how we can therefore validate the genuineness of saving faith.

In verse five of chapter eight he speaks of how the mind of a believer is going to dwell on the things of the Spirit, not on the things of the flesh. In verse seven he says:

“...the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so.”<sup>4</sup>

It is very simple. You call yourself a Christian. If your mind dwells on the things that God hates, if you find it entertaining and enjoyable to have your mind dwell on the things that God detests, then, frankly, you have no legitimate claim to Christ.

In Isaiah five verse 20 God spoke through his prophet and said, “Woe.”

In other words “Damn”

“...to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness.”<sup>5</sup>

Well, certainly God has a cure for such idolatry and it is the gospel of Jesus Christ. And when we place our faith in the Lord, he changes all of our desires. There is a transformation. We begin to hate the things that God hates and love the things that he loves. And then we grow in the grace and the knowledge of Christ through the systematic teaching of the Word of God, where we immerse ourselves in his Word and we submit ourselves to those who teach his Word. Therefore, in Jude verse three and four we are called to:

“...contend earnestly for the faith.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Deuteronomy 18:10-12.

<sup>4</sup> Romans 8:7.

<sup>5</sup> Isaiah 5:20.

<sup>6</sup> Jude 3.

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Referring to the Word of God.

“...which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.”<sup>7</sup>

So we come, again, to the Word of God this morning, as we do every Sunday. And you must know that I take very seriously—and I hope you do, too—what the apostle Paul told Timothy and, therefore, all ministers of the Word of God.

2 Timothy four verse one he says:

I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths.<sup>8</sup>

So we return once again, dear friends, to the truth of the Word of God, the Christian's confirmation here in then text before us. These are truths pertaining to the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of those that he indwells that gives us assurance that, indeed, we are sons of God.

You will recall, by way of review, that, first of all, we saw that this assurance begins by understanding and experiencing the fact that the Spirit leads our lives. The overall direction of our lives will manifest a continual leading by the Holy Spirit.

Verse 14.

“For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”<sup>9</sup>

Literally these and these alone are sons of God and he leads through illuminating our minds with the truth and activating our wills with desire and animating our heart with hope. And, secondly, not only he leads our lives, but he relieves our fears, verse 15.

“For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Jude 3-4.

<sup>8</sup> 2 Timothy 4:1-4.

<sup>9</sup> Romans 8:14.

<sup>10</sup> Romans 8:15.

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The Lord Jesus said that when he would send the Spirit, the Spirit would convict the world of sin and righteousness and judgment. He is the one that first convicted us of these things in our life. He is the one that caused us to see the sword of divine justice looming over our heads. He caused us to see the wrath of God that abides upon us prior to salvation. He causes us to see that we were slaves of sin and there was a gripping of our heart with fear of eternal judgment. He caused us to tremble at the realization that we had violated the law of a holy God. But it is the Spirit that takes away that fear when we come to Christ.

While there will be varying levels of intensity, every genuine Christian will acknowledge that they experience some measure of fear when they first were confronted with their hopelessness and their helplessness and their sinful condition. They had a sense of condemnation. They had a sense of their inward corruption, a profound awareness of their unworthiness and their inability to save themselves. There was a terror of ever having to stand before a holy God. There was a horror of hell. And like Moses and the covenant people who stood before Mount Sinai, there was a fear and a trembling.

You will recall that Moses said:

““I AM FULL OF FEAR AND TREMBLING.””<sup>11</sup>

And every man that comes to Christ will experience some measure of this when the Spirit of God confronts him with his sin. And without such a Spirit induced spirit of slavery, as Paul says, leading to fear, the gospel would not be the exceedingly good news that it is, would it? Of course not. But for those who repent and believe in the finished work of Christ, that spirit of slavery leading to fear is replaced, as we see here, with a Spirit of adoption.

We will never again experience the terror of Mount Sinai.

You will recall in Hebrews 12 beginning at verse 18 we read:

For you have not come to a mountain that may be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that those who heard begged that no further word should be spoken to them.<sup>12</sup>

Verse 22.

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge

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<sup>11</sup> Hebrews 12:21.

<sup>12</sup> Hebrews 12:18-19.

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of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant.<sup>13</sup>

Oh, dear friend, the mercy and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ that is ours, the joy that that brings.

In Galatians chapter four and verse four the apostle Paul says:

But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"<sup>14</sup>

So, indeed, it is the Spirit that relieves our fears. And, frankly, if you find yourself in fear of divine justice and in fear of divine judgment, you must place your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And when you do, as Paul makes it clear at the very beginning of Romans eight, you will soon understand that there is no therefore no condemnation. And we rejoice in that.

So we have learned that this assurance comes in knowing it is the Spirit that leads our lives. He relieves our fears. But now today we will also examine the fact that he assures our Spirit.

Notice verse 16.

“The Spirit Himself bears witness [or literally testifies] with our spirit that we are children of God.”<sup>15</sup>

Now this is utterly astounding to me. To think that the Holy Spirit transformed us from slaves to children. So all fear of approaching God is gone. Now understand that this is the language of intimate fellowship, of intimate communion with our Father. By enabling us to cry out, “Abba, Father,” Philip says, quote, “The Spirit endorses our inward conviction that we are children of God.”

I love the way he puts that.

“The Spirit endorses our inward conviction that we are children of God.”

You will recall Paul said in Romans five verse five that:

“...the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Hebrews 12:22-24.

<sup>14</sup> Galatians 4:4-6.

<sup>15</sup> Romans 8:16.

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So he is the one that produces within us a subjective awareness of the love of God for us.

Now this witness of the Holy Spirit that testifies with our spirit that we are children of God is a profoundly subjective kind of an awareness, a joyful recognition of filial trust and love. But like all emotions, this is animated by the truth that we understand, the conviction, the belief that the Holy Spirit is, indeed, alive within us and is continually at work in us to bring us to a place of glory, to conform us to the image of Christ.

Now this is an amazing truth, but I believe that it is all together foreign to many people within the Church. I asked you. Do you have to convince yourself that you are in love with someone? Not at all. You know that it is true. If I am in need of some kind of persuasion as to whether or not I am in love with my dear wife, then I am not in love with her at all.

I know exactly the love that I feel for my wife. I don't need any persuasion of that. But that is based upon, those feelings are based upon a myriad of facts that warrant such a conviction and, therefore, elicit such emotion. If someone were to say to me, "That man does not love his wife," well, I would instantly dismiss that charge because I know the truth. I know exactly what I feel. And I know why I feel it.

So, too, is this witness of the Holy Spirit that assures our spirit that, indeed, we are a child of God. Therefore, if my flesh or Satan or any man would ever tell me otherwise, I would just ignore it, because I know the truth. The Spirit causes me to experience that. Why? Because it is the Spirit that indwells me. He is the one that leads my life. He is the one that relieves my fears. He is the one that assures my Spirit that I am a child of God.

Now, beloved, this is part of Paul's great argument here. He is trying to help us have the assurance that is ours based upon these tests.

You say, "Well, I have felt little of these things. I feel little of this awareness of God's love for me and the fact that I am his child."

Well, if that is the case, I would suggest to you, humbly, that you are probably not walking by the Spirit. You have probably grieved the Spirit, quenched the Spirit because of sin in your life.

You have broken fellowship with him in some way and allowed the old nature to, once again, reassert itself and control you and rob you of the fellowship that could be yours. And, therefore, you forfeit the blessing of Spirit induced assurance.

Jesus said in John 15 verse 10:

""If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love.""<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Romans 5:5.

<sup>17</sup> John 15:10.

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Let's reverse that. How do you abide in the love of God? Well, you keep his commandments. That is how you experience it. It is not hard to understand.

In verse 11 he says:

These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full. This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.<sup>18</sup>

I would submit to you that many Christians do not enjoy the fullness of the Spirit's inner witness within them because they are disobedient, especially with respect to loving one another, that we all tend to be selfish, self absorbed, self centered. But certainly the Spirit's subjective testimony of our sonship is available to all believers, all who are willing to act like sons and be willing to live in a way that brings honor to our Father.

And when we do, we experience many glorious things of Scripture. He causes us to bear the fruit of the Spirit. And this is foreign to many, many Christians because they are not walking by the Spirit, the love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control.

When we are walking by the Spirit we witness the effects of the gifts that he has given us. And that brings great joy to us. We experience his power in serving Christ as is promised in Acts 1:8. He stirs our hearts to prayer. He convicts us of sin. He draws us to works of love.

Now can you say that these things are true in your life? If so, you will experience that Spirit of adoption. You will have an instinctive confident, intimate Spirit induced sense of your sonship, conscious, unshakable, joyful sense of love, your love for God and God's love for you. This is that Spirit of adoption.

But I want to make an important point. God's love for us is not because we are so lovable. Sometimes we tend to think that. The reason he loves us is because we are hidden in his beloved Son. He sees us in him. He ultimately sees his Son in whom we are hidden.

That is why in verse one of chapter eight he says:

“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”<sup>19</sup>

You will recall this is our justification. We have been declared righteous because we have the imputed righteousness of Christ. We are clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In some inscrutable way that we could never fathom, we are hidden in him. That is why he loves us. When Christ died, in some unfathomable way, the Scripture teaches that we

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<sup>18</sup> John 15:11-12.

<sup>19</sup> Romans 8:1.



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also died. Our spiritual baptism united us to Christ in his death, his burial and resurrection and the ritual of baptism really pictures these astounding truths. You will remember that we have been immersed into his death, chapter six verse three.

He goes on to say in verse four:

“Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.”<sup>20</sup>

And in verse eight.

“Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.”<sup>21</sup>

So, my friend, God loves us and we experience this love because we are in Christ. God sees his righteousness, not ours, because we don't have any. Ours is the righteousness of Christ. We make our boast in him, not in us.

In Galatians four and verse six we read:

“And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’”<sup>22</sup>

To make this abundantly clear, this means that the very essence of our sonship, the objective and subjective confirmation of our divine nature, the fact of our exalted position as children of God is all because we are in Christ. And the experience of this, the subjective awareness of this is induced by the indwelling Spirit of God.

Astounding truths.

And did you know that Jesus prayed for this very thing? In John 17 beginning in verse 22 he prayed that we would:

“...be one, just as We are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and didst love them, even as Thou didst love Me.”<sup>23</sup>

And he even prayed in verse 26 at the end:

“...that the love wherewith Thou didst love Me may be in them, and I in them.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Romans 6:4.

<sup>21</sup> Romans 6:8.

<sup>22</sup> Galatians 4:6.

<sup>23</sup> John 17:22-23.

<sup>24</sup> John 17:26.

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This is utterly astounding. He is praying here that the love wherewith the Father loves him be felt in us. He is not praying that it would be set upon us, because that love was set upon us in eternity past. It was set upon us even when we were dead in our sins. But he is praying here that we would experience this same love that he experiences from the Father.

So the Spirit's work of making us conscious of our adoption and assuring us that we are assuring our spirit that we are children of God is all because of our relationship to Christ. We are in him and because of our conscious awareness of these truths, our spirits just literally overflow with love for God. This is all a work of grace.

1 John four verse seven at the end. He says:

“...everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.”<sup>25</sup>

And then he says in verse nine:

“By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.”<sup>26</sup>

In verse 19 he says:

“We love, because He first loved us.”<sup>27</sup>

Now, my friend, if these truths resonate within your heart, if these truths cause your soul to soar into the heavens with excitement, if your heart is overflowing with joy and love for the lover of your soul, then you can be sure that this is a work of the Spirit and that you are one of the Sons of God. This is an amazing and wonderful text.

But know full well that all of this is the work of the Spirit himself that bears witness with our Spirit that we are children of God.

Now you will recall that Roman adoption required the testimony of seven reputable witnesses in order to make the transaction legally binding. And here we discover that we have the witness of the Holy Spirit testifying on our behalf within us and he does this through the mysterious work of sanctification. All of the things that I have been describing are part of this process.

John reminds us of the Spirit's assuring witness within us in 1 John three beginning in verse 18. He says:

Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. We shall know by this that we are of the truth, and shall assure our

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<sup>25</sup> 1 John 4:7.

<sup>26</sup> 1 John 4:9.

<sup>27</sup> 1 John 4:19.

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heart before Him, in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God.<sup>28</sup>

Now, what is it that prevents our heart from condemning us? He says here it is being obedient in Word and in truth. And then we know also in Romans 8:16 that it is the Spirit that will bear witness with our Spirit that we are children of God.

Did we not learn this as a little child when we sang, “Jesus loves me, this I know”?

Why? “For the Bible tells me so.”

Well, what is that? Well, that is the Spirit of God speaking to us, illuminating our minds though the truth.

But I must emphasize that the Spirit's witness expressed here in verse 16 exceeds his work of believing the truth, as important as that is. But here the text is emphasizing the Spirit wrought delight that we have in the living God.

This is an amazing concept and if you have never felt it, I would be hard pressed to explain it any more than I could explain to a person what it means to be truly in love with some one who is reciprocating that love. If you have never experienced that, I can't explain it to you. But when it happens you know it. How can I explain the joy, the sheer excitement, the exhilaration, the longing to be with the Lord.

My friends, this is the stuff of the Spirit's witnessing in our heart. It is more than just believing in God. It is delighting in him above all else. It is enjoying him. It is longing to be with him. It is desiring to serve him, to obey him. It is longing to know him more intimately and completely.

You might recall the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Assembly says, quote, “The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.”

You see, this is what we feel when we hear the Word of God, when we hear the voice of God and it warms our hearts. Our imaginations are ignited by the promises that are ours. This is what we experience when we come to prayer and we commune with the lover of our souls and we can cry out Abba, Father, knowing full well and feeling the love that he has for us as his child. This is the work of the Spirit.

The hymnist captured this joy and thanksgiving that we feel when he wrote:

All that thrills my soul is Jesus,  
He is more than life to me,  
And the fairest of 10,000

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<sup>28</sup> 1 John 3:18-21.

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In my blessed Lord I see.

My, what confirmation we have as a result of the Spirit's work. He leads our lives. He relieves our fears and he assures our spirit. And, fourthly, the apostle helps us see here that he also guarantees our glory.

I am so humbled and often ashamed at how the Holy Spirit must endure me, how often he must grieve over my sin. And yet he continues to do his work in me and you. That is why Paul said in Philippians 1:6:

“For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.”<sup>29</sup>

And it was the Spirit that participated in the beginning of this good work when he caused us to be born again. In fact, the Spirit has spiritually sealed our salvation. He has sealed us as belonging to God. he is the down payment of our eternal inheritance.

2 Corinthians 1:22 we read:

“[God] also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.”<sup>30</sup>

What an amazing truth.

You see, the believer's assurance, the security we have of our eternal salvation is, once again, Paul's great theme here in chapter eight. And he is going to continue to expand upon this theme. In fact, we will read in verse 30:

“...whom [God] predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.”<sup>31</sup>

My friends, if you study Scripture you will quickly see that our election, our calling, our regeneration, our new birth, our faith, our repentance, being united with Christ, our justification, our sanctification and ultimately our glorification, every part of our salvation is inextricably woven into the glorious tapestry of God's sovereign plan to glorify himself by saving us. And there is nothing you can do. There is nothing Satan can do to thwart those purposes. And it is the Spirit's work to bring all this about. He is the one that carries us from one stage of glory to the next stage until we are finally conformed in the image of the Lord Jesus Christ, into the image of the one in whom we have been hidden.

2 Corinthians 3:18 Paul says:

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<sup>29</sup> Philippians 1:6.

<sup>30</sup> 2 Corinthians 1:22.

<sup>31</sup> Romans 8:30.

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“But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.”<sup>32</sup>

And we see this great confirmation concerning the Spirit guaranteeing our glory in verse 17. He says:

“... and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.”<sup>33</sup>

Now the key to understanding this text is in this little word “if.” And it introduces a fulfilled condition. It could even be translated because. Because of all that Paul has revealed to us before that the Spirit leads our lives, he relieves our fears, assures our spirit, all of these things that prove that we are, indeed, God's adopted children. He is saying, “If...” And because of this, if children, then obviously we are heirs. Make sense? And if heirs, obviously there is an inheritance in store. There is one that awaits us in glory that we will share with Christ.

So, again, it is the indwelling Spirit of God that guarantees our future glory.

Now I want you to notice something fascinating here. Because we are children of God Paul tells us we are not only heirs of God, but also fellow heirs with Christ.

Now think about this for a moment. What is it that makes an inheritance valuable? Well, it is the net worth of the one who bestows the inheritance. It is the wealth of the Father. But here we learn that our inheritance is not only infinitely valuable because our Father is the creator and sovereign ruler of everything that exists, but here, beloved, we see that our inheritance includes even more than what our Father owns. It includes God himself. This is incomprehensible.

What man has ever received both his father's wealth and his father? And you think about it. An inheritance is bequeathed at the death of the Father. So to have an inheritance that includes the Father is inconceivable to us. Can there be anything more magnificent than this? God is not only the source of our inheritance, but is himself our inheritance.

John had a glimpse of this in his vision on the isle of Patmos. We read in Revelation 21 verse three:

“And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them, and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.”<sup>34</sup>

In fact, Luke tells us in Luke 12 verse 37 that God will literally gird himself to serve us.

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<sup>32</sup> 2 Corinthians 3:18.

<sup>33</sup> Romans 8:17.

<sup>34</sup> Revelation 21:3-4.

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Dear Christian, grab a hold of these truths. For this reason Paul prayed in Colossians 1:9 that we:

“...may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.”<sup>35</sup>

Why?

“...so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord.”<sup>36</sup>

And at the end of verse 11 he says:

“...joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.”<sup>37</sup>

What light? What is he referring to?

Beloved, this is referring to the ineffable light of the glory of God in whose presence we will bask for eternity. That light.

In Revelation 21 verse 23 we read of the new Jerusalem and John says this.

“And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.”<sup>38</sup>

Is that not precious?

And in chapter 22 verse five we read:

“And there shall no longer be any night; and they shall not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall illumine them; and they shall reign forever and ever.”<sup>39</sup>

Now wonder the psalmist could say in Psalm 73 verse 25:

Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth. My flesh and my heart may fail, But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Colossians 1:9.

<sup>36</sup> Colossians 1:10.

<sup>37</sup> Colossians 1:11-12.

<sup>38</sup> Revelation 21:23.

<sup>39</sup> Revelation 22:5.

<sup>40</sup> Psalm 73:25-26.

## The Christian's Confirmation – Part 2

By David Harrell

**Bible Text:** Romans 8:14-17

And because of the sealing, securing, sanctifying work of the Spirit, we are not only heirs of God, but verse 17 says we are fellow heirs with Christ.

My, what will this include? Well, God the Father has appointed his Son in whom we have been hidden to be, quote:

“...[the] heir of all things.”<sup>41</sup>

Hebrews 1:2.

That pretty well covers it, doesn't it? Ok? I don't think I need to expand upon that. What greater validation of our status could there possibly be and this was at the Son's request of the Father.

Again, John 17 verse 24:

“Father, I desire that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, in order that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me; for Thou didst love Me before the foundation of the world.”<sup>42</sup>

Beloved, because we are hidden in Christ he has loved us as well. And what is even more incomprehensible is that our future inheritance was ordained before time began in the eternal counsels of a sovereign God.

When his Son comes into glory Jesus said in Matthew 25 verse 34:

“Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’”<sup>43</sup>

For this reason Paul just exploded into praise in Ephesians one and verse three saying:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.”<sup>44</sup>

Verse 11.

“... also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will.”<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Hebrews 1:2.

<sup>42</sup> John 17:24.

<sup>43</sup> Matthew 25:34.

<sup>44</sup> Ephesians 1:3.

<sup>45</sup> Ephesians 1:11.

## The Christian's Confirmation – Part 2

By David Harrell

**Bible Text:** Romans 8:14-17

I never cease to be amazed at God's sovereign grace. Every aspect of our salvation was decreed in eternity past through the uninfluenced choice of a sovereign God and it is the Holy Spirit, according to Romans or Ephesians four verse 30, the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

In Ephesians one verse 11 that I just read you might say, "Well, wait. It says here that we have obtained an inheritance. I don't have an inheritance yet. What does that mean?"

Well, the answer was found in the exegesis of the text. We have obtained an inheritance really translates a single compound word in the Greek. And the grammar, the meaning of this term indicates that this is something that is going to happen in the future, but it is so certain that it will come to pass that it is spoken of as if it has already happened. In fact, whenever something in the future was absolutely inevitable to come to fruition, the Greeks would often speak of it as if it had already occurred.

What is he referring to? What has already occurred? Even though we don't have it yet, it is our inheritance. That is how certain it is.

So he is saying:

[In Christ] we have obtained an inheritance having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.<sup>46</sup>

What a marvelous thing this is. Our inheritance, to think that we are fellow heirs with Christ.

Paul said in Titus 3:7 that we are:

"...justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."<sup>47</sup>

But, finally, notice another proof of our sonship at the end of verse 17. He says:

"...if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him."<sup>48</sup>

Well, this makes perfect sense. Think about it. Fellow heirs with Christ will share in glory in the same way in which Christ achieved his glory. And how did that happen? It was through suffering.

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<sup>46</sup> Ephesians 1:11-14.

<sup>47</sup> Titus 3:7.

<sup>48</sup> Romans 8:17.



## The Christian's Confirmation – Part 2

By David Harrell

**Bible Text:** Romans 8:14-17

Hebrews five verse eight says:

“Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.”<sup>49</sup>

Dear Christian, as his co-heirs, we must learn the same way. Paul said that he was always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. So, indeed, we will suffer for Christ in who we have been hidden.

And ultimately we are being conformed into his image day by day as we are being transformed, according to 2 Corinthians 3:18, into the same image from glory to glory as just from the Lord, the Spirit. And this process is going to include the shared sufferings of Christ in order that we might also share in his glory.

So bear in mind, my friend, when you experience the inevitable ridicule and mockery and slander and persecution because of your faith, know that that is yet another proof that one day you will share in his glory.

And I close with Peter's words in 1 Peter one beginning in verse four.

He said we will:

...obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.<sup>50</sup>

Dear Christian, take joy in these great truths that confirm the genuineness of your faith. If you can say with full conviction that it is the Spirit of God that is leading your life, that it is the Spirit of God that has relieved your fears, that it is the Spirit of God that causes you to experience that assurance that you are a child of God then you can be certain that it is that same Spirit of God that will guarantee your future inheritance, that will take you to glory if, indeed, you suffer for him.

Peter said in 1 Peter 4:13:

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<sup>49</sup> Hebrews 5:8.

<sup>50</sup> 1 Peter 1:4-7.

## The Christian's Confirmation – Part 2

By David Harrell

**Bible Text:** Romans 8:14-17

“...to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation.”<sup>51</sup>

May I encourage you? May I challenge you dear Christian to walk in a manner worthy of your calling, to hear these truths, to carve them into your hearts in such a way that you never forget them, live consistently with them so that you can enjoy the fullness of the Spirit that indwells you, so that you can enjoy all of the blessings that the Lord longs for you to experience which is just a foretaste of what you will experience in eternal glory.

Let's pray together.

*Father, thank you for these eternal truths. Lord, they are not complicated, but they are profound. I pray that every believer that meditates upon these truths will hold them so close to their heart that they will be forever transformed by them. Lord, thank you that there is a transformation that occurs within us by the renewing of our mind. So, Lord, take what you have taught us today and cause these truths to bear much fruit to the praise of your glory. And for those that do not know you as Savior, oh God, would that you overwhelm them with conviction, with fear and trembling that today would be the day that they bow the knee to Christ and experience the miracle of the new birth and the joy of sins forgiven and the hope of eternal glory. For it is in Christ's name that I pray. Amen.*

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<sup>51</sup> 1 Peter 4:13.