

## Romans chapter 8

Forwards: In ch 7 Paul expressed in detail all the stuff that fails to justify us, to make us right before God: hard work, obeying the law, and even when we want to be good we are not. Now for the good news.

vv./ 1-4 The Heart of the Gospel: What we could not do, God has done in Christ, and if we are part of Christ, it is thereby accomplished.

\*Christ became something which He was not: sin bearing, that sin might die in Him.

\*The Law condemns us to death, but Christ took our place.

\*There is a new law: life in the Spirit.

vv. 5-13: A sharp contrast between the flesh and the spirit. (Paul has been sharply criticized for this line of thought condemning the flesh. Paul would reply- if it's so great why is it dying?)

\*the life of the flesh=death. Consider the insights of Dr Freud: pleasure principle and the death wish. (Era of WW 1.) Eros+Thanatos

\*The Spirit is more powerful than the flesh

It is the Spirit that gives life now

It is the Spirit that will give life in the world to come

The spirit can and does change us, so that we can live

13b-17: The Aramaic term Abba (ref. Mark 14:36) Hebrew addresses often have a formulaic and respectful addition when speaking to God. Eg. "Lord of Hosts" or "God of our Fathers" or "God Almighty." Here is simpler and more direct; not in a sentimental sense as in "daddy" but direct and personal

\*in Christ we inherit all things good

\*this does not mean that everything will be peachy: suffering is still real. Contrast this with prosperity Gospel stuff, which sees the Bible as a contract, and if we do our part, ie truly believe, God will respond with prosperity Joel Osteen: "Let go of what happened yesterday. Today is a new day. God will crown the year with a bountiful year. Not just a 'get by' year, but a bountiful year."

vv. 18-27

\*What is coming is far greater than what we endure in life - this is important to remember. This is a call to endurance. Ex. Shackleton and the HMS Resolute

\*this renewal extends to the whole of the created order; the world itself is fallen along with us, and it too shall be redeemed Are animals saved?

\*this redemption applies also to the spiritual order of things, to the point that God is praying within us. Note the value of silence as a response to dry prayer; we can outgrow our spirituality. God knows how to pray far better than we do

\*C.S. Lewis: the weight of glory; we look forward to something we cannot yet know, like a child learning grammar cannot imagine what poetry will be like

v. 28-39 \*this was all planned out long in advance in the Mind of God. It was not an afterthought or an accident: f<sup>r</sup>om all ages, you personally were chosen for this

\*we note the progression of salvation: predestined, called, justified, glorified. The predestination issue is complicated by the influence of the Reformation: Do we f<sup>r</sup>eely choose what we are predestined to do St Augustine, He predestined the called. Image of the gate: I have called you/come to me all of you. We live with that paradox. A reaction to overemphasis on merit Calvin & double predestination and universalism - views which denies the dignity of free will. CS Lewis - the great divorce

\*condemning oneself futile: we must never deny the Almighty power of God to save

\*one cannot do better than God does and He has won this and the Christian has no business thinking God will change His Mind or fail to forgive "How can God forgive me for doing x, answer: He already has, there is no conditionality in this. " How can He" suggests a world where it may not be possible

\*God's victory extends across the universe beyond spiritual forces: Spiritual forces, eg principalities and powers, height and depth possibly refers to zodiac. Christ's victory overcomes the demonic, the elemental, things we do not see