

Linchpin pt2

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Linchpin / Romans 8:12–17

So last week we talked about the transformation that comes on us when we are united with Jesus and dead to our flesh. How we move from one way of life dedicated to being hostile to God to a new way of life committed to being filled by God.

So where do we go from here?

Let's look at verses 12-17 and get some clarity on this new life.

(v12) First, Paul wants to remind them that the old debts are paid in full. We no longer owe for our sins. **Jesus has paid the cost and we are no longer facing the bill that was due for our sin- death and permanent separation from God.**

Romans 3. Living in the Spirit (8:1–39)

What we once were no longer has any claim on us. We are not obliged to obey the desires of our old earthly nature

Church you need to stop living in that past. Some of you were forgiven by Jesus a long time ago, but you cannot, or will not allow yourselves to accept that forgiveness. **You are paying a debt you no longer owe.** It's like someone making payments on a Mercedes that someone else bought for them! It is nonsense.

It is the one thing the Enemy has left, to keep you focused on your past. He cannot take your soul, but he can distract you from engaging in the work your soul needs to do to experience the fullness of life Jesus promised.

It is time to tell that guy to GO!

(v13) The real danger of continuing to focus on the past is not just being spiritually stunted but staying in those old ways Jesus saved you from. **Stop living like a sinner when you are a saint!**

I am so glad we celebrate authenticity at West Metro. It makes us a welcoming space for anyone who is struggling with sin or their faith or just life. BUT being authentic does not mean we just keep wallowing in the sin that we need to be authentic about. **We are called to LIVE! Not to wallow.**

So, some of us need a reckoning with our old life. We don't just need to tell the accuser to take a hike, we need to say goodbye to an old life- and put to death the things in our life that bring us to sin instead of a Savior. Before they kill us.

Romans 3. Living in the Spirit (8:1–39)

The lower nature does not automatically fade away when a person comes to Christ. **The need to put to death the evil practices of the body is ongoing.** Note as well that the way to crucify the old self is to obey the promptings of the Spirit. **When we walk in fellowship with the indwelling Spirit, the desires of the lower nature are not met.** For all practical purposes they are put to death. It is only when we break fellowship with the Spirit that our sinful nature is able successfully to reassert its fraudulent claim on our lives. The key to freedom from what we were is constant reliance on the active presence of the Spirit

So why do we have this power to inherit this new way of life and leave behind the bondage to sin that we have lived in so long? Because of our adoption. **Look at verses 14-15.**

These verses spell out not just a new way of life, but a new identity. **Before Jesus, we were in bondage to sin.** Ill treated servants carving out our own deaths but helpless to do anything about the road we were on. But then Jesus stepped in.

And in His arrival, He not only broke the chains of bondage to sin, but **He elevated us from the prison to the King's table!** We are not random servants in the Kingdom, we are sons and daughter of God.

Romans 3. Living in the Spirit (8:1–39)

While God is the Father of all in the sense of creation, and specifically the Father of Israel in a corporate sense (Deut 32:6; Isa 63:16; Jer 31:9), **the only way for a person to become a child of God is through faith in Jesus Christ** (John 1:12–13). The corollary is that unless people are continually being led (indicated by the Greek present tense) by the Spirit, they are not members of God's family. The NIVSB note on 8:14 says that **"being led by God's Spirit is the hallmark of this relationship."** Beware of the temptation to adjust this requirement to the level of common practice.

And with that should come a confidence! That's why **verse 15** compares the former spirit- one of fear of impending doom and judgement- to the new Spirit by saying we can cry out Abba Father!

Romans 3. Living in the Spirit (8:1–39)

In adoption all previous relationships are severed. The new father exercises authority over the new son, and **the new son enters into the privileges and responsibilities of the natural son.** "Abba," the Aramaic word for "father," was used primarily within the family circle and in prayer (cf. Mark 14:36; Gal 4:6). Montgomery's translation (**"My Father, my dear Father!"**) underscores the intimate nature of the expression, which is so clearly the opposite of fear

That's a highly personal name for God! It is like calling Him Daddy. And that relationship implies an intimacy and a lack of fear- **a confidence that we will not only be heard, but attended to!**

And since we are children of God, we are heirs. **Look at verse 16-17.**

We are heirs of the same thing Jesus was an heir of- the Resurrection. Jesus suffered to buy our freedom, but **He inherited the resurrection power of God. We have access to the same power-** “heirs with Christ” - and though we suffer, and sometimes even to the point of death, we have the hope of life in Him for eternity.

Romans 3. Living in the Spirit (8:1–39)

What our own spirit assures us to be true is strengthened by the powerful inward testimony of God’s Spirit. In much the same way that the hymn writer knew that Jesus lives (“He lives within my heart”), we rest assured that we are actually members of God’s family because the same Spirit witnesses to our spirit that it is so.

The transformation is both temporal- we leave behind sin for holiness- and eternal- we enter the Kingdom of God to live in an eternity that God had intended before the Fall.

Romans 3. Living in the Spirit (8:1–39)

What appears to be a condition on this promised inheritance (“if indeed”) is actually a simple statement of fact. Sharing the sufferings of Christ leads to sharing his glory. Obviously we do not share the redemptive suffering of Christ, but we do share the consequences in terms of opposition from the world he came to save (cf. Phil 3:10; 1 Pet 4:13). As members of the same family we share in the trials of life as well as the benefits

So why don't we live like this?

First- because we don't know it is possible

Second- because it requires discipline to change- and that discipline is not will power, but Spirit powered...to seek to be in sync with the leading of the Spirit of God!

Third- because we do not slow down long enough to listen to God

Finally- because we have forgotten the sin which Jesus saved us from and the condition we were in

Church we need to remember and return. We have a purpose to fulfill and we all have assignments to complete. But we cannot complete them if we have left the table for crumbs.

What God is seeking are His people who will remember who they are and why they are. To do the work He created for them to do from now to eternity.

What would it take for you, today, to leave the crumbs and return to the table? When will you stop being satisfied with tiny morsels of what God has for you and instead long for the greater meal?