

Romans 8

The Spirit-Filled Life



15 studies for Bible-believing born-again Christians seeking knowledge of the deeper life in Christ.

By John Edmiston

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Before You Start!

Purpose

The purpose of this series on Romans 8 is spiritual growth and not theological argument. The aim is for the believer to experience, grow-in and mature as a Spirit-filled Christian. We will not be debating theories of salvation or comparing denominations or various viewpoints. This is an interdenominational bible study focused on discipleship.

Bible Version

You will need a fairly literal translation such as ESV, NKJV or NASB. You do NOT want a translation that replaces terms such as flesh, walk, mind, or inner man with abstract concepts.

Pre-Reading

Please read Romans chapters 5-8 and Galatians chapters 3-6 as background. It will help you get a LOT more from this study.

Repetition of Concepts

There is some repetition of concepts in this study (especially in the first few studies) but please bear with it since the ideas are completely new to many people.

Group Study

These studies are meant to be used in small groups but can also be used for personal study. The leader should be a mature Christian who is well-prepared beforehand.

Free Commentary

A free commentary on Romans chapters 1-8 (by John Edmiston) can be downloaded from:

https://globalchristians.org/pdf/romans1_to_8.pdf

Website

The website with these studies and other resources is at: www.globalchristians.org/rom8/

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Contents

1. Introduction: *Spirit vs. Flesh* - p. 4
2. Romans 8:1,2 – *No Condemnation* – p.7
3. Romans 8:3,4 – *The Flesh Is Weak* – p.8
4. Romans 8:5-8 – *The Mind, The Flesh and The Spirit* – p.9
5. Romans 8:9-11 – *The Spirit of Christ Dwells In Us* – p.10
6. Romans 8:12,13 – *Putting The Flesh To Death* – p.11
7. Romans 8:14-17 – *Sons and Daughters of the Living God* – p.12
8. Romans 8:18 - *Suffering and Glory* – p.13
9. Romans 8:19-22 – *The Creation In Childbirth* – p.14
10. Romans 8:23-25 – *The Hope of Redemption* – p.15
11. Romans 8:26,27 – *The Spirit's Intercession* – p.16
12. Romans 8:28 – *All Things Work Together For Good* – p.17
13. Romans 8:29,30 – *The Divine Process* – p.18
14. Romans 8:31-34 – *God Is For Us!* – p.19
15. Romans 8:35-39 – *More Than Conquerors* – p.20

About the Author – page 21

Introduction: Spirit vs Flesh

In Romans 7 the apostle Paul speaks of his own struggle with “sin in the flesh” and concludes that there is a good part of him (the Inner Man v. 22) that agrees with the law of God, and which also observes his behavior, which Paul hates, because he finds himself “sold as a slave into sin” (Romans 7:14). Eventually Paul concludes that he is not to blame for his sin, because he is not doing it, rather it is sin in the flesh that is doing it (Romans 7:17,20), and because he is not to blame for his sin, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus! (Romans 8:1)

We find that Paul has three components, the Inner Man – *eos anthropon* which desires to obey the Law, The Mind (*nous*) which knows the Law in an intellectual way, and the Flesh - *sarx*, which hates the Law and cannot please God at all. The mind can be set on either the Flesh or the Spirit (Romans 8:4-6) so it is not intrinsically good. However, the New Creation, the Inner Man is intrinsically good because it is born of God and cannot sin or even desire to sin (1 John 3:9). The flesh is just flat out wicked (Galatians 5:19-21). If you were to die and go to Heaven (as a born-again Christian) you would be there without your flesh and without your merely human mind, you would be there as a New Creation and you would have no desire to sin at all and you would have perfect knowledge (1 Corinthians 13:12).

The New Creation is far beyond our human mind and the sense-perception thought-realm. Our spiritual self is our true self, and is a citizen of heaven, and is currently seated with Jesus at the right hand of God (Philippians 3:20, Ephesians 2:6, Colossians 3:1-4, 1 John 3:2). Our spiritual self receives information from the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:9-16) and is intimately connected to God and is one spirit with Him (1 Corinthians 6:17), so that we always have a sense of eternity and the eternal (Ecclesiastes 3:11). It is this new creation, our spiritual self, that will receive the fully spiritual resurrection body (1 Corinthians 15:35-55). This is where our true identity lies, this is essentially Who We Are, forever.

The human mind is mainly a survival tool. It is easily affected by alcohol, drugs, hormones, caffeine, moods, evil spirits, temptations etc. It is not our true self, though it sure feels like it. The mind can be set on good or on evil, on things above or below, on the appetites or on holy things, on the Spirit or on the flesh. Our mind determines what we are filled with. Filling flows to focus. If we focus on resentments we are filled with rage, if we focus on God’s promises we are filled with faith, and so on.

The flesh is the egocentric self that is appetite and vanity driven and which mostly has very immediate plans. The Bible refers to “the flesh with its lusts and desires” (Galatians 5:24, Ephesians 2:3). The flesh is also called the Old Man (Ephesians 4:22). It carries the old stimulus-response pathways of the old nature, the bad habits,

the cravings, the foolish reactive emotions and so on. The flesh contains “no good thing” (Romans 7:18). The mind set on the flesh is death (Romans 8:6) since the carnal mind is at war with God (Romans 8:7) and those who are in the flesh cannot please God (Romans 8:8). Following the flesh results in a wide variety of toxic lifestyle choices (Galatians 5:19-21).

The human mind is the instrument that chooses between the flesh and the Spirit:

(Romans 8:4-6) *in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.*

Therefore, the Spirit-filled life is made possible and fruitful when we set our minds upon the Spirit, and is made impossible and spiritually deadly when we focus our minds upon the flesh. So then, which things cause us to focus our mind of the flesh and its carnal desires? Resentments, offenses, addictions, superstitions, irrational beliefs, fear, threat, ego, pride, vanity, self-absorption, a sense of entitlement, gross appetites, worldliness, love of status, slothfulness (extreme laziness), greed, covetousness, rage, in appropriate sexual lusts of all kinds, doubts, a stubborn and critical spirit, self-righteousness, unreasonableness, selfish ambition, distractions, being in a hurry, frantic behavior, rationalizing sin, toxic guilt, getting stuck in the past or the future, ego defenses, need for control, absorption in trivia, gossip, neediness, insecurity. These things, and many like them, send us straight into the flesh.

What then can pull us out of this mess and into the Spirit? Self-awareness, repentance, being still before God, knowing we are children of God, setting our minds on things above, casting our cares upon God, prayer, being anxious for nothing, fellowship with people of faith, Scripture, worship, challenging our doubts and fears, Sabbath rests, patience with life, patience with others, hope in God, all the fruit of the Spirit, leading a disciplined life, being careful about we watch and read, fleeing temptation, fleeing idolatry, setting our mind on the blessed hope of the Resurrection, being alert about the times and circumstances, doing the works of the Lord and good deeds, and many things like these will keep us in the Spirit with our minds and hearts set upon Christ. This is what we call “walking in the Spirit”.

So let’s recap a bit. You have two main parts, the Inner Man (the real eternal you), also called the New Man or the New Creation. Then you have the Flesh, the Old Man, also called the Outer Man, which is temporary and “of

dust” and is perishing. The new nature is born of God and does not sin and is only at home in Heaven and in the Spirit. The old fleshly nature loves to sin and is at total enmity with God and is only at home in “the world”. One hundred percent of your desire to sin comes from the old nature, the flesh. The new nature has zero desire to sin.

The mind gets to choose. Your mind knows what is right and wrong through the Law and through nature and through your own conscience and through things of the Spirit that inform your mind. Your human mind also gets invaded by the flesh. It frets, gets distracted, gets fearful and focuses on the wrong things.

We have to train our minds to ignore the chattering, sweaty insistence of the flesh and to hold to the Cross. We have to crucify the flesh with its passions and desires (Galatians 5:24) and we will talk much more about this later.

The grace of God can be with our spirit (Galatians 6:18, Philippians 4:23), and grace strengthens the inner man (Ephesians 3:14-21). As we download grace from Heaven through faith, our inner man is strengthened and we can have spiritual victory.

You (eternally) are not your bad behavior. The real you is a spiritual self that is totally separated from your bad behavior and which has the power to change it. This is why Paul writes about putting on the New Man and putting off the Old Man:

(Ephesians 4:20-24) *But that is not the way you learned Christ!— assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your **old self**, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in **the spirit of your minds**, and to put on **the new self**, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.*

Your new self is created in the likeness of God, in true righteousness and holiness. The old self is corrupt and full of deceitful desires. And the way forward is by being renewed in the spirit of our minds. If we renew our minds, then we will be able to put off the old self, and fully access and participate in the new self.

Romans 8:1,2 No Condemnation

1. “Therefore there is now no condemnation” (krino = absolute judgment). How is absolute judgment (Heaven / Hell) removed from the believer? (John 5:24, John 3:16-18, 1 Thessalonians 5:9)
2. How much has God forgiven us? (Colossians 2:13-15, 1 John 2:12) What should be our response in turn (Colossians 3:13)
3. Do Christians still experience the discipline of the Lord? How important is it for our spiritual growth? (Hebrews 12:3-11)
4. “For those who are in Christ Jesus” What are some of the benefits of being “in Christ Jesus” (Romans 3:22-24, 6:11,23; 8:39, Ephesians 1:3, 2:6,7,10; 3:11,12)
5. “For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus” - Who is the Spirit of life? (John 6:63) How does the Holy Spirit set us free from sin and death? (2Corinthians 3:6, 16-18; Galatians 6:8, Revelation 22:17)
6. “From the law of sin and death” What is the law of sin and death? (Ezekiel 18:4,20; John 8:24, Romans 5:12,21; 6:16,23; 1 Corinthians 15:56, James 1:15)
7. How is the law of the Spirit of life (in Christ Jesus) stronger and greater than the law of sin and death? (Romans 6:1-10)
8. Can we sin as much as like since now there is “no condemnation”? (Romans 6:15-23)
9. When you see “therefore” you should look to see “what is before”. So how does Romans 8:1,2 answer Paul’s question in Romans 7:21-25?

Romans 8:3,4 The Weakness of the Flesh

1. The Law was holy, righteous and good (Romans 7:12) but it completely failed to produce good people and a good nation – why was that? What was the fatal weakness (Romans 8:3)?

2. How does the flesh prevent us from doing God’s will? (Romans 7:13-23)

3. Why did God send Jesus in a human body instead of writing another book of the Bible with more detailed instructions on how to get things right? (Romans 8:3, 1 John 4:9-14, John 3:16-18, Hebrews 9:26-28)

4. How did the incarnation and the Cross break the power of sin in the flesh? (Romans 6:6, Galatians 5:24, 1 Peter 2:24, 4:1,2) “Judging sin in the flesh” here means to break its power, to confine, to finally reckon with it and deal with it.

5. Do lots of laws produce a better society? What is needed instead? (Romans 8:4)

6. How do Christians fulfill the righteous requirements of the Law? (Romans 8:4, 13:8-10, Galatians 5:14,6:2; James 2:8)

7. What is a Christian’s “walk”? (John 12:35, Romans 6:4, 13:13; 2 Corinthians 4:2,5:7; Ephesians 4:1)? Is God just interested in your beliefs or also in how you live your life?

8. What does it mean to walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh? (Romans 8:4-6, Galatians 5:16-18)

9. How does walking in the Spirit enable us to overcome the flesh and thus fulfill the righteous requirements of the Law (moral law, see question 6 above)? (Romans 8:13,14, Galatians 5:24, 6:8)

Romans 8:5-8 The Mind Set On The Spirit

1. Read Romans 8:5,6 What are the different outcomes for a) a mind set on the flesh and b) the mind set on the Spirit? How important is the focus of our mind to the success of our spiritual life?
2. What does “life” and “death” mean in Romans 8:5,6? (see also Romans 5:10,17,21) What is spiritual life? (John 5:24, 17:3, 1 John 3:14) and what is spiritual death (Romans 6:23)?
3. Read Romans 8:7 - What is wrong with the mind set on the flesh? What is its attitude to God? Can it submit to God’s law?
4. What are the works of the flesh? (Galatians 5:19-21) Why does the flesh behave this way? What are some notable characteristics underlying these “works” (e.g. self-centeredness, toxic ego, a sense of always being threatened, short-term focus...)
5. Read Romans 8:8 and John 3:3-6, 6:63 is it possible to please God by doing the religious works of the Law in the unaided human flesh? Nicodemus was a “good man” and a teacher of all Israel, why did he have to undergo a drastic change in order to please God?
6. What is required for us to please God? (Hebrews 11:5,6; 1 Thessalonians 4:1,2; 1 Timothy 2:1-4, 5:4,8)
7. Why does purely intellectual, ceremonial or traditional religion fail to produce good fruit? (Colossians 2:8, 16-23; 1 Peter 1:18,19)
8. How can we set our mind on the things of the Spirit? (Philippians 4:4-9, Colossians 3:1-4, Matthew 6:33,34) How can we “change gears” and move out of the flesh, and into the Spirit?
9. Which life disciplines help you to press the reset button so that your mind is set on the Spirit and not on the flesh? Which things should you cut out of your life? What puts you in a negative mood? What pulls you back toward God? Which people in your life help you to be closer to God?

Romans 8:9-11 The Spirit Dwells Within Us

1. Read Romans 8:9-11 - How many times does it refer to the Spirit of God dwelling “in us” in some way? Where is God located for the Spirit-filled believer? Why does Paul emphasize this so much?
2. Compare the phrases: “Spirit”, “spirit of Christ”, “Christ in you”, and “Spirit of God” in these verses. How are they used interchangeably for one another? How does this support the idea of the Trinity?
3. How does the Holy Spirit dwelling in us affect our lives? (1 Corinthians 6:15-20, Galatians 2:20)
4. Read verse 9 – where it says that if someone does not have the “spirit of Christ” then he/she does not belong to Him. How does someone with the spirit of Christ behave? How can this be a test for false teachers and false brethren?
5. Read verse 10 – What is the state of the body? [The word here is “soma” or physical body, not “sarx” or flesh]. Why is the body currently “dead”? When will it be made alive? (Romans 8:11, Matthew 24:31, 1 Corinthians 15:52, 1 Thessalonians 4:16)
6. Read verse 10 – What is the state of our (human) spirit? Why is it alive? How can we be a spiritually alive spirit in a spiritually dead body? (See also John 6:63, 2 Corinthians 3:6, 1 Peter 3:18)
7. Read verse 11 and Romans 1:4 – How powerful is “the Spirit who raised Christ Jesus from the dead”? Where does this powerful Spirit dwell? How is the Holy Spirit the source of our personal power as believers (Ephesians 3:20, Colossians 1:29)?
8. Why do we sometimes fail to access the power of the Holy Spirit? (Romans 8:5,6; 1 Corinthians 3:1-4)
9. Read Colossians 1:27 – How is Christ in us the hope of glory? What would happen if we focused on this great and mysterious truth more?

Romans 8:12-13 Putting The Flesh To Death

1. Read Romans 8:12 – “ we are not under obligation to the flesh..” Who is in control, you or your flesh? How can you gain self-mastery? How can you make the decision that you will be responsible for your own choices and so be master of your soul?

2. What leads us to the delusion that we are helpless and under the control of our anger, moods, resentments, lusts and desires? That we “just cannot help ourselves”? What does the Scripture say instead? (2 Timothy 2:22, James 1:13-15, 1 Corinthians 10:13, Matthew 26:41)

3. Read Romans 8:13 “for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die..” and compare this with Romans 5:12, 6:23. What leads to spiritual death? What is the Second Death? (Revelation 2:10,11; 20:6, 13,14; 21:8)

4. Read Romans 8:13 Fill in the blank: “but if you _____ you shall live” What is the missing component that leads to spiritual life? (Romans 6:6, Galatians 2:20, 5:24, 6:14)

5. Read Romans 8:13 “but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body” How does walking in the Spirit stop us from carrying out the works of the flesh? (Galatians 5:16-18)

6. How does the constant practice of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23) put to death the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21)? Compare the two lists and try to work out which spiritual fruit extinguish which works of the flesh.

7. The Catholics and some others try to “mortify the flesh” by self-abasement and strict practices. Why is this not useful at all? (Colossians 2:18-23)

8. Scenario 1: *You are being immature and upset about something, you are angry, defensive and unreasonable.* What are some ways that you could “put this to death” by the Spirit?

9. Scenario 2: *You are under severe temptation by a member of the opposite sex at work.* How do you handle this?

Romans 8:14-17 Sons and Daughters of the Living God

1. Read Romans 8:14-17 – What are the key themes in this passage? What are the key promises? What are the key conditions (“if statements”)?
2. What things are we “led by” in life? (What thing/s have become our uncompromising bottom line that causes us to make certain human decisions e.g. feelings, security, happiness, reputation, logic, money, self-esteem, beauty, success, popularity etc.)
3. What does it mean to be led by the Spirit? (Romans 8:14, Galatians 5:18, Luke 4:1, Acts 8:26-40) How will this be different from being led by our lusts and desires? What would it be like to be a Spirit-driven person?
4. Read Romans 8:15 – What are some of the key differences between the spirit of slavery and the spirit of adoption? (Romans 8:23, Ephesians 1:3-5, Galatians 4:1-7, 2 Timothy 1:7, 1 John 4:18)
5. Read Romans 8:16 – How can we know that we are children of God? (Galatians 3:26, John 1:12, 1 John 3:10, 4:13, 5:2; 2 Corinthians 1:22,5:5; Ephesians 4:30)
6. Read Romans 8:17 “If children, then heirs also” What does it mean to have a spiritual inheritance in the Kingdom of God? (Matthew 5:5, 19:29, 25:34; Ephesians 1:13,14,18; Colossians 1:12, 3:24; 1 Peter 1:4,5; Revelation 21:7)
7. Read Romans 8:17 “co-heirs with Christ” Why do we get a share in the inheritance of Jesus Christ? (Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:10-13; 1 Corinthians 3:21-23)
8. Read Romans 8:17,18 What is the condition for our inheritance? (Matthew 10:37-42, 16:24-28, 24:9; Philippians 1:29)
9. Why is it difficult to be a child of God in the midst of a sinful world? (Ephesians 6:10-13)

Romans 8:18 The Glory That Is To Be Revealed

1. Read Romans 8:17,18 - Why will our suffering be completely worth it? (1 Peter 4:13, 5:1)

2. Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-12, 16-18 - What was Paul going through? Why are Christians to focus on the unseen and the eternal?

3. What are the “sufferings of the present time” for Christians? (Romans 8:35-36, Matthew 5:10-12, 10:16-28; 2 Timothy 3:12)

4. What is the glory that is to be revealed? (1 Corinthians 15:35-58, Colossians 3:1-4)

5. How does Romans 8:18 deal with all of our self-pity? What happens when we focus on our circumstances instead of on Christ? What should be our attitude toward intense suffering? (1 Corinthians 10:9-10, Hebrews 3:7-11, 1 Peter 5:6-11)

6. How is the anticipation of glory the deepest hope of every Christian? (Romans 8:19-25)

7. How does “the hope of glory” change us as believers? (1 Corinthians 3:7-18, 1 John 3:3, Colossians 1:27, Romans 5:2)

8. Read 2 Corinthians 5:1-10 What does it mean to “walk by faith and not by sight”? What is the difference here between the Inner Man and the Outer Man? What future events motivated Paul and kept Paul going?

9. Read Romans 8:18, 1 Corinthians 2:9-12 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 How is eternal glory a *revelation* that the rational mind cannot grasp now but which will be fully uncovered and be made manifest later? How can we encourage one another to handle the sufferings of life with a faith-filled eternal perspective?

Romans 8:19-22 The Liberation of Creation

1. Read Romans 8:19 What is creation waiting and longing for? (Colossians 3:1-4)

2. What does it mean to be a “son (or daughter) of God”? (John 1:12, Galatians 3:26, Colossians 3:1-4, 1 John 3:1-3, Luke 20:34-39)

3. Read Romans 8:20-22 – What is the current state of Creation? The word “futility” (*mataiotes*) here means “vanity, aimlessness, unable to achieve one’s goals or ambitions”. (Ecclesiastes 1:5-9, Isaiah 34:4, 51:6)

4. In Romans 8:20-22 Creation is variously described as anxious, subjected, futile, enslaved, corrupted, groaning and suffering. What is Paul indicating here? How does this fallen world affect our lives?

5. Read Romans 8:20 Who subjected Creation and why? What powers were available in the Garden of Eden that might not be available today? (Genesis chapters two and three)

6. Read Romans 8:21 What was God’s eventual plan for the Creation that he temporarily subjected to futility? (2 Peter 3:10-13, Revelation 21:1-8)

7. Read Romans 8:21b “into the freedom of the glory of the children of God” which indicates that who we are as Christians places some sort of a cap or restraint on what Creation can become so our liberation is simultaneously the liberation of Creation. What are the habitations of the wicked like? (Jeremiah 17:5,6 Zephaniah 2:8-11) And what are the habitations of the righteous like? (Isaiah 32:18-20, Proverbs 3:33)

8. In Romans 8:22 Paul tells us that Creation is in childbirth until now. This may indicate that the new heavens and the new earth are “born out of” the old. The old is transformed and glorified, the old fallible Creation is no more (no more sin, death, grief) just as the caterpillar “dies” to become a butterfly. There may be a metamorphosis of Creation. How mysterious are God’s plans? (Romans 11:32-36)

9. How much do you trust God’s mysterious long-term plans for your life? (Jeremiah 29:10-14)

Romans 8:23-25 Christian Hope

1. Read Romans 8:23 What are the “first-fruits of the Spirit” (Deuteronomy 26:1,2, 10,11; 2 Corinthians 1:22, 5:5; Ephesians 1:14, 5:7-10; Galatians 5:22,23)
2. How do believers feel waiting for the return of the Lord? (Romans 8:23, 2 Corinthians 5:2-4)
3. Romans 8:23 What is: “The adoption as sons, the redemption of the body” (Luke 21:28, Ephesians 4:30, Philippians 3:20,21) and how does this contrast with the idea that we are already sons of God and already redeemed? How is our redemption a vast work in progress, something that is “now, but not yet”?
4. Romans 8:24 ..”For in hope we have been saved” - *salvation bestowed in the past is characterized by hope* (John Murray). How is the presence of a strong spiritual hope a sign that Christ is in us? How does faith involve the tremendous courage to solidly believe that all of God’s Promises are going to turn out to be true? What is our Christian hope? (Titus 2:13, Romans 5:2, 1 Timothy 4:10)
5. Romans 8:24,25 How does Christian hope involve having faith in invisible realities? (Hebrews 11:7, 25-27; 2 Corinthians 4:18, 5:7)
6. How vital is Christian hope? (1 Corinthians 13:8-13, Lamentations 3:21-26)
7. Romans 8:25 “...with perseverance we wait eagerly” Does this remind you of waiting for Christmas as a very small child? How have perseverance and waiting been eroded as modern virtues? (see also James 5:7-11, Revelation 1:9, 13:10, 14:12)
8. What happens when people give up waiting for the return of Jesus Christ? (2Peter 3:1-13, Hebrews 6:9-12, Matthew 24:45-51, 25:1-13) How can poor teaching on the return of Christ destroy some Christians?
9. What is the relationship between being filled with the Spirit and having Christian hope? (Romans 5:5, 15:4; Galatians 5:5)

Romans 8:26,27 The Holy Spirit Helps Us To Pray

1. Read Romans 8:26 – “we do not know how to pray” If even the apostle Paul can say that how much more you and I? Do you sometimes have difficulty in prayer?
2. Romans 8:26 - How does the Holy Spirit help us to pray? (1 Corinthians 14:1-4)
3. How does this operate spiritually? Who searches the hearts and minds of Christians? (Romans 8:27, 1 Corinthians 2:9-12, Revelation 2:23, Hebrews 4:12,13)
4. Read Romans 8:27,11:33-36 and 1 Corinthians 2:16 What is the mind of the Spirit, the mind of the Lord and the mind of Christ? How is the unknowable mind of God made known to us? (1 Corinthians 2:9-12)
5. Romans 8:26,27 “Intercedes” is used twice, it is a powerful and picturesque word (*upereutugxanei*) that means “to happen on someone who is in trouble and on their behalf plead with unuttered groanings or with sighs that baffle words” (A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures In the NT*) Have you ever stepped in to help someone in trouble who could not help themselves? Do you think that God cares about our struggles in prayer?
6. Romans 8:27 “intercedes for the saints” who are the “saints” (holy ones) in the New Testament? (Acts 9:13, 32, Romans 1:7, 12:13, 16:2,15; Ephesians 5:3)
7. Romans 8:27, 1 John 5:14,15 “according to God” or “according to the will of God”. Why are even our prayers to be in the will of God? (Matthew 7:21, Mark 3:35, 1 John 2:17, Colossians 1:19,4:12)
8. How can it be helpful to pray using the Bible as a guide to the will of God? (Daniel 9:1-3)
9. How do Romans 8:26,27 show us some of the complexity of the constant spiritual relationship between God and the Christian?

Romans 8:28 All Things Work Together For Good....

1. “And we know” indicates the common knowledge of the Christian community in Rome. How do we reach theological conclusions through reflecting on common Christian experience in the light of Scripture?
2. What does it mean to love God? (Matthew 22:34-39, John 14:15,21; 15:10, 1 John 4:20-21, 5:1-3)
3. “That all things work together” (literally synergize) – this Greek word is most often translated “fellow worker” as in a group of Christian workers working together (Romans 16:3,9,21) How does the universe become a cooperative coworker with those who love God? How does this relate to the general blessings upon the loving, kind and obedient life?
4. “For good” – what is the common conception of the good life? What is God’s idea of the good life (Romans 8:29-30)? What is the difference between an earthly perspective on “good” and an eternal perspective on the good life?
5. Have you ever experienced someone using this verse in a very glib and shallow way? How should Romans 8:28 be used?
6. How can Romans 8:28 help sustain our faith? (Hebrews 11:1-12)
7. To what are we “called”? (Romans 1:6-7, 1 Corinthians 1:2,24; Galatians 1:15, Jude 1:1)
8. What is God’s Purpose? (Ephesians 1:3-12, 3:11; 2 Timothy 1:9) How does Creation work together for those who are part of God’s great divine purpose?
9. Highly “on purpose lives” such as those of the prophets, apostles and heroes of faith seem to be highly directed, whereas the lives of people of little faith may seem to be almost random. How important is it to be a person of unwavering faith if Romans 8:28 is to be fulfilled in your life?

Romans 8:29, 30 The Divine Process

Foreknew->Predestined->Called -> Justified -> Glorified

Foreknew (Gk: Proegno) from which we get the word “prognosis” and Predestined (Gk: Proorizo) are planning words. We would say foreknowledge is the big vision where God sees the end product with utmost clarity. Predestined is when He puts in His divine schedule, or in His heavenly project-planning software.

Predestined = like a train which has a predetermined destination e.g. Seattle. Once you get on that train then you are going to Seattle. However you have a choice to get on the train. Once we begin the Divine Process we are “in it until the end” and its destination is Christlikeness. In this case predestination is God’s project planning software and manufacturing process producing a high-quality and eternal product in a blameless and holy Christian.

1. What does it mean to be foreknown by God? (Acts 2:23, 15:8, Romans 11:1-6, 1 Peter 1:20) Do you have questions about this?
2. Where are you on the following scale:
 1. God predestines everything, all events, even my sin. (Determinism)
 2. God predestines some to salvation and yet others to damnation (Calvinism)
 3. God predestines the salvation of people but not the damnation of anyone. (Lutheranism)
 4. God predestines the plan of salvation but I have to agree to it. (Arminianism)
 5. God doesn’t have a plan, He made the Universe and just lets it do whatever. (Deism)
3. Read Romans 8:29 – “In order that...” what is the goal of God’s process? (1 Corinthians 15:49, 2 Corinthians 3:16-18, Colossians 3:10) What does it mean to be conformed to the image of Christ?
4. Read Romans 8:29 “first-born of many brethren” How do we become brothers and sisters of the Lord Jesus Christ? (Hebrews 2:11-15, Revelation 1:5,6)
5. Read Romans 8:30 What does it mean to be called by God? How should we then live? (Romans 9:22-26, Ephesians 1:18, 4:1-6, 1 Thessalonians 4:7, 2 Thessalonians 2:13,14)
6. Read Romans 8:30 How are Christians justified? (Romans 3:21-31) Discuss this passage in detail.
7. Romans 8:30 “those He justified, he also glorified”. How do Christians become glorious? (Romans 8:21,9:23; 1 Corinthians 15:42-49, 2 Timothy 2:10, Hebrews 2:10, 5:1,4,10; 2 Peter 1:3)

Romans 8:31-34 If God Is For Us...

1. Read Romans 8:31-34 and list the blessings outlined in each verse. Please note that these are “rhetorical questions” that point out how much God is doing for us.
2. “If God is for us, who can be against us...” How is God greater than any trouble that we may face? (Romans 8:31)
3. Read Romans 8:32, John 3:16-18, Hebrews 1:2, 1 Corinthians 3:21-23, Revelation 21:7 Why did God send Jesus to die on the Cross? What does it mean to inherit all things?
4. Read Romans 8:32, John 15:1-7 What does “with Him” mean? Why is it essential to abide in Christ?
5. Read Romans 8:33, 3:26, Isaiah 50:8-9, 54:17; Galatians 3:8, Revelation 12:10,11 How does God protect us from accusation?
6. Read Zechariah 3:1-7 How does this passage show us the principles of Romans 8:33 in action? (the Joshua here is a high priest, not the Joshua of Jericho)
7. Read Romans 8:34, Acts 2:33,34; 7:56-60, Ephesians 1:20-21, Colossians 3:1, Hebrews 1:1-4, 8:1-2, 10:12, 12:2; 1 Peter 3:22 Where is Jesus located now? How is that significant for us as Christians? What are some of the benefits for us in the spiritual realms?
8. Compare Romans 8:26,27, Romans 8:34 and Hebrews 4:12-16, 7:23-28 What is Jesus Christ always doing on our behalf? What should our response to Him be?
9. Do you really believe that God is on your side unconditionally? Or do you have to be a very good person for God to be on your side?

Romans 8:35-39 More Than Conquerors

1. Read Romans 8:35-39 Note the first part of verse 35 and the last part of verse 39, what question is the apostle Paul answering here? How important is that question in your Christian life? Why?
2. Why doesn't sin separate born-again Christians from the love of God? (Romans 8:1-2, 31-34)
3. Read Romans 8:35-39 and list the things that do NOT separate us from the love of Christ Jesus our Lord.
4. What was happening to the persecuted Christians in Rome? (Romans 8:36) Do you think that Christians are still persecuted today? (80% of people persecuted worldwide for their faith are Christians) What is our attitude to be in such times (Matthew 5:10-12, 43-48, 10:28, 2 Timothy 3:10-12, 1 Peter 3:13-17)
5. The word tribulation (thlipsis) actually means "*incredible pressure like having a boulder placed on your chest crushing you to death*". The word distress (stenochoria) means *narrowness, constriction, having no good options*. Have you ever been through such circumstances? How does God's love help us when life is extremely tough? (1 Thessalonians 3:1-5, 1 Corinthians 4:7-18,)
6. Conditions such as "*persecution, famine, nakedness, peril or sword*" tend to go together. The persecution leads to Christians being stripped bare, humiliated, hungry and killed, just like they are in North Korea at the moment. Are you prepared to take this level of risk for your faith? How is our perception of God's love often tied to our material and social condition in life? (Job 1:20-22; 2:9,10)
7. What about terrifying spiritual enemies such as demons, principalities, powers, death and so on? (verses 38 and 39) What is our basis for victory? (Colossians 2:13-15, Ephesians 6:10-18, Revelation 12:7-11)
8. Can physical dimensions such as space and time (height, depth, present, future etc.) separate us from the love of God? What about a jailed believer who cannot go to church – are they separated from the love of God? Will God stop loving you when you get old and are "less useful", or are down-and-out?
9. Read Romans 8:37 How are we "more than conquerors"? How are the saints of God much greater than the emperors of Rome? (Matthew 16:24-28, 19:28-30, John 16:33, 1 John 4:4, 5:3-5)



About The Author

John Edmiston B.Sc. B.D. is a Christian bible-teacher and CEO of Cybermissions. He lives in Los Angeles with his wife Minda. John is available for preaching, speaking and conferences.

Contact

Cybermissions
21615 Berendo Ave. Ste 400
Torrance, CA 90502 (USA)
+1 424-358-1207

Email: johned@cybermissions.org

Books By John Edmiston

Biblical EQ: A Christian Handbook For Emotional Transformation (www.biblicaleq.com)

The Spiritual Continuum (www.spiritualcontinuum.org)

Websites

www.GlobalChristians.org

www.newtestamentprayer.com

www.biblicaleq.com

www.spiritualcontinuum.org