BECOMING WHO WE ARE
ROMANS 8:1-17

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Romans 8 – What many call the crescendo or Romans

1. The heart of Christianity – after careful study we see the Christian life is even better than many realize
2. Paul starts with the declaration that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus and ends with the assertion that there is no separation from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord
   a) As Jesus said to the crowds in John 8 – If you abide in my word, you are my disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free. Free from what?

B. The Christian’s struggle with sin

1. After pastoring for 15 years and being a sinner for 40 years it is a struggle, I am all too familiar with
2. Struggle with sin – not just sin – but reconciling who Jesus says that I am and who I see in the mirror everyday
   a) How often have we felt miserable and discouraged because we know we are not who we are supposed to be?
   b) Battle that Paul spoke about in the last chapter – The good that I want to do, I do not do. But the evil I don’t want to do, that I practice.
   c) Romans 7:21 I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. 22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.
   d) We hear the cry of a prisoner - O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?
3. The answer - I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord!
   a) How? How does Jesus Christ deliver us? How does He free us from this constant struggle with sin?
   b) That is what Romans 8 is all about.

C. Vocabulary Review

1. Justification – Delivered from the penalty of sin – our position
2. Sanctification – Being delivered from the power of sin – our condition
3. Glorification – Will be delivered from the presence of sin – (Our position is our condition)
   a) We’ve been saved, we are being saved, and we will be saved
   b) Keep that in mind as we study this monumental chapter
II. NO CONDEMNATION

Rom 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

A. Battle verse – Now no condemnation

1. Condemnation – there is now no penalty – judicial term
2. Penalty from Romans 6:23 – For the wages of sin is death
   a) This is our position before God, we are delivered from sins penalty – why does Paul keep returning to the doctrine of justification?
   b) Even though we have been set free we return to the prison cell and shut the door behind us
   c) But I feel guilty! I feel condemned! - Guilt can be healthy but what we believe about our guilt matters. Conviction is not condemnation.
3. Imagine you’ve started a collage class and quickly realize it is way over your head. You know day one you are going to fail. You make your way to the teacher after class and explain the situation and ask to be disenrolled. What if the the teacher said “I understand but with if I gave her an automatic A. No matter what you do in this class you will have an A at the end of it.”
   a) Provide the freedom to learn and to grow without the pressure of the outcome
   b) Our guilt does not define us, doesn’t change our position – now there is no condemnation!
   c) There is a condition – this isn’t for everyone

B. There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus

1. Most common description of believers – term “Christian” is rarely used by the New Testament authors – you will see them consistently using the term “In Christ”
2. Paul and Peter greet the churches in their introductions – “to all the saints in Christ Jesus”
   a) Encourage us all to study this term in scripture - In Christ, unified with Christ, joined to Christ, clothed in Christ
3. Vital because all the promises, all the benefits, they are a result of being in Christ
   a) Spurgeon - “There is no joy in this world like union with Christ. The more we can feel it, the happier we are.”
   b) “No saving good, no eternal good, no God-exalting good, no soul-satisfying good comes to us except as we are connected to Christ.”
   c) Justification, sanctification, glorification – they all happen because we have been united with Christ – Martin Luther wrote “But so far as justification is concerned, Christ and I must be so closely attached that He lives in me and I in Him. … Because He lives in me, whatever grace, righteousness, life, peace, and salvation there is in me is all Christ’s; nevertheless it is mine as well, by the cementing and attachment that are through faith, by which we become as one body in the Spirit.”
4. How are we united with Christ?
   a) Eph 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ
b) 1 Cor 1:30 (NIV) It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

c) Col 3:3 (NIV) For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

d) 1 Cor 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

5. This is our position – in Christ
a) 2 Cor 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

b) 2 Cor 5:21 21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, 4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

C. For, because – evidence

1. Paul wrote in Romans 6:18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. - Rom 6:22 But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

2. Sanctification – we are being set free from the power of sin – we now have the ability to walk, not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit
a) “Who we are” statement – isn’t a prescription, a condition for receiving salvation but a description of those who are in Christ
b) The transforming work of the Spirit – salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone – but that kind of saving faith is never alone

3. The law didn’t have that power! What the law could not do because it was weak – what makes the law weak? Not the law that is weak, it is our flesh – our inability to obey God’s law
a) What the law could not do because of our own weakness – GOD DID!

b) by sending His own Son – in the likeness of sinful man – Jesus took on our sins and with them the penalty of our sins – nailed our sins and the righteous requirement of the law to the cross

C) He was condemned so there would be no condemnation for us

Rom 8:5 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, the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

III. THE MIND OF CHRIST

A. Being in Christ doesn’t just change the way we walk, but the way we think

1. This is all coming back to that new nature in Christ
2. Nature, nurture argument - I am who I am (product of my DNA/hardwiring) or I'm a product of my past
   a) Third option – I am a new creation in Christ
   b) *Gal 2:20* I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

B. Carnal Mind

1. Carnally minded, unregenerated mind - is at war with God, it desires everything the Lord detests
2. A willful rejection of God is a hatred of God

9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. 10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

C. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you

1. The Spiritual mind is concerned about the things of God.
   b) *Heb 12:3-4* NIV Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. 4 In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

Rom 8:12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. 13 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. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

IV. SONS OF GOD

A. We don’t owe our flesh anything.

1. What did it ever do for us? Brought death and destruction. Caused pain and heartache
2. That old man may still make demands, but we don’t owe him anything. Why would we entertain that voice?
3. We are debtors - we owe Jesus everything

B. These are the sons of God – led by the Spirit

1. What does it mean to be led by the Spirit?
   a) *Gal 5:16* I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.
b) Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

c) Walking in the Spirit is a way of life – bringing our condition in line with our position
   (1) We elevate momentary supernatural acts, or we elevate a particular gifting - healing, teaching, worship
   (2) We should elevate Godly character - persistence, faithfulness
   (3) Paul reminds us the “the greatest gift is love!”

d) Paul encourages us to throw off the old man and put on the new man

15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

C. you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear

1. God doesn’t give us a spirit of slavery “again” to fear – we don’t move from one cruel master to another – we receive a Spirit of adoption/sonship!
2. The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God
   a) We CRY “Abba, Father” - Children call out to their parents when they are afraid - want to know who a child belongs to? Who do they look for when they are scared?
   b) Fatherless = Fear – young men acting out their fear
3. There is no fear in love - eternal judgement - perfect love casts out all fear. 1 John - Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!

D. We are joint heirs with Christ

1. We are part of the family of God. Deep, personal relationship, with God.
2. Adoption – sonship – Gave us a home in Christ
3. What makes a home? Safety, security, peace, provision, love and affection, freedom to learn and grow
   a) Eph 2:4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus
   b) Our glorification is secure – one day we will be delivered from the presence of sin and our position and our condition will be one in the same