

THE ASSURANCE OF SONS

Part 8 Romans Chapter Eight

Romans 8:15-16

*For you did not receive ~~the~~ a **spirit** of bondage again to fear, but you received ~~the Spirit~~ a **spirit** of adoption by which we cry out, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶The **Spirit** Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.*

In these two verses, the word 'spirit' is mentioned three times.

So to interpret these verses we must firstly **understand which 'spirit' is what.**

So, regarding the first two uses of the word '**SPIRIT**' in verse 15 I have to disagree with most great Bible teachers whom I read and admire.

Most say the second mention of the word, '**SPIRIT**' is the Holy Spirit; however, I disagree and believe that both references to '**SPIRIT**' in verse 15 are references to our **HUMAN SPIRIT.**

One reason is: in neither case is the definite article 'THE' used but instead, '**a**' spirit.

Romans 8:15 Interlinear Greek: SLIDE

*For you did not receive **a** spirit of slavery that returns you to fear; but you received **a** spirit of sonship by which we cry: Abba Father.*

Also, regarding the first mention of '*a spirit of bondage*' I don't believe the Holy Spirit can ever be called 'a spirit of slavery or bondage' in fact I think it's blasphemous to do so.

Now in relation to the second mention of the word, '**SPIRIT**' '*a spirit of adoption*' it follows on to state that **BY THIS SPIRIT we cry, 'Abba Father'**. IT IS LOGICAL AND OBVIOUS **WE ARE THE ONES CRYING FROM OUR RE-BORN SPIRIT ...** from a newly generated spirit.

PARAPHRASED

This makes so much more sense if we were to just add a few words to these two verses as follows -

*For you did not receive a human spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received a human spirit of adoption by which **we cry out, "Abba, Father"** AND, not only that ... ¹⁶**The Holy Spirit Himself bears witness with our new human spirit that we are children of God.***

PAUL IS DIRECTLY CONTRASTING OUR 'BEFORE AND AFTER' CONVERSION CONDITION AS HE HAS DONE TWICE BEFORE. IT IS HIS DIRECT AND DIDACTIC MANNER USING THE SECOND PERSON 'YOU' TO STRESS (IN CHRIST) **WHO YOU AREN'T AND WHO YOU ARE!**

Romans 6:14b **SLIDE**

... You are not under law but under grace.

Romans 8:9a

... You are not in the flesh but in the spirit ...

Romans 8:15a

*... You did not receive a **spirit** of bondage ... but you received a **spirit** of adoption ...*

SLIDE

IN ROMANS 8:15, PAUL GIVES US INSIGHT INTO THE CONTRAST OF TWO HUMAN SPIRITS.
HERE HE SHOWS US INTERNALLY WHAT WAS GOING ON IN OUR UNREGENERATE SPIRIT
COMPARED TO WHAT NOW GOES ON IN OUR REBORN SPIRIT.

- This reveals the condition of the human spirit before we were born again
- This reveals the condition of the human spirit after we become born again

Paul contrasts **the unregenerate human spirit** which we had in Adam ... to
the regenerated human spirit which we now have in Christ.

PAUL ALSO SHOWS ...

THE REAL ISSUE WITH THE UNSAVED PERSON IS A SPIRITUAL ONE.

THE REAL PROBLEM AND ANSWER TO OUR MORAL, EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES IS A SPIRITUAL ONE.

THE REAL PROBLEM FOR A PERSON WITHOUT CHRIST IS, THEY ARE
SPIRITUALLY DAMAGED / BROKEN / IMPAIRED / BOUND-UP.

People break down ... spin out ... cry out 'what's wrong with me?'

People often think, 'I'm not normal' or 'I'm not good enough'.

People get temporary answers from counselling etc, but it doesn't address the real issue.

THE REAL ISSUE IS ... BEFORE WE COME TO CHRIST, OUR SPIRIT IS BROKEN.

AS CHRISTIANS WE MUST ALSO REALISE ...

- The issue with the non-Christian is not that he or she believes wrong ...
So it's no use trying to change a person's ideology ...
- The issue is not that they live wrong or do wrong things ... so it's no use
trying to get people to stop sinning and live righteously.
- The issue is, THEY HAVE A WRONG SPIRIT – a spirit of bondage bound
in fear of judgement ...

THE VERY CORE OF THEIR BEING IS WRONG AS OURS USED TO BE ... And,
what's even worse, there is nothing you can do to change it. IT IS YOU.

*Even if you could change your belief ... stop sinning and act right ... helping
others etc ... you would still have a wrong spirit of slavery.*

SLAVERY TO WHAT?

SLAVERY TO SIN AND THE LUSTS OF THE FLESH ...

WHEN ADAM AND EVE FELL IN THE GARDEN, THEIR SPIRIT WAS SEVERED FROM GOD'S
LIFE AND WAS NOW DOMINATED BY A SATANIC REGIME OF SIN AND DEATH.

ADAM BECAME A SLAVE TO SIN AND BROUGHT ALL HIS DESCENDANTS WITH HIM. ALL NOW LIVE IN FEAR OF DEATH AND JUDGEMENT.

Long my imprisoned spirit lay ... Fast bound in sin and nature's night.

(Charles Wesley)

Romans 6:17-18

*God be thanked that though **you were slaves of sin**, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. ¹⁸ And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.*

Romans 8:21 tells us that the whole fallen creation has come under this bondage (- the same Greek word as slavery).

CONVERSION IS NOT AN INTELLECTUAL DECISION ... IT'S NOT DECIDING ...

I'm going to live a better life with Christian values.

It's not a commitment to a changed life or a church life.

It's a spiritual transformation from a dead spirit to a reborn spirit.

It's a transportation from the realm of darkness into a realm of light.

THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD REVEALS THIS PROBLEM AND THE ANSWER TO YOU SO THAT YOU HAVE A CHOICE - TO REMAIN DEAD OR BE BORN AGAIN ...

... As Wesley's hymn continues ...

*Thine eye defused a quickening ray ... I rose, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell of ... my heart was free ... I rose went forth and followed thee.*

(Charles Wesley)

SLIDE

THERE ARE 3 ASSURANCES THAT CONFIRM WE ARE SONS OF THE FATHER

1. THE FIRST ASSURANCE IS THE SUBSTANCE OF ADOPTION **SLIDE**

(WHICH WE DIDN'T HAVE BEFORE)

Romans 8:15 **SLIDE**

*For you did not receive ~~the~~ a spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received **a spirit of adoption** by which we cry out, "Abba, Father."*

THIS IS A **SPIRIT** OF ADOPTION NOT JUST A LEGAL DOCUMENT OF ADOPTION.

IT IS THE **SUBSTANCE** OF ADOPTION WHICH WE DIDN'T HAVE BEFORE.

Legal adoption is a legal process ratified by the court and sealed with a stamp. God the Father has already done this when He justified us; but now comes the Holy Spirit and

brings us the Substance of this adoption.

THIS IS THE ESSENCE OF SOMETHING THE FATHER ALREADY DID LEGALLY IN HEAVEN.

THIS SPIRIT OF ADOPTION IN US HAS THE SAME NATURE AS THE FATHER

THIS MEANS ... ALL HIS GOODNESS HAS COME TO LIVE IN YOU ... ALL HIS KINDNESS ... THE ESSENCE OF LIFE IS NOW WITHIN YOU ... THE PURITY OF LIGHT ...

*You can't tell me that a person can have this amazing regeneration at the core of their being and **NOT FEEL DIFFERENT**. WE FEEL ALIVE LIKE NEVER BEFORE.*

Many years ago, I prayed with a friend who was into the Baha'i religion. She was Chinese and very quiet and private; however, as she silently said the prayer of turning to Jesus and receiving Him as her Saviour ... without any prompting, she fell back against the wall and wept saying, 'Thank you Jesus, thank you Jesus'.

ROMANS 5:5 SLIDE

*Now hope does not disappoint, because **the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit** who was given to us.*

NB: This is not my love for God, but God's love for me.

People weep as this love fills their heart, having never known such unconditional love before. It is 'agape' love and **OUR HEART SWELLS**.

This is the consciousness of justifying love. The believer *feeling* the love of God for him or her being now **poured out** in their heart. The tense indicates a lasting result from one act of LOVE GRANTED ONCE, BUT REMAINING FOREVER, *bringing an assurance* that God's promises will not be in vain.

Instead of reading the Holy Spirit 'is given' (as the King James Version says), it should be 'was given'. It is not so much a continuous bestowment, but a definite moment when this great grace was bestowed on us

NOW WE START TO EXPERIENCE 'A SPIRIT' OF ADOPTION. THIS IS ALL THE ESSENCE / THE FEELINGS / THE EMOTIONS / THE JOYS / THE WELL-BEING / THE SENSE OF PEACE AND SAFETY.

THIS IS A CERTAIN ASSURANCE WE ARE A SON OF FATHER GOD.

2. THE SECOND ASSURANCE IS A DEEP PASSION FOR GOD HIMSELF SLIDE

(WHICH WE DIDN'T HAVE BEFORE)

Romans 8:15 SLIDE

*For you did not receive a spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received a spirit of adoption by which **we cry out, "Abba, Father."***

This is adoration ... This is true worship.

John 4:23

*But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father **in spirit** and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.*

NB: '**In spirit**' is the same wording as '**a spirit ... by which we cry ... Abba. ...**'

A NEW DESIRE FOR THE FATHER IS BIRTHED

When we are born again of the spirit ... we are born to the Father and in our new nature. **There is now an inherent new desire to be with our Father.**

THIS WAS NEVER THE CASE BEFORE WE BELIEVED & RECEIVED GOD'S GRACE. WE NOW HAVE ASSURANCE WE ARE SONS OF THE FATHER BECAUSE WE HAVE A NEW DESIRE FOR THE FATHER WHICH WE DIDN'T HAVE BEFORE.

1 Corinthians 2:14

*... The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for **they are foolishness to him**; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

HOW DO WE CRY?

WE CRY IN **APPRECIATION** FOR HIS UNCONDITIONAL LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE.

THIS IS PRAISE

WE CRY IN **ADORATION / ADMIRATION** FOR HIS MAGNIFICENT GLORY.

THIS IS WORSHIP

WE CRY IN **PASSION AND DESIRE** FOR HIS OVERWHELMING PRESENCE.

THIS IS FELLOWSHIP

As mentioned, this speaks about **our spirit** crying out, 'Daddy Father'.

But we read something more in the almost identical scripture in Galatians ...

Galatians 4:6 **SLIDE**

*Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son **into our hearts**, crying, "Abba! Father!"*

NOTICE HERE **THE HOLY SPIRIT HIMSELF CRIES OUT, 'ABBA FATHER'**.

WHEREAS IN ROMANS 8:15 WE CRY IT.

HE CRIES AS WE CRY ... WE CRY AS HE CRIES ... HE CRIES WITH US ... WE CRY TOGETHER ...

He encourages us and carries the cry to the Father ... **THE CRY INSIDE ... DEEP INSIDE ...**

The Holy Spirit has regenerated our spirit and we now cry out of our spirit **with the Holy Spirit** to the Father ... **THE DESIRE FOR HIM NOW LIVES IN OUR HEARTS.**

Psalm 84:2 Berean Study Bible **SLIDE**

My soul longs, even faints, for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

Psalm 42:1-2 GNT **SLIDE**

As a deer longs for a stream of cool water, so I long for you, O God.

²I thirst for you, the living God. When can I go and worship in your presence?

SLIDE

3. THE THIRD ASSURANCE IS THE INNER WITNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT HIMSELF

Romans 8:15-16 **SLIDE**

*For you did not receive ~~the~~ a spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received ~~the Spirit~~ a spirit of adoption by which we cry out, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶*The Spirit Himself* bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,*

NB: THE HOLY SPIRIT HIMSELF ...

- This is not some force or 'zapping' from the Holy Spirit.
THIS IS HIS PERSON.
- This is not us doing anything.

HE DOESN'T MAKE US A CHILD OF GOD HERE IN THIS VERSE ... WE ARE ALREADY THAT.

But by the highest experience we could have ... He personally reassures us.

The wife knows her husband loves her, but this evening he comes home with flowers ... He's written a poem for her ... He takes her in his arms and whispers in her ear ... 'I so love being with you ... I adore you ... you are the best thing that ever happened to me ... I will never let you go.'

Or

The Father picks up his little boy playing at his feet, kisses him on the cheek and squeezes him saying, I'm so glad you're my little boy ... you made me the happiest father in the world.

The boy already knew he was his father's son, but this has taken it to a new level of love and affection.

**SO IT IS WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT PERSONALLY TESTIFIES TO YOUR HEART
WORDS FROM THE FATHER ...**

TO BE CONTINUED ...