



Indwelt

Session 7 • Romans 8:14-27



ENGAGE

PREPARE: Display **Pack Item 4** (Poster: *Key words in Romans*) on a focal wall. Make copies of **Pack Item 8** (Handout: *Romans Time Line*) and **Pack Item 13** (Handout: *Adoption in the First Century*) for the group.

ASK: When you picture a happy family, whose family do you think of? (p. 61)

READ: Enlist a volunteer to read the opening paragraph on page 61. Encourage adults to suggest images or ideas that represent family or home to them.

ASK: How does being a part of God's family shape your sense of belonging? (p. 61)

REVIEW: Note that Paul used the idea of family to illustrate the Christian life. This family isn't connected by DNA but the work of the Holy Spirit. Living by the Spirit rather than the flesh proves that one is truly God's child—a relationship marked by intimacy and guaranteed inheritance. Those who belong to God by faith are “heirs of God and coheirs with Christ” (8:17).

TRANSITION: *Sometimes, the Bible's teachings about the Holy Spirit can make believers uncomfortable or confused. But Romans 8 makes it clear that the Spirit's*

work in our lives is a blessing and evidence of our family relationship with God.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

CONTEXT: Distribute copies of **Pack Item 8** (Handout: *Romans Time Line*). Remind adults that Paul likely wrote this letter during his third missionary journey. Use **Pack Item 4** (Poster: *Key Words in Romans*) to review key words in the letter.

READ: Read Romans 8:14-17 aloud as the group listens for changes that occur when a person turns to Christ in faith. Allow volunteers to share what they noted.

ASK: According to these verses, what are some key differences between a believer and an unbeliever? (p. 63)

REVIEW: Distribute copies of **Pack Item 13** (Handout: *Adoption in the First Century*). Encourage adults to scan the article and to note how ancient adoption compares to spiritual adoption. Briefly explain that “Abba” is a term of endearment that emphasizes the tender relationship between a father and child.

DISCUSS: How does calling God “Abba, Father” impact your understanding of prayer and intimacy with Him? (p. 63)

HIGHLIGHT: Summarize the following to explain what it means to be an heir with Christ:

- **(8:17)** As members of God's family, we have access to all of His riches. Paul was not promoting a prosperity gospel; rather, he was affirming that God's resources are sufficient to meet every need. He also reminded the Romans that being coheirs with Christ may include suffering alongside Him. Yet when we suffer for the sake of our faith, we can be confident that we will ultimately share in His glory.

SAY: *Any struggles in this life cannot compare to the blessings of eternity.*

READ: Direct the group to read silently **Romans 8:18-25**, noting the hope expressed in these verses.

SHARE: Note that Romans 8:19-22 shares how creation will be set free from the curse of sin, while verses 23-25 affirm that God's "adopted children" will be redeemed as well. Point out that both creation and believers suffer because of sin, and both look forward to a future hope thanks to Jesus.

ASK: How does the hope expressed in these verses help you in times of adversity? (p. 63)

- **(8:18)** Paul said suffering was part of being an heir in God's family, but he also emphasized that the "sufferings of this present time" can't compare with the "glory . . . to be revealed." This was the first of three encouragements God offers suffering believers. Paul reminded the

Romans that God would reveal His glory (Rom. 8:18-25), that God provides the Holy Spirit (vv. 26-27), and that God works for our good (vv. 28-30).

DISCUSS: Read Romans 8:23 again aloud. Explain the significance of "firstfruits."

- **(8:22-23)** All creation joins humanity in groaning. The "labor pains" point to Christ's return (Mark 13:8), when God's children will be fully redeemed. Until that day, believers possess the Spirit as the firstfruits. In the Old Testament, firstfruits were the initial portion of the harvest set apart for God (Ex. 23:19; Lev. 23:9-14). In the same way, the Spirit guarantees that God will finish His work in His people through the redemption of their bodies at the final resurrection. Until then, the struggle between flesh and Spirit continues.

TRANSITION: *The Holy Spirit gives us the confidence we need to know that we are God's adopted children. His presence also reminds us that there is more to life than what we are experiencing here on earth. Those assurances should fill us with hope for the future and offer security until that day comes.*

READ: Invite a volunteer to read **Romans 8:26-27** as the group listens for how the Holy Spirit supports the hope we have in Christ.

ASK: When was the last time you didn't know what to pray? What practical difference does it make knowing that the Holy Spirit intercedes for you? (p. 63)

SHARE: Point out that as humans we can feel overwhelmed by our circumstances, which makes it hard to articulate our heart to God. Note that this is why we need the Spirit's help in prayer.

- **(8:26-27)** We can be especially grateful for the Spirit's help in our weakness. Weakness often appears as confusion or uncertainty that leaves us frustrated, unsure even of how to pray. In those moments, the Spirit comes to our aid. He intercedes when words fail and carries our unspoken burdens to God on our behalf.

ASK: How does knowing that God understands both your heart and the Spirit's intercession give you peace? (p. 63)

SAY: *Between the Holy Spirit praying for us and God the Father searching our hearts, we have many reasons to rejoice. We can be confident that we have access to the Father through Christ, hope for the future, and the Holy Spirit supporting us when we feel weak.*

ASK: How much do you depend on the Holy Spirit to help you when you pray?

PRAY: Challenge the group to depend more on the Holy Spirit's leadership, especially when they don't know how to pray.

CHALLENGE

HIGHLIGHT: Review these bullet points from this week's Bible study passage:

- Believers can confidently approach God as Father.

- The indwelling of the Spirit and the promise of what is yet to come motivates believers to live in hope.
- Believers can be assured that the Holy Spirit is interceding to the Father for them.

EVALUATE: Lead the group to evaluate their own response to the following statements on a scale of 1-5, with one being "seldom" and five being "often":

- I approach God confidently as my Father.
- The presence of the Holy Spirit motivates me to live in hope.
- I recognize that the Holy Spirit is interceding for me.

DISCUSS: Direct adults to respond to the **Apply the Text** questions on page 63.

PRAY: Close in prayer, thanking God for making us a part of His family, and for His Spirit's continuing work in our lives.

AFTER THE SESSION

Reinforce the session by sending the group a text or email that reminds them the Holy Spirit is praying for them. Encourage them to spend time meditating on Romans 8:15, this session's memory verse. Challenge them to consider their adoption and to ask God to help them live it out in practical ways each day.