

Romans 8:17-18

Part 2

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17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Now, although the scripture here links our future glory to *suffering with Christ*, that by no means discounts those who *do not* suffer with Christ *from glory*. Just as we saw with being a *son of God*, and how, what is in view here in Romans 8 is being a *functional son* in our sanctification, that is, our being *led of the Spirit*, and yet, everyone has *the status* of a son of God in the Body of Christ, regardless of whether we participate in the sanctifying work of the Holy Ghost or not, and we demonstrated this by looking at the letter to the Galatians. All saints are *sons of God* by *status*, as being a *son of God* is an aspect of *identity*, and is a component of our *positional* sanctification—it is something given to us the moment we trusted the gospel and God justified us unto eternal life. We now know that God in that moment didn't just justify us unto *eternal life*, but also sanctified us unto *functional life*; all of the components needed for our sanctified life *to function*, to become *functional*, were given to us immediately upon faith, because they are found in the new identity we received when we were saved. As we've discussed, God did not just save us from the penalty of sin, but also from the power of sin, and as we move forward here in Romans to discuss our future hope of glory, we know that one day we will also be saved from the very presence of sin itself. And thus you have the three tenses of salvation. God's grace is the whole package. He supplied and *will supply* everything we need.

And so, as with the subject of our being *sons of God* by way of identity, by way of status, it is a similar issue here with the glory. In verse 17 we learn that we are *children of God*, and if children, then *heirs of God*. And we discussed that being an *heir of God* meant you were an heir of eternal life itself. Consider Titus chapter 3:

Titus 3:3-7

3 *For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.*

4 *But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,*

5 *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;*

6 *Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;*

7 *That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

The result of our justification is that we are made *heirs according to the hope of eternal life*, and that hope is not hope in the sense that it *might* happen, but its hope in the sense that this is what we know *will* happen, and thus we are given something to be *hopeful about* as we go through life in this fallen world. Romans 8:16 tells us that we are *the children of God*, and verse 17 tells us then that *if children, then heirs*. Titus 3 verse 7 here shows us that our justification results in our being heirs of eternal life itself. And so by comparing these two passages we see that being a child of God, being an heir of God, is something that comes out of our *justification* and that being an heir of God means we are *heirs—inheritors—*of eternal life.

Romans 8:18 then tells us that *the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*. Notice it says that this glory *shall* be revealed in us, meaning this is also something that is certain, it's not something that might happen—it will, or, to use the scriptural word, it *shall*. And so, in Romans 8:16 we have our identity as *children of God* disclosed to us, something that is not dependent on anything other than our initial trust in Jesus Christ's provision for us in the gospel, and in the first clause of verse 17 we are then told that because we're *children of God*, we are then also *heirs of God*, or heirs of eternal life itself. Verse 17 then, in the second and third clause, come along and give us information of a conditional nature, that of being *heirs of God* and *joint-heirs with Christ*, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. But then we return in verse 18 to something once again unconditional, and that is the reality of future glory.

And so we have a potential issue: verse 17 reveals that there is a glory contingent upon suffering with Christ, and yet verse 18 tells us that glory is certain. Well this makes sense when you understand that there are actually two separate issues at work between our justification and sanctification and how each of these two things actually impact our future inheritance and the glory associated with it. The conditional clauses of Romans 8:17, it should be noted, are not exclusionary in nature. They do not say that if you don't suffer with Christ, then you will not receive any kind of glory. What they do say is that if we suffer with Him, then we will be glorified together, and I take this to mean glorified together with Him in the sense of His glory in reigning

over creation. There must be some element of glory characteristic to that particular capacity of *reigning*, a glory that somehow differs from the glory associated with resurrection and eternal life alone.

Eternal life of course carries with it the idea of *glory*. And so before we proceed any further, let's define what "glory" even means. Because *glory* is one of those words which is often elusive in meaning to us, as it can be used in several different ways. The following definitions are taken from Webster's 1828 American Dictionary of the English Language:

1. Brightness; luster; splendor.

The moon, serene in glory mounts the sky.

2. Splendor; magnificence.

Solomon, in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Matthew 6:29

3. The circle of rays surrounding the head of a figure in painting.

4. Praise ascribed in adoration; honor.

Glory to God in the highest. Luke 2:9

6. The felicity of heaven prepared for the children of God; celestial bliss.

Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory. Psalms 73:24

7. In scripture, the divine presence; or the ark, the manifestation of it.

The glory is departed from Israel. 1 Samuel 4:21

8. The divine perfections or excellence.

The heavens declare the glory of God. Psalms 19:1

9. Honorable representation of God.

For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. 1 Corinthians 11:7

10. Distinguished honor or ornament; that which honors or makes renowned; that of which one may boast.

Babylon, the glory of kingdoms. Isaiah 13:19

11. Pride; boastfulness; arrogance; as vain glory

12. Generous pride.

Thus we see the word *glory* has many uses. In Hebrew, the word translated as *glory* literally means *weight*, but is used in a positive sense for something that has *splendor*, something *copious*, something of *substance*, and by implication could be also used to mean *honor*, though it exceeds mere honor; it's something of *grandeur*, something of great *fame* or celebrity. It's something *weighty*, and so this could refer to actual material attributes or something figurative, but in either case it is something that appeals to the senses or to the mind in such a way as to denote *greatness*, *beauty*, *immensity*, *splendor*.

What is in view here in Romans 8:18 is the future glory that all believers will partake of. Suffering with Christ may be associated with a particular *kind* of glory, but it does not say that those who do not suffer with Christ will not receive glory. It is not an exclusionary statement. We are all going to partake in resurrection as heirs of eternal life and partake of glory in that regard.

Many of the references to Jesus Himself being *glorified* are in fact references to His resurrection from the dead. Consider John chapter 12:

John 12:12-24

12 *On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,*

13 *Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.*

14 *And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written,*

15 *Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.*

16 *These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.*

17 *The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.*

18 *For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.*

19 *The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.*

20 *And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast:*

21 *The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.*

22 *Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.*

23 *And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.*

24 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.*

It is clear from the context here that the glorification in view is Christ's death, burial, and bodily resurrection. But Christ also demonstrated another glory apart from the bodily resurrection. Christ manifested His glory visibly *before* His resurrection, when He was transfigured before Peter, James, and John:

Luke 9:28-32

28 *And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.*

29 *And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening.*

30 *And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias:*

31 *Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.*

32 *But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.*

Here we have a visible manifestation of the glory of Christ's divinity, of the glory within Himself. In fact, Jesus's public ministry began by demonstrating this inner glory through miracles:

John 2:9-11

9 *When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,*

10 *And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.*

11 *This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.*

Note the choice of words here in John 2: *manifested forth his glory*. If something was manifested, what does that mean? It means it was *made visible*, it was *made apparent*; and if it was *manifested forth*, then it *came from* somewhere, somewhere *not visible*, *not apparent*. It was *manifested forth*. Thus, this glory was manifested forth from *within Him*. Was God *in* Jesus Christ? Of course. 2 Corinthians 5:19 tells us that *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself*. Jesus Christ is God.

Allow me to ask another question: is God *in us*? He is. Remember Romans 8:9—*if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His*. And thus, there is a glory *within us* as redeemed individuals who are temples of the Holy Ghost. Interestingly, the word *glory* is what is used all throughout the Old Testament to refer to the manifestation of God's presence.

This is by no means exhaustive of the scriptures' use of the word *glory*, but I think these two uses are what are most pertinent to our present discussion in Romans 8: there is a glory associated with *the resurrection from the dead*, and there is a glory associated with *the inner man*. Just as Christ was glorified in resurrection, and yet there was already a glory within Him, that He demonstrated, that He manifested forth.

We actually see this alluded to later in our epistles:

2 Corinthians 3:17-18

17 *Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*

18 *But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

As we behold the glory of the Lord Himself in this looking-glass, in this mirror—the *scriptures*—as we steadily behold Him as we work through this doctrine and allow His word and Spirit to work

in us, we are being changed into that same image, from glory to glory, from one glory to another. We are not being visibly changed—in fact, we are going to be told that though the outward man perish, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. This glory is an *inner-man* glory. It is something being worked within us.

If we're going to be changed from glory to glory, how would this be accomplished? Many people have all kinds of ideas about the issue of rewards, and of the judgment seat of Christ, but none of them offer any real explanation for *how* we are changed from one level of glory to another, and how this process is related to the issue of judgment and rewards. It's almost as if these doctrines are entirely disconnected in these other views. But one thing we will come to see more and more clearly is that *none of our doctrines are disconnected*, they are all interconnected and all *build upon* and *into* each other.

And so, there are in fact differing levels of glory. And this makes sense—if we are being taken from one glory to yet another as we are progressively conformed to the image of the Son of God, as we progress in this process of edification, then there must be differing levels of glory produced in the inner man.

Both of these glories—the glory of *resurrection* and the glory of *the inner man*—are in view in our passage here in Romans 8, as all *heirs of God* are heirs of eternal life by way of justification, and thus, all are appointed to the glory of bodily resurrection, but bodily resurrection is going to do is manifest *who and what we truly are*—it is going to visibly manifest the glory of our inner man.

Notice what Romans 8:18 *actually* says:

Romans 8:18

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed *in us*. The level of glory attained to in our inner-man is going to be *visibly* and *publicly* manifested in the resurrection. Again, our epistles will later touch on this very subject:

1 Corinthians 15:35-44

35 *But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?*

36 *Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:*

37 *And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:*

38 *But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.*

39 *All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.*

40 *There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.*

41 *There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.*

42 *So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:*

43 *It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:*

44 *It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.*

In discussing the issue of bodily resurrection with the Corinthians, Paul here makes the point that there are in fact differing levels of glory between one heavenly body and another, and then says, *So also is the resurrection of the dead*. Of course he will go on to explain that as we have all borne the image of the *earthy*—that is, *the natural man*—so too shall we all bear the image of the *heavenly*, that is, of the Lord from heaven.

And so, if there are in fact differing levels of glory, how will this be obtained? Well, we've already been told, it is by *suffering with Christ*, by allowing the Father to educate us as sons by the effectual working of the word in our inner man, just as Christ did in His humanity, by which He was perfected as a son.

The book of Hebrews, the foundational epistle for the believing Hebrew remnant in the last days of prophecy, quotes from the book of Proverbs, a book written from a father to a son, and applies that book to *them*:

Hebrews 12:5

And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him...

Proverbs in part is a book written for Israel in their last days, so that they themselves would be able to receive their prophesied *adoption*—their placement as sons—into God’s earthly kingdom. We have to understand that Proverbs was written under the Law, to an audience who is under the Law, and is not written to us, the Church the Body of Christ. There is no book of doctrine contained in the Old Testament written for the Body of Christ because the Body of Christ itself was a mystery kept secret since the world began—it was a mystery that was hid in God Himself, and kept secret from the Old Testament prophets.

And yet there is a format within the book of Proverbs that specifically relates to *sons*, and to the adoption of sons. Though the doctrine itself is fundamentally different from ours—*theirs* is under the covenant system of the Law, and *ours* is not—the *format* for the perfecting of sons is the same.

I want us to consider something back from Proverbs 1:

Proverbs 1:1-9

- 1 The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;*
- 2 To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;*
- 3 To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;*
- 4 To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.*
- 5 A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:*
- 6 To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.*
- 7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*
- 8 My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:*
- 9 For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.*

Now, when he writes of *the instruction of the Father*, this relates to the instruction of the scriptures themselves, *the word of God*, and we arrived at that conclusion many lessons ago by looking at John 6:44-45; and when He speaks of *the Law of thy mother*, this is not actually speaking to the Old Covenant Law system, but the Law of *thy mother*. Now, we know who *the Father* is... *but who is our mother?* Luckily, the scriptures tell us.

Galatians 4:21-26

- 21 Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?*

22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.

23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise.

24 Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.

25 For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

26 But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

When Paul says that this allegory pertains to *the two covenants*, contextually this is speaking of the Abrahamic covenant, which was one of *promise*, and which stated that through Abraham and his seed all nations of the earth would be blessed, and the Old Covenant given through Moses. This is not a reference to the “New Covenant.” That is something that, though it has its basis in the Abrahamic covenant, is distinct.

Paul here says that the Mosaic *Law covenant* was of the flesh and leads to bondage. And we understand this; we’ve discussed this at length as we’ve gone through the Romans doctrine. He says that this Law covenant that was received in Sinai in Arabia actually correlates to *the Jerusalem which now is*, the modern state of Jerusalem in its unbelief, as they continue to go about establishing their own righteousness in the flesh. Thus, the Jerusalem that *now is*, is in bondage with her children. *But*, he says, the Jerusalem which is *above* is *free*, and is *the mother of us all*.

What do you mean Paul? How is the *Jerusalem which is above our mother*? Well, these things are an allegory, he says, and “the mother” is not of the flesh, that is, of *the Old Covenant*, but rather, it is of *promise*; that, through the seed of Abraham, Jesus Christ, all nations of the earth would receive blessing.

The law of our mother is a reference to *the law of the spirit of life that is in Christ Jesus* that we learned about back in Romans 8:1-2. It is by this spiritual operation that we are *birthed* into new life in Christ. It is *the law of grace*. It is the law of *His power in us* doing what we cannot do for ourselves, *justifying* us and *sanctifying* us by His grace, judicially severing our outer man from the sins it commits, and severing the inner man from the power of sin that is in that flesh. This is the operation of grace that is made available through the gospel.

Though we are not part of Israel’s covenants *at all*, we are still beneficiaries of the New Testament through this operation of grace. This is the same spiritual provision that will be made to the believing Hebrews in the last days—for, *who the Son sets free is free indeed*.

Now, Proverbs 1 goes on to say that the instruction of the Father, and the law of thy mother, shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck:

Proverbs 1:8-9

8 My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

9 For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

What is an *ornament of grace*? The word *ornament* itself only shows up 7 times in the Bible. When you think of an *ornament*, what do you think of? Some kind of decoration maybe? What about an ornament upon the head? A *crown*, perhaps?

Luckily, Proverbs goes on to tell us what is meant:

Proverbs 4:7-9

7 Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

8 Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.

9 She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.

The ornament of grace is here explained for us as a crown of *glory*. Verse 8 says if we exalt wisdom and understanding, then she shall *promote* us and bring us to honor.

If someone is *promoted*, they are taken from one position and exalted to a *better position*. One thing we will see in 2 Timothy chapter 2 is that, if we strive *lawfully*, that is, according to the instruction of the Father (*the word*), and the law of our mother (*the operation of grace*), then we will be *vessels unto honor*. There are vessels unto *honor*, and vessels unto *dishonor*. The *ornament of grace* is a *crown of glory*, but that can only be obtained a certain way. To reign with Christ in glory, to receive a crown of glory, we must suffer with Him.

But does it mean when Proverbs 1 says that the instruction of the Father and the law of thy mother shall be *chains about thy neck*? Taken out of its context, this certainly could sound like a bad thing. But it is clear from the context that it must be something positive. And when we search the Bible for examples of *chains* being placed *around one's neck*, it is in fact in the context of *promotion*:

Genesis 41:39-42

39 *And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art:*

40 *Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.*

41 *And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.*

42 *And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck...*

Daniel 5:29

Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

And so, why am I taking us through this? It is because the template for our sonship education, which is the basis of our *godly edifying*, is laid out for us in the book of Proverbs, and it makes it known right there in that template that there is an aspect of inheritance that is *conditional*, that our promotion and attaining unto a certain kind of glory is not automatic, but requires our participation with the Fathers instruction and the law of thy mother—with the word of God found in *our* epistles, Romans through Philemon, and the doctrines of grace it communicates to us.

The scripture here in Romans 8 is not divulging all the particulars of this glory, but what it *is* doing is telling us up front that glory is *certain* for every saint, because every single believer has trusted in Christ, and this in itself is a glory. His grace received, by which we are made accepted in Christ, is a glory to God. And this glory so far excels anything we might experience in this life that it's not even worthy to be compared with the sufferings.