

FBC Service Sunday September 7, 2025, Romans 8:5-17 Transformed by the Spirit

Intro Slide: This morning we turn to Romans 8:5-17 where we discover three gifts of the Holy Spirit that are given to every believer. **These are not things that you should seek if you are a believer.**

These are things that are given to you at the moment of conversion. You're told not to seek them, you're told to realize that **you have them** and to live on the basis of the fact that they've been given to you.

Slide 2: A New Mind Romans 8:5-8

"Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. 6 So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. 7 For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. 8 That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God."

This is one of the greatest and most important passages of Scripture in all the Bible. **Why?** Because it addresses the matter of the mind.

The Bible is clear in its teaching that how a man or woman thinks, determines what manner of person they really are. Proverbs 23:7, *"For as he thinks in his heart, so is he..."*

And Philippians 2:5, *"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:"*

The mind is a very important thing! Whatever a man focuses his mind upon is what that man reproduces in his life!

Our text makes clear there are two ways and only two ways of living in this world, and those two ways of living are diametrically opposed to each other. The flesh is on one side, the Spirit on the other and never the two shall meet. Those two ways of life are constantly moving in opposite directions.

Let me give you some practical applications of that truth.

There's a Christian way of thinking, there's a Christian way of speaking, there's a Christian way of acting, there's a Christian way of approaching the problems of life.

God has given the born-again believer a new mind so that they might develop a thoroughly Christian way of thinking.

When you meet Jesus Christ, he will change forever the way you think.

One part of following Jesus Christ is having your mind continually transformed. Romans 12:2 says, *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."*

Slide 3 Image: Before Transformation

The word here is a form of the big word metamorphoses, meaning "a transformation."

In the context of a person's life, metamorphoses refer to profound changes—not just external, but often deeply internal shifts in identity, perspective, and behaviour.

It's the change of shape that takes place within a cocoon whereby a caterpillar becomes a butterfly.

Slide 4 Image: After Transformation

Let “mental metamorphoses” take place in your mind. Let the very shape of your thinking be changed by the renewing of your mind.

Evangelicals hold fast to the belief that their great calling is to go out into the world—into every field of endeavour—with truly renewed minds.

How does that happen? I know of one sure way in which our minds can be transformed. When they are saturated with the Word of God, spiritual metamorphoses takes place.

Slide 5 and 6: God's Word - The Great Change Agent

God gave us his Word so it would be a spiritual change agent in your mind. As you study the Bible, it changes the way we think. And as our thinking changes, our lives will slowly change also.

We need Christians who will serve God with their minds.

If you know Jesus Christ, it ought to make a difference in every area of your life.

The way you speak, the way you talk, the way you write, the way you relate and yes, the way you make decisions in the public arena.

If you know Jesus Christ, that will radically affect the way you approach the great moral decisions of life.

Nothing will be simply private or personal. **There's no such thing as a purely private Christian faith.** If it doesn't affect all of life, how can our faith be called truly Christian?

That means we don't need politicians who happen to be Christian; we need Christian politicians whose genuine faith will be seen by all “whose they are and whom they serve.”

We don't need teachers who happen to be Christian; we need Christian teachers who will be unashamed of their faith in the classroom.

We don't need businessmen who happen to be Christian; we need Christian businessmen who will let their faith in Christ shape every decision they make.

We don't need nurses who happen to be Christian; we need Christian nurses who treat patients differently because they know Christ.

We don't need believers who are born again on weekends; we need believers who will unashamedly express their Christian faith seven days a week.

God's people have been given new minds, a new mindset. May that mind be clearly exhibited in all our actions and endeavours.

God gave us a new mind so we could be a difference-maker for the kingdom of God.

Slide 7: A New Nature Romans 8:9-11

“But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. Remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all. 10 Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. 11 The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.”

Verse 9 gives us a clear definition of what it means to be a Christian.

A true Christian is one who has the Spirit of Christ within him. One mark of genuine Christianity is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. He actually takes up residence inside those who know Jesus Christ.

When you say, “Lord Jesus, I want you as my Saviour,” the Holy Spirit answers that prayer by coming into your life. At the very instant of salvation, the child of God is indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

When the Spirit of God comes into a life, that life is forever changed! **2 Corinthians 5.**

That’s what Paul means here when he uses the phrase—*“in the Spirit.”* To be *“in the Spirit”* means that the Holy Spirit himself moves into your life. **He actually and literally lives within you.**

Because the Holy Spirit has given you a new nature, you actually have a brand-new life. That’s the meaning of the phrase, *“even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God.”*

The Holy Spirit makes your spirit come to life. The seeds of death have been planted in our bodies. That’s why it eventually wears out and dies. It happens to all of us sooner or later.

Yet God has placed life—eternal life, resurrection life—**on the inside through the Holy Spirit.** Dying on the outside, yet new life on the inside.

Seeds of life spring up where death once reigned. Though our bodies perish, our spirit lives on with God. **That’s the wonder of the gospel.** Where death once reigned, life now reigns within.

Death is Not the End. We have the promise of future resurrection.

The Spirit who raised up Jesus will one day raise up our mortal bodies out of the grave. **Verse 11 is an explicit promise of future resurrection from the dead.**

Do Christians die? Yes, we die like everyone else. But death for us is not the end.

When your body is laid to rest, your spirit goes to be with Jesus.

You’re going to die someday. If I’m still your pastor, I’ll probably officiate at your funeral.

But if you know Jesus Christ, that’s only the beginning.

By virtue of the promises of God, the work of Jesus Christ, and the indwelling Holy Spirit, when you die, you will not stay dead forever.

You will one day experience a glorious resurrection. We have the promise that if God raised His Son Jesus from the dead, He will by that same Spirit raise you from the dead.

Slide 8: A New Identity Romans 8:14-17

“Because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a Spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.”

Paul uses two different phrases to describe believers. He calls us **“sons of God”** and **“God’s children.”** There is a slight difference, although sons are children and children are sons. **The term “child of God” speaks of the intimate relationship you have with God.**

God’s children call him **“Abba”**—an Aramaic term of intimacy and respect. It means “dad or Daddy” or “Poppa.” Because we are God’s children, we can speak to God the same way little children speak to their earthly fathers.

The term **“son of God”** refers to your official status within God’s family. It speaks of your privileged position. You have the official right to be a son of God.

This was one of the great gospel songs we used to sing in the Carrickfergus Gospel Male Choir.

Sons of God, beloved in Jesus!

O the wondrous word of grace.

In His Son the Father sees us,

And as sons He gives us place.

That’s our new identity in Christ. Sons and daughters of God beloved in Jesus.

The Bible generally does not use the phrase "daughters of God".

The phrase "sons of God" for believers is a radical concept that elevates women's status, as only sons traditionally inherited from their families in that ancient culture.

We are no longer in the flesh; we are now in the Spirit. We no longer live according to the world; we now live according to God’s Word. We are now a blood-bought son of God.

This truth is radical, supernatural and far-reaching.

It’s radical because your life has experienced the greatest change that could ever be.

Once you walked without God and without hope, now you serve Him.

Once you followed your own desires, now you live to please God.

Once you were dead spiritually, now you are alive.

That's a radical change. **It's supernatural** because only God could do something like that.

It's far-reaching because it touches every aspect of your life.

Slide 9 Five Fantastic Privileges

Our text lists five privileges we have as children of God:

Slide 10: Personal Guidance of the Holy Spirit 14

To be "led" by the Spirit is a very personal term. It means to be led by the hand, to be personally escorted by a tour guide. The Holy Spirit takes your hand and leads you through the difficulties of life. How many times have we heard Christians testify, "If it had not been for the Lord, I wouldn't have made it."

We don't know the half of it. Thank God for the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Slide 11: Freedom From Fear 15a

No more abject fear. All of that is gone because we have received the "Spirit of sonship."

Slide 12: The Right to Call God "Father" 15b

This is truly good news. You don't have to scream at God to get his attention. You simply say, "Daddy," and He hears your voice. You whisper his name in the darkness and He comes to your aid.

Every father understands this principle. They can be in a room filled with people and a welter of voices. But let one of his children call out "Daddy," somehow, he will hear their voice. I don't know how that happens, but it does.

A father knows when his children are speaking to him. **The same is true with our heavenly Father.** He hears the faintest cry of His children.

Slide 13: Inward Assurance 16

As a believer, you have the right to expect that the Holy Spirit will give you inner assurance that you know Jesus Christ. This is the "peace that passes all understanding."

Is that important? Yes, because Satan would like nothing better than to pull you down by causing you to doubt your own salvation. He accuses you and makes you think you aren't really born again.

Then praise God, the Holy Spirit comes along and says, "You're not perfect, but you are a Son of God."

Because Jesus paid for all your sins. You're a child of God. When the devil whispers in your ear, the Holy Spirit speaks up from deep within your heart to testify that you are indeed a child of God.

Slide 14: Right of Heirship in God's Family 17

You are an "heir" of God. We all understand what heirship means in human terms.

My will specifies that my children are my heirs after Wyn. Our wills specify that after our deaths our children will inherit all that we own. **Why?**

Because we want to ensure that what we have worked for will be passed on to the members of our family. I don't want my estate—**such as it is**—to be given to people I don't know and who have no relationship to me.

God feels the same way. **He wants the riches of heaven to go to the members of His family.** When we trust Christ, He writes us into His will, so to speak.

Not that God will ever die—**He won't!** But we are included in God's family fortune because we are now part of the family of God.

So this morning, praise God we have these three great gifts of the Spirit—A New Mind, A New Nature, And A New Identity. That leaves us with one great obligation.

Slide 15: One Great Obligation 12-13

“Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. 13 For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live.”

The "obligation" Paul talks about is the believer's responsibility to live by the Spirit—to resist sin and walk in the new life that God has provided.

Actively choosing to walk in obedience to God.

Paul is addressing believers and explaining a critical truth about the Christian life.

We owe nothing to the flesh. 12

We owe everything to the Holy Spirit. 13

This verse balances a moment-by-moment dependence upon the Spirit.

Day by day. Hour by hour. Moment by moment.

Letting our lights shine as children of God.

Slide 16 Closing Image: Transformed by the Spirit

As transformed people, let's represent our Saviour well.