

Take-Home 9: No Condemnation

Romans 8 · Keep this sheet; bring it back each week

What We Found

Chapter 7's cry got its answer: "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death" (8:2), and the law's just requirement is now "fulfilled in us" who walk by the Spirit (8:4): the Spirit empowers what the law commanded but could not itself supply. The Spirit makes us sons who cry "Abba! Father!" (8:15), echoing the sonship Israel first bore, "my first-born son" (Ex 4:22), now voiced from inside us, and heirs with Christ, "provided we suffer with him" (8:17).

Where words fail, "the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words" (8:26); in everything God works for good with those who love him (8:28); and the chain holds: foreknew, predestined, called, justified, glorified (8:29-30), a plan that "includes in it each person's free response to his grace" (CCC 600). On Moriah God spared Abraham's son; at Calvary "he did not spare his own Son" (8:32; Gen 22:12). So the confidence is real and the charge is real, in one chapter: nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God (8:38-39), and "if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live" (8:13). Hope walks between despair and presumption, sure of God and watchful of self.

Voices of the Church

VOICE OF THE CHURCH: ST. BASIL THE GREAT

St. Basil, in his treatise On the Holy Spirit, teaches that through the Spirit comes our restoration to paradise, our ascent to the kingdom, our return to the adoption of sons, and our confidence to call God Father. Only God can give a share in God; what Romans 8 shows the Spirit doing from within is work no creature could do in that divine mode.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH: ST. ELIZABETH OF THE TRINITY

St. Elizabeth of the Trinity wrote in her letters that she had found her heaven on earth, since heaven is God, and God was dwelling in her soul. Romans 8:9-11 taken with complete seriousness: the interior life as hospitality to the Guest already in residence.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH: ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

St. John Chrysostom, preaching on 8:38-39, teaches in substance that Paul's list is a lover's defiance: every terror named and dismissed, not because the terrors are small but because Christ's love holds. Its confidence is Paul-shaped: about God's grip, never our own; hope, not presumption.

Live It This Week

- Pray one Our Father each day slowly, stopping at the first word: let the Spirit's Abba be the whole prayer if it needs to be.

- Name the one deed of the body most needing death right now, and each day ask the Spirit explicitly for the power of 8:13, taking one concrete step alongside the asking.
- Write Romans 8:38-39 somewhere you will meet it on a hard day, and give a copy to one person who needs it this week.

Memory Verse

"For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 8:38-39 (RSV2CE)

Before Next Session

Read Romans 9 once, slowly, and bring your hardest questions; next session does not dodge them.

Catechism references for this session: CCC 1997, 2777, 600, 2091-2092.