

LESSON TWO**HEIRS OF GLORY (1)**

Scripture Reading:

Heirs of Glory

Rom. 8:14-27

8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

8:15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery bringing you into fear again, but you have received a spirit of sonship in which we cry, Abba, Father!

8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.

8:17 And if children, heirs also; on the one hand, heirs of God; on the other, joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him that we may also be glorified with Him.

8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed upon us.

8:19 For the anxious watching of the creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the sons of God.

8:20 For the creation was made subject to vanity, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it,

8:21 In hope that the creation itself will also be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

8:22 For we know that the whole creation groans together and travails in pain together until now.

8:23 And not only so, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting sonship, the redemption of our body.

8:24 For we were saved in hope. But a hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what he sees?

8:25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly await it through endurance.

8:26 Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help us in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

8:27 But He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to God.

OUTLINE:

I. The Blessing of Sonship—Rom. 8:14

- A. The Spirit of Sonship—8:15; Gal. 4:6
- B. The Witnessing of the Spirit—Rom. 8:16
- C. The Leading of the Spirit—8:14, 4, 6
- D. The Firstfruit of the Spirit—8:17-25; 1 Cor. 15:41
- E. The Helping of the Spirit—8:26a
- F. The Interceding of the Spirit—8:26b, 27
- G. The Full Sonship—8:19, 21, 23

QUESTIONS:

SECTION 1:

1. How did we receive the spirit of sonship?
2. What does “Abba” mean? Why do we call Him Abba Father?
3. In Romans 8:14, we see “the sons of God” and in verse 15 “the spirit of sonship”, why then does Paul, in verse 16, suddenly mentioned “children”?

SECTION 2:

1. How can we have the leading of the spirit?
2. What does the leading of the spirit depend on? Share your experience.
3. What is the difference between the children of God in verse 16 and the sons of God in verse 14?

SECTION 3:

1. What is the condition of being an heir?
2. What is the firstfruit of the Holy Spirit? What is full sonship?
3. What is the hope mentioned in verse 24?

SECTION 4:

1. What does the phrase “in like manner” mean in Romans 8:26?
2. What is the difference between “we join in with the Spirit” and “the Spirit joins in with us”? Please use some examples to illustrate this point.
3. What kind of prayer is the best prayer according to Romans 8:26? And what is this kind of prayer primarily for?

[Section 1]

I. THE BLESSINGS OF SONSHIP

Before 8:14 the terms “children of God” and “sons of God” have not been used in the book of Romans. The concept of “children of God” is only brought in at this point, proving that Paul wrote the book of Romans with a deep purpose in view. Starting with 8:14 Paul begins to speak about the sons of God and the children of God. However, the ultimate concept of the section on glorification (8:14-39) does not concern the children or the sons, but the heirs. We may be a child of God without the growth of a son of God, or a son of God without the qualification for an heir. Thus, Paul’s ultimate concept in this portion of Romans concerns the heirs of glory.

Romans 8:14 says, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” This verse is a continuation of the foregoing portion in which Paul tells us that we must walk according to spirit (v. 4). In a sense, to walk according to spirit is to be under the leading of the Holy Spirit. Thus, verse 14 continues Paul’s thought by saying that as many as are led by the Holy Spirit, or by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God. By means of this short sentence Paul turns the whole concept from that of the sanctified ones to that of the sons of God. At the end of verse 13 the thought was on the sanctified ones, the ones who were condemned, justified, reconciled, identified, and eventually sanctified. With verse 14 Paul introduces the concept of the sons of God. How are we sanctified? By walking according to spirit. In a sense, walking according to spirit means to be led by the Spirit of God, and “as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” In this way Paul turns us from sanctification to sonship. Now we have come to the matter of the sons of God.

We need to approach the subject of sonship in the spirit, not in the letter. If we are in the letter, we will have difficulty. Why? Because according to the letter all the sisters are excluded. How can sisters be sons? Paul did not say, “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons and daughters of God.” However, we all, brothers and sisters alike, are sons of God. We must read the Bible not merely in letter, but in spirit. Although we are males and females, brothers and sisters, in spirit we are all sons of God. In eternity there will be no daughters, only sons.

A. The Spirit of Sonship

“For you have not received a spirit of slavery to fear again, but you have received a spirit of sonship in which we cry, Abba, Father.” How did we receive this spirit of sonship? By the Spirit of the Son of God coming into our spirit. Galatians 4:6, a sister verse to Romans 8:15, says, “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into

your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” Romans 8:15 says that we “have received a spirit of sonship”; Galatians 4:6 says that “God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son” into us. Because the Spirit of the Son of God enters into our spirit our spirit becomes a spirit of sonship. Thus, verse 15 says that we “have received a spirit of sonship.” Furthermore, verse 15 mentions “a spirit of sonship in which we cry, Abba, Father”; but in Galatians 4:6 it says that “the Spirit of His Son” cries “Abba, Father.” There is a difference here. Nevertheless, whether we cry or He cries, we both cry together. When we cry, He cries in our crying. When He cries, we cry with Him. According to grammar, the subject of crying in verse 15 is “we,” but in Galatians 4:6 the subject of crying is “the Spirit.” These two verses prove that we and He, our spirit and the Spirit, are one. When we cry, “Abba, Father,” He joins with us in our crying. The Spirit cries in our crying because the Spirit of the Son of God indwells our spirit. Hence, there is no fear, only a sweet crying of, “Abba, Father.” “Abba” is an Aramaic word which also means father. When these two terms “Abba” and “Father” are put together, the result is a deep, sweet sense, a sense that is exquisitely intimate. “Abba, Father” is sweetness intensified. Children of every race address their father in such a sweet way: in America we say, “Daddy”; in China they say, “Baba”; and in the Philippines they say, “Papa.” We do not speak one syllable, such as “Da,” “Ba,” or “Pa.” It is not sweet at all if we speak just one syllable. We need to say, “Daddy,” “Baba,” or “Papa.” We need to call, “Abba, Father.” If you do it, you will realize how sweet it is.

Why do we call, “Abba, Father”? Because we have a spirit of sonship. If a certain man is not my father, it will be difficult for me to call him “Daddy.” It may be easy for me to call him “mister,” but I cannot call him “Daddy.” It would be even harder for me to say to him, “Abba, Father.” In fact, it would be impossible. If my dear father were still living, I would like to call him, “Daddy.” It would be so sweet to address him in this way because I was born of him. Young people, there is no need for you to doubt whether or not you are the sons of God. When you say, “Abba, Father,” do you have a sweet, intimate sensation within you? If you do, it proves that you are a son of God and that you have a spirit of sonship...As long as you can call, “Abba, Father” sweetly, you may be assured that you are a son of God.

B. The Witnessing of the Spirit

“The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are the children of God.” In verse 14 we see “the sons of God” and in verse 15 “the spirit of sonship.” Why in verse 16 does Paul suddenly mention “the children”? Because the Spirit witnesses to something basic. He witnesses to our primary or initial relationship with God. As I have already mentioned, we may be children without the growth of a son and we may be sons without the qualification of an heir. For the Holy Spirit to witness that we are all heirs of God would be premature. Most of us are not mature enough for such a witness. Thus, the Spirit witnesses to the most basic and elementary relationship—that of being the children of God. He witnesses with our spirit that we are God’s children. Therefore, the witnessing of the Holy Spirit starts with the youngest age, even from our spiritual birth. Regardless of how young or new you may be, if you are a child of God, the Spirit of God witnesses with your spirit. Notice that it does not say “in our spirit.” If it said “in our spirit,” it would mean that only the Spirit of God witnesses, but that our spirit does not witness. However, it says that the Spirit witnesses with our spirit, meaning that both witness together. The Spirit of God witnesses, and simultaneously our spirit witnesses together with Him. This is wonderful.

Some may say, “I don’t feel that the Spirit of God witnesses. Where is the Spirit of God? I don’t feel Him. I don’t have any sensation that the Spirit of God is within me. I never saw Him and I cannot feel Him. I simply cannot sense Him.” However, do you not feel that your spirit witnesses? You must realize that as long as your spirit is witnessing it means that the Holy Spirit also is witnessing. You cannot deny that your spirit witnesses within you. The Apostle Paul was very wise. He said that the Spirit witnesses with our spirit. When our spirit witnesses, that is also the witnessing of the Spirit, because the two spirits have been mingled together as one. It is very difficult for anyone to distinguish these two spirits.

[SECTION 2]

C. The Leading of the Spirit

Many Christians have a mistaken, natural concept regarding the leading of the Spirit. People invariably think that the leading of the Spirit comes suddenly from the third heaven or elsewhere. Some ask the Lord for a sign saying, “O Lord, give me a sign, an indicator, whether or not I should buy this thing. Lord, if there’s transportation available, it will be a sign that You want me to buy it, but if there’s no transportation, it means that You don’t want me to buy it. Lord, keep the stores open, for if they are closed it will indicate that You do not want

me to buy anything.” This is an example of a mistaken concept regarding the Lord’s leading.

Have you noticed the first word in verse 14 regarding the Lord’s leading? The first word is, “For,” a word which refers us back to what Paul has mentioned previously and which indicates that verse 14 is a continuation of that matter... Now the main point of the previous verses is to walk according to the spirit that we might fulfill the righteous requirement of the law of God. How can we have the leading of the Spirit? It is neither by praying nor by looking to signs or indicators. We may have the leading of the Spirit by walking according to the spirit.

The leading of the Spirit does not derive from nor depend upon outward things. The leading of the Spirit is an issue of the inner life. I would say that it comes from the sense of life, from the consciousness of the divine life within us. The word life is mentioned at least five times in Romans 8. Hence, the leading of the Spirit is a matter of life, a matter of the sense and consciousness of life. The mind set upon the spirit is life (v. 6). How can we know this life? Not by outward things, but by the inward sense and consciousness of life. There is an inward sense which comes from setting the mind upon the spirit. If our mind is set upon our spirit, we are immediately strengthened and satisfied inwardly. We also are watered and refreshed. By that sense and consciousness we can know the life within us, and by this sense of life we can know that we are walking rightly. In other words, we know that we are under the leading of the Spirit. Therefore, the leading of the Spirit in verse 14 does not depend on outward things; it absolutely depends upon the sense of life within our spirit.

When you are about to go shopping you need not pray, “Lord, should I go shopping or not? If I should not go, give me a sign.” There is no need for you to pray in this way. You should not say, “O Lord, if You do not want me to go to the department store, prevent me.” Never pray or think in this way. Do not think that if the Lord does not stop you from going shopping that you have the leading of the Lord. Everything might be smooth outwardly, but how about inwardly? Perhaps after you have parked your automobile and while you are walking toward the door of the department store you have no peace within. Instead of being inwardly strengthened you feel frustrated. However, since everything is smooth outwardly you proceed. Inwardly, however, the closer you get to the store, the emptier you feel...Although everything is positive outwardly, inwardly you are empty and weak. You do not have the anointing, the watering, or the inward peace.

What does this mean? It means that the leading of the Spirit is within you, in your inner life. Unbelievers do not have the divine life that is within us. The divine life within us leads us constantly, not by signs or indicators, but by giving us an inward sense, feeling, or consciousness. Thus, Paul says, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." If you are led by outward things, it does not prove that you are a son of God. However, if you are led by the inward sense of the divine life, it indicates that you are a son of God.

Where is the leading that Paul mentions in verse 14? It is in verses 4 and 6. The leading of the Spirit comes as you walk according to the spirit and set your mind on the spirit. If you walk according to the spirit and set your mind on the spirit, you will find that you have the leading of the Spirit. You will have the consciousness that you are walking, behaving, and living according to the spirit. You should not violate this inner sense or disobey this inward consciousness, for it is truly the leading of the Spirit. When you have this sense within, it means that you are being led by the Spirit. Therefore, to set your mind upon the spirit is to be placed under the leading of the Spirit. The inward life gives you the sense, even in small things, of whether or not you are under the Lord's leading. Thus, we are led of the Spirit by walking according to spirit and by setting our mind upon the spirit. Therefore, the leading of the Spirit mentioned in verse 14 is not derived from the outward environment, but from the inward sense and consciousness of the divine life. This leading proves that we are sons of God, for "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."

While your classmates are talking in a worldly way, you may find yourself, at a certain point, unable to join in the conversation. Although nothing outward frustrates you, you do sense an inner forbidding. This inward regulation comes from the life of God within you, the life which makes you a child of God. Your classmates may be discussing sinful things in a happy, excited way, but the divine life within you does not allow you to say a word. Instead, it turns you away from them. That is the leading of the Spirit. This leading of the Spirit marks you out as a son of God.

How do we know that we are the sons of God? We know by the leading of the Spirit, for the leading of the Spirit puts a mark upon us. The inward life constantly gives us a sensation or consciousness that we should not behave ourselves like worldly people do...As we obey the inward sense of life, we spontaneously display a mark which tells people that we are different from the devil's children, that

we have the life of God within us which makes us sons of God. This is the leading of the Spirit. Do not consider the leading of the Spirit mentioned in verse 14 as an outward matter. It is absolutely an inward sense which comes from the divine life in our spirit.

This leading of the Spirit by the inward sense of the divine life does not happen as an accident. It is a continual matter in our daily life, just like breathing. Normal breathing is continuous breathing. When breathing becomes an accident, it is an indicator that something is wrong with our health. Since the leading of the Spirit is a matter of life, it should continue normally in every aspect of our daily walk. This is the leading of the Spirit. This leading of the Spirit in our daily life is the proof that we are sons of God.

We need to realize the difference between the children of God in verse 16 and the sons of God in verse 14. The children of God are in the initial stage of the divine life, the stage which mainly concerns the birth, while the sons of God are in a more advanced stage, the stage which concerns the growth in life. In order to be children of God we need the witnessing of the Spirit with our spirit, but in order to be the sons of God we need the leading of the Spirit by the sense of the divine life. As long as we have the witness of the Spirit with our spirit, we have the assurance that we are the children of God. However, in order to have the proof, the mark, that we are the sons of God we need to have the leading of the Spirit and to live and walk according to the inner sense of the divine life. All real Christians are children of God, having the witness of the Spirit with their spirit, but not all have the mark that they are the sons of God who are growing in the divine life and living and walking according to the leading of the Spirit. Therefore, we all must move forward in the growth in life from the initial stage of being the children of God to the more advanced stage, showing that we are the sons of God by bearing the distinct mark of the leading of the Spirit in life.

[SECTION 3]

D. The Firstfruit of the Spirit

Romans 8:17 says "And if children, heirs also; heirs of God and joint-heirs of Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him that we may also be glorified with Him." In verse 17 we see that we have progressed from children to heirs. We are heirs of God and joint-heirs of Christ. Paul's thought here is very strong. Please notice the semicolon in this verse. It indicates that there is a condition involved in being an heir. We should not say that simply because we are children we are heirs. This is too hasty. There is no condition imposed for us to be the children of God. As long as the Spirit witnesses with our spirit, we are the children of God. However, for us to

progress from children to heirs there is a condition. This condition is mentioned in the latter part of the verse.

The condition for being heirs of God and joint-heirs of Christ is that “we suffer with Him that we may also be glorified with Him.” We may not like suffering, but we need it. Remember that suffering is the incarnation of grace. We should not be distressed by suffering. If we suffer with Him, we will be glorified with Him...The more suffering we pass through, the more our glory will be intensified, for suffering increases the intensity of our glory. We would like to be glorified, but we do not want to experience suffering. However, suffering increases glory. In 1 Corinthians 15:41 Paul says that “one star differeth from another star in glory,” indicating that some stars shine more brightly than others. We all will shine and we all will be glorified, but the intensity of our glory will depend on the amount of suffering we are willing to take. It is certain that the Apostle Paul in that day will shine more brightly than all of us. Do you believe that you will shine as brightly as Paul? We shall all be glorified, but the intensity of our glory will differ according to our suffering. Therefore Paul says in verse 18, “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed to us.” The present suffering means nothing compared with the coming glory.

Verse 19 reads, “For the anxious watching of the creation eagerly expects the revelation of the sons of God.” This revelation denotes the manifestation or the appearing of the sons of God. We all are the sons of God...If we tell people on the street that we are sons of God, they will think that we are crazy. They will say, “Look at you and me. What is the difference between us? We are both human beings. You are not different from me. You are just another person. Why do you say that you are a son of God?” However, the day will come when the sons of God will be manifested. In that day there will be no need to make the declaration, “From now on we are the sons of God,” because we all shall be glorified. We shall be in glory, designated as sons by the glory of God. Then all other people will have to admit that we are the sons of God. They will say, “Look at these people. Who are these people so full of glory? They must be sons of God.” There will be no need for us to say anything. We shall be designated by our glorification. The entire creation is waiting for this with watching eyes, for the creation eagerly expects the revelation of the sons of God.

Verse 20 continues, “For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but because of Him Who subjected it.” We need to notice the word “vanity.” The entire creation is under vanity.

Everything under the sun is vanity. The wise king Solomon said, “Vanity of vanities; all is vanity” (Ecc. 1:2). Creation is subject to vanity.

Then verse 21 says, “In hope that the creation itself will also be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.” We need to notice two other words, “slavery” and “corruption.” In the entire universe there is nothing except vanity and corruption. This corruption is a kind of bondage, a slavery that binds the whole creation. Creation has been made subject to vanity in the hope that it will be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. One day the children of God will be glorified, brought into glory. With that glory there will be freedom, and that freedom will be a kingdom, sphere, or realm. The whole glory will be a kingdom, a sphere, into which we will be brought. When we are brought into that freedom or kingdom of glory, creation will be delivered from vanity, corruption, and slavery. This is the reason that the entire creation is awaiting that time. We have very much to do with the creation, for the future destiny of the creation rests upon us. If we mature slowly, the creation will blame us and murmur against us. It will say, “Dear children of God, you are growing too slowly. We are waiting for the time of your maturity, the time when you will enter into glory, the time when we will be freed from vanity, corruption, and slavery.” We must be faithful to the creation and not disappoint it.

Verse 22 says, “For we know that the whole creation groans together and travails in pain together until now.” It seems that one star groans to another and that the moon groans to the planets. They all groan together. Not only does the creation groan together, it also travails as in the pangs of childbirth. The whole creation is groaning and travailing together until now.

Verse 23 follows, “And not only so, but we ourselves also, having the firstfruit of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly expecting sonship, the redemption of our body.” Although we have been born through regeneration as the sons of God and have the Spirit as the firstfruit, we also groan because we are still in the body which is linked to the old creation. We must admit that our body still belongs to the old creation. Since our body belongs to the old creation and has not yet been redeemed, we are groaning in it as the creation does. However, while we are groaning we have the firstfruit of the Spirit. The firstfruit of the Spirit is for our enjoyment; it is a foretaste of the coming harvest. This firstfruit is the Holy Spirit as a sampling of the full taste of God as our enjoyment, of all that God is to us. God is so much to us. The

full taste will come in the day of glory. Nevertheless, before the full taste comes, God has given us a foretaste today. This foretaste is His Divine Spirit as the firstfruit of the harvest of the full enjoyment of all that He is to us.

While we are groaning and enjoying the firstfruit of the Spirit, we are expecting sonship. Here sonship means full sonship. Although we have sonship within us, this sonship has not yet become full. In that day we will know full sonship. What is full sonship? It is the redemption of our body. We have sonship in our spirit through regeneration and we may also have sonship in our soul through transformation, but we do not as yet have sonship in our body through transfiguration. In the coming day we will also have sonship in our body. This is full sonship, our longing expectation.

While we are waiting we need to grow. We do not need to groan as much as we need to grow. Although we need to rejoice continually, while we are rejoicing we need to grow. Many among us are too young, too immature. We all must grow and be matured. The time of the coming of that glorious day depends upon our growth in life. The faster we grow, the sooner that day will come.

In verse 24 Paul says, “For we have been saved in hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what anyone sees, why does he also hope?” What is the hope mentioned here? It is the hope of glory. We have been saved in the hope that some day we will enter into glory. Paul says that “hope that is seen is not hope; for what anyone sees, why does he also hope?” What does this mean? It means that the thing for which we hope will be wonderful because we have never seen it. Hence, it is a real hope. If we have seen even a little of it, it would not be such an excellent hope.

Verse 25 continues, “But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly expect it through endurance.” So many expectant saints have asked, “Lord, how long? Another ten years? Another generation? How long, Lord?” This is a test to our endurance.

[Section 4]

E. The Helping of the Spirit

“And in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help us in our weakness; for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” What does the phrase “in like manner” mean? Why does Paul say this? It is difficult to understand this phrase. I believe that it has an all-inclusive meaning. “In like manner” includes all the points of the foregoing verses—expecting, eagerness, groaning, endurance, hope, and so forth. The phrase “in like manner” relates to all of these

points. While we are groaning, the Holy Spirit also is groaning. While we are expecting, He is expecting. While we are hoping and enduring, He is hoping and enduring. Whatever we are, He is also the same. “In like manner” the Spirit joins in to help us. What a comfort this is! While we are groaning, watching, and expecting, He is also groaning, watching, and expecting. He is just the same as we are. If we are weak, He apparently is weak also, although actually He is not. He sympathizes with our weakness. He appears to be weak for the sake of our weakness that He might participate in it. When we loudly pray, “O, Father,” He also prays loudly. He also prays softly when we pray softly. We may say, “O Father, I’m so pitiful. Have mercy upon me.” When we pray in this way, He also prays for us “in like manner.” In whatever way we pray, He also prays. In whatever way we are, He also is. If we pray quickly, rejoicingly, and shoutingly, He also prays in this manner. Our manner is His manner. Do not think that the Holy Spirit is so different from us that when we receive the Holy Spirit we will be extraordinary people. This is not the thought contained in Romans 8. Romans 8 reveals that the Holy Spirit is in our manner. Sisters, are you disappointed? Some sisters say, “We cannot shout. We cannot pray loudly as the brothers do. Because of this, it seems that we have been neglected.” Be comforted, sisters. The Spirit prays in your manner. In whatever manner you are, He also is. Praise the Lord!

Paul also says that the Spirit joins in to help us. He participates in our weakness in order to help us. The Spirit does not ask us to join in with Him; He joins in with us. The Spirit does not say, “Come up to the highest standard to join Me.” None of us can do this. Thus, the Spirit joins in in our manner. If your manner is quick, He will also be quick. If you are slow, He will be slow. Try to pray. Whether you pray strongly or weakly, loudly or softly, it does not matter to Him. If you pray, He will pray in you “in like manner.” “In like manner” He will join in to help you.

If a man is crippled and I want to help him walk, I have to take his manner. Likewise, if I want to approach a little boy, I must do it in his way. I should not say, “Little boy, I am a big giant who has come to help you.” If I do this, the boy will look at me and say, “I do not want you. You are too different from me.” If I want to help the little boy, I must shorten myself and squeeze myself into being a little boy and say, “May I play with you?” If I say this, the little boy will be happy and respond, “Good! Let’s play together.” This means that I join in to help him in his manner.

Sometimes the older brothers in the church life are too big, too high. Although they try to help the saints, they do not help them in the saints' manner. On the day of resurrection, the Lord Jesus came to two disciples who were on the way to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-33). The Lord joined them absolutely in their manner. While they were talking, the Lord Jesus pretended not to know anything. He seemed to ask, "What are you talking about?" The two disciples rebuked Him, "Don't you know the things that have come to pass in these days?" The Lord said, "What things?" They said, "The man Jesus of Nazareth, a prophet mighty in deed and word, has been condemned to death and crucified." The Lord Jesus neither rebuked them nor revealed Himself to them. He kept Himself in their manner, walking with them until they came near to the village. They asked Him to abide with them and He did. As they were seated in the room, the Lord took bread and broke it. Only then were their eyes opened to see that it was the Lord. When they realized that He was the Lord, He disappeared.

In the church life the older brothers and sisters need to help the younger ones in their manner. They need to join in to help in their weaknesses. None of us is so strong. We all are groaning, expecting, and saying, "O Lord, when?" Day by day we are suffering. Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit is present, joining in to help us in our manner.

F. The Interceding of the Spirit

Paul continues to say, "For we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." The Spirit intercedes for us with groanings in our manner. This groaning apparently is our groaning, but in our groaning is the groaning of the Spirit. This is why His groaning is in the same manner as our groaning. He is in us and His groaning is in our groaning. He groans with us "in like manner." This is the best prayer we can have for the growth in life. Most of our prayers are very utterable with clear words, but they may not be out of our spirit. But when we have a real burden to pray yet we do not know how to utter it, then spontaneously we just groan with that burden without any utterable word. This will be the best prayer within which the Spirit intercedes for us by groaning together with us.

This kind of unutterable prayer is primarily for the growth in life, concerning the true need of which we do not have much understanding. Concerning our material needs and business affairs we are clear and do have the utterance to pray about these things, but concerning the matter of our growth in life we are lacking in both understanding and utterance. However, if we are seeking the Lord regarding the growth in life, oftentimes deep within our spirit we will be burdened with some prayer

about which we have no clear understanding and for which we have no utterance. So, spontaneously we are forced to groan. While we are groaning from deep within our spirit, the Spirit who dwells in our spirit automatically joins in with our groaning, interceding for us mainly that we may have the transformation in life for growth into the maturity of sonship.

Verse 27 says that "He who searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit because He intercedes for the saints according to God." The Spirit intercedes according to God. What does this mean? It means that the interceding Spirit prays for us that we may be conformed to the image of God.