

## YouVersion READ plan

**Title: Life in the Spirit: Adopted into God's Family**

**Date: April 2, 2023**

### DAY 1 I AM ADOPTED INTO GOD'S FAMILY

**Scripture:** [Romans 8:14-21](#)

#### **Reflection:**

Identity. Whew – what a heavy word that can be in this day in age. Between what we observe on social media or see in the news, it seems like so much of the world is struggling to find their place and find out who they are meant to be. It can be easy to look toward all the wrong places to answer those burning questions.

In Romans 8, Paul offers a better answer to the question of identity. He reminds Christians of the freedom we have in Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit in us and through us. Most importantly, this means we are adopted sons and daughters of God.

The book of Romans is a letter from Paul to the Christian church in Rome. In ancient Roman culture, the act of adoption has significant meaning. In fact, it's a coveted status. Some of the most notable leaders in ancient Rome were adopted into their place of inheritance. Caesar Augustus (formerly known as Octavian), the emperor of Rome when Jesus was born, was the adopted heir of Julius Caesar. He was not the heir by any rule of bloodline. In this way, everything about Augustus's life is changed – his place in society, his ability to influence people around him, and his financial status. His inheritance wasn't because of blood but because of choice. In Paul's use of the concept of adoption to describe what is available to us because of Jesus, the Roman church understands what a big deal it is that this is. If the Spirit is leading you, then you are an adopted child of God.

*For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father!'"*  
Romans 8:14-15

Over the next several days, we'll look at what it means to be an adopted child of God and what implications that has on our life now and forever.

#### **Ask Yourself and Reflect:**

- What parts of my identity (or how I define myself) do I need to turn over to God so I can live in the fullness of his love?
- What does it change about my life (or how I think about my life) to know and live like an adopted child of God?

**Pause to Pray:** *Father God, I don't deserve this love you have poured out over me. I have fallen short of your glory, yet you offer me an eternal gift as your son/daughter. Help me to receive this gift and live in the fullness of your love.*

#### **Take a Next Step:**

You are adopted into Christ's family. You are a beloved son or daughter of the Most High King! If you find yourself questioning your value, or feeling like you're not good enough, work to reframe your

thoughts about yourself this week, and repeat the words “I am a child of God.” Make it a habit every time negative thoughts try to slip into your mind.

## **DAY 2 I SHARE IN HIS INHERITANCE**

**Scripture:** [Romans 8:16-17](#), [Galatians 3:25-29](#), [Mark 14:36](#)

### **Reflection:**

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!  
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God  
Born of his Spirit, washed in His blood

These lyrics to the timeless hymn “Blessed Assurance” were written in 1873 by blind lyricist Fanny Crosby. As the story goes, Crosby went to visit a composer friend, Phoebe Knapp. At the time, Knapp’s pipe organ was being fixed, so she played a new tune she had just composed on a piano and asked Crosby what she thought the tune said. Crosby responded, “Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine.” This assurance or promise is what we are offered in Christ Jesus.

As adopted children and heirs of God, our entire destiny is changed. Once, we were sinners with no hope for a future. Now, even though we remain sinners, God has offered us something greater than we could imagine and more than we deserve. As sons and daughters of God, we receive the blessings, privileges, and inheritance rights of God’s children. We are no longer bound by our sin. This inheritance offers us freedom. And it’s only available to God’s children. The fullness of this inheritance will come to fruition when we enter into eternity.

We’re also able to enter into intimacy with God because of our status as heirs. The relationship between a father and an heir is one of closeness and reverence. Biblical scholars believe Paul’s use of *Abba* in the passage in Romans from today’s reading ties back to Jesus’s calling out to his Father in Mark 14:36. Just as Jesus calls out to God as his Father, so can we.

In our inheritance, we have an assurance of who we are in Christ.

### **Ask Yourself and Reflect:**

- Do you have assurance in who you are in Christ? Why/Why not?
- After doing the reading for the last two days, how does the reality of being God’s heir change how you feel about your identity?

### **Pause to Pray:**

Use the words of the hymn we read about in today’s reading as your prayer. Put yourself in a prayer posture (hands palms up, kneeling on the ground) and say the words out loud from your heart as a prayer to Abba Father. “Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine! Heir of salvation, purchase of God. Born of his Spirit, washed in His blood. Amen!”

### **Take a Next Step:**

Be brave and share something you struggle with, with a trusted Christian advisor, mentor, or friend and ask them to pray with you to overcome that identity struggle so you can embrace who you are in Christ Jesus.

### **DAY 3 I SHARE IN HIS SUFFERING**

**Scripture:** [Romans 8:17-18](#), [John 16:33](#)

#### **Reflection:**

Suffering has been part of humanity's affliction dating all the way back to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3 when they ate the forbidden fruit and were sent away from the Garden of Eden. We cannot get away from the brokenness of this world. This pain and suffering and longing for a place where none of that exists is the reality of our exile. In John 16:33, Jesus himself acknowledges that our life here on earth will bring suffering. It's just a fact. But in that same passage, Jesus reminds us that He has overcome the world.

Additionally, in the passage in Romans from today's reading, Paul tells the church that the pain and suffering we face here on earth do not compare to the glorious riches we will experience in heaven. None of this minimizes the fact that, for a lot of us parts of life on earth feel unbearable. The pain of loss, death, illness, and so much more often feels like more than we can handle. The only way any of this IS bearable is because what we trust and believe is yet to come.

Christian author Joni Eareckson Tada became a quadriplegic in 1967 at 17 after a diving accident. In an instant, everything about the life she knew changed. In the immediate years following her accident, she went through bouts of deep depression and bitterness. As time went on, Tada adjusted to her new normal and began to find new ways to enjoy life. Since her accident and subsequent health struggles, Tada has spent her life advocating for others with disabilities and sharing her story with others.

*He has chosen not to heal me, but to hold. The more intense the pain, the closer His embrace. The greatest good suffering can do for me is to increase my capacity for God. Real satisfaction comes not in understanding God's motives, but in understanding His character, in trusting His promises, and in leaning on Him and resting in Him as Sovereign who knows what He is doing and does all things well.*

Joni Eareckson Tada

While our adoption means we share in Christ's suffering, it also means we share in His glory. Tomorrow, we'll discover what the Hope of Glory means for us. Our earthly suffering is not the end of our story. The best is yet to come.

#### **Ask Yourself and Reflect:**

- How does the knowledge of my adoption into God's family change my perspective on my suffering here on earth?
- What does Paul say about suffering and its purpose?
- How do Paul's words change or reframe how I view my own suffering?

#### **Pause to Pray:**

Read [Psalm 71](#) and meditate on it as your prayer today.

**Take a Next Step:**

It's easy to get caught up in what feels hard about life because let's be honest – life IS hard. But there's also so much good all around us. Take a few minutes in a quiet space today to reflect with gratitude on all the goodness around you. Make a list in your Bible, on your phone's note app, or somewhere you can refer back to all of the things that come to mind.

**DAY 4 I SHARE IN HIS GLORY**

**Scripture:** [Romans 8:18-21](#), [Isaiah 65:17](#), [Revelations 21:1-7](#)

**Reflection:**

As sons and daughters of God, we are promised eternity and the Glory that is yet to come there. It pales in comparison to what we could experience here on earth. It is this hope that keeps us going through the hardships of life on earth. God has so much more for us than what we can experience here on earth. He is preparing a place for us in Heaven, at His right hand, where we will share in the glory promised to us.

Paul says in Romans 8:18, *“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing to the glory that is to be revealed to us.”*

This is what we have to keep in mind as we make our way through life. What we experience and feel now isn't the end. As the prophet Isaiah says in the verse from today's reading, *“The former things won't be remembered, nor will they come to mind.”* When we share in God's glory, that's going to be all that matters. Sometimes when we're in the thick of life, it can feel never-ending. Let's look instead at the hope in these words. Someday soon, we will not even recall the hardships. We'll only know God's glory.

CS Lewis writes in his book *Mere Christianity*, *“If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world.”* This world was never meant to be our home. We were created for something more.

In Revelations 21, we're given a glimpse of what future glories await us. A new heaven and a new earth, God dwelling amongst us, no more death, mourning, crying, or pain. Amen!

Because we are children of God, we share in His glory. Forever and ever.

**Ask Yourself and Reflect:**

- What am I looking forward to about the glory that is promised to me?
- How can I keep this future glory in mind as I go through the day-to-day trials of life?

**Pause to Pray:** *Father God, help me to focus more often on what awaits me in Heaven with you and to see that no matter what I have to face here on earth, you have something better and greater waiting for me.*

**Take a Next Step:**

Designate time this week to re-read [Revelations 21:1-7](#) and spend some time reflecting on what you're reading and what it's teaching you about life in eternity.

## DAY 5 I CAN BE SURE OF WHO I AM

**Scripture:** [Ephesians 1:11-14](#), [Romans 8:1-2](#)

### **Reflection:**

Over the last few days, we've spent time reading and reflecting about what we gain by our adoption as sons and daughters chosen by God. The fact of the matter is, we gain everything when we become an heir to God's throne. As a child of God, we share in His inheritance. We also share in His suffering, but it pales in comparison of what's to come. We share in His glory, and look forward to the splendor that awaits us.

In our reading in Romans 8 today, we're reminded that God does not condemn His children. We can be sure of who we are as children of God. When it comes to our identity, the most important part of who we are is who God says we are. And He calls us children.

*"In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will."* Ephesians 1:11

In a time when it's so easy to be who society or social media, or friends say we should be, let's stand strong in faith in light of that. Let's make the person in whom we find our identity and our value be in Christ Jesus. There is so much hope and peace to be found by placing our faith and trust in God. It's the better way, always.

### **Ask Yourself:**

- What does the passage in Ephesians teach you about your identity?
- What do you need to do in your daily life to remember and then live like you're sure of who you are in Christ?
- What have you learned about yourself over the last few days?

**Pause to Pray:** *Father God, you are better than anything this world has to offer me. Help me to find myself in the fullness of your glory. Help me to see myself as you see me. Help me to rest in the assurance that I have as an heir to your throne. Amen.*

### **Take a Next Step:**

- Remember what you've learned this week and take time to pray every day, give God glory always, and remember that you're a beloved child of God!

Find more resources at [www.whoisgrace.com/READ](http://www.whoisgrace.com/READ).