
Traders Point, how are we doing? Hey, it is so good to be with you, everyone at the campuses and everyone watching online. Welcome. Welcome to all who are back or who are here for the first time. That didn't sound as good as it did in my own mind.

But for everyone, we are in our series *Recalibrate*, right? *Recalibrate*. And the picture we've been using for this series is basically: We want to get aligned. We want to be recalibrated. And we've said, "We all have an internal compass." And I think the older we've gotten, we thought maybe it would be easier to kind of read that compass within us, but a lot of times it feels like that bad boy is just spinning.

And it's kind of hard to know where we should go, what we should say, what we should invest in. So we've said in this series that we want to recalibrate to what God says. And the way we've said that is, "Hey, we want to go after True North." And True North is simply following Jesus in every area of our lives.

Over the past few weeks we've been studying through the book of Romans to do just that. We've covered chapters 1 through 7. You guys loving this Romans series? Everyone at the campuses, online. It's been unbelievable. And today we're going to be in Romans, chapter 8. If you have a Bible or a device, you can go ahead and flip or get there.

Romans 8, for those of you who don't know, is a really big chapter. There is so much in there. And as I was studying this week, I wanted to kind of give us a framework as we walk through this chapter for all of us.

There are three big themes that we are going to work through in our time together. Here they are, if you're taking notes in your Romans journal. It's the idea of what does the Holy Spirit give us? The Holy Spirit—what is His role?

The Holy Spirit does so much in our lives that this is not going to be an exhaustive list, not by a long shot. These are just three big things that we see that the Holy Spirit does in all believers' lives.

The Holy Spirit gives us: A position that cannot be removed A purpose that cannot be ruined
A power that cannot be rivaled

Come on! A position, a purpose, a power—these are some of the things that the Holy Spirit gives us as followers of Jesus that we're going to be working through today.

But before we can get to all of these gifts that the Holy Spirit gives us, we have to make sure that we handle something first. We have to make sure something is true of us and that we are living like it's true as well. And that's what Paul kicks off with in Romans, chapter 8, verse 1.

And it's big. It says:

"So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus." We're going to celebrate that. Want me to run it back? For those of you who know better. "So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus." Yes! You're going to catch up with me. We're going to get there together.

"And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death." Come on! Oh, yeah. See, now we're getting it. It's so good.

"The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have.

"And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit."

Amen! Yes.

That first line is kind of like the hinging point for all of this. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Now, condemnation is a legal term. And it really comes up when one party is in debt for either an amount or they broke the law and now they have to go underneath of what this condemnation is.

And for us, as sinners, the condemnation that we suffer is eternal death—complete separation from God. That was our sentence. That was our spot. Sin placed a debt that we could not pay. But thank God that Jesus came and paid it for us.

2 Corinthians summarizes this. It says:

"For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ." 2 Corinthians 5:21 (NLT)

You see, the way that we could have lived to get no condemnation was to live a perfect life, to be sinless. I don't know if you've ever met you, but I've met me and that wasn't going well for us.

So God stepped in and intervened, even though He knew no sin, He became sin on our behalf. And our God went to a cross and nailed sin there—Jesus died. And here's what that means. No longer does sin condemn us. God condemned sin. God put an end to sin. God paid the penalty.

God did it all. It's gone.

The problem is not that it wasn't dealt with, not that it wasn't completely removed, not that Jesus wasn't telling the truth when He said, "It is finished."

The problem is a lot of times, even when we believe in Jesus we forget this. We fall victim to this mentality of living like condemnation is a real thing for us. And we sit underneath the guilt and the worry and the anxiety wondering if we'll measure up, wondering if God is for us or if He is going to be there for us.

What Romans shows us over and over again is that God is for you. There is no condemnation, even when you feel like it, even when you're feeling that things are yelling at you, and it sounds so right. It's not.

I love the way 1 John puts it in chapter 3. It says:

"Even if we feel guilty, God is greater than our feelings, and he knows everything." 1 John 3:20 (NLT)

If you're taking notes or you're looking for something to write in the chat, that's it right there, *"God is greater than our feelings."* If you need something to hold on to this week when you wake up and you're not looking so pretty, when you wake up and you're having a rough day, when you're facing opposition and you just feel like you are not enough, know this: God is greater than our feelings.

When we are worried about coming to Him, worried about what He's going to say or how He's going to interact with us, we can know without a shadow of a doubt what He's going to do, because the kindness and the forgiveness that we are asking for—He's already given them, He's already paid the penalty for the sin, so He is not going to punish us for it again.

Our God is for us. He did not condemn us. But the role of the Holy Spirit is actually to convict us, to convict us when we are not living in that position, that purpose, and that power that He has laid before us. He convicts us that there is something more, so much more, that He has for us.

We're going to skip a few verses here because there is a little bit of an overlap between chapter 7 and chapter 8. And our lead pastor, Aaron Brockett, did an incredible job preaching through chapter 7 last week—am I right? Go back if you missed. You want to check that out. It's all about the battle of the mind and what we can do there.

We're going to skip down to verse 11, alright? Verse 11, take a look at it, the good news just keeps on coming:

"The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you." Again:

"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."

“Therefore,” here’s the action, because that’s true, “dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. 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.”

Come on. This is incredible. I hope all of the campuses are keeping up with the clapping that we’ve got going on over here because it’s a beautiful thing. This is the way Sunday should be. The amazing things aren’t what I’m saying, the amazing things are what I’m reading. Come on. And I worked all week on it.

So we are free, no condemnation, sin has been dealt with, the penalty has been dealt with, we’ve been taken off of death row and given life.

He then takes this a step further and he says, “You’ve not only been freed now by the power of the Holy Spirit of God within you, you have no obligation to do what sin tells you to do. You have no obligation to live like you want to live. You have no obligation to trust those fears because you have something so much more to live for.

You have the Spirit of God who has given you something very specific. And that brings us to the first point if you’re taking those notes. Here’s where that next heading comes. Because of what God is doing the Holy Spirit gives us:

A position that cannot be removed

Look at this:

“For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God’s Spirit when he adopted you as his own children.” Romans 8:14-15 (NLT)

So you see that it doesn’t just end with freedom at the cross. No. We are more than free. We are family. You see, attached to our freedom papers were actually adoption papers. We are actually pardoned from our sin, but we are also welcomed into the family of God.

What Paul is talking about here is actually a process that went on in Roman society where a wealthy man would look for a son to adopt because he didn’t have anyone to pass everything that he had worked for down to. So what he would do is he would find someone, he would adopt him.

And here’s what that meant. When he adopted him as his own he completely took care of the debt that he owed. Whatever was in his name before, the slate had been wiped clean. He made sure of it. It was all dealt with.

Then he stepped in, not only to the family, he actually became the heir, the heir to all that the father had. All the son had to do was to honor the father. That is what he would spend his life doing.

What Paul says here is that exactly. In the same way, you have been adopted. You have been brought into the family of God. Here it is. God is our Father. God is not just our God. God is not

just our Savior. God is our Father, And that is really important to look at because look at what happens next:

"Now..." because of this, "... we call him, 'Abba, Father.' For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory." Romans 8:15-17 (NLT)

I love this part right here. *"Now we call him, 'Abba, Father.'" We get to call God, Father. When I read those words together, Abba Father, it made me think of when Jesus used these exact words in Mark. This is when He is out spending the whole night praying. He's about to be taken. He's about to be crucified. And look at His prayer. Look at how He talks:*

"'Abba, Father,' he cried out, 'everything is possible for you. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.'" Mark 14:36 (NLT)

This part hit me pretty hard this week. This idea of not just whispering the name, *Father*, but when Jesus used it He was crying out *Abba Father* because He was in a really tough spot. He was hurting. And He said, "God, if You can take this, I know you can, but if this is what You want me to do, I'll go through with it."

And this reminded me of my kids. Maybe you have kids, and you know what they are like, especially in the middle of the night. That's usually when they cry out. When they are going to cry out mom or dad, it's in the middle of the night. It's when they have been overcome by either the darkness or the monster that is in the closet or under the bed or by the thunderstorm and the lightning that's happening outside.

And I'm going to be honest with you. I'm not at my best at 2 in the morning. The older I get—that's not my window. And how many times over the past decade I've gotten up in the middle of the night? Almost as many as my wife. It's not close. If we're in a competition she's definitely winning.

But to get up in the middle of the night and to go in there, you know what I mean? You're half asleep. You're stumbling through the dark. And you get to him and he's talking about a monster or she's talking about the lightning, and I wasn't at my best. You just try to get them back to bed, "It's okay. It's okay."

And I think what God was revealing to me this week when He slowed me down and I was studying this, it was like, "Think about this from your kids' perspective. Your child was in darkness. Your child was facing something he couldn't fully comprehend. She was terrified out of her mind.

And they really believed that there was a monster, or they really believed that the storms outside were about to come in and their best move, their first move and only move was to cry

out, "Dad." They really believed that you could kill monsters. They really believed that you could stop storms.

God is saying, "Just like that. Just like a child calls out for dad, call out to Me because unlike you, I really can destroy monsters. Unlike you, I really can deal with the stuff that is in the closet. Unlike you, I really can stop the storms and bring peace to everything."

We have a good Father, and we get to think about Him in the same way. I was convicted of this. So I want to convict you of it. That's usually the way that it goes. And here's the challenge for all of us. If you're taking notes, make a note of it:

In your prayers this week, exchange the word God for Father.

I don't know about you, but a lot of times I find myself praying, "God," I find myself praying, "Jesus," but I miss, "Father." This week, change it and start your prayers with Father. That's the way Jesus does it.

There has to be something to it, because not only did Jesus cry out in His moment of need when He calls Him Father, but remember when His followers came to Him and asked, "Hey, can you teach us how to pray? What does that look like?"

And He just kind of gives them this template right off of the top. Do you remember how He says it? "Our Father," so there has to be something to it. Jesus uses it. He instructs us to use it. I think it would grow us in our relationship, our intimacy, with God if we were to refer to Him as *Father* as He's asking us to.

See, this universe is not operated by fate. It's just not some power pulling strings behind the curtain. Our universe is operated by a good Father, by the hands of a Father who is working all things together for our good. He doesn't want us to just think of Him as God but as *Father* because there are some things you will only ask a father for.

I also know that there are some in this room based on your life circumstances that you never got to use the word *father*. Maybe your father passed away years ago and you've never been able to bring yourself to say those words in a long time. Give yourself permission to remind yourself that God is your perfect Father who will never leave you, who is always there every step of the way. He's a good Father.

It's amazing that he lays all of this out and he shares this with us, but he actually puts a condition there at the end. Notice this:

But if we are to share His glory, if we're going to share in what He's given us, the freedom, the family, we must also share His suffering. We must share in His suffering now.

It's this idea that once you have accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, the Spirit of God is working in you, when He's showing you the family business, what it's like to be a part of the

family of God, you will be raging war against yourself, putting to death your sinful wants and desires and letting God give birth to new ones, share in them.

And there are going to be tough days to come. There is going to be pain that you experience. But this next section is all about, even when facing pain, even when we get knocked down, even when we don't think we can get up again or that there is more to our story; this is what the Holy Spirit gives us:

A purpose that cannot be ruined

The plan that God has for you and your life cannot be ruined, it cannot be stopped, it cannot be thwarted—I've never used the word *thwarted* before, but it can't be done. God has a purpose for your life. And He uses a beautiful illustration to make sense of this, alright? Keep reading in verse 18. It says:

"Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are."

Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay.

"For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering."

"We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children," there is more to this, "... including the new bodies he has promised us. We were given this hope when we were saved. (If we already have something, we don't need to hope for it. But if we look forward to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.)"

What Paul is pointing to here is that suffering is going to come even to those who have the Holy Spirit within them, but everything that we face, the pain that we go through is pain with a purpose. It's pain that is producing something. It's pain that is giving life to something else.

And the illustration that he uses here is that of childbirth. Now, I've never given birth to a child myself, clearly. But I've been about as close as you can get. I've been in the room three different times. Twice it went great. The middle time, it didn't go so great for me.

My wife did great, she really held in there but I'm in there—if you've ever been there, there is a lot going on. There's some groaning, there's some yelling, there's some pushing. But we're all in it together, right?

The doctors are down there. I'm up top coaching, doing my thing. Ted Lasso at his best, Mr. Positivity, "We're going to be alright. It's good, yeah." And everything was going great until it wasn't. I'm standing there. I'm standing there, until I'm not standing there.

I might have passed out, alright? I passed out. And I didn't just pass out, I fell backwards through the table, knocked everything off, I'm laying on the ground cold.

If you wonder, "Hey, I wonder what the doctors do when that happens to a dad," they do nothing. No one moves. No one flinches. They just keep doing what they are there to do. And I don't realize it until I come to that I've even passed out.

So I come to and all I hear is the doctor in a very calm voice just saying over and over again, "Dad down. Dad down. Dad down. We've got a dad down in here."

I'm so embarrassed that I go to jump up and pretend like, "What are you talking about? I didn't fall down." My mind has come back. My body has not come back yet. So I go to pop up, but my neck is all I could move. And I'm just squirming back and forth on the floor. I finally get up and I get there just after our son comes into the world.

I didn't want to tell my family when that happened. If you want to know the power of Jesus, I'm sharing it with thousands of people today, the most embarrassing moment of my life. And just to prove how horrible men are, they would even make a day like childbirth about themselves. I'm the worst.

Childbirth has to be one of the most painful experiences on the planet. Yet on most days, I think most moms would say, "It was worth it. It changed me. It changed my body. It changed my bladder. It changed my skin. It changed me—every part of me from the inside out. It was painful and I suffered, but it brought life and it brought love and it was worth it.

Paul says to think about creation in the same way. Here's the truth: Creation is giving birth to a new version of itself.

Do you ever think about it this way? It says in Romans 8 that all of it was subjected to the curse. All of it is in pain. All of it is changing. God has a plan for creation. It's actually giving birth to a new version of itself.

The plan, the purpose that God has for all of it, is that He is dealing with it day in and day out. And there will come a day when there is a new heaven and a new earth, and we have new bodies, and everything is made right.

But in the meantime, creation is giving birth to a new version of itself. I want you to hear that. The same is being said about you. So maybe you can give yourself a little bit of credit and take it easy on yourself knowing that God is working something new in you in this season and for every day that you are here.

This isn't something we fear. This is something that we long for. Did you hear that? He not only set it up in a way that we're going to experience suffering, but he gives us this picture of a woman giving birth, and he actually says that this is something that we long for.

I think we can see that too. Have you ever met a woman who is 39 and 1/2 weeks pregnant? She is longing for the day to give birth to her baby. And it starts pretty normal. Women will do some things to get the baby out. It starts with, "Hey, I'm just going for a walk around the neighborhood. I'm going to try to jump start something." That's fine. That's normal.

And then it's like, "Can I get a bouncy ball and start bouncing off some stuff?" I don't think that's scientific, but maybe it is. It gets weird when they start googling to ingest, like, "Hey, babe. Do we have any hot sauce?"

"Yeah, why?"

"Because I'm going to drink it."

You get this picture. She is longing for that day. She is looking forward to it. And she will do anything for it to get there and to get there right now.

Paul says that that is the way that we should be living. And while we're living, while we're waiting, going through that suffering we wait confidently, and we wait patiently because the Holy Spirit is with us in our waiting.

I love the way this builds. I'm telling it's a masterpiece, what Paul put together here. Look at this:

"And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will." Romans 8:26-27 (NLT)

So what Paul is saying is that the Holy Spirit teaches us the language of prayer. The Holy Spirit actually joins in on it. It says all of creation is groaning. God, Himself, in His Spirit is groaning as well, praying for us even when we don't have the words to say. Even when we pray the wrong things, the Spirit of God is still praying on our behalf in the right ways. Can you relate?

Have you ever gone into prayer and you're like this? "I don't even know what to pray about. Is this even sinful to ask for? Is this selfish? What is truly from God? How can I know the difference?" We don't know the language of prayer like the Spirit does.

Have you ever been in a situation where you and someone else really were just on different pages? Maybe it felt like you were speaking different languages or maybe you really were speaking different languages.

For me, over the summer I was on a flight back from Texas to Indy. I'm about to board the plane and this lady sits next to me, a very sweet woman but she only spoke Spanish and I barely speak English. So we're in quite the pickle.

She's trying to make sure that she is in the right place, she's boarding the right plane. And come to find out, yeah she was in the right spot. We're actually on the same plane together. And she had a physical disability. So I grab her bag and I kind of help her get on to the plane.

It just keeps on going. We're not only on the same plane together, we're actually sitting right next to each other on the plane. So we get in there. She gets to her seat. I take her luggage and I put it into the overhead bin above. We sit down and we take off from Texas to Indy.

And as we're about to land, I want to help her out again. I want to make sure that I can grab her bag for her. I thought that her luggage was red—but that's all that I could remember. I think it's red.

But I don't want to start opening the compartment and grabbing people's luggage. If you've learned anything from YouTube, you get punched in the back of head for doing something like that.

So I've got to ask her, the problem is I don't know the word for luggage, bag, really anything. The only word that I do know is red, *rojo*.

So I turn to her. I tap her on the shoulder. And I look at her and I say, "Rojo. Rojo. Rojo?" She's terrified at this point. I don't know if she thought that blood was going to fall from the.... She's like looking up like, "What am I missing?"

Luckily, there was a woman who was sitting by the window who spoke both English and Spanish. And she leaned over and she kindly translated rojo to, "Hey, he wants to know if your luggage is red. He would like to grab it for you." She smiled. Thumbs up. We move forward with the thing.

But what the Holy Spirit does in these moments of prayer is that when we don't even know what to pray for, it says that the Spirit of God is always at work praying. He's praying for something very specific. And maybe it's a prayer that misses a lot of our prayers, but it doesn't miss the connection between the Holy Spirit and God our Father.

Here's verse 28. This is what they are praying about:

"And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them."

Now that sounds amazing, doesn't it? We know that God causes everything to work together for the good. The problem is, who defines good? Is God answering the good for my life and the good for your life? What if the good for your life is different than the good that is for mine?

What does that even look like?

A lot of times we fill in the blank for what is good. "God is working for my promotion." "God is working for me to stand out in my class, to look a little bit cooler. God is working for me to be a little bit more popular." "God is working for me to get the starting spot." "God is working for me to get to first chair." "God is working on my money."

What good is He working for? What I love about the Bible is that it answers the question that it puts up there. And you can't read verse 28 without reading verse 29. Take a look at this:

"For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters."

So when we talk about the good, what the Spirit of God is praying for, what He's aligning to the will of God is this:

Good is what is best to form us into the likeness of Christ

What is best to form us into the likeness of Christ, that's what the Holy Spirit is praying on our behalf. Here's the truth. Sin not only separated us from God, sin has deformed us. And maybe that sounds like strong language there, "I don't know if I can go that far." But the Bible does.

God created all things, and they were good, and they were perfect until sin came in and corrupted us. Now, all of our desires, all of our wants, everything is all mixed up. That's why we need a series like *Recalibrate*. That is what Romans has been talking about.

It's not even that we don't do what we want to do, it's that we do what we even hate. There is something internally wrong with us. We have been deformed by sin.

But God is saying that by His Spirit, by the power—the same power that raised Jesus from the grave—God is actually forming us into the likeness of His Son, Jesus Christ. God is forming us into His image.

We want God to change our circumstances. We want God to change what is going on around us. But God focuses on you. God loves you. God bought you at a very high price. And what He wants to do is change you.

Following Jesus isn't about getting a longer streak of good days or avoiding pain. It's about realizing that the good and the bad are working together. Here's what that means:

"Good" circumstances can be terrible for you (notice the quotations)

"Bad" circumstances can be wonderful for you in the kingdom of God

It's an upside-down kingdom. And if you're looking to God only to bring you good things or to avoid the bad things, you're missing out on what He is trying to do.

And I think we know this at some level, right? Have you ever met someone who said, "Hey, when I lost my job it was the best thing that ever happened to me"? "When I got sick, it was the best thing that ever happened to me. It was actually freeing."

On the flip side, have you ever met someone, a man or a woman, who gave his or her whole life working toward one thing? And he rolled over and she threw out everything else to get this one thing. And he/she finally got it and what did he/she say? "It's the worst thing that ever happened." Or "It wasn't what I thought it would be."

In the kingdom of God, God is saying, "I'm going to cause all things to work together and there's going to be an opportunity for Me to form you into the likeness of My Son if you share in the suffering, if you follow the prompts that I give you."

I love the way John Newton said it. He said:

"Everything is necessary that he (God) sends; nothing can be necessary that he withholds."

Maybe if that doesn't hit if for you, maybe you like the way Kanye said it, "Everything I'm not made me everything I am." Not Kanye fans in this service either. I went for it. The first service I was like, "Maybe they're just a little bit older." It was from the first hour. I thought it was fun. We're going to skip past it though.

But I think this one goes back to prayer as well. Most of us.... Think back to your prayers. We pray for good things, right? What we think is going to be good for us and the people who we love. I don't think we're out here praying about bad things. Maybe you are, you weirdos, "Can I give you some bad stuff?"

But what he's saying is that if we can line up with what the Spirit deems good, then we are going to be on the right page.

This is what really convicted me, just a few questions. And the way this works is, you know when I'm studying and I get convicted then I get to share it with you. And hopefully God gets to do the same thing with you as well.

But I had this conviction as I was looking at my prayers and my prayer life:

If all of your prayers from this week were answered... would you look more like Jesus?

If all of your prayers from this week were answered... would you look more like Jesus? Or

would you look just like a kid with a blank check? You just got everything that you ever wanted. Because none of those things are satisfying.

We might receive some of those, but they are never going to be the ultimate thing. What the Spirit of God is trying to do in us, we want to look more like Jesus. Here's another one:

Would the people around you look more like Jesus?

If all of your prayers were answered... I'm not saying that we shouldn't pray for our friends and our family and pray good things for them, but the ultimate prayer should be for them to become like Jesus, to know Jesus.

And if we're praying that prayer, I believe that that is one that God answers and one that will bring change. I even just started... I want to start to pray for you this week. I want to give you a heading and you can fill in the space underneath it. Here's what a prayer could look like:

Father, by the power of Your Spirit, form me into the likeness of Jesus, Your Son.

Father, (I'm recognizing who He is, that He's not just any God but He's my Father) by the power of Your Spirit, (by the same power that raised Jesus from the dead), form me into the likeness of Jesus, Your Son.

If God is doing that in our lives, then we will show up for those around us and we will become like Jesus. They will be drawn to that. And those prayers will be answered even through us, how God is using us.

That's the prayer this week. So wrestle with the idea. Look back on last week and ask, "If all of my prayers were answered, would I look more like Jesus?" But this week make it a plan to make all of your prayers ask the question, "God, can You form me into the image of Jesus?"

So here we are. With condemnation dealt with, no obligation to do what our sinful nature desires, we're back on this—this is what the Holy Spirit gives us:

A position that cannot be removed

We are family, God's chosen, adopted, loved children. That's who we are. Never accept anything else other than that title.

A purpose that cannot be ruined

No matter what you face, what you've gone through, you can know that God is working together all things for the good of those who love Him, being formed into the image of Jesus.

And nothing can stop that process from happening. You are giving birth to a new version of yourself. And finally there is:

A power, because of what the Holy Spirit gives us, that cannot be rivaled

The same power, the One who raised Jesus from the grave, the One who lives inside of you, that can all be yours.

This is who I want to speak to right now, to all of those who don't belong to Jesus Christ. It is not because of anything that you have done in your past, it's because of something you haven't received. It's not a matter of doing or cleaning up your act, it's actually a moment of surrender.

You see, all of those things that God promises and all of those things that God has for us, those are for us who believe, those who have placed our faith in Jesus Christ, is something that you can accept today.

You can walk out of here today with a position that cannot be removed. No matter what you came in here believing about yourself, you can leave knowing that you are a son of God that you are a daughter of God. That is what the Spirit of God brings you.

You can go out of here today knowing that.... Maybe your life has been so gray and there has been so much that you didn't understand and why did this happen—there is a purpose to all of it.

You can walk out of here and know that nothing is wasted, that there is a good Father who is molding all things together for your good to form you into the likeness of His Son.

You can know that there is a power and it's a power greater than anything you've ever experienced before and it's a power that God will place within you that nothing can rival—nothing you will ever face. And here's what that power does, it grabs on to you. God grabs on to you and holds you.

And what we're going to look at at the end of chapter 8 is this fact that the power of the Holy Spirit will not let us go. There is no condemnation, there is no obligation, and there is no separation from the love that God has for His sons and daughters.

So what I want to do is to just ask everyone to stand up. At all of our campuses, watching online if you can stand up, if you're driving, please don't. I don't want to get that email this week, "But you said...."

I want us to look at the way Paul ends it here. Romans 8. This is the power that cannot be rivaled. And as we stand, in this moment of surrender, I just want to ask you to just put your hands out and open in a moment of receiving all that God has for you and letting go of all of the things that are trying to keep you from Him.

I want to read this over you. It says:

"What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else?"

"Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself."

“Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God’s right hand, pleading for us.”

“Can anything ever separate us from Christ’s love?” This part is for us, “Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? (As the Scriptures say, ‘For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.’) No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.”

“And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God’s love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God’s love.”

“No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

This is a moment of response. We have people in every room at our campuses who are there to meet with you and to pray with you to receive you and everything that you are going through. For those online, just follow the prompts on the screen.

But what I want to do in this moment is to pray for us. To pray all of those things over us before we go from here. So that we can come to know this Father of ours and we can come to be formed into His image and live a life knowing Him, with confidence, waiting patiently for all He has for us.

Would you pray with me?

God, we thank You. God, we thank You for this moment God we thank You for Your Scripture. We thank You for the pictures that You’ve painted of all that we can have because of all that You have done.

God, don’t let us get in the way of that. Don’t let us get caught up in our feelings or believing things that are not true. In the name of Jesus, there is no condemnation for those who believe in You. None.

God, we have a purpose that has been placed on our lives. God, You have a plan for us. You have a power that You’ve decided to give to us. You’ve decided to place within us the same power that raised Jesus from the grave—it lives within us.

So, God, I’m going to create right here in this moment of surrender a time to respond. God, I pray that we would give room for all at all of the campuses, all watching online, to have space to talk to their Father, maybe to talk to their Father for the first time, to know that they are loved and adopted.

God, let them receive that in this moment. Let them ask big things, intimate things, the biggest things. God, we pray that right now in this space in this moment of quiet, we'd respond.

[Quiet Space]

God, I pray that this was a moment when people placed their faith in You. God, I pray that it was a moment where condemnation was dealt with, guilt was dealt with, where chains have fallen.

God, I pray that this was a moment when people moved into a position that can never be removed. God, I pray now, in this moment that we have sons and daughters among us who were not here before.

God, we celebrate all that You have done today in Your name. And now, as we worship You, God, we just want to make room, and we want to continue to allow You to form us.

We want to die to ourselves and for You to give birth through Your Spirit into a new version. God, allow us to do that. Break us up. Lead us in this moment, Jesus. It's in Your perfect name we pray. Amen.