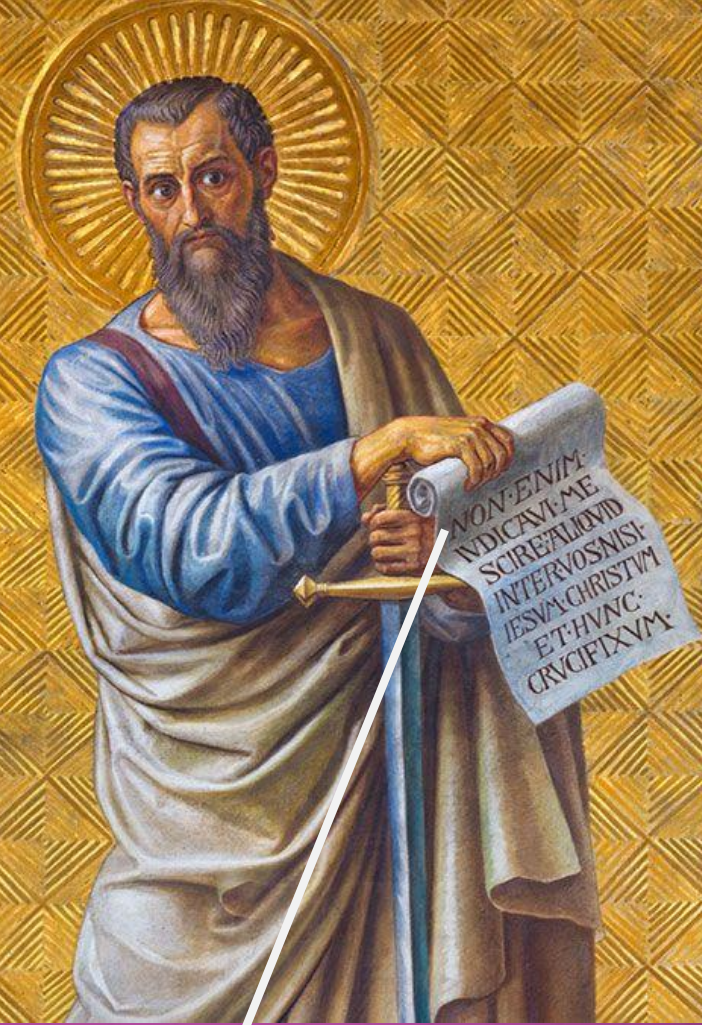


ROMANS

8:5-13

S
A
N
C
T
P
A
V
L
S



Flesh *or* **Spirit;**
Dead *and* **Alive**

ROMANS

8:5-13



Verses 5–13 is a very enlightening section that follows the struggle discussed in Romans 7 and presents a strong contrast between life according to the flesh and life in the Spirit, which Paul introduced last week! Paul begins to now expand the final phrase of v.4: “...*the ones who are not walking in accord with flesh, but in accord with the Spirit.*”

PREAMBLE

ROMANS

8:4B



MOVING
“US”
AHEAD

4b “...the ones who are not walking in accord with the flesh, but in accord with the Spirit.”

Our Christian behavior, in this last part of v.4, shows that Paul does not separate the “fulfillment” of the Law from the lifestyle of the Christian. This does not mean that your behavior is how the Law is fulfilled! Instead, as we have seen in v. 2: “...the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus freed you from the Law of sin and death.”

By our Lord’s sacrifice, the Law of sin and death has been overcome by whom the righteous requirements of the Law has been fulfilled, and in whom nothing is condemnation. As Christians, we are now able to...

ROMANS

8:4B

MOVING
“US”
AHEAD

4b “...the ones who are walking in accord with the flesh, but in accord with the Spirit.”

Our Christian behavior in this last part of v.4, shows that Paul does separate the “fulfillment” of the Law from the lifestyle.

“...walk the walk of the Spirit and not of the ‘flesh!’”

behavior is now the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, as we have seen in v.2. The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has freed you from the Law of sin and death.

By our Lord’s sacrifice, the Law of sin and death has been overcome by whom the righteous requirements of the Law have been fulfilled, and in whom there is no condemnation. As Christians, we are now able to...

ROMANS

8:5-13



In today's study, we will see that Paul continues to use this resistance between flesh and Spirit to expand on the life that is given to believers in and through God's Spirit! You may notice that Paul uses "*flesh*" (σάρξ) nine times and "*Spirit*" (πνεῦμα) ten times, at least nine of which refer to the Holy Spirit.

PREAMBLE

ROMANS

8:5-13



In this section, you will also notice a definite progression. Initially, in verses 5-8, Paul sets up the antithesis between *Either* the flesh *Or* the Spirit. He then introduces an element of overlap, which leads to Paul's themes of flesh and Spirit, in verses 9-11, which are complemented by four references to death and two to life. Believers (you) are paradoxically presented as both dead/mortal and alive; awaiting God to make your mortal bodies alive (v.11).

PREAMBLE

ROMANS

8:5-13



The last section of our study, vv.12-13, will reveal to us Paul's application of the previous truths in a brief exhortation which maintains all four themes:

- 1.) Reference to the *“flesh”* three times;
- 2.) reference to *“the Spirit”* once;
- 3.) *“to live”* three times; and finally,
- 4.) the use of two words related to death (*“die...put to death”*).

PREAMBLE

ROMANS

8:5-8



Either Flesh
Or Spirit

⁵Indeed, the ones who are in accord with the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but the ones [who are] in accord with the Spirit [set their minds on] the things of the Spirit.

⁶For the mindset of the flesh is death, but the mindset of the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷[This is] because the mindset of the flesh is hostility toward God, for it is not submitting itself to the Law of God; indeed, neither is it able to [do so]. ⁸And the ones who are in [the] flesh are not able to please God.

ROMANS

8:5



Either Flesh
Or Spirit

Paul speaks to two distinct groups that stand as total opposites as we exegete

v.5: *“Indeed, the ones who are in accord with the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but the ones [who are] in accord with the Spirit [set their minds on] the things of the Spirit.”*

As you should be aware, the dominant way of the world is that what you DO leads to who you ARE in terms of your occupation, social status, and station in life. Paul, however, contends that in the church it is just the opposite!

ROMANS

8:5



Either Flesh
Or Spirit

Who you ARE *“in Christ Jesus”* (vv.1-2) comes and must always be FIRST!

What you DO, in response, then follows. This is a very familiar pattern of the indicative first and then the imperative second.

Here’s another significant point: Paul know of no other alternative! Notice, there is either flesh (which results in death and we will discuss this in the next verse) or there is Spirit (ditto...next verse!).

ROMANS

8:5



Either Flesh
Or Spirit

Dearly beloved, there is no third or “middle of the road” option. The very same is true of Paul’s use of his slavery motif (6:16-22); there are only two alternatives:

- + Slavery to sin; or,
- + Slavery to righteousness!

Again, we are not “free” in this life...we all have one of two lords:

- + The lordship of sin; or
- + The Lordship of Christ Jesus!

ROMANS

8:5



Either Flesh
Or Spirit

Paul's use of the Greek verb φρονέω (“*set one's mind on*”) says a great deal about those who are in accord with the flesh versus those who are in accord with the Spirit. This verb conveys the thought that what a person sets their mind upon...will be their focus...in actuality, this idea is difficult to translate into English because it combines the visceral and cognitive aspects of thinking; so perhaps the best word that we could use to fully understand this is:

“vocation!”

It moves from “*being*” to “*doing*.”

ROMANS

8:6



‘For the mindset of the flesh is death, but the mindset of the Spirit is life and peace.

Paul gives us the results of each, respectively. In doing so, Paul switches from the verb **φρονέω** (“*set one’s mind on*”) to the noun: **φρόνημα** (“*mindset*”). This noun depicts a “way of thinking, ...an aim, aspiration, or striving!

Either *Flesh*
Or *Spirit*

ROMANS

8:6



Either Flesh
Or Spirit

‘For the mindset of the flesh is death, but the mindset of the Spirit is life and peace.

The last word of this verse has been absent from Romans since 5:1; so then, what does Paul mean by the use of εἰρήνη (*wholeness*, i.e. when all essential parts are joined together; *peace* (God’s gift of *wholeness*)).

Again, Paul is alluding to the great “NOW/NOT YET!” You presently exist in and are now in this current relationship with God. But the NOT YET, is clear, and Paul will provide significant clarification in verse 10-11!

ROMANS

8:7



Either Flesh
Or Spirit

Paul provides further explanation of this polarity here. *⁷[This is] because the mindset of the flesh is hostility toward God, for it is not submitting itself to the Law of God; indeed, neither is it able to [do so].*

Hostility [*ἐχθρα*] takes us back to 5:10: “while being enemies [*ἐχθροί*], we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son.” Hostility also reinforces the notion that there is NO neutral ground. With the Spirit there is peace; with the flesh there is enmity!

ROMANS

8:7



Either Flesh
Or Spirit

How does the flesh exhibit this hostility?
By “*not submitting itself to the Law of God...!*” Note: this will be the last use of “Law” by Paul until 9:31. “Submitting” (ὑποτάσσω) is also the prominent verb that Paul uses in Rom. 13:1, 5; Eph 5:21, 24 and is often used in familial, religious and political context: *to submit to one’s [God’s] control; to yield to one’s [God’s] admonition or advice.*

So the hostility of the flesh revolts against God’s Law and the result is total depravity! The condition of fallen humanity! And the flesh (σάρξ) is squarely at fault since it is unwilling and even unable to submit itself to God’s Law!

ROMANS

8:8



⁸And the ones who are in [the] flesh are not able to please God.

Paul concludes this section by returning to speak of “*being*.” It is impossible for anyone to please God as long as they “...*are in [the] flesh...!*” We have studied this same truth in the Book of Hebrews:

“...and without faith it is impossible to please Him [God].”

Either Flesh
Or Spirit

ROMANS

8:8



Either Flesh
Or Spirit

So let's close this section with the
SIX Allies of the flesh:

1. **Mindset, which is focused on the things of the flesh;**
2. **Death;**
3. **Hostility toward God;**
4. **Refusal to submit to God's Law;**
5. **Inability to do so; and,**
6. **Incapacity to please God.**

ROMANS

8:9-11



Dead
AND
Alive

⁹You now, you are not in [the realm of the] flesh, but in [the realm of the] Spirit, if indeed [the] Spirit of God is dwelling in you. But if someone does not have [the] Spirit of Christ, this person is not His. ¹⁰If however, Christ is in you, indeed, the body is dead on account of sin; however, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹And since the Spirit of the One having raised up Jesus from the dead is living in you, the One who raised Christ from the dead will also make your mortal bodies alive through His Spirit, who dwells within you.

ROMANS

8:9-11



Excursus

Sometimes we distinguish persons of the Trinity to the point where teaching about their unity may suffer. Note the complex unity within the Godhead expressed in 8:9–11, especially through the relationship between teaching about Christ and the Spirit. The ease with which Paul can pass from the one **[Spirit of God]** to the other **[Spirit of Christ]** is a clear indication of the recognition of the Divine dignity of Christ Jesus. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ (e.g., Rom 8:9, 14; 15:19; 1 Cor 2:11; 6:11; 7:40; 12:3; Phil 1:19; 3:3; Gal 4:6; 1 Pet 1:11)! This provides the Biblical basis for the filioque* (the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son (Nicene Creed))

ROMANS

8:9-11



Excursus

* A major dispute in the church; became a chief point of difference between the Eastern and Western Church. The Nicene Creed had as the Third Article: *“And in the Holy Spirit”*; to this the Constantinopolitan Creed added: *“The Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father.”* The belief that the Spirit proceeds *also from the Son* (L: filioque) is found in the 4th c. (e.g., in Ambrose; taught by Augustine, and appeared in creeds in Spain (by the 5th c.). The term filioque was adopted at Toledo (589) against Arianism. Later, it was generally accepted in the West and was adopted at Rome (a. 1000). The Eastern Church, which made the Father alone the fountainhead of deity, rejected the filioque, though find no difficulty in saying that the Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son.

ROMANS

8:9-11



Excursus

Do we receive both Christ and the Holy Spirit at Baptism? Yes, we receive Christ via the Spirit to dwell in us as His temple even as we are also brought into Christ as a member of His body. Though “spirit” (*πνεῦμα*) is often not translated as “the [Holy] Spirit,” in 8:16, Paul writes: “*The Spirit Himself* bears witness with *our spirit* that we are children of God.” What is “*our spirit*”? In light of what Paul says in the preceding verses, this “spirit” should be understood as the “*new man*” who is Christ dwelling in us via the Spirit. In other words, “The Spirit Himself [*the Holy Spirit through the Word and Sacraments*] bears witness with our spirit [*the ‘inner man’ Christ who dwells in us via the Holy Spirit*] that we are children of God.” Thus, we receive the testimony of the Spirit from outside ourselves as well as inside ourselves. God covers us completely.

ROMANS

8:9-11



Excursus

Romans reveals that, along with the heavenly Father and Jesus, the Holy Spirit receives special emphasis in Paul's teaching. In fact, Romans 8 mentions the Holy Spirit more often than any other chapter in the Bible!

Lutherans are, all too often, classified as "Anti-Holy Spirit" because we don't emphasize feelings-based theology that requires the speaking in tongues or shaking (some would say flopping on the ground like a dying fish) with the "Spirit's fervor." But we, like Paul, are anything...BUT..."Anti-Holy Spirit."

ROMANS

8:9



Dead
AND
Alive

⁹You now, you are not in [the realm of the] flesh, but in [the realm of the] Spirit, if indeed [the] Spirit of God is dwelling in you. But if someone does not have [the] Spirit of Christ, this person is not His.

Paul begins this verse with an emphatic pronoun **YOU** [second person plural: All y'all]. As we have seen, Paul quite often shifts between first and second person plural forms, but the emphatic use here is a separation from the first person singular language of Romans 7. Paul's use of the emphatic "*You*" is a positive, as he is expressing his confidence that the Roman Christians are now firmly in the realm of the Spirit.

ROMANS

8:9



Dead
AND
Alive

⁹You now, you are not in [the realm of the] flesh, but in [the realm of the] Spirit, if indeed [the] Spirit of God is dwelling in you. But if someone does not have [the] Spirit of Christ, this person is not His.

The decisive factor is that God bestows His Spirit, His love, as we have read in 5:5: *“...has been poured out and remains within our hearts through the Holy Spirit.”* Thus, Paul’s use is to mark off the Lordship that should characterize the Christian from the lordship of sin (7:17, 20), even though both continue to exert their claim in the lives of believers.

ROMANS

8:9



Dead
AND
Alive

⁹You now, you are not in [the realm of the] flesh, but in [the realm of the] Spirit, if indeed [the] Spirit of God is dwelling in you. But if someone does not have [the] Spirit of Christ, this person is not His.

The indwelling of the Spirit is the necessary qualification which marks the Baptized as one who belongs to Christ and which move them from the realm of the flesh to that of the Spirit. “...*[I]f indeed...*” presumes that what follows *is*, in fact, *true*; the Christian’s life is no longer determined by the sinful flesh.

ROMANS

8:9



Dead
AND
Alive

⁹You now, you are not in [the realm of the] flesh, but in [the realm of the] Spirit, if indeed [the] Spirit of God is dwelling in you. But if someone does not have [the] Spirit of Christ, this person is not His.

Paul concludes this verse: *But if someone does not have [the] Spirit of Christ, this person is not His.* This statement again makes it very clear that there are only two possible realities. Having “*the Spirit of Christ*” means that you belong to Him; not having His Spirit means that you do not!

It is just that stark, simple, and straightforward!

ROMANS

8:10



Dead
AND
Alive

Now we have a more noticeable and dramatic shift: *¹⁰If however, Christ is in you, indeed, the body is dead on account of sin; however, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.* Paul now shifts from the *either/or* to the *both/and*. Paul is speaking, and only can be speaking, to Baptized believers [YOU]! Therefore, these very important theological truths are revealed.

1. Paul describes our current Christian life as Christ within us (cf. 2 Cor. 13:5; Gal 2:20; Col 1:27); and,

2. Paul makes no sharp distinction about the Godhead. So, when the NT speaks of the Divine indwelling (cf. St. John 17:22-23), there is no separation. Godhead [The Holy Trinity] cannot be divided nor the Persons of the Godhead be separated.

ROMANS

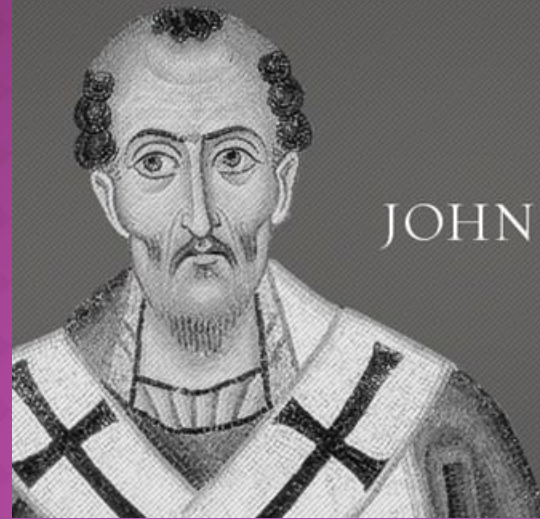
8:10



Dead
AND
Alive

So as John Chrysostom preached:

“For where the Spirit is, there Christ is also. Wherever one person of the Trinity is present, the whole Trinity is present too. For the Trinity is undivided and has a perfect unity in itself.”



JOHN CHRYSOSTOM
349–407

[Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Epistle of Romans*, 13
(Bray, *Romans*, ACCS NT 6:212).

ROMANS

8:10



Dead
AND
Alive

Lastly, this verse is the *sedes doctrinae* (seat of doctrine) concerning: *Simul iustus et peccator!*

And this is taken from the wording of this verse in the Latin Vulgate: A believer is dead *propter peccatum*, “on account of sin,” and also “truly” (*vero*) in possession of life *propter iustificationem*, “on account of justification.”

ROMANS

8:11



Dead
AND
Alive

¹¹And since the Spirit of the One having raised up Jesus from the dead is living in you, the One who raised Christ from the dead will also make your mortal bodies alive through His Spirit, who dwells within you.

The initial clause is Trinitarian: “*the Spirit*” (The Holy Spirit); “*One having raised up*” (The Father); and, *Jesus!*

Paul proceeds to speak also of believers by referring to “*your mortal bodies.*”

While this is one part of present reality, this verse also describes significant life-giving acts of God in the past, present, and future!

ROMANS

8:11



Dead
AND
Alive

11 And since the Spirit of the One having raised up Jesus from the dead is living in you, the One who raised Christ from the dead will also make your mortal bodies alive through His Spirit, who dwells within you.

In the past, God the Father raised His Son, Jesus, from the dead.

In the present, His Spirit is dwelling, *“living in you.”*

As a result of both of these glorious truths, the exhilarating promise of the bodily resurrection awaits future fulfillment on the Great Last Day. In essence, what you read in this verse is a Divine Guarantee to you!

ROMANS

8:12-13



The Application

¹²Consequently, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh to live in accord with the flesh. ¹³For if you live in accord with the flesh, you are about to die. But if, by the Spirit you put to death the practices of the body, you will live.

On the basis of what we have studied in Romans 8 thus far, Paul now draws a conclusion as it applies to your present life. It's similar to what he has done in 6:1-10 as he moved to exhortation in 6:11. So vv.12-13 express an urgent plea!

Paul also has in mind no mere hypothetical or unreal possibility; the danger is very real! And his switch to the second person plural throughout increases the warning! The devastating consequence of living in accord with the flesh is evident in the first half of v.13.

ROMANS

8:12-13



The Application

¹²Consequently, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh to live in accord with the flesh. ¹³For if you live in accord with the flesh, you are about to die. But if, by the Spirit you put to death the practices of the body, you will live.

He then concludes with the positive consequences of living according to the Spirit.

However, there are two surprises!

1. Instead of calling you (all Christians) to live in accord with the Spirit, instead of the flesh, he tells you how to respond properly to the negative impulses of the flesh.
2. Largely for rhetorical variation, Paul switches from *“flesh”* in the first sentence to refer to its influence as *“practices of the body.”*

ROMANS

8:12-13



The Application

Instead of calling you (all Christians) to live in accord with the Spirit, instead of the flesh, he tells you how to respond properly to the negative impulses of the flesh.

The first is significant: Paul is speaking to you all; to those who are no longer under the dominion of the flesh. You are encouraged to join the battle against what once enslaved and ruled over you. If you succumb to and return to your “*fleshly*” ways, you surrender the fight; you are giving up...in essence, you are following the way of a coward! What’s the result: death!

ROMANS

8:12-13



The Application

2. Largely for rhetorical variation, Paul switches from *“flesh”* in the first sentence to refer to its influence as *“practices of the body.”*

The second aligns the body’s desires with the sinful flesh. This is why Paul urges, exhorts you, to *“put to death the practices of the body.”* So you ask, “How can I do this?” *“By the Spirit...!”* By means of the power of the Holy Spirit! Thus, you do join the battle and you do fight! You do not follow the way of the coward, but the warrior! By doing so, *“...you will live.”*

ROMANS

8:12-13



The Application

This is your relationship with God [The Holy Trinity]. The verb *“you will live”* is in the future tense and expresses the future-oriented, eschatological promise of the resurrection to life eternal. Yet, the saving, life-giving relationship with God [The Holy Trinity] exist NOW for you.

Indeed, this life is a dominant motif in Romans 5-8 and takes you back to 1:17: *“For the righteousness of God is revealed, from faith to faith, as it has been written: ‘and the righteous by faith will live.’”*



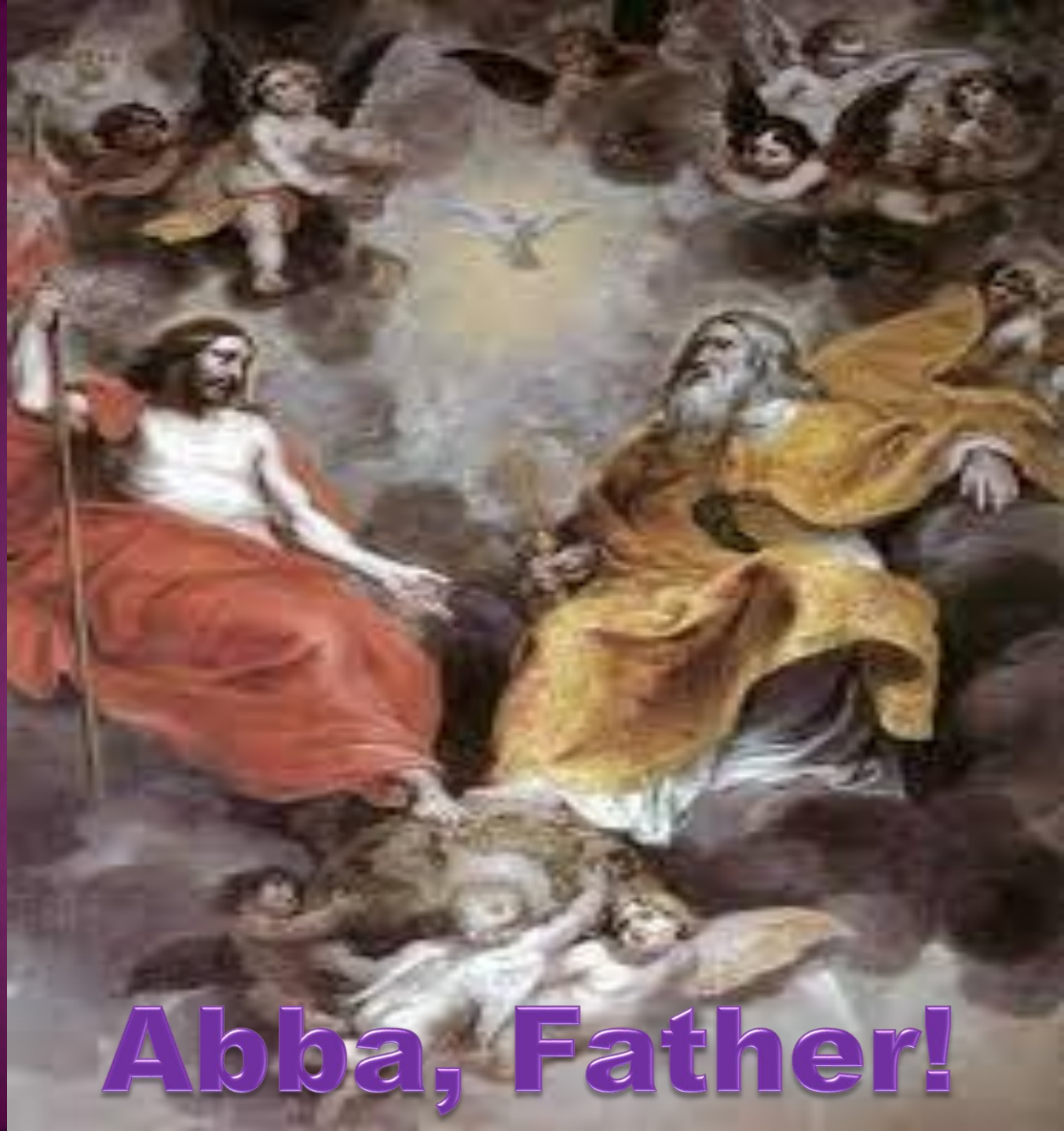
ANY
QUESTIONS

ROMANS

8:14-17



**Next
Week**



Abba, Father!