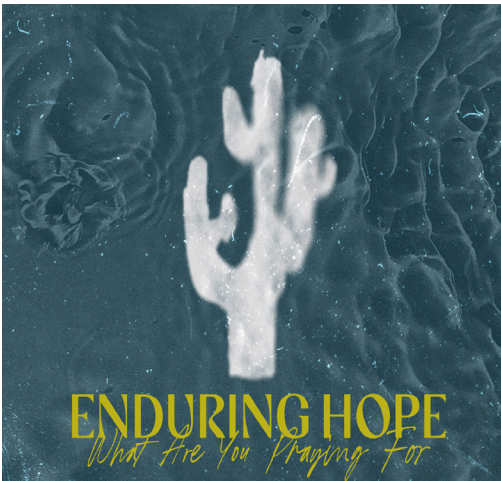


Sermon Growth Guide

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Enduring Hope | Romans 8:12-21

May 10, 2026

Key Verse: Romans 8:11 – “For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.”

Big Idea: Through the Holy Spirit, we are adopted as God’s children and freed from slavery to fear, giving us strength to fight sin, endure suffering, and live with hope in the glory still to come.

Foundations

Last week, Pastor Greg contrasted two different ways of life: walking according to the desires of the flesh versus walking according to the desires of the Spirit. This week, we continue to learn about the power of the Spirit who dwells inside all those who have faith in Jesus. Through the Spirit, we put to death the misdeeds of the flesh (Romans 8:13), we are adopted as sons and daughters of God (8:14-15), and we receive assurance that we truly are God’s children (8:16).

Two weeks ago, Pastor Tim discussed the theological term, justification, which is God’s declaration that we are in right standing with Him. In this week’s passage, Paul gives us another rich theological word to describe our salvation, adoption. When we have faith in Jesus, we are adopted as sons and daughters of God, and because we are now legal children of God, we also become God’s legal heirs. That is an amazing concept! Jesus is the primary heir, and we are joint heirs with Him. This means that in Jesus, we have a share in Jesus’s blessings, privileges, and honor. Adoption is a rich image for our salvation because it entails both a new legal status (we become God’s heirs) and a new relationship (we can call God “Abba, Father”).

Being children of God gives us hope even when we go through times of suffering, because we know that far better things still lie ahead for us (8:18). What’s more, this hope is not just for individual believers, but all of creation will share in God’s final restoration of all things (8:21).

Understanding God’s Word

What does it mean to be “heirs of God”? If Jesus is the heir of all things (Hebrews 1:2), and if we are co-heirs with Christ (Romans 8:17; Galatians 4:7), then what does that mean for the type of inheritance that God has in store for us?

The Holy Spirit testifies that we are God’s children (8:16) in two important ways: 1) through inward, subjective reassurance in our hearts, and 2) through outward, objective evidence of a transformed life that bears fruit. How have you experienced the Spirit working in these two ways in your own life and in the lives of those around you?

Applying God’s Word

How do we rely on the Spirit to help us put to death the misdeeds of the body (8:13)? In what ways is it a one-time event? In what ways is it an ongoing process? How should the prospect of a full inheritance and future glory help you endure times of trial and suffering here and now (8:18)?

Witnessing God’s Word

J. I. Packer once said, “If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God’s child, and having God as his Father.” What does being a child of God mean to you? How has it changed your life, and how can you share that special story with others?