

Dr. Craig Keener, Romans, Session 9

Romans 8:5-26

Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Study Guide, 4) Briefing Document, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Keener, Romans, Session 9, Romans 8:5-26, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This lecture by Dr. Craig Keener **explains** Romans 8:5-26, focusing on **the interplay between the "mind of the flesh" and the "mind of the Spirit."** Keener **argues** that this isn't an internal struggle but a distinction between those "in the flesh" and those "in the Spirit," emphasizing the Spirit's role in shaping believers' thinking and understanding of God's will. He **supports** his interpretation by **referencing** other Pauline epistles and Jewish thought, **illustrating** his points with personal anecdotes and discussions of relevant historical and cultural contexts. The lecture also **explores** the concepts of spiritual gifts, the nature of suffering, and the hope of future glory.

2. 23 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Keener, Romans, Session 9 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (New Testament → Pauline Epistles → Romans).



Keener_Romans_Session09.mp3

3. Briefing Document

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from Dr. Craig Keener's Lecture 9 on Romans 8:5-26:

Briefing Document: Dr. Craig Keener's Lecture 9 on Romans 8:5-26

Overview:

This lecture by Dr. Craig Keener focuses on Romans 8:5-26, exploring the contrast between life "in the flesh" and life "in the Spirit." Keener emphasizes that this passage is not primarily about the internal struggle of believers, but about the fundamental difference between those who are governed by their own human nature and those who are empowered by the Holy Spirit. The lecture delves into the role of the Holy Spirit in shaping our minds, revealing God's heart, leading believers, granting adoption, and interceding for us. Keener stresses the importance of both the cognitive and affective dimensions of our faith and warns against simplistic or dualistic interpretations.

Main Themes & Key Ideas:

1. Life in the Flesh vs. Life in the Spirit:

- Keener clarifies that Romans 7 describes life under the law *without* the Spirit, not the normal Christian experience. "Paul technically is addressing life under the law not for believers, but what life under the law is like without faith, without the Spirit. And so, it's not meant to be the believer's life."
- The contrast in Romans 8 is between "those who are in the flesh versus those who are in the Spirit." It's not just an internal struggle, but a difference in fundamental orientation.
- "Flesh" refers to being dependent on oneself, while "Spirit" signifies being empowered by God's Spirit. Keener notes, "We are but flesh...people who are dependent on their own righteousness at best, those who are subject to their own passions. And spirit people, those who depend on God's righteousness, those in whom the mind of Christ can give us a higher way of thinking."
- These two categories are presented as "ideal types" - not completely either/or - but represent the primary orientation of one's life. "The contrast, flesh people, that's what we were in Adam. ... And spirit people, what we are in Christ."

1. The Mind of the Spirit:

- The "mind" (Greek: *phronēma*) of the Spirit is not merely individual thought, but "may involve the activity of God's own Spirit and God's own way of thinking influencing our way of thinking."
- The Spirit works not only on our spirit but also on our mind, shaping our worldview and thinking, "the spirit we see here also helps to shape our worldview and our thinking."
- Keener rejects a dichotomy between revelation in the spirit and the use of the mind, citing 1 Corinthians 14: "Both probably the affective dimension of us and the cognitive dimension of us." He shares his personal experience where he learned the importance of understanding Scripture, and that "God wanted me to understand something in Scripture."

1. The Spirit as Revealer and Intercessor:

- The Spirit reveals God's heart and "the depths of God," drawing a connection to wisdom literature. "In 1 Corinthians 2:10, Paul says that believers know about our future glory because the Holy Spirit searches the depths of God."
- The Spirit intercedes for us with "inarticulate groanings" (Romans 8:26), which Keener interprets not as tongues, but as a deeper form of prayer, connecting it to the sighing/groaning of the Israelites in bondage in Exodus. "But I think because it says it's inarticulate, this is something else."
- He emphasizes that the Spirit makes us aware of God's love (Romans 5:5) and causes us to cry out, "Abba, Father" (Romans 8:15).

1. Worldview & Epistemology:

- Keener emphasizes that everyone starts with a worldview or a framework for evaluating things, "Everybody starts with a worldview. Everybody starts with a framework, a way of looking at things."
- He discusses different ways of knowing (epistemology): science (observation and experiment) versus disciplines reliant on eyewitness testimony (history, law, journalism). He emphasizes that different disciplines require different approaches to epistemology.
- He argues that if Christians have accepted Christ and acknowledged God's wisdom, then they should evaluate spiritual things using a spiritual framework

rather than a worldly one. "If we've accepted Christ if we've already made our decision for Christ, if we've already acknowledged that God's way is wiser, then we should start with that premise and that worldview, that framework, rather than a contrary framework."

1. **Led by the Spirit:**

- Being "led by the Spirit" is linked to moral guidance and not merely a general sense of direction. "The Spirit leads us. The Spirit checks us from doing something morally wrong. The Spirit can encourage us, working within us, to do something right."
- He also mentions that the Spirit can also guide us in specific ways for ministry (examples from Acts).
- He illustrates this through a personal anecdote where the Spirit led him to encounter specific people he needed to minister to, highlighting the personal and specific ways the Spirit can guide believers.

1. **Adoption and Intimacy with God:**

- We have received the "spirit of adoption" (Romans 8:15) and are therefore children of God, not slaves. "We've received instead the spirit of adoption... Now we have a different kind of relationship with God, not slaves, but children."
- This adoption allows for an intimate relationship with God, characterized by crying out "Abba, Father," a phrase used by Jesus in prayer. "So, Jesus becomes the model for our intimate relationship with God. We have the spirit of sonship because we're in the Son, we're in Jesus."
- Keener emphasizes that our relationship with God can be a model for experiencing what a loving father relationship should look like. "I know of people who didn't have that kind of relationship with their earthly father, but through their relationship with their Heavenly Father, they found out what fatherhood should be like."

1. **The Spirit's Witness and Future Inheritance:**

- The Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are children of God (Romans 8:16). "The Spirit testifies together with our spirit, so that it's not just the Spirit testifies to our spirit, but the Spirit bears witness together with our spirit that we are God's children."

- We are co-heirs with Christ, inheriting the world to come. "We're children of God, and if we're children, we're also heirs."
- The Spirit is a "down payment" (Greek: *arrabon*) of our future inheritance (2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 1:13-14).

1. **Suffering and Glory:**

- The present sufferings are not comparable to the glory that awaits us (Romans 8:18), he parallels this to 2 Corinthians 4.
- Our sufferings are like "birth pangs" of a new creation and are part of the process of bringing about the new world. "He speaks of our present sufferings then in verse 22 as the birth pangs of a new world."
- These sufferings work for our good by conforming us to the image of Christ (Romans 8:28-29).

1. **Groaning and Transformation**

- Keener emphasizes three kinds of groaning: The groaning of creation, the groaning of believers awaiting bodily transformation, and the groaning of the Spirit who intercedes for us. "Creation groans with birth pangs...we also groan, awaiting the transformation of our body. And the Spirit intercedes for us with groanings."
- He notes that the language of groaning fits in with the idea of the New Exodus and the eagerness for Christ's return.

Key Quotes:

- "Paul technically is addressing life under the law not for believers, but what life under the law is like without faith, without the Spirit. And so, it's not meant to be the believer's life."
- "The spirit we see here also helps to shape our worldview and our thinking."
- "Everybody starts with a worldview. Everybody starts with a framework, a way of looking at things."
- "We are but flesh...people who are dependent on their own righteousness at best, those who are subject to their own passions. And spirit people, those who depend on God's righteousness, those in whom the mind of Christ can give us a higher way of thinking."

- "So, Jesus becomes the model for our intimate relationship with God. We have the spirit of sonship because we're in the Son, we're in Jesus."
- "The Spirit testifies together with our spirit, so that it's not just the Spirit testifies to our spirit, but the Spirit bears witness together with our spirit that we are God's children."
- "He speaks of our present sufferings then in verse 22 as the birth pangs of a new world."

Implications:

Keener's lecture offers a rich and nuanced understanding of Romans 8:5-26, emphasizing that:

- Christian life is not defined by a constant struggle with sin, but a dependence on the Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit has a comprehensive influence on both the cognitive and affective dimensions of our faith.
- We need to adopt a spiritual framework for interpreting spiritual realities.
- We have a new identity as God's adopted children, a privilege that gives us both intimacy and security.
- Suffering is part of the Christian experience and it serves a purpose toward conforming us into the image of Christ.
- The Spirit is intimately involved in prayer, even when we lack the words.

This lecture encourages believers to embrace the transformative power of the Spirit and to live out their new identities as children of God.

4. Romans Study Guide: Session 9, Romans 8:5-26

Romans 8:5-26 Study Guide

Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. According to Keener, what is the primary difference between those who live "in the flesh" and those who live "in the Spirit?"
2. How does the Holy Spirit influence believers' minds, according to Keener, and how did he learn this personally?
3. How does Paul describe the concept of "eternal wisdom" in 1 Corinthians 2:6-10, and how does this relate to believers?
4. What does Keener say about how the world views miracles, and what framework does he suggest Christians should adopt?
5. Explain the contrast between the "psychikos" person and the "spiritual" person as Keener interprets it.
6. How does Keener describe the use of "ideal types" and provide an example used in Romans 8?
7. What does it mean that the mind of the Spirit is peace, and how does this tie into the concept of not worrying from Philippians?
8. What does it mean to be "led by the Spirit," according to Keener, and how does he illustrate this concept?
9. What is the significance of the Aramaic word "Abba" in Romans 8:15 and how did it originate?
10. How does the Holy Spirit testify, and what does this testimony affirm about believers' identity?

Quiz Answer Key

1. Those "in the flesh" are living independently of God, relying on their own power and desires, while those "in the Spirit" are living in submission to God, empowered and guided by the Holy Spirit. It's not about a fluctuating state but two fundamental ways of living.

2. The Holy Spirit influences believers' minds by revealing God's own thoughts and perspectives, shaping their worldview and way of thinking, and not solely operating on the spirit. Keener initially believed he only needed revelation in his spirit but realized through a divine intervention that he also needed to use his understanding.
3. Paul describes eternal wisdom as wisdom from God's eternal perspective which is hidden from the world's rulers and is revealed by the Spirit. It is antithetical to worldly wisdom and is accessed by believers, giving them a foretaste of the future world.
4. The world often evaluates miracles based on cultural norms or preconceived naturalistic explanations. Keener suggests that Christians should start with the framework of God's wisdom being superior and the understanding that God's ways are wiser.
5. The "psychikos" person is someone who is living only in their own power, on their own, apart from God's Spirit, also known as the fleshly life, while the "spiritual" person is one who has God's spirit within them, submitting to God and His guidance. It's not about a person made of soul or spirit but a way of living.
6. Ideal types are rhetorical forms that present two contrasting categories of people to illustrate a point, and one such ideal type in Romans 8 presents the two categories of fleshly people and spiritual people in an effort to demonstrate the contrasts between each. It acknowledges that individuals may not perfectly fit either category, but are typically more in one category than the other.
7. The mind of the Spirit being at peace means that when we trust in God, we are free from worry and anxiety because we can rely on Him, both in our personal lives and relationships with others. This ties into Philippians by stating that we must pray about our concerns, and then God's peace will guard our minds.
8. To be "led by the Spirit" means that the Holy Spirit guides believers in moral decision making, checks them from wrongdoing, and encourages them to do good. Keener illustrates this by sharing how the Spirit led him to an old friend and an alcoholic at separate times.
9. "Abba" is an Aramaic word, meaning "father," signifying a relationship of intimacy and respect, similar to "papa." It originates from Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane in Mark 14:36, which was adopted by the early church to indicate

the intimate relationship that the Spirit makes possible between God and believers.

10. The Holy Spirit testifies by speaking to believers, through scripture, and by reminding them they are God's children, which echoes the spirit of prophecy from Old Testament traditions. This testimony affirms that they are adopted children of God and co-heirs with Christ.

Essay Questions

1. Explore the tension between the cognitive and affective dimensions of faith as presented in Keener's lecture, and discuss how these two aspects work together in the life of a believer.
2. Analyze how Keener interprets Paul's use of "ideal types" in Romans 8 and discuss the implications of this rhetorical technique for understanding the human condition in relation to God.
3. Discuss the various ways Keener describes how the Holy Spirit interacts with believers, using examples from both his own experiences and biblical references to illustrate each point.
4. Examine how Keener uses Old Testament themes and concepts (such as Exodus, adoption, and inheritance) to illuminate Paul's teachings in Romans 8:5-26.
5. Compare and contrast the different views of "groaning" discussed in Romans 8, and how each form of groaning relates to the Christian's experience of living between the first and second comings of Christ.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Mind of the Flesh:** A way of thinking and living that is controlled by one's own desires, passions, and the ways of the world, operating independently of God.
- **Mind of the Spirit:** A way of thinking and living that is influenced and empowered by the Holy Spirit, reflecting God's thoughts, values, and wisdom.
- **Phonema:** A Greek word often translated as "mind," but can also refer to disposition, frame of mind, or way of thinking.
- **Psychikos:** A Greek term meaning "natural" or "soulish," referring to a person who lives only by their natural or human capacity, apart from the Spirit of God.

- **Spiritual:** A state of being guided by and submitting to the Holy Spirit, indicating a life aligned with God's will.
- **Eternal Wisdom:** The wisdom of God, which is concealed from the world's understanding and is revealed to believers through the Spirit, often contrasted with worldly wisdom.
- **Epistemology:** The branch of philosophy that deals with the nature, sources, and limits of knowledge.
- **Ideal Types:** A rhetorical technique involving the presentation of two contrasting categories to illustrate a point, understanding that real individuals may not perfectly fit either category.
- **Abba:** An Aramaic word meaning "father," used by Jesus and adopted by the early church to signify an intimate and respectful relationship with God.
- **Testimony of the Spirit:** The Holy Spirit's communication to believers, affirming their identity as children of God and assuring them of their inheritance.
- **Heirs (co-heirs with Christ):** A legal term indicating that believers are joint inheritors of all of God's promises and the blessings to come, sharing in Christ's inheritance.
- **Down Payment (ar-habon):** A term used to describe the Holy Spirit as a first installment or pledge of our future inheritance with God.
- **Shekinah:** A Jewish term referring to the presence of God, often associated with his glory in the Old Testament.
- **Birth Pangs:** Metaphorical term referring to the sufferings and struggles of the present time as a period before the new world is brought to fulfillment.
- **Groaning:** A term describing the experience of intense longing and pain, used in relation to the suffering of creation, of believers, and even of the Spirit itself, in anticipation of future redemption.
- **Inarticulate Groanings:** A form of prayer or intercession by the Spirit that is beyond human comprehension or expression, representing the Spirit's deep involvement in the believer's life.

5. FAQs on Keener, Romans, Session 9, Romans 8:5-26, Biblelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ on Romans 8:5-26

- **What is the key difference between "mind of the flesh" and "mind of the Spirit," and how does this relate to the believer's life?**
- The distinction is not about a struggle within a believer, but between two types of people: those *in* the flesh (dependent on their own strength and understanding) versus those *in* the Spirit (influenced and empowered by God's Spirit). The "mind of the Spirit" is not just our individual thinking, but our disposition, frame of mind, and way of thinking being shaped by God's own Spirit. When believers experience the struggle described in Romans 7, it is a result of relying on their own efforts rather than accepting what God has done through Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit.
- **How does the Holy Spirit influence our thinking and understanding, and what is the role of the mind in spiritual life?**
- The Holy Spirit works not only on our spirit but also on our minds, revealing God's heart and wisdom. This includes shaping our worldview and thinking according to God's perspective. The Spirit helps us to understand spiritual truths, not to bypass understanding. It is important to embrace both the affective and cognitive dimensions of our being, as the Spirit impacts both our spirit and mind. The Holy Spirit's influence allows us to be more attuned with God's heart and perspective.
- **What does it mean to have a "foretaste" of the coming world, and how does the Spirit contribute to this experience?**
- The "foretaste" of the coming world refers to the experience of glimpsing and participating in the future glory that God has promised. This is enabled by the Holy Spirit, who acts as a down payment of our eternal future. This foretaste can manifest as intense worship or a deep experience of God's love, giving us a sense of the joy and peace to come. While we don't have the full picture yet, the Spirit provides us with an assurance of the future inheritance.

- **What does it mean that the Spirit "testifies with our spirit" that we are children of God, and how does this relate to assurance?**
- The Spirit "testifies with our spirit" means that the Holy Spirit bears witness along with our own inner spirit confirming our identity as children of God. This is not just an intellectual concept but a deep inner knowing and experience. The Spirit assures us of our sonship, reminding us of God's love and promise, and granting us intimacy with God. It is a knowing of our belonging to God that transcends doubts.
- **How does the concept of "adoption" by God transform our relationship with Him, and how does this relate to fear?**
- Adoption by God means that we are no longer slaves but have been brought into a new relationship with God, becoming His children. This transforms our relationship from one of fear and bondage (to sin) to one of intimacy and trust. The Spirit of adoption allows us to cry out "Abba, Father," expressing a familial intimacy and dependence on God as a loving and trustworthy parent. This intimacy and trust replaces the fear that comes with bondage to sin.
- **What is the significance of the Aramaic term "Abba," and how does it impact our understanding of prayer?**
- The use of "Abba," an Aramaic term meaning "Father," highlights the intimacy and familiarity of our relationship with God. Jesus' use of "Abba" in prayer serves as a model for our own prayer life, emphasizing not just respect but also deep affection. It's like calling God "Papa," conveying a very close and loving relationship with Him. This intimate term, which is combined with the Greek "Father" indicates a shared early church tradition.
- **What is the connection between suffering in the present and the future glory, and how does this shape a Christian's perspective on trials?**
- Suffering in the present is seen as part of the Christian life, and it is not to be compared with the future glory that awaits us. Just as Christ suffered, so too do we, but our suffering is connected to and will be followed by glorification with Him. This gives us a perspective that our present trials are a temporary phase and should be viewed as "birth pangs" of the new world, contributing to our transformation and the spreading of the gospel. Ultimately, suffering works for the good of those who love God as they are conformed to the image of Christ.

- **What does the text mean when it speaks of the Spirit's "groanings" and how does this relate to our own experience of groaning?**
- The Spirit's groanings refer to the Spirit's intercession for us with "inarticulate groanings." It also connects to the groaning of the creation and of believers themselves, awaiting the transformation of our bodies and the redemption of all things. This is a shared anticipation for the fulfillment of God's promises and the new world that is coming. The Spirit helps us in prayer beyond our own ability, expressing the longing for redemption and our union with God. These groanings may not necessarily refer to speaking in tongues but to a deeper level of intercession that reflects the longing of both the Spirit and the believer for the redemption of creation and our transformation.