***Romans 8:26-27 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.***

Two weeks ago, we talked about eagerly awaiting our redemption and looking forward to our adoption, with perseverance, even as we and creation groan for restoration and renewal. We desperately desire to go home. But, our living hope is Jesus. In John 14:18, He promises not to leave us as orphans - *I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.* We are adopted.

This morning, we learn that Christ is not only preparing a place for us in heaven, but that He helps us in the life we live today. Verse 26 starts - *Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses.* The Spirit is promised by Jesus in John 14:16-17 *And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever -****17****the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.* Remember, in John 3:6, Jesus said - *That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.* Romans 8:16 assures us that *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God*. Our flesh cannot receive that which is of God, unless the Spirit first enters in by Christ and bears witness of our adoption. This same Spirit helps in our weakness – this has the idea of the Helper lifting one side of a heavy load, carrying the burden. The Spirit provides continuous help in our weakness. This must give us great hope! The Spirit Himself affirms that we are adopted children of the Most High God.

Verse 26 continues - *For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought.* Our prayers are often shallow, never reaching depth and richness with God. At times, we don’t know what to pray. Other times, we pray in keeping, not with God’s desires, but our own. The Spirit teaches us to pray as we ought – Faithful, fervent prayers. Persevering prayers. Humble and sincere prayers, desiring the things of the Spirit and not of the flesh.

Verse 26 finishes - *but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.* The Spirit utters groanings on our behalf, in keeping with the prayer our spirit desires, rather than our flesh. The Holy Spirit makes intercession, just as Romans 8:34 affirms that Jesus does in heaven - *It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.* The Holy Spirit dwells within and intercedes, guiding us to make suitable and God-pleasing prayers. He knows the weak vessels we are, just as Jesus does, sitting at God’s right hand, interceding on our behalf, knowing our weaknesses as well. This must bring us great comfort that, even when we don’t know what to pray, there are Two that are perfect and pray perfectly on our behalf, bringing God-pleasing petitions upon our hearts and before the throne of God. Of course, we must crucify the desires of the flesh, be saved in hope, be born of the Spirit, and have the Spirit living within. If this has not happened, you are not His, as verse 9 taught us earlier.

Verse 27 starts - *Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is****.*** He who searches the heart… Jeremiah 17:10 says - *I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.* 1 Sam 16:7 says *But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. Forthe Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.* God knows what the mind of the Spirit is… Recall with me that we spoke about desires of the flesh and desires of the Spirit, and one or the other rules our mind. Our mind is either carnal, an enemy of God, or Spiritually minded, which is life and peace. The One who searches the heart, knows the desires of the Spirit. These desires are in perfect harmony – God, Son, Holy Spirit – all in harmony to excite our affections for the Kingdom and align our prayers with His highest purposes. That must excite us!

Verse 27 finishes *because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.* The Spirit makes God-pleasing desires known through intercession. For everyone? No. For the saints… saints are those holy and set apart, by faith in Jesus Christ. Ephesians 1:1 *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus*. The Spirit makes intercession for those faithful in Christ, and this intercession is in perfect alignment with the will of God. Father, Son, Holy Spirit helping us not just make it to heaven, but pursue the Kingdom of God while still here on earth. This is exciting as we live for the Kingdom!

This week, let’s remember that God sees the heart. He must see Christ when He looks. He is not mocked and He is not fooled. That which is of the flesh is flesh, but we are of Spirit in Jesus. How are the desires of our hearts and the service of our hands aligning with the will of our Father? The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. The Spirit is ready to intercede. Jesus is ready to intercede. Won’t we align this morning with the desires of the Spirit that we might live life and peace in Jesus? Come and receive Him today.