

Romans 8 May 14, 2012

Romans 8:1

If you seen the word "therefore" you had better find out what is there for. In this verse Romans 8:1 "therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" sums up the entire first seven chapters of Romans. Another way of translating this would be; "because of what Christ has done for us, we are no longer condemned". More specifically if we read Romans 7:24-25 "Wretched man that I am. Who will set me free from the body of this death?" And he answers his own question with this statement. "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord". However, you could sum up the entire first 7 chapters of Romans with Romans 3:23-24. "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by grace, through the redemption"-He bought us from the slave market of sin, "which is in Jesus Christ". And Romans 6:23 "The wages of sin is death, or the wages sin pays is death but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord".

How could there be condemnation for those who are justified? Remembering that justification is the act of God where He declares an ungodly man to be perfect based on that man or woman's profession of faith in the finished work of Christ, Romans 4:5. The justifying act of God is based on the redemption that was provided by Christ when He was crucified "wounded for our transgressions bruised for our iniquities", when He bore the punishment for our peace and healed us by His stripes". Isaiah 53:3. How can there be condemnation for one who is declared righteous by God?

Reviewing what we have seen before in the first seven chapters; Paul has explained the doctrine of justification, and he has shown us the necessity of sanctification. We learned about the doctrine of justification by grace through faith, which is also called the *new covenant*; John tells us in John 1:17 the law or the *old covenant* was given by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Hebrews 9:15, 24 teaches us that Christ is the mediator of the new covenant, a covenant of grace, which was first promised by God in Jeremiah 31:31. "Behold, days are coming declares the Lord when I will make a *new covenant* with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah 32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them" declares the Lord. God says this covenant is like a marriage and we were spiritual adulterers and broke the covenant. 33 but this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days", declares the Lord, "I will put my law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God and they will be my people". So this *new covenant* in Jesus blood is written on the heart of believers by the finger of God. Deuteronomy tells us that the finger of God wrote the LAW given to Moses on the stone tablets, but now God writes His law on our hearts if we want it there. The new covenant was initiated by the death of Christ and it becomes effective for each believer as he enters into the death of Christ by faith, and is raised to newness of life. The *new covenant* is of the spirit the spirit who gives life.

Do you ever feel condemned? that is Satan's trick as he uses our past guilt and our current failure to make us question what Christ has done for us. The apostle Paul is not saying there is nothing in us that deserves accusation he is simply saying we will not be condemned because we are in Christ Jesus. We cannot let our feelings rule in this situation, feelings do not tell the truth. The truth is; even though we have failed to meet even our own standard we are not condemned.

Romans 7:24 and 25 says Jesus Christ has rescued us. Because we belong to Him we are in Him we cannot be condemned. What does it mean to belong to Jesus Christ? It means we have put our faith in his finished work. We are not trying to do good works to save ourselves. We are trusting that by grace we have been saved because of our faith in Jesus Christ and we have been justified. Justified means God has declared us not guilty because Jesus Christ has paid the penalty for our sin. We know that Christ payment was enough and it was accepted because He rose from the dead victorious over sin and death. In John 5:24 Jesus said we would never be condemned for our sin; we have already passed from death into life when we have trusted Jesus Christ and his payment for our sin debt.

The awareness of this present glorious liberty and freedom is one of the greatest spiritual forces in the life of a believer. How can we deal with the realization that the Lord Jesus took our hell and there is now no condemnation because we are in Christ Jesus?

Romans 8:2

How can we say there is now no condemnation? Paul gives the answer; the Holy Spirit or the "spirit of life in Christ Jesus", who was present at the creation of the world giving life, now by the new birth gives life to our dead spirit. He sets us free once and for all from the power of sin and death.

What is the law of sin and death? It is that which draws us like a magnet to sin, (being our insistence on doing it our way) resulting in spiritual death, separation from God for eternity. This is what the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has freed us from. We were slaves to the law of sin and death; God has set us free by the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

If you are in Christ Jesus, you have been set free from the law of sin and death.

Romans 8:3

Sin was such a disturbance in the creation that God Himself, in Jesus Christ had to deal with it. God executed the punishment for sin in human nature so that the requirements of the Law could be met. Being united with Christ in His death means we do not live according to our old nature but we live according to the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Christ was in the likeness of sinful flesh but he was not sinful. He became flesh; He was circumcised and baptized with John's baptism proving He was in the likeness of sinful flesh. Second Corinthians 5:21 says "Christ was made sin for us". Because Jesus was perfect the pure Lamb of God He had no sin of His own, therefore He could serve as our sacrifice for sin. So there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ and the sin that guaranteed our condemnation is itself condemned by Christ's sacrifice.

Romans 8:4

Even though the law was divinely given and was holy, just and good it cannot make us holy because of our sinful nature, which is what it means to say that it was weak through the flesh. The weakness and sinfulness of our flesh makes it impossible for us to obey any divine command without the intervention of divine grace. Again, the weakness of the flesh has made it impossible that man can ever do anything effectively himself to please God. People have thought education, psychology; environment can produce the changes needed to make mankind good. None of those ever has done so. The weakness of the flesh demands the intervention of God and nothing less than the intervention of God can deliver us from evil. God has solved this problem by His son Christ Jesus. Here Paul makes a distinction between two kinds of obedience to the law. There is an obedience that

stays merely at the flesh level, such as keeping rules like being circumcised or some keep rules about diet or clothing. The other kind of obedience depends on God's Holy Spirit and that is the only one that fulfills the law.

Here let us touch on the doctrine of the Virgin birth. This verse says "God sent His Son into the world in the likeness of sinful flesh". No other person could be described as having been sent into the world. John 1:4 says, "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us". Jesus was in the flesh after His resurrection as well. After His resurrection Jesus said to Thomas; "touch Me and see; a spirit doesn't have flesh and bones as I have". Luke 24:39. If Jesus had been Joseph's son, he would have had a sinful nature. The forces of sin and death which exist in our bodies did not affect Jesus, He was crucified and died but remember He dismissed His spirit; "He did not see corruption" the bible says. He said He would lay down His life and take it up again. How could this be? The bible says that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit in Mary, He did not have a human father. You can see how the Virgin birth of Jesus vital to the finished word and is linked to His death and resurrection. These verses in Romans explain this; He did not have a body of sinful flesh; no He was sent by God the Father "in the likeness of sinful flesh". The key doctrine of the Virgin Birth of Christ is always under attack, it is important and a basic tenant of true belief.

One of the results of Jesus death was the condemnation of sin in the flesh. The death of Jesus condemned sin in the flesh, and provided the way for the righteousness the law demanded to be fulfilled in us. We will never achieve sinless perfection while we live on earth but God has removed the power or authority of the law of sin and death from our spirit even though that law still has effect on our flesh. So the righteousness the law demands can now be fulfilled in a believer when he surrenders his life to Christ and is born again.

We cannot be sinless here on earth for several reasons; because of our flesh, which battles our new nature, because of the temptation, which Satan constantly presents, and because of the spirit of lawlessness, but we are free from the slavery to sin and we can say no. Also we have this wonderful promise in Philippians 1:6 "He, Who has begun a good work in us, will keep on perfecting it until the day of Jesus Christ". He saved us, He is determined we will be sanctified.

What does Paul mean when He refers to our "walk"? The word walk when used in the biblical sense expresses the idea of your daily life, your behavior. The Greek word is "peripateo" "to live, to regulated one's life, to conduct one's self". Listen to what Jesus said about this subject; John 12:35 "for a little while longer the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes". Here Jesus is referring to Himself as the Light and He is instructing them saying; it is our business to walk, to press forward towards heaven, and to get nearer to it. If you are careless the time will pass for you, you know how quickly time passes, and you will come to the end of your life journey and it will end in darkness.

So to talk about your walk is to talk about your lifestyle, your conduct. And then what does it mean to walk after the Spirit (Holy Spirit)? How do you know whether you are walking after the spirit? Take some time to consider this; what do you think about most of the time? Are you concentrating on the things of the flesh? What does your checkbook and calendar reveal about you?

The things of the Spirit include the favor of God, the welfare of your soul, eternal things. The bible says in Proverbs 23:7 as a person thinks so he is". What do you spend your time thinking about?

Walking in the Spirit we will be mindful of God's Word and direction in our life. We will want His will to be done. There will be peace in our hearts. Perhaps you are thinking as one of my friends says; "now you have stopped teaching and started meddling". These are the truths of God's Word. A lifestyle of faith and trust in God and in His Word is the way to walk in the Spirit. It is the way of peace and joy.

You have no doubt noticed that walking also gives the idea of progress forward. The life of the believer is a process of sanctification, which is gradually growing more Christ like all the time. Perfection will be reached in heaven, not on this earth.

Romans 8:5

You can see right in this verse that God sees people in one of two categories; those who live according to the flesh and those who live according to the Spirit. Any other divisions of people are manmade and not accurate. So God recognizes only the difference between those who are born again that is they have divine life in them and those who do not.

If you are of the flesh then you will follow your sinful nature you will be dominated by it and you will think about sinful things, your flesh will govern your life. Notice what God says about those who are not born again; they live or walk after their flesh, 2 they mind or think about the things of the flesh 3) they are spiritually dead and 4) they cannot please God. This is a description of natural unsaved man.

Remember Jesus told us we cannot serve two masters; we can serve Jesus or serve ourselves or our flesh. If we will walk in the Spirit, then our daily choices must be follow Christ; we must seek the things that please the Holy Spirit. One way to help you stay walking the right path is to daily renew your mind with the Word of God.

Romans 8:6-8

No self-help measures, psychotherapy, education programs, environment or New Year's resolutions can enable us to please God. Each one of these things promised to give us peace and tranquility to enjoy but they never deliver on their promise. Someone has said education does not make people good, it often barely civilizes. You can look at your nightly news to see this. If you wish to live a life that pleases God you do not cater to your carnal instincts. You can have that peace that passes understanding as you seek God and obey Him. As you ask for His direction He will answer. Only the Holy Spirit can enable us to live a life that pleases God and brings us peace

Romans 8:9

The phrase Spirit of God or Spirit of Christ mean the same thing, it's talking about the Holy Spirit. And this verse states that if the Holy Spirit does not indwell you then you do not belong to Christ. On the other hand, if you have committed your life to Christ in faith in His finished work you have the Holy Spirit indwelling you that is what gives life to your spirit.

Romans 8:10

Beginning this verse with the word "if" makes it a little confusing, you could correctly say "because or since you have Christ in you then" These are called "if/then" clauses and can teach us something. I always mark my bible to show the conclusion of the if/then clause. So "if you have Christ in you, then your spirit is alive because of the righteousness He has imputed to you, even if your flesh is

dead. Or as DG Barnhouse said; "Because Christ is in you, in spite of the fact that your body is dead because of sin, your spirit is alive because of righteousness."

Plainly stated the Holy Spirit indwells those who believe in Christ. Even though our mortal bodies decay and die yet our spirit is alive in Christ. Not only is our spirit alive in Christ now but will be eternally.