

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 1ST - 2ND, 2021 // BOOK OF ROMANS

## NO CONDEMNATION (ROMANS 8:1-4)

Paul has made some very significant spiritual claims in chapter 6 & 7.

- If we're in Christ, we have died to sin (6:1-2), been raised to walk in newness of life (6:4), and we've died to the law (7:4).
- We've died to those things so that we can, "serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code" (7:6)

Because of all these things, there's an even greater spiritual truth - if we are in Christ, we no longer live under condemnation from God (vs. 1).

- Since God the Father does not condemn Jesus, He will not condemn those who are in Jesus.
- It's not that our standing before God got just a little bit better once we came to Jesus- it's that our standing before God was completely transformed and flipped on its ear!

## THE LAW CANNOT CLAIM YOU (VS. 2)

The law of "sin and death" shows that because we are sinners, we deserve our sentence-death.

- But the law of the "Spirit of life" has freed us from sin and death.
- We will still struggle with sin, but we have power over sin and over sin's control.
- We are freed from the penalty of sin (death) and have the promise of eternal life.

## THE LAW CANNOT CONDEMN YOU (VS. 3)

If you are in Christ, you receive the benefit from the fact that Jesus came "in the likeness of flesh" and was punished for your sins.

- Sin was "condemned in the flesh" of Jesus as He bore the condemnation we deserved.
- In legal terms, double jeopardy is the principle which states that a person cannot be tried twice for the same crime.

## THE LAW CANNOT CONTROL (VS. 4)

The "righteous requirement of the law" can't be fulfilled by anyone who walks according to the flesh.

- Because Jesus fulfilled the righteous requirement of the law, and we are in Christ, we fulfill the law in regard to obedience, because Jesus' righteousness stands for ours.
- The law is fulfilled in us in regard to punishment, because any punishment demanded by the law was poured out upon Jesus.

So now, those who walk "according to the Spirit". can walk in a new kind of obedience to God's will.

- We are no longer controlled by the sin that the law pointed out- instead, we are enabled and empowered by God's Spirit to walk in freedom.
- Freedom isn't simply the ability to do whatever you want- it's the power God provides to do what's right (2 Cor. 3:17).

## THE SPIRIT OF GOD (ROMANS 8:5-14)

Our mind is the battlefield upon which the flesh (the old remnants of our sinful nature) and the Spirit (who we are in Christ) wage war.

- When our minds are set on the things of the flesh, we're living in accordance to our old nature and bringing death to our lives (vs. 6).
- Our flesh is self-centered, loves being right/noticed/recognized, wants the path of least resistance and the greatest immediate pleasure.

When our minds are set on the things of the Spirit, we're living in accordance to our new nature in Christ and bringing life and peace to our lives (vs. 6).

- The Spirit produces in us love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, & self-control.
- When our minds are set on surrendering to the Spirit's work of producing those things in our lives, we please God.

When our minds are set simply on getting what we want when we want it in the quickest and easiest way possible - we are living hostile to God and can't please Him (vs. 7-8).

- When our minds are set just on being right, getting noticed, and being recognized, we're not living to bring glory to God, but only to ourselves.
- This way of living is "hostile" to God (vs. 7).

But we're not "in the flesh but in the Spirit" (vs. 9)- because the Holy Spirit is given to each believer when they're born again, every Christian has within themselves a power that's stronger than the flesh.

- The evidence of conversion is the presence of the Holy Spirit within us that bears witness to the fact that we are children of God (vs. 16).
- We need to clear up some bad theology...

"Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him" (vs. 9)- every true believer has the Holy Spirit.

- Categories that separate and divide Christians into "spirit-filled" and "non-spirit-filled" are simply unbiblical because if someone doesn't have the Spirit, they're not saved.
- However, there are some Christians that do not live in the constant fullness of the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:18 tells us to "be constantly filled with the Holy Spirit" and Jesus described "rivers of living water" flowing from the life of a believer (John 7:37-39).

- Because the Spirit lives in us, the old self ("the body") is dead, even while the Spirit lives and reigns (vs. 10).
- The same Spirit that rose Jesus from the dead dwells in us! (vs. 11)

We don't owe anything to our flesh anymore - we're not "debtors" to the flesh, so we have no obligation to oblige, pamper, or obey it (vs. 12).

- Some of us have gotten so used to saying "yes" to our flesh our relationship to it could almost be described in the terms of "debt".
- We think that the flesh offers life, pleasure, and fulfillment, but the exact opposite is true - if we live according to it, we will die (vs. 13).

But when we surrender to the Spirit's work in our lives and "put to death" the deeds of the body, we find life (vs. 13).

- If there are two selves that live inside of us (our flesh and our Spirit), the one we choose to feed will be the one who grows the strongest.
- The one we choose to starve will be the one who grows the weakest.
- The Christian life is either progression or regression.

Your identity as a son or a daughter that lovingly trusts your Father and chooses to joyfully obey Him is evidenced by your willingness to be led by the Spirit (vs. 14).

- Paul doesn't say, "As many as go to church". or "As many as have prayed the magic prayer". or "As many as got baptized".
- The test for sonship is whether or not a person is led by the Spirit of God.

## ABBA, FATHER (ROMANS 8:15-17)

Your willingness to be led by the Spirit is the evidence of your identity as a son or daughter of God (vs. 14).

- You didn't receive "the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear"- relating to God through the law causes us to see Him only through the slave/master relationship where we live in constant fear of His wrath, judgment, & condemnation.
- But you received the "Spirit of adoption" (vs. 15b).

Under Roman law, the life and standing of an adopted child changed completely.

- The adopted son lost all rights in his old family and gained all new rights in his new family.
- The old life of the adopted son was completely wiped out, all of his debts were canceled, and his old identity was completely forgotten.
- An adopted son had every right to the same inheritance as a natural born son!

Because we've received "the Spirit of adoption". we now relate to God not like a slave-master out of fear, but as someone to whom we cry, "Abba! Father!".

- "Abba" is the most intimate, personal, familial pet name that a young child can call their father in Jewish culture- it's like, "daddy" or "pappa".
- Because the Spirit has been given to us and we've been "adopted". our hearts are linked to the heart of the Father in permanent intimacy.

Those who are truly God's children, born again by the Spirit of God, know their status because the Holy Spirit testifies to our spirit that this is so (vs. 16).

- Some will have false assurance of salvation because of subjective experience, and some will have no assurance of salvation because of subjective experience.
- Nevertheless, the witness of the Spirit is in the heart of every true believer who has placed their faith in the truth of God's Word & Jesus' work.

## WHAT DOES THE "WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT" FEEL LIKE?

Because the Holy Spirit is personal (emotions, intellect, a will), He will relate to us as believers personally. ("How did that symphony capture your imagination & heart"?)

- The Holy Spirit comforts & guides (John 14).
- The Holy Spirit convinces us of the truth of Scripture, prompts us to holiness & good works, and empowers us with Spiritual gifts.

Because we're in Christ, we have the privilege of relating to the Father as Jesus does and we are "heirs" of the inheritance of eternal life (vs. 17).

- But that inheritance of glory also comes with an inheritance of suffering- we are not immune from trials or trouble.
- No matter how much our flesh may want the eternal life and glory without the suffering, we are co-heirs with Christ - so we must share in His suffering and part of that is "dying" to our flesh.