

Sermon Title: The Holy Spirit Assures Our Freedom From Condemnation, Part 1

Sermon Text: Romans 8:1-13

Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to understand the true source of their sanctification.

Sermon Proposition: There are four eternal principles that assures and secures the true believer.

- I. The reality of liberation in Jesus Christ is no condemnation. V.1a**
- II. The rationale of liberation in Jesus Christ is justification. V.1b-2**
- III. The resource of liberation in Jesus Christ is substitution. V.3**
- IV. The result of liberation in Jesus Christ is sanctification. V.4**

Introduction: The Spirit who was mentioned only once in Chapters 1-7 (1:4), is referred to nearly 20 times in Chapter 8. He frees us from sin and death (vv.2-3); enables us to fulfill the Law of God (v.4); changes our nature and grants us strength and secures our future glory and victory.

“It is impossible for a man to be a Christian without having Christ, and if he has Christ, he has at the same time all that is in Christ. What gives peace to the conscience is that by faith our sins are no more ours, but Christ’s upon whom God hath laid them all; and that, on the other hand, all Christ’s righteousness is ours, to whom God hath given it. Christ lays His hand upon us, and we are healed. He casts His mantle upon us, and we are clothed; for He is the glorious Savior, blessed forever. [reprint, McLean, VA.: McDonald, 1958, p. 312]” [John MacArthur Commentary, *Romans 1-8*, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 402.]

I. The reality of liberation in Jesus Christ is no condemnation. V.1a

There is no condemnation for the believer because they are no longer under the law (6:14), and they have been released from the law (7:6). They can now serve God in the “new way of the Spirit” (7:6). This is the result of truths taught in Chapters 1-7. “Condemnation” is used exclusively in judicial settings as the opposite of justification. It refers to a verdict of guilty and the penalty that verdict demands.

Every true Christian is “in Christ Jesus to be in Christ means to be united with Him (6:4). Those who are “in Christ Jesus” are removed from this status of condemnation and removed forever from it, as the emphatic “no” indicates. NO more will any condemnation of any kind be a threat to those who are “in Christ Jesus.” (8:34)

“Faith unites the soul with Christ as a spouse with her husband. Everything which Christ has becomes the property of the believing soul; everything which the soul has, becomes the property of Christ. Christ possesses all blessings and eternal life: they are thenceforward the property of the soul. The soul has all its iniquities and sins: they become thenceforward the property of Christ. It is then that a blessed exchange commences: Christ who is both God and man, Christ who has never sinned, and whose holiness is perfect, Christ the Almighty and Eternal, taking to Himself, by His nuptial ring of faith, all the sins of the believer, those sins are lost and abolished in Him; for no sins dwell before His infinite righteousness. Thus by faith the believer’s soul is delivered from sins and clothed with the eternal righteousness of her bridegroom Christ. [Cited in Haldane, *Exposition of Romans*, p. 313]” [John MacArthur Commentary, *Romans 1-8*, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 402-403.]

II. The rationale of liberation in Jesus Christ is justification. V.1b-2

This section introduces the rationale for why there is no condemnation for the believers, the Spirit who comes as a result of the Person and work of Jesus Christ, has replaced the law of sin and death (7:5, 13) with a new law of the Spirit. The Spirit applies to the life of the believer newness of life, based on what God has done, through faith in Jesus Christ.

The basis for no condemnation is the believer having been placed “in Christ.” A liberation has taken place through the Holy Spirit, and liberation as a result of justification makes this freedom possible.

The Mosaic law of God, although good, holy, and righteous (7:12), but because of the weakness of the flesh to overcome sin and death, it can only produce sin and death (7:5, 130 (8:3). This verse contrasts 3 elements:

- 1) Principle of law vs Spirit
- 2) Authority of law vs Spirit
- 3) Power of law vs Spirit

The real contrast in verse 2 is between the Spirit on the one hand and sin and death on the other. As sin and death are those powers that had authority in the old age (of Chap 6-7), so the Spirit and the eternal life supplied by the Spirit are those powers that rule with authority in the new age. (change in power structure)

III. The resource of liberation in Jesus Christ is substitution. V.3

A. The law's inability due to its weakness. V.3a

B. The law's inability through the flesh. V.3b

The powerlessness of the flesh to overcome sin, has already been discussed in Chapters 1-7. "Flesh" as in (7:5) is not the flesh of our bodies, but the fact they are conditioned to "worldly orientations." (**Gal 5:19-20**)

C. The person and work of Christ fulfills the law's requirement. V.3c

It is God the Father Himself who has done what the law could not do, and He has done it through the sending of "His own Son." This focuses on the substitutionary aspect of Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin.

John 5:17 But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."

Those who trust in Christ alone by faith, not only are saved from the penalty of sin but also are able for the first time to fulfill God's righteous standards. (**Phil 3:5-8; Col 1:19-22**)

D. The reason for this is on account of sin. V.3d

Paul might mean no more than that Christ's mission generally "had to do" with sin. God sent His Son "to be a sin offering." "To teach people that men can live a good life by following Jesus' example is patronizing foolishness." To try to follow Jesus' perfect example without having His own life and Spirit resident in them is even more impossible and frustrating than trying to fulfill all of the Mosaic law.

E. Jesus is the only source of liberation from condemnation, of the believer, to condemnation of sin and death. V.3d

Isaiah 53:4 Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. **5** But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He was* bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. **6** All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. **7** He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. **8** He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.

Philippians 2:7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men.

IV. The result of liberation in Jesus Christ is sanctification. V.4

The just requirements of the law are fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Paul's presentation of the work of Christ that has been called an "interchange" – Christ bears what we are, so that we might become what Christ is.

The just decrees of the law are fulfilled in us by our walking not according to flesh but according to the Spirit. The reference to Christian behavior in the final phrase shows that Paul does not separate the "fulfillment" of the law from the lifestyle of Christians. Christian behavior is the necessary mark of those in whom this fulfillment takes place.

Christians can now live a new way of life, and love is the hallmark characteristic. "Love . . . is the fulfillment of the law." **Romans 13:10** Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love *is* the fulfillment of the law." Believers can live freely in keeping with the Spirit. God through Jesus Christ provides in Christ full completion of the law's demands for the believer, but He also sends the Spirit into the hearts of believer's to empower a new obedience.

Paul makes clear that a true believer, whether young or old, mature or immature, well taught or poorly taught does not habitually, walk in away, as a bent of life, or a lifestyle according to the flesh. Just as clearly, the true believer does walk according to the Spirit. There are no exceptions. **Gal 5:22-23; Matt 5:20; 5:48**

"When preachers speak as if God's chief desire is for men to be happy, then multitudes with problems flock to Jesus. Those who have ill-health, marital troubles, financial frustration, and loneliness look to our Lord for the desires of their hearts. Each conceives of joy as being found in health, peace, prosperity or companionship. But in search of illusive happiness they are not savingly joined to Jesus Christ. Unless men will be holy, God is determined that they shall be forever miserable and damned. (Carlisle, Pa.: Banner of Truth, 1980, p. 67)" [John MacArthur Commentary, *Romans 1-8*, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 402-403.]