

Sharing in the Life of Christ

Paul's letter to the Romans can be divided into three major parts: a presentation of the gospel (chapters 1-8), the place of Israel in God's plan (chapters 9-11) and exhortations for Christian living (chapters 12-15). Chapter 8 comes near the end of Paul's explanation of the gospel. It is the climax, and the truths that Paul discusses are astounding.

Sunday 26 June. Romans 8 verses 1-4. No condemnation!

The chapter begins with an astonishing statement: "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death" (verses 1-2).

Because of what Christ has done, believers are not counted guilty and will not be punished on the day of judgment. We sin, but there is no condemnation. (If we didn't sin, the question of condemnation wouldn't even come up.) Paul knows that we sin, so he is saying, there is no eternal punishment for Christians even though they sin.

Hard to believe? Yes, because we know that sin deserves to be punished. Paul agrees, but the gospel announces that Christ has taken our sins, and the consequences, on himself. He has punished sin itself. He has experienced the consequences of sin, and escaped, so that we can also escape. On behalf of all humanity, Christ has experienced the results of our sins, so there is no further condemnation waiting for us. If we trust him, if our lives are in him, we do not need to be afraid. Sin has physical penalties in this life, but for those who are in Christ, it has no ultimate penalty for us.

Why? Because Jesus has set us free from the law of sin and death, set us free from the only law that could possibly condemn us. The law that says, "Those who sin shall die," no longer applies to us, because it has been taken care of — completely. We died with Christ, and it is no longer we who sin, but it's the sinful nature inside of us that does it (7:17). It will die, and we who are in Christ will live eternally.

Things to think about

- If there is no condemnation for believers (verse 1), should we ever have feelings of guilt? Why?

God does not want us to sin, but even if we sin, we will not be condemned because of what Jesus has done for us. The law could not give us eternal life, but God could, and he did it through the death of Christ. "For what the law was powerless to do [that is, to give life] because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3).

Jesus did not come to condemn sinners — he came to condemn sin. He came to take away its power to control us and kill us. He came to give us life, and to do it in such a way that "the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us" (verse 4). In his life and in his death, Jesus satisfied all the requirements of the law, both its commands and its penalties. It cannot demand anything more.

Excerpt taken from: (Sharing in the Life of Christ: A Study of Romans 8:1-17)

by Michael Morrison, (<https://www.gci.org/bible/rom8a>)

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Song: Every Promise

By Keith Getty & Stuart Townend © 2005 Thankyou Music (Adm. by Integrity Music)

From the breaking of the dawn
To the setting of the sun,
I will stand on every promise of Your word.
Words of power, strong to save,
That will never pass away,
I will stand on every promise of Your word.
For Your covenant is sure,
And on this I am secure,
I can stand on every promise of Your word.

When I stumble and I sin,
Condemnation pressing in,
I will stand on every promise of Your word.
You are faithful to forgive,
That in freedom I might live,
So I stand on every promise of Your word.
Guilt to innocence restored:
You remember sins no more!
So I'll stand on every promise of Your word.

When I'm faced with anguished choice,
I will listen for Your voice,
And I'll stand on every promise of Your word.
Through this dark and troubled land
You will guide me with your hand
As I stand on every promise of Your word.
And you've promised to complete
Every work begun in me,
So I'll stand on every promise of Your word.

Hope that lifts me from despair,
Love that casts out every fear,
As I stand on every promise of Your word.
Not forsaken, not alone,
For the Comforter has come,
And I stand on every promise of Your word.
Grace sufficient, grace for me,
Grace for all who will believe,
We will stand on every promise of Your word.

Prayer:

Lord thank you that there is no condemnation for me, and that I am set free from sin and death, by your Spirit.

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