"No Condemnation in Christ!"

Romans 8:1-17
5-11-2024 - HRM

INTRODUCTION: Verse 1

***You can rest assured that you are under no condemnation in Christ!**

I. The <u>REASON</u> You are Not Condemned (v. 2-4a)
(A Changed <u>Status</u> - via being "in Christ")

A. Reason #1: Christ set you free (v. 2)
(Liberation)

B. Reason #2: Christ took your place (v. 3)
(Substitution)

C. Reason #3: Christ gave you His righteousness (v. 4a)
(Justification)

II. The <u>EVIDENCE</u> That You are Not Condemned (v. 4b-17)
(A Changed <u>Life</u> - via being "in the Spirit")

Those under "no condemnation" will have the following evidences in their lives:

A. You will have the Spirit's <u>mindset</u> (v. 5-8)

B. You will have the Spirit's <u>presence</u> (v. 9-11)

C. You will have the Spirit's <u>victory over sin</u> (v. 12-13)

D. You will have the Spirit's <u>leading</u> (v. 14)

E. You will have the Spirit's <u>witness</u> (v. 15-17)

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Whereas chapter 7 described the futility of living victoriously in the flesh, chapter 8 unveils the victory of living by the power of the Holy Spirit, which is available to those "in Christ."

Whereas the personal pronoun "I" appeared over 30 times in chapter 7, reference is made to the "Spirit" about 20 times in chapter 8.

It has been said, "If the Holy Scripture were a ring, and the Epistle to the Romans a precious stone, chapter 8 would be the sparkling point of the jewel." (Spener, cited by Thomas, p. 200).

What a blessed chapter of God's Word this is!

Romans 8 begins with "no condemnation" and ends with "no separation" (Godet).

"Therefore" - because of Christ who alone can deliver the "wretched man" (7:24, 25), there is now no condemnation.

"Now" - in contrast with the sinner's past; prior to coming to Christ, we were under condemnation (Jn. 3:18 - "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.")

God is not merely saying that int he future we will not be condemned; but that at <u>present</u> ("now") we are not condemned.

"Condemnation" = to hold judgment against. No condemnation means the removal of all prospects of judgment. The sentence has been lifted.

"<u>No</u> condemnation" - an emphatic NO! There awaits <u>no kind</u> of condemnation whatsoever. No believer will be charged with <u>any</u> sin at the judgment. If only one sin were found in us, we would not be allowed in God's Heaven.

With God, either one is <u>totally</u> free from sin (cp. v. 2) or he is not free at all. (It's all or nothing).

After death, a believer's works will be evaluated (I Cor. 3:12-15), but not his sin.

The verse does not say "no mistakes" or "no failures" or even "no sins." Christians do sin (Rom. 7:15-25; I Jn. 1:8-10) and also suffer the consequences because of their sins, but they do not suffer condemnation! (SEE Wiersbe, p. 538).

"No Condemnation" - Jn. 5:24 - "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

Charles Wesley wrote:
"No condemnation now I dread,
I am my Lord's, and He is mine,
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness divine."

"To them" = NOTE: It does <u>not</u> say "to all" (not universalism, which teaches that all will be saved). God's promise only applies specifically <u>to them</u> which are in Christ Jesus.

Christ is God's only means of salvation, and our only means of safety, just as Noah's ark was God's only means of deliverance and safety. In the ark, they were safe; in Christ, we are safe!

In Adam, we were condemned. In Christ, there is no condemnation! (Weirsbe, p. 538).

"In Christ Jesus" - this phrase depicts the believer's union with Christ; our oneness with Christ that occurs at the moment of salvation (Rom. 6:3).

Being "in Christ" means eternal life (Ro. 6:23).
Being "in Christ" means a new life (II Cor. 5:17).
Being "in Christ" means spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3).
&Being "in Christ" means no condemnation (Ro. 8:1)!

***You can rest assured that you are under no condemnation in Christ!**

I. The REASON You are Not Condemned (v. 2-4a)

(A Changed Status - via being "in Christ")

A. Reason #1: Christ set you free (v. 2)

(Liberation)

"For" = introduces the reason why those in Christ are not condemned.

The Spirit of life - the Spirit that results in life

The law of sin and death - the law that results in sin and death.

"Spirit & life" - always go together, and "Law, sin, and death" always go together (I Cor. 15:56 - "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law."

Where the Spirit is, there cannot be death and where sin is, there cannot be life. Death cannot co-exist with the Spirit, and sin cannot co=exist with life.

Life is only "in Christ Jesus" (I Jn. 5:11, 12).

We were spiritual criminals, hand-cuffed, on death row and awaiting eternal execution.

Breaking God's Law resulted in sin, and sin always results in death (Rom. 6:23; Ja. 1:15).

The law demanded payment! But praise God, He freed us!

"Free from the law" = cp. Rom. 7:4 - The law has no claim on the believer. It cannot condemn you who are saved.

B. Reason #2: Christ took your place (v. 3)
(Substitution)

"What the law could not do" - what the Law was powerless to do. The Law was powerless to free us from condemnation.

"It (the Law) was weak" - lit. without strength

"The Law was weak (powerless) because it demanded what human nature could not provide.

"Likeness of sinful flesh" - the word "likeness" shows that Christ in His incarnation took upon Himself flesh, but not the sinful nature of man that is housed within every man's flesh.

"Likeness" - does not mean that Christ only appeared as a man; it does not mean He came as a phantom, as the Gnostics believed (I Jn. 4:1-3). What it means is that He took on a body, a body that looked no different than any other man's body. The only exception is that man's body houses sin inside; Christ's did not. He was sinless (II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15, 7:26; I Pet. 2:22).

"God sending" - the initiative for our salvation was with God!

It has never been man's initiative to find God; it has always been God's initiative to seek and to save man!

"For sin" - for (on behalf of) our sin

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins..."
(I Pet. 3:18)

"Christ died for our sins" (I Cor. 15:3).

"Condemned sin in the flesh" = the reason we are not condemned for our sin (v. 1) is because our sin was condemned in Christ.

God judged your sin in the flesh of His Son.

The Father "laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Is. 53:6); Christ bore "our sins in His own Body on the tree" (I Pet. 2:24); Christ was made a "curse for us" (Gal. 3:13).

God being a just God must condemn sin. He must judge it. It must be paid for. He cannot violate His Law, and "sweep sin under the carpet" and hide it as if it never took place.

In God's wondrous plan, however, He judged sin by putting it on His Son, and judging His Son!

The "Law of double jeopardy" states that a man cannot be tried twice for the same crime. Since Jesus Christ paid the penalty for your sins, and since you are "in Christ," God will not condemn you. (Wiersbe, p. 539).

ILLUS: Hymn "It is Well With My Soul" - third stanza:

"My sin, O the bliss of this glorious thought,
My sin, not in part, but the whole
Is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!"

C. Reason #3: Christ gave you His righteousness (v. 4a)
(Justification)

Because of Christ, it is as if those "in Him" have never broken God's law. Christ took the full load of man's sin and paid for it so "that" (Purpose) the righteous demand of the law would be fulfilled in us.

The law said, "here is the standard"; and in Christ, we meet the standard. We measure up because He measures up, and we are in Him!

II. The EVIDENCE That You are Not Condemned (v. 4b-17)

(A Changed Life - via being "in the Spirit")

Paul in verses 4b - 17 gives evidences of sonship, objective proofs revealing who are children of God and who are not. Evidences to show who has eternal life and who does not.

NOTE: He is not describing the means to life (which is "in Christ" v. 1) but merely the evidence of it.

V. 4b

"In verses 1 - 4, the apostle has shown that until and unless a man is justified, he cannot possibly be holy. So now, in verses 5 - 11, he will show that if a man is not holy, he cannot possibly have been justified" (Thomas, p. 208).

Those under "no condemnation" will have the following evidences in their lives:

A. You will have the Spirit's mindset (v. 5-8)

v. 5

God is describing the overall bent, trend or tendency of one's life. It is not that a believer will not ever think about or even from time to time desire the things of the flesh. The point is that this way of thinking will not be the overshadowing trend of your life.

There are only two groups of people in the world: Saved and Lost. Those "after the flesh" and those "after the Spirit."

"This does not mean that the unsaved person never does anything good, or that the unbeliever never does anything bad. It means that the bent of their lives is different. One lives for the flesh, the other lives for the Spirit." (Wiersbe, p. 539).

What characterizes your walk/your life?

As you examine your life, are you predominantly controlled by the Spirit of God or by your own natural, selfish, fleshly cravings?

"Mind" = to mind with a purpose; to have a mind set on something.

An unbeliever's mindset is merely physical, of this world, geared toward self-gratification.

"The things of the flesh" obviously include the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19ff).

The believer's mindset is focused on the things of God.

"The things of the Spirit" obviously include the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22, 23 - "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance").

The Christian who has the Spirit of God in him has new goals, new ambitions, new desires. He lives in a totally different sphere.

Many view Christians as "out of place," "from another world", etc. and rightly so, because our "citizenship is in Heaven."

When Evangelist D. L. Moody described his conversion, he said: "I was in a new world. The next morning the sun shone brighter and the birds sang sweeter . . . the old elms waved their branches for joy, and all nature was at peace" (cited from Wiersbe, p. 540).

V. 6

Paul is <u>not</u> describing two kinds of Christians, one carnal and one spiritual. He is contrasting the saved and the unsaved (Wiersbe, p. 539).

The fleshly-minded man proves by his mindset that he is abiding in death; but the spiritually-minded man evidences by His Godly desires that he is in the realm of life and peace with God (5:1).

V. 7

"Enmity against God" - hatred (hostility) toward God. The mindset of the unbeliever reveals its hostility in that it refuses to submit itself (place itself under) to God's law. Such a mindset is rebellious and insubordinate.

A spiritual mind (a believer) is willing and able to submit to God's law (cp. Ro. 7:25).

"Neither indeed can be" - the fleshly mind has no power or ability to submit itself to God's law. Such ability comes only through the power of the Spirit.

This does not necessarily mean a gross, vicious life, for the flesh as unrenewed may be educated, refined, cultured, and even externally religious (Thomas, p 209).

What it does mean is that the inner man is dead toward God and does not respond to the things of the Spirit.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh..." (Jn. 3:6)

V. 8

After describing the fleshly mind's relationship to God as being "enmity," God in verse 8 describes God's relationship to the fleshly mind. Such a one has absolutely no ability to please God.

That which pleases God is faith (spiritual trust and dependence - Heb. 11:6 - "Without faith it is impossible to please Him"). An unbeliever has not this faith.

The flesh prompts men to walk by sight; the Spirit prompts us to walk by faith - II Cor. 5:7.

The unsaved person lives to please self, not God.

B. You will have the Spirit's presence (v. 9-11)

V. 9

The word "dwell" occurs 3 times in verses 9 - 11, and refers to the Spirit as the tenant or resident in the believer's life.

The believer has the flesh (old nature) in him, but he is not "in the flesh."

V. 9b

"Spirit of God". . . "Spirit of Christ" - NOTE: How Christ's relation to the Spirit is synonymous with God's, identifying Christ as God! Another proof of His deity!

"He is none of His" = i.e. he does not belong to Christ.

It is the Holy Spirit that links the believer to Christ (Rom. 6:3ff). No one gets the Spirit without getting Christ, and no one gets Christ without getting the Spirit.

V. 10

"Because of sin" = because of <u>indwelling</u> sin.

"Because of righteousness" = because of <u>imputed</u> righteousness.

The body is dead because its resident is indwelling sin.

Our true life is not related to our physical body, but to the Spirit who resides in our physical body.

V. 11

If the "Spirit is life" (v. 10), and the Spirit is in you (v. 9), then the logical conclusion is that <u>you</u> will be guaranteed <u>life</u>!

"Mortal" = subject to death

Having Christ's spirit guarantees your resurrection.

Just as the Holy Spirit "quickened" Christ (I Pet. 3:18), He will quicken those "in Christ."

C. You will have the Spirit's victory over sin (v. 12-13)

V. 12

The reason we are not indebted to the flesh is because the flesh did nothing for us. The flesh did not provide our salvation; the flesh does nothing but lead to death (v. 10), and the flesh does not mortify sin (v. 13).

In contrast we are indebted to the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit has given us life (v. 10) and guarantees us future life (v. 11). Therefore, the implication is this: Every Christian is obligated (indebted) to live a life that does not grieve the Spirit, and obligated to allow the Spirit to dictate our desires, ambitions, goals in life, etc.

The flesh does not dictate our lives. It has no right to! it did nothing good for us, so why should we live to serve it?

V. 13

The contrast between "dying" and "living" must refer to eternal death and eternal life.

All Christians have died physically but will never die eternally.

"Ye shall die" = lit. You are about to die. ETernal death is right around the corner for those whose lives are characterized by the dominant control of the flesh.

"Mortify" - to put to death. The only way we put to death the deeds (practices) of the body is "through" (or by) the Spirit.

The Spirit stops us from indulging in sinful practices. The Spirit convicts, protects, and gives us the "will power" to deny the selfish impulses that are aroused by the flesh (the old nature).

"Mortify the deeds of the body" = NOTE: God never calls on us to mortify or inflict personal injury to the physical body itself (EX: asceticism), but to the sinful practices that stem from the fleshly old nature (Col. 3:5 - "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil conucupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.").

How do you mortify (kill) the deeds of the flesh?

ANSWER: You don't give them a chance to live.

Don't even give sin a chance to be born (Ja. 1:15); abort it, by asking for God's cleansing forgiveness. Abort a sinful thought, before it conceives and becomes a sinful act.

"Do mortify" - refers to a continual lifestyle. Paul does not suggest that the war with sin was something that was fought and won in the past, but a continual campaign that lasts throughout our life.

The question is not: "have you reached perfection?" nor "have you gained total victory over all acts of sin?" (I Jn. 1:10).

The question is: "Are you in the battle against sin?" "Is your life presently characterized by victory over sin's domination?" (SEE I Jn. 3:7-10).

Sin may on occasion knock us down, but it does not knock us out.

Sin may trip us up, but it won't chain us up.

D. You will have the Spirit's leading (v. 14)

God only leads His children (He does not lead the Devil's kids).

HYMN - "God leads His dear children along."

The Spirit of God, as it were, takes us by the hand and like a good shepherd leads us in the path of righteousness for His names' sake (Ps. 23:3).

Who leads your life? What is the guide of your life?

E. You will have the Spirit's witness (v. 15-17)

V. 15

NOTE: "The spirit of bondage" is contrasted with "the Spirit of adoption."

Someone in bondage to sin and its fearful results is led by another spirit (small "s"), not by the Spirit of God.

"Bondage" = servitude; slavery. Sin and Satan don't lead (in contrast to the Spirit - v. 14). They chain their victims up and drag them along, pulling their prey toward the fearful prospects of death and hell.

"Adoption" is the legal process by which someone who is not blood related, becomes related to someone and thereby gains all of the rights, privileges and responsibilities of a literal son.

Our adoption came through Christ (Eph. 1:5 - "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will").

God who formerly was not our Father (but we were "children of wrath" - Eph. 2:3; and "children of disobedience" - Col. 3:6-7); but now God is our dear Heavenly Father.

The idea of "adoption" would have been fully understood by the Romans, since Roman law observed certain facts concerning adoption:

1. He lost all rights in the old family and gained all rights of a legitimate son in the new family.

2. He became an heir to the new father's estate.

3. His old life was forgotten.

4. He was considered the son of the new father.

(Stitzinger, Romans notes, p. 51)

"Abba" = Aramaic term used in addressing one's father. "O Father" "O Daddy" or "Papa".

An intimate expression; cp. Mk. 14:36. A term of endearment.

God is not an alien to His children.

The term "Father" is primarily a N.T. term, frequently used by Christ to emphasize the closeness we have with God (EX: Lord's prayer - "Our Father...")

NOTE: Paul speaks in same words and along the same line of thought in Gal. 4:6-11)*v. 6).

"The Spirit itself" [itself = Himself - He is a person not a force; a force does not speak (bear witness)]

"Beareth witness" - to testify in support of someone. To confirm.

The Holy Spirit speaks to us in conjunction with our human spirit and confirms to us that we are saved and belong to God.

The evidence is not speaking in tongues; but is that "still small voice," that says to us: "You belong to God."

"Children of God" - Greek - tekna - a different word than "son" in v. 14, used to emphasize the relationship we have with God.

V. 16

"with our spirit" - NOTE: Not to our spirit

A double testimony is given to assure us of sonship:

Both God's Spirit and our human spirit confirm to us that we belong to God. NOTE: The HOly Spirit only speaks in conjunction with the spiritual aspect of man (Not the flesh).

Housed in the believer's body (I Cor. 6:19-20) is the Holy Spirit, whose echo can be heard saying: "You are a child of God."

ILLUS: How someone doubted my salvation because I never spoke in tongues.

I do not need any man to tell me whether or not I am a Christian; I have the Spirit of God to do so.

V. 17

"If children, then heirs" = no one becomes a child of God who does not inherit what is god's (ILLUS: No good parent would keep any child out of his/her will; rather the children inherit what was the parents).

"Joint heirs" - co-heirs; fellow-heirs.