

FREE FROM THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH

TEXT: ROMANS 8:1-4

Introduction:

1. There is a statement attributed to a 17th century German preacher named Philipp Spener, "If Holy Scripture was a ring, and the Epistle to the Romans its precious stone, chap. 8 would be the sparkling point of the jewel!"
2. William Newell said, "There is scarcely a passage in the New Testament that is more delightful reading to the spiritual Christian than the eighth of Romans...There is an atmosphere of blessing all through it...for the blessed Holy Spirit breathes throughout it -- the indwelling Deliverer, Quickener, Guide, Assurer, Helper, Intercessor."
3. J. Vernon McGee said, "Chapter 8 is the high-water mark in Romans...A life that is pleasing to God must be lived in the power of the Holy Spirit."
4. I would like to speak tonight about the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and how the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death. (8:1, 2).

I. NO MORE CONDEMNATION FOR SIN (8:1)

II. NO MORE CONTROL BY SIN (8:2)

III. NO MORE CONTINUANCE IN SIN (8:3, 4)

I. NO MORE CONDEMNATION FOR SIN (8:1)

1. Romans chapter 8 deals with our deliverance from the power of indwelling sin. Union with Christ means victory over indwelling sin.
2. "Therefore" (8:1) brings us back to the previous chapters, which dealt with our justification (chapters 3,4, and 5) and our sanctification (chap. 6 and 7).
3. Therefore, because we have been justified, and because we have been sanctified – there is "now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus..." (8:1).
4. If you are saved you are "in Christ Jesus" (8:1), and you are secure in Him. Romans 6—8 deal with our union with Christ (6:3, 4).
5. Romans 6 teaches us "that union with Christ involves the utter incompatibility of union with sin" (W.H. Griffith Thomas, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*).
6. Being "in Christ" means we are identified with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. We enter into union with Christ by faith.
7. Being "in Christ" means to be resting in Him, depending upon Him, trusting in Him, and believing in Him.

8. This is what we call objective truth. But it is subjective also (cf. 8:16). The true believer in Jesus Christ is secure from the moment he trusts Christ up until he goes home to be with the Lord (8:38, 39).

II. NO MORE CONTROL BY SIN (8:2)

1. When we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and are born again, we receive a new power – the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit delivers us from the law of sin and death (8:2).
2. In Romans 8:2, the Holy Spirit is called “the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.” It is on account of the Holy Spirit’s acting as a law of life, delivering us from the law of sin and death, that there is now no condemnation for sin, and no more control by sin.
3. This does not mean that the original "law of sin and death" (8:2b) has ceased to operate. What the Bible teaches is that a higher law has come into force -- "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (8:2).
4. Noah Webster’s 1828 Dictionary says, "To walk after the flesh means to indulge sensual appetites, and to live in sin (Rom. 8:4)."
5. We are not to walk after the flesh. We are to walk "after the Spirit" (8:1, 4).
6. Webster says, "To walk after the Spirit means to be guided by the counsels and influences of the Spirit and by the word of God, and to live a life of holy deportment (Rom. 8:1)."
7. There is an important contrast here -- the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and the law of sin and death. The former overcomes the latter by the principle of counteraction.
8. W.H. Griffith Thomas wrote, "The one overcomes the other by the great principle of counteraction; just as at the Red Sea the law of the wind counteracted the law of the tide" (*St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*).
9. Exodus 14:21 says, "The LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided." The law of the wind counteracted the law of the tide.
10. An airplane should fall from the sky by the law of gravitation, but it is upheld by the law of aerodynamics. This is the law of counteraction, and "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" is a higher law than "the law of sin and death" (8:2).
11. The higher law sets us free from the lesser law.
12. Because of the fall of man, the unsaved man is totally dominated by the flesh (cf. 5:12; 7:18). But once a man gets saved, he receives the Holy Spirit (cf. 8:9).
13. Every Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. This is why deliverance from the flesh is available to each and every Christian.

14. Unfortunately, a Christian can be genuinely saved and still be carnal. Paul wrote to Christians in the church at Corinth, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ" (I Cor. 3:1).
15. Harry Ironside, "The flesh of the believer is no better than the flesh in an unbeliever."
16. While it is true that some Christians are in the flesh, it should be emphasized that it is not God's will that a Christian walk in the flesh (Romans 8:8).
17. When a man gets saved, he is immediately indwelt by the Holy Spirit. And "the law of the Spirit of life" (Holy Spirit) delivers him from the law of sin and death (8:2).
18. The "law of sin and death" is the authority that sin had over us before we were saved. It should be stressed that the conflict described in Romans 7 is not the normal Christian life.
19. It is unfortunate that some Christians have been taught that Romans 7 is the normal experience for every Christian. This is one of the reasons for all of the carnality and backsliding in our churches.

III. NO MORE CONTINUANCE IN SIN (8:3, 4)

1. Romans 6:1, 2 says, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"
2. Romans 6--8 repeatedly teaches that Christians are not to continue in sin. Romans 7:6 says "that we should serve (God) in newness of spirit." Romans 8 explains how this is possible.
3. Romans 7:25 says, "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God." Romans 8 explains how this is possible.
4. Romans chapter 7 deals with the problem of indwelling sin; and Romans 8 emphasizes the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.
5. The key is found in Romans 8 -- "walk after the Spirit" (8:1, 4).
6. In Romans 7 the word "I" appears 33 times (cf. 7:15). In contrast, in Romans chapter 8 there are 19 references to the Holy Spirit.
5. Romans 8 teaches us that the Christian life is not "one long endeavor to be good" (W.H. Griffith Thomas).
6. In the epistle to the Romans, we see a contrast between law and grace (6:14). The law demands obedience, but grace is given to believers so that we are able to obey.
7. "Grace *gives* before it *requires*" (W.H. Griffith Thomas, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*).

8. The carnal man is incapable of obeying the law of God. He does not have the power to obey (7:14-21). This is what the apostle Paul means when he says the law "was weak through the flesh" (8:3).
9. The law demanded what sinful man could not provide.
10. The law can only condemn. The law commands obedience but it cannot produce obedience. So God sent His only begotten Son to die for us on the cross and do what the law could not do. The law cannot save but Jesus saves.
11. W.H. Griffith Thomas wrote, "Law had failed because of man's inability to work; the Gospel succeeds because of God's ability to give" (*St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*).
12. Through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the life that the Lord Jesus Christ lived can now be reproduced in us who believe.
13. This is what Paul means in Galatian 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."
14. Christ lives in us, and Christ is sinless. This is the key to victory over sin.

CONCLUSION:

*Once far from God and dead in sin,
 No light my heart could see;
 But in God's Word the light I found,
 Now Christ liveth in me.
 Christ liveth in me,
 Christ liveth in me;
 Oh! what a salvation this,
 That Christ liveth in me.
 As rays of light from yonder sun,
 The flow'rs of earth set free,
 So life and light and love come forth
 From Christ living in me.
 As lives the flow'r within the seed,
 As in the cone the tree,
 So, praise the Christ of truth and grace,
 His Spirit dwelleth in me.
 With longing all my heart is filled,
 That like Him I may be,
 As on the wondrous thought I dwell
 That Christ liveth in me. (Daniel Webster Whittle)*