



Romans 8: Pt.1: No Condemnation

Romans 8:1-4 *“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, 2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law was powerless to do 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, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*”

It all begins with verse 1. Paul is building a case for Christ. The Jewish people have followed the Law of Moses for thousands of years. That’s a hard habit to break. It’s not really about breaking away from the law but seeing the heart of the law more clearly through Christ Jesus. Matthew 5:17 has Jesus saying *“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”*

There are many Christ prophecies yet, probably none bigger than 1 Chronicles 17:11-14 *“When your days are over and you go to be with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. 12 He is the one who will build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever. 13 I will be his father, and he will be my son. I will never take my love away from him, as I took it away from your predecessor. 14 I will set him over my house and my kingdom forever; his throne will be established forever.”*

This is Romans and this is Paul. How can we bring God, the Law, the Christ, and Jesus together? Paul was a theologian as a Pharisee. He knew the Old Testament inside and out. When

he met Jesus his understanding of the law changed. All of a sudden, he could see it! See what? That the promised Christ was Jesus. How so? All the words and actions of Jesus fulfilled what the Christ was supposed to be. What about this condemnation thing? Why does Paul start with this saying? In many ways it usually begins in the previous chapter. It's how Paul intends to make a bridge to God, the Law, the Christ, and Jesus.

Romans 7:24-25 *“What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? 25 Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.”*

The Law of Moses was given by God. These laws or commands say *“thall shall not.”* Each one was made to expose sin and require payment. Why? It's because we all fall short of the glory of God. God requires payment for disobedience. These themes are riddled throughout the Bible. Paul knows this stuff because the Pharisees were notorious for pointing out law breakers. Paul has changed his mind on the law. We can't follow it but we can be saved from it through the Christ. The man he met on the Damascus Road named Jesus.

We know how Paul feels because he completed his case in Romans 8:37-39 *“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* In a nut shell Paul is saying that we will be rescued by the Christ as promised in the Old Testament.

Romans 6:18 *“You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.”*

All through Romans, Paul is making a case for our standing with God through Christ Jesus. He is using terms associated with the law. This comes in the form of key words.

The first is **Christ**. Paul's use of the word Christ is not by mistake. The whole reason that the Jews don't follow Jesus is because they don't see him as the Christ. It's because they are looking for the military Christ. It never occurred to them that the Christ was to save them from themselves. The law condemns a person. Nobody can keep the law. Over the centuries the law made a distance between the people and God. It was never supposed to be that way. God is relational and personable.

It's also by no mistake that Paul uses the word **condemnation**. The pharisee was the keeper of the law that condemns. Yet, these very leaders claimed to follow the law sinlessly. Paul writes in Romans 3:23 *"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."* Imagine Paul being blinded by men and then by God. What helped Paul see again? The infusion of the Spirit of God in Acts 9:17 *"Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.'"*

Of course, the third word Paul mentions is the **Spirit**. He said it sets us free. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2:10 *"these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God."* He knows this because it happened to him! According to the Spirit we can be free of the intent of the law. Romans 6:23 says *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."* The Spirit is the key to breaking free. What the flesh (law) could not do the Spirit can through Christ Jesus.

We can now see the words law and flesh a little clearer. By our own person or flesh we are under the law of Moses. Those laws condemn our sin to death. Unless someone pays our sin debt. Jesus died by the flesh but rose by the Spirit to pay the sacrifice price of our sin debt under the old law. In court your either guilty or not. We are a slave to something. In court we could be a slave to a law that we broke or set free from it. Paul uses these words creatively to begin to pull the Jewish people away from the law of Moses and closer to the law of Christ Jesus. Welcome to Romans 8.