



Romans 8 Pt. 2: The Flesh

Romans 8:3-9 *“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. 5 Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. 6 The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. 7 The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. 8 Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God. 9 You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ.”*

It’s ringing in my ears! We are not condemned! In-fact we are not condemned by the law God gave us. No, we are condemned by our sin nature. The law just exposed our sin. Honestly, laws were meant to be kept. Yet, in some strange twist of fate laws were meant to be broken. How so? It’s because our sin nature (the Bible calls the flesh) says so.

Why are we called the flesh? John 4:24 says *“God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”* The cardinal rule is we are creation. We are not God. That means we are of substance called the flesh. Paul uses this word to cover all humans. No matter your gender, race, or culture, we are all flesh. God gave his law to the created flesh. I know it sounds weird in this modern era. Yet, it’s what we are. Romans 8:3 says the law was powerless to save us from judgment because of our sin nature (the flesh).

This is the Christian gospel 101 in Romans 8:3-4. God sent his son (in the flesh) to be a sacrifice for all our sins. To defeat the flesh and fulfil the law. In a way God rescued the law from the flesh. Yet, Jesus died and rose again in Spirit. He then sent the Holy Spirit to reside in us (the flesh). Why? Romans 8:4 *“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.”*

Romans 8:5-6 continues Paul’s take on theology. If we live as we always have then the law condemning us to death remains. Romans 3:23-24 should be ringing in your ears now *“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.”* Since we all live as the flesh it’s a tall order. It’s about the war of the mind. Do we desire the mind of the flesh or the Spirit? We can have victory over the nature that ruins us. That power can reside within us. Hence: winning the war of the mind.

How do you live? Is it for the flesh or for the Spirit? There is a proverbial line in the sand. The Trinity is played out in the war of the flesh. God the Father gave his children the law. It’s a very good law. In essence it’s the Ten Commandments. Yet, in Leviticus God goes much deeper. Then we have the Christ coming down in the flesh. It’s the Son of God called Jesus the Christ. Then the Spirit mines the depths of God on our behalf. This Spirit mines the depths of us to root out our sinful nature.

Romans 8:9 *“You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you.”*

This is the realm of God living in you. If, indeed, you have the Spirit. I love Romans 8 because it’s textbook information on why there is a war and why we are in it. Yet, Paul is asking:

are you in it? There are spiritual forces that are trying to turn the church away from the sacrifice of Jesus. To turn us away from God's holiness. From the sacrifices and laws of the Old Testament. These forces are asking us to love, have joy, and find ourselves in Christ. Yet, the story of Romans is accepting the sacrifice of Jesus so that we could find the Spirit within us. A spirit that is fighting the law of the flesh so that we could find joy. This whole war is played out by God for the love of His children. This makes Romans 8 amazing for those who believe.