

Romans 8:1-11
“Change of Address”

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I. Intro

Romans 8 begins with no condemnation; it ends with no separation, and in between there is no defeat. If you have ever struggled with anxiety then this chapter ought to bring you some much needed relief. It is amazing to notice the repeated words in the Bible, last week I told you that Paul in Romans 7:14-25 used the first-person pronoun in the present tense “*I*” over 40 times. But here in chapter 8 Paul uses the word “*Spirit*” 19 times. It seems to me you won’t battle the “*I*” as much if you spend more time with the *Spirit*.

We are prone to anxiety in one of three areas and all three are addressed in Romans 8:

1. **We are anxious about something in the PAST**: But Romans 8:1 says “*There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.*”
2. **We are anxious about something in the PRESENT**: But Romans 8:28 says that “*We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.*”
3. **We are anxious about something in the FUTURE**: But Romans 8:38-39 says that we are “*Persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*”

In the original the final two verse of chapter 7 and the first two verse of chapter 8 are all one sentence and when read that way they bring a greater clarity to the passage as it summarizes all that Paul had been saying in chapter 7 and the first word in chapter 8 ought to be a word that ties it together like “**but**”. Paul is making it clear that just because we have been saved through the finished work of Jesus Christ *doesn't mean that the battle is over* in fact we will be entered into the battle between our old flesh and our new nature which are going to battle not for your soul but for control. Think of this battle as being tied to a person in a “*three-legged obstacle race*” and you get the general idea as it's a battle of control and direction. There are **three things every Christian should know about their new life in Christ:**

- A. ***There is a very real internal battle the moment we got saved we entered into***
- B. ***That this battle is not between God and us as it is without condemnation from Him***
- C. ***That provision has already been made for our victory over ourselves in the Spirit filled life in Christ***

II. Vs. 1-4 Freedom from judgment

Vs. 1 The phrase “*There in now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus*” is even more powerful when examined in the original language. The word “*therefore*” implies a changed circumstance which involves a change of time. The time is “Now” which is in the present and the word NO is emphatic which implies no sort of condemnation. The phrase “*Who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit*” is not found in the earliest ancient manuscripts of the Book of Romans and they do not agree with Paul's context. They were probably added by a copyist who either made a mistake or thought he could “help” Paul by bringing in these words from Rom. 8:4. ***The unbeliever has judgment day before him, but the believer has judgment day behind him and because of this there in NOW NO***

CONDEMNATION in Christ Jesus! The basis of this incredible declaration is to be found in the words **In Christ Jesus!** The verse **doesn't say** that:

- There will now be “**no mistakes or failures** in Christ Jesus”.
- There are now “**no consequences** for mistakes and failures in Christ Jesus”.
- What it says is that when we make mistakes and failures that **we will not be condemned by them by God because we are in Christ.**

You aren't fighting God on this, He isn't pointing an angry finger at you and shaking His head in disgust, in fact He isn't surprised at your battle or your failure. He isn't rejecting you and kicking you out of His family and He isn't mad and shunning fellowship with you. Joined to Jesus, we hear the verdict: “**no condemnation**” not “**less condemnation.**” Our standing hasn't improved, it's been completely transformed. **The reason for this is threefold:**

A. Vs. 2 **The law cannot claim you:** *We have been made free from the law of sin and death as we have a life in the Spirit and as such the law no longer has any jurisdiction over us.* The “**Law of sin and death**” is made up of three powerful forces that operate in conjunction with each other: **The flesh**, the **world system** which offers up things that entrap my flesh **and satan** who energizes the whole mess with his lies and deception. *If just one of those three things is inactive I will have victory but together I'm defeated.* But in comes the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus that has made us free from the effects of the deadly three.

B. Vs. 3 **The law cannot condemn you:** **The reason for this is because Jesus has already paid for our suffering and condemnation on the cross.** There is a human law that mimics this truth it's called “**double jeopardy**” and *states that a person cannot be tried twice for the same crime so since Jesus was tried and paid for our*

crime we can't be retried for it. **There are three reasons why are FREE from God condemning us based upon what we read in chapter 7:**

1. 7:18, 22 **There is nothing in my flesh that is good and nothing in my new heart that doesn't want to do good.** Because of that truth God will not and doesn't condemn us.
2. 7:11, 15-19 **We can't handle the flesh, it is too powerful and we are too powerless in our strength to deal with it.** Because of this God will not and doesn't condemn us.
3. 7:24 **God has already made provision in Christ for our past present and future failure.** Those very real failures are driving me to Him and if He condemned me they would drive me from Him.

C. Vs. 4 **The law cannot control you:** To break the cycle of guilt and failure God sent His own Son. He did not send an angel, prophet, or holy man. Paul is very careful to describe this incarnation as being in the “*likeness of sinful flesh*” not the likeness of “*flesh*” which would make Him a phantom or a mirage but in the likeness of sinful flesh which means that He came in the flesh but without sin.

Based upon these truths Paul asks in Romans 8:34 “*Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.*” **We will be just like Paul, disgusted by our behavior, and even say the same thing about ourselves as Paul does about himself, “Oh what a jerk I am!”** But even though we are disgusted about our failure we must not start believing that God feels the same way about us as we do.

III. Vs. 5-11 What do you want from life?

Verse 5-11 explains that just being a Christian doesn't mean that you will automatically look and act like Jesus. The question Paul anticipates is "*Hey Paul if I'm free from the condemnation of my past, present and future sins, why not just continue to practice these sins?*" His answer is twofold:

- a. Vs. 5 **To do so would be an indication that you are not born again**, "*those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh.*"
- b. Vs. 6 **To do so would only destroy you and rip you off** whereas the things of the Spirit bring you "*life and peace*".

The way we can determine our direction in walking is to take note of what we are thinking about all day long. What's important to us, how do we view this circumstance or that situation.

Vs. 6 We could translate this "*The thinking of the flesh is death, but the thinking of the Spirit is life and peace.*" On January 6th, 1941, then President Franklin Delano Roosevelt addressed Congress on the state of the war in Europe, he closed his speech by saying that he looked forward "*to a world founded upon four essential freedoms: The **freedom of speech, the freedom of worship, the freedom for want, and the freedom from fear.***" Paul in Romans makes **a declaration of four spiritual freedoms away from death. Death in our present experience always consists of four things:**

- a. **Fear:** *Anxiety, dread, timidity*
- b. **Guilt:** *Shame, self-hatred, perfectionism*
- c. **Hostility:** *Resentment, bitterness, revenge*
- d. **Emptiness:** *Loneliness, depression, discouragement*

These are all forms of “*death*” which come upon us when we set our thinking on the things of the flesh. If you summarize the entire Bible you will discover that **Life is also made up of four**

things that are the opposite of death:

- a. **Trust:** *Hope, confidence*
- b. **Acceptance:** *Security, assurance*
- c. **Love:** *Friendliness, kindness*
- d. **Fulfillment:** *Excitement, vitality*

Vs. 7-8 The Soul is the center of our emotions, intellect and will and in will come 1,000’s of times a day a fork in the road where we will need to choose between two paths the spirit or the flesh. Paul very plainly tells us that when we are at the fork in the road not to be persuaded by the lure of the “*flesh path*” because it is at war against God, and it cannot please God. Can a Christian choose to go down that road of the flesh? Yes, but they will do so apart from enjoying fellowship with God. There is no such thing as a happy carnal Christian.

Vs. 9 The word for “*dwells*” is a word that means to make one’s home with. So, Paul says that we have not merely changed locations with have been transformed into a dwelling place whereby the Holy Spirit takes up His permanent residence. Can you imagine the Holy Spirit taking up His home in your heart and your life, putting His feet up on the easy chair of your heart and saying, “*Man, Dale I feel so at home in your life, I’m so glad that I came to live here with you. I love what you watch, why you like the same things I like.*” You see if you are a Christian than that is the situation going on in your heart every moment of the day as the Holy Spirit dwells in you and if He doesn’t dwell in you than you are not a Christian.

Vs. 10-11 The phrase, “*Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His*”, means that every believer has the Holy Spirit. As such we cannot divide Christians among the “*Spirit-*

filled” and “*not-Spirit-filled.*” If a person is not filled with the Holy Spirit, they are not a Christian at all. What we can say is that there are some who miss out on living the Christian life in the constant power of the Spirit because they are not constantly being filled with the Holy Spirit. The question as believers isn’t whether we have the Holy Spirit it is does He have us?