

Romans 8:1

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Christians are the richest people in the world. Nonchristians are the poorest. Go with me to a home on the edge of the city. The family living there has very little. The house is small, the furnature is inexpensive. But on the table is a Bible which shows evidence of being well-used.

As the family sits down to a frugal meal we hear the voice of the father being lifted in thanksgiving to God. The Spirit of Jesus Christ permeates this home, for all those in the family are Christians. They all love Christ and they are all growing in grace.

When Sunday comes, we see them on the way to church. When the offering plate passes by they put the Lord's money in it. It isn't much but they know it belongs to the Lord and they give it to Him. When the pastor preaches they listen intently and rejoice that their names are written in Heaven. When they see souls saved, they thank God that salvation has come to others.

Look at them as they go. They don't ride in a big car, they don't wear expensive clothes, but they are rich. They are rich in this world and rich for the next world. All the treasures of Christ are theirs.

But look into another house. We will not call it a home, for if Christ doesn't dwell there, it isn't a home. This is a big house. Its floors are covered with the finest carpets. Expensive pictures hang upon every wall. The furnishings are luxurious. Sterling silver is there, imported china is there.

But when these people sit down to eat their sumptuous meals, no one looks to God in gratitude. No scripture is ever read in this house and the Name of Jesus is never mentioned. These people ride in their big cars, but they don't go to God's house. They spend their money, but none of it goes into God's treasury. They wear fine clothes and expensive jewelry, but they don't have the peace of God in their hearts.

Look at these people. This is a picture of many families. They are rich, popular, well educated. But in God's sight they are the poorest of the poor. They are going to live a little while and then die and leave all these things behind them. They are living for this world only, which means that they are committing suicide

for the world to come. They had better enjoy what they have here, because there is nothing but Hell and suffering and the Lake of Fire awaiting them after death.

In Matthew 16:26, Jesus said, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Our passage today says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Paul here tells us that he is speaking of those who are "in Christ Jesus." There is no condemnation for them!

But, what does the Bible say about those who are NOT in Christ Jesus:

John 3:18 says, "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."

And John 3:36 says. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

Now, suppose Paul had said only, "There is no condemnation."

Then every sinner in the world would cry out, "That's great. We agree with Paul. It doesn't matter how we live or what we do, everything will work out alright in the end and we will all be together in Heaven."

Now, that's what many people believe today. They say that God is such a great God of love that He will take them home at the end of the way, regardless of the fact that they have sinned and broken His laws and trampled His Son underfoot.

I agree that God is a God of love, but He is also a God of justice, and He will NOT allow His love to blot out His justice!

If God permitted the sinner to go unpunished, regardless of what he had done, even the sinner would lose respect for God. Suppose you had murdered five people in cold blood, breaking the hearts of five loving wives and a number of helpless children. And suppose that when you came before the judge, he said, "I know you have committed an awful crime, but I am a loving judge. Go on home. You are free."

You and all the world would lose respect for that judge. That is precisely why so many of our court systems are held in such disrepute today! Well, if God said to every sinner in the world,

"It doesn't matter how you have lived upon the earth, it doesn't matter how much you have sinned. There is nothing to it, just enter into Heaven and enjoy the blessings of the redeemed." - If God said that, He just wouldn't be God and no one would respect Him.

Now, this is the serpent's gospel - to say that there is no punishment for sin. Remember Eve's discussion with the serpent in the Garden of Eden. Eve told the serpent that God said they would die if they ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But Satan, in the guise of the serpent, said, "Ye shall not surely die."

It is simply a matter of God's word against Satan's word. God says, "The wages of sin is death."

Satan says, "Go on in sin. Nothing will happen to you."

So, who are you going to believe: God or Satan. As for me and my house, we have chosen to believe God!

But, wait a minute! If all sin has to be punished, you and I are in real trouble. We're both sinners! We have both failed to measure up to God's standard of right conduct. No amount of good deeds will EVER be enough to cover up our sin - it stands out like a sore thumb and accuses us at every turn. If all sin MUST be punished, what can we do!?

Aha! Today's passage gives us the answer we are searching for. Romans 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Yes, all sin MUST be punished. But, Jesus took OUR punishment on the cross, so all we have to do to avoid the punishment we deserve is reach out and accept the free pardon that Jesus is offering us; the free pardon that He purchased for us with His own blood!

Robert Murray M'Cheyne was a great preacher of Scotland. He died as a young man, but his name had become a household word in thousands of Scottish homes.

He preached one night on the text, "I am the door, by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." In the congregation there was a lost man to whom he had often preached and spoken to personally about his soul.

That night the Holy Spirit shook that man in convicting power. He saw himself as a lost soul on the way to Hell. He looked to Christ and was saved. He said to the preacher, "I got in tonight."

I know I am saved. The trouble before was that I was trying to go in the wrong door."

"What do you mean?" asked the preacher.

And the man said, "I have been trying to get in at the saint's door. I thought that I had to live a perfect life to be saved and I knew that I couldn't do it. You made it clear tonight that I must go in at the sinner's door. I know Jesus is that door. So I have entered in, and thank God, a sinner has been saved!"

Do you see? The world is filled with people who are trying to enter through the wrong door! They are condemned now and will be condemned forever. Why? Because they are not in Christ Jesus.

But, Romans 8:1 says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Now, how does one get into Christ Jesus? Not by a good life! Many are trying to get in that way, but they are forever doomed to failure.

I once talked to a man who told me that he had lived a good life and expected that good life to take him to Heaven. I handed him the Bible and said, "Show me where it says in God's word, 'Live a good life and thou shalt be saved.'" Of course, he couldn't do it.

Neither are we saved by good works, yet millions of people are saying, "I will pile up my good works, then when God sees what I have done, He will take me to Heaven." Yet the Bible tells us that we will never be saved by our works.

Neither will we be saved by our gifts. If you gave a million dollars to the cause of Christ every day, that would not wash away a single sin.

Neither are we saved by baptism or church membership. You can be baptized in every stream in the world and join every church of every denomination and this will not carry you to Heaven.

There is just ONE WAY to get into Jesus Christ. Ephesians 2:8 tells us that salvation is by grace through faith. There are two great words here: grace and faith.

The grace is God's part. It means all the loving kindness of God extended to a lost sinner who has broken His laws and rejected His Son. God's grace is so marvelous and so wonderful that the human tongue can never describe it.

The other word is "faith". That is man's part. It means to turn your back upon your sin and look in faith toward the Son of God, fully trusting Him to save you.

Why make salvation difficult to understand? Just throw aside all of your sins, all of your doubts, all of your human notions about salvation, and look up into His wonderful face in faith and He will save you.

Acts 16:31 says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved..." Jesus says, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by Me."

There are many bridges over the Mississippi River, but there is only one bridge that spans the chasm between a sinful man and a Holy God. That bridge is Jesus!

There are many roads from Chicago to New York, but there is only one road to Heaven. That road is Jesus!

There are many ships that ply the waters from New York to London, but there is only one ship that will carry you into God's loving arms. That ship is Jesus!

There are many rocks that a ship can anchor to that will keep the ship from drifting off course, but there is only one rock that you can anchor your soul to that will keep you from drifting down to Hell. That rock is Jesus!

If you have never grasped hold on that rock, do so today! Do so before it is too late! Behold, NOW is the accepted time, TODAY is the day of salvation. DO NOT DELAY!

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Hallelujah! Amen!

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