

ROMANS – LIVING BY FAITH
THE CHILDREN OF GOD & THE SPIRIT OF GOD – Chapter 8

LESSON 23 – A REVOLUTIONARY FREEDOM – Romans 8:1-4

This lesson introduces us to the true freedom found only in Christ. Different people have their own definitions of freedom...freedom from poverty, freedom from tyranny, freedom from authority, freedom from worry and fear. The most basic freedom of all is freedom from the penalty, power and practice of sin.

An old German Bible scholar said, "If the Bible were a ring and the Book of Romans its precious stone, chapter eight would be the sparkling point of the jewel."

These first four verses give us the themes for the entire chapter.

Freedom from the Penalty of Sin

Romans eight begins with the message of "no condemnation;" ends with the message of "no separation;" and in between is the message of "no defeat." This chapter spells out...

- The gospel and plan of salvation
- The life of freedom and victory
- The hopelessness of the natural person
- The righteousness of the spiritual person
- The indwelling of the Holy Spirit
- The resurrection of the body
- The hope of Christ's return
- The working together of all things for our good

You don't have to read very far into the Bible to discover that sin is a destructive and deadly force. As we've already studied, because of Adam we are all sinners by birth. Scripture also teaches that we are all sinners by choice.

Psalm 51:5, "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me."

Romans 2:6 & 8, "God will repay each person according to what they have done...for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger."

There are four key thoughts in Romans 8:1 concerning our freedom from the penalty of sin...

- 1. Therefore** – Paul begins chapter eight with a summary, but not just of chapter seven. He is summarizing the argument of the entire book up to this point...especially the truth of Romans 5:1. These two verses are complimentary to each other.

Romans 5:1 is the positive statement, "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Romans 8:1 is the negative statement, "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

2. **Now** – "Now" contrasts the times before we were free from our sins through justification with our current position in Christ. This captures the difference between the saved and the unsaved. The saved person's judgment day is behind them at the cross of Calvary. The unsaved person's judgment is still ahead of them at the Great White Throne Judgment. Because the saved person's judgment day is completed, there is now no condemnation.
3. **No Condemnation** – This is a legal term that includes both the sentence and the execution of judgment. For those who are in Christ, the condemnation they deserve has already been taken care of by Jesus.
4. **Through Our Lord Jesus Christ** – Everything we have is because we are in Christ.

"It is impossible for a man to be a Christian without having Christ. And if he has Christ he has at the same time all that is in Christ. What gives peace to the conscience is that by faith our sins are no more ours, but Christ's, upon whom God hath laid them all and that on the other hand all Christ's righteousness is ours. I call that the great exchange. Our sin was placed upon him. His righteousness was placed upon us. He is the glorious Savior, blessed forever." – Martin Luther

Freedom from the Power of Sin

Paul now sets out to contrast two laws...the law of life through the Holy Spirit and the law of death through the condemnation of sin.

The main theme of chapter eight is the Holy Spirit. In Romans 1-7, the Holy Spirit is only mentioned two times. Here in Romans 8, we see the Holy Spirit referred to 20 times.

Paul says in 2 Corinthians 3:17, "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom," and Romans chapter 8 is definitely the chapter of freedom through the Holy Spirit.

"The Spirit of God is the distinguishing mark of the Christian, and this presence means the defeat of the power of sin. Paul is saying that when the Holy Spirit comes into a person, that person is freed from the bondage of evil and finds a new power within...a power that causes the defeat of sin and leads the Christian into ways of goodness and love." – Leon Morris

Freedom from the Power of Sin

There are a number of key passages from earlier in Romans as well as Galatians that provide the background for Paul's teaching on freedom from the law and the condemnation it brings.

Romans 3:19, "Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God."

Romans 5:20, "The law was brought in so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more."

Romans 7:13, "Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! Nevertheless, in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it used what is good to bring about my death, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful."

Galatians 3:10, "For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, as it is written: Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law."

Galatians 3:21, "Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law."

The problem with The Law is that human weakness robbed it of all its power. The law is not weak in itself, but it is weak because of our inability to keep it. So to deal with this problem, God sent His Son to meet the demands of the law. Through Jesus we are justified freely from all sin. Then God sent His Spirit to indwell us and enable us to meet the requirements of God's Law in our daily lives.

As Christians, we have been given four new realities because of our relationship with Christ...

1. **A New Peace** – "No condemnation," Romans 8:1
2. **A New Position** – "In Christ Jesus," Romans 8:1
3. **A New Power** – "The law of the Spirit who gives life," Romans 8:2
4. **A New Potential** – "The righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us," Romans 8:4