

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 1ST - 2ND, 2021 // BOOK OF ROMANS

THE DARK CLOUD (ROMANS 8:1-4)

A NEW WAY

The first half of chapter 8 details the freedom Christians experience because they have died to sin and the pressure of being saved by their works.

- **The “newness of life” we have doesn’t permit us to live in sin, it liberates us from the control of sin that produces shame, guilt, fear, and God’s wrath.**

ANOTHER TURNING POINT

“Therefore” usually marks a turning point. Chapter 8 may be one of Paul’s most famous because he’s making the point that the believer in Jesus is no longer under condemnation.

- Condemnation is the opposite of justification (being declared right). **When we follow Jesus, we are declared innocent through His work on the cross.**

“IN CHRIST JESUS”

This phrase is used 119 times by Paul. We are not only set free by Jesus, but because of His Spirit living in us we also are called and equipped to live in a way that honors God.

- **A life with Jesus isn’t only freedom from sin’s claims, it is living in the power of God.** We can be transformed and also be the catalyst to others’ transformation.

WE ARE FREED TO SOMETHING GREATER

If Jesus sets us free from something (sin), we are also set free to something else.

- 1 Pt. 2:9 says, **“you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of the One who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”**

WE NEEDED HELP

The Law (10 C’s) is perfect and produces perfection if followed. The problem is we’re imperfect and have “weakened” the law “by the flesh.” This doesn’t mean God messed up, it was all His plan to display grace and mercy.

- In order to resolve the conflict of a perfect law given to imperfect people, God sent Jesus to fulfill the requirements of the law.

“IN THE LIKENESS OF SINFUL FLESH”

Jesus became a human, yet remained divine. Because Jesus came as flesh, He was able to pay the price for the evil of all humanity, past, present, and future.

- We live in an age that teaches Jesus was a great guy, but nothing more. **This is incompatible with the Bible and defies history and logic.**

AND NOW WE CAN BE WHAT GOD WANTS (V4)

Though we make mistakes, we can honor and keep the principles of Jesus’ law, “Love God and love others as you love yourself.”

- We’re only able to honor the commands of God if we’re full of the Holy Spirit of God. **When we fail we run back to God, receive grace, and His power helps us move forward.**

THE LIFE WE CHOOSE (ROMANS 8:5-11)

WE ARE REBORN TO BEAR GOOD THINGS

In Galatians 5:19-23 Paul tells us about the fruit that should be evident in the life of a Christian. In these verses he tells us where these fruits come from.

- Romans 7:18 makes it clear that **nothing good comes from us, but only Christ that should be living in us.** This is counter-cultural, but nonetheless true.

TWO WAYS TO LIVE

Paul says there are two ways to think and live: by the flesh (what we desire) or by the Spirit (what God desires).

- This is essentially the crux of the Bible: **the way of humanity without God leads to chaos and death, and the way of God, when submitted to by people, leads to life and peace.**

THE POINT IS QUITE SIMPLE

If our minds are set on selfish desires, there’s no way to live according to the teachings of Jesus. Not only that, without the Spirit we’re unable to discern what is foolish and dangerous.

- To people that have a mindset on pursuing Jesus, the evil around us is extremely clear. **If we don’t see it, what does that mean?**

ON THE OTHER HAND...

If our minds are set on Jesus and His will, we will not only be filled with His Spirit but we will be empowered to live in a holy manner.

- This doesn’t mean we can’t quench the Spirit (1Thess. 5) or that we won’t occasionally sin, but **it does mean that we are moving in the direction of God and getting better as time goes on.**

HAS THERE BEEN A VISIBLE CHANGE?

Paul really drives the point home by stating that “If anyone doesn’t have the Spirit of Christ, [they] do not belong to Him.” This simply means the proof is in our lifestyle.

- Jesus simply said, **“A tree is known by its fruit.” If we claim Christ, we don’t claim perfection, but direction. We should be changed and changing.**

THE PROMISE OF A PERFECT FUTURE

If we have the Spirit of God with us we are saved from eternal separation from God after this life. If we are saved, one day our “mortal bodies [will be] brought to life through His Spirit who lives in us.”

- **The Christian should long for the day when we escape the brokenness of this world and eternally dwell with Jesus.**

NEVER ALONE (ROMANS 8:12-17)

WE ARE NOT ALONE

Because of our relationship with Jesus, “we are not obligated to the flesh to live according to the flesh.” This means that we can change and be set free from sin by God’s grace through our faith.

- The Bible is clear, **the end of our path is always death, but freedom comes by choosing to commit to Christ.**

NOT HANGING OUT ON THE FRINGE

If we truly love God, we should have a desire to get closer to Him and know Him more.

- **How many “Christians” do we know that display no real commitment to knowing God more?** How many people function in a way that sees how far they can stretch the tether to Jesus that they probably don’t even have?

WE ARE ADOPTED, AND WE SHOULD LIVE LIKE IT

“For all those led by God’s Spirit are God’s sons [and daughters].” Since we have been adopted into His kingdom, we’re free from the fear that the world uses to control the lost.

- Not only should **we be moving away from sin and growing closer to God in our thoughts and actions, we should also be moving away from fear into security.**

WE DON’T FEAR BECAUSE OF OUR TRUST IN GOD

This life is brutal, and many of us have been hurt and abandoned. But, Jesus promises to never leave us or forsake us, even knowing every evil we have done or thought.

- **God loves us so much we are not only children of God but “coheirs with Christ.” God doesn’t just invite us to heaven, He gives it to us.**

THERE IS A SLIGHT CATCH

If we are to be “glorified with Him (Jesus),” we must also suffer in a similar way that He did because obedience and trust is learned through adversity. And if Jesus grew weak but still maintained His connection to God, so should the adopted children of God.

- And this is where many check out. **We often want rewards without sacrifice.**

FREE, BUT NOT CHEAP

- Salvation, freedom, and a relationship with our Creator is a free gift, but we must choose to pursue Him over ourselves.
- Choosing to throw away our pursuit of self will make us vulnerable to pain and suffering. But, we must trust that Jesus has a plan and it is for our benefit.
- We need to take the time to really meditate on the enormity of what God has done for us. When we think of all He did for us, suffering for His name becomes an honor.
- We are not only saved by the cross, but we can live in the power of it! We can overcome fear, hate, addiction, and a lifestyle enslaved to sin with Jesus’ help.

WE DON’T HAVE TO BE ALONE

- Romans 8 is so renowned because it tells the Believer that we’re not only adopted as a child of God but the protective and loving hand of Jesus is always on us.
- We’ve learned that not only are we free from condemnation, but we are freed to live a life that is content and God-honoring!

TAKING AN INVENTORY

- Where do we choose to place our minds? Do we believe there are only 2 directions?
- Do our daily lives display the Fruit of the Spirit? If not, are we truly full of the Spirit?
- Are we willing to lay our temporary lives down for eternal life with Jesus?
- Do we believe that God can transform and give us the ability to live honorable lives?