

I'm no Longer a Slave to Sin

Message 23

11.10.24

Romans 8:1–11 (CSB)

Primary Verse: 2-4

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, ²because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. ³For what the law could not do since it was weakened by the flesh, God did. He condemned sin in the flesh by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh as a sin offering, ⁴in order that the law's requirement would be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵For those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit have their minds set on the things of the Spirit.

⁶Now the mindset of the flesh is death, but the mindset of the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷The mindset of the flesh is hostile to God because it does not submit to God's law. Indeed, it is unable to do so. ⁸Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹You, however, are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him.

¹⁰Now if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. ¹¹And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, then he who raised Christ from the dead will also bring your mortal bodies to life through his Spirit who lives in you.

Introduction:

A. Not all laws are the same.

1. Recently, we were able to vote in not only for president but for many levels of leadership.

a. This right, protected by American law, is not a right in most places of the world.

b. Countless numbers of people have died around the world in hope of achieving this kind of freedom.

2. In 2007, Julie and I were in England for a missions trip.

a. The number one question the kids and teens asked us about:

b. Do you own a gun?

c. The rights we have in America to own firearms would make us Criminals in most of the free world.

3. It's amazing how the conditions of a person changes depending upon the law they are under.

a. Nelson Mandela is a good example.

b. Under apartheid, he was imprisoned.

c. Under democratic law, he became president.

B. The Apostle Paul introduces the freedom of the believer in the terms of law once again.

1. Whereas before, we were under the law of sin and death, most clearly seen through the Jewish Law but also in all of the laws of nature.

2. But now, believers come under a new law in Verse 2.

3. The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ:

C. Why does Paul refer to Law?

If Americans wrote this, we would want to stress we aren't under any law.

2. But laws are part of God's design because where there is no law, there is chaos and anarchy.

3. We were created to live and thrive under God's designed and ordered laws, including the laws of physics, biology, and sowing and reaping.

a. One of the first ministries of the Spirit ever recorded was the hovering over the waters in pre-Creation and moving everything from void and nothingness to creation.

b. Law is not sinful, wrong, or immoral.

c. But the power behind the Law determines the result.

D. The Apostle Paul is clearly showing in Romans that we were all under a law, a power, of sin and death that needed to be replaced.

1. Through Jesus, in Christ Jesus, we are bought out from under the penalty, the condemnation, of the first law and brought under a new Law.

2. Romans 5-7 shows us what it means to live under the rule of sin and death.

3. Romans 8-15 shows us what it means to live under the rule of the Spirit.

E. Today, I want to show us from these verses 4 reasons why we are no longer slaves to sin.

1. We all know the principles and rules of the law of sin.

2. But today, Pastor Paul and the Apostle Paul want to teach you why you are not a slave to sin any longer.

I am not a slave to sin because:

1. Christ has set me free. Vs. 2.

A. Free from what?

1. Law of sin and death.

2. Our natural condition, because of what Adam did, is a condition of sinfulness.

a. We all have sinned and fall short of God's glory.

b. And that means we are slaves and partners with sin.

3. Before Christ, I was bound to the Law of sin and death without choice or option.

4. For believers, sin is a choice instead of an obligation.

a. No one is perfect.

b. No one is sinless.

c. I do sin, but I don't have to.

B. A few years ago, when I worked at the elementary school, I noticed many teachers using the language of choice.

1. Especially with younger students, teachers would confront a child who did wrong by asking, "Did you make a good choice?"

a. It wasn't like when I was growing up, and the teacher was telling us what we did wrong and that we better get our act right.

b. Instead, the kid was encouraged to recognize that they had made a bad choice and that they shouldn't do that next time.

2. This type of correction assumes that the behavior is a choice within their ability to control.

3. Scripture teaches us that, apart from Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit, we don't have a choice.

a. We are obligated to sin.

b. We are predisposed toward sin.

c. Sin is not only an outward influence but also an inward one.

d. Jesus taught that it was what comes out of a person that makes them unclean.

C. However, the Holy Spirit has set us free from the law that binds us to sin.

1. The verb for “free” here in Romans 8:2 is what is called an aorist tense verb.

- a. “The aorist tense is a verb form that refers to a single, completed action in the past.”
- b. This means Paul is referring to a past, completed action.
- c. Jesus isn’t setting us free from the law of sin and death;
- d. Nor is he going to set us free.
- e. We ARE set free.

2 That means we don’t HAVE TO SIN, we choose to sin.

3. In Christ Jesus, we are not destined to fail and fall but to win and rise.

- a. That’s because Jesus broke the power of sin over us and, as we read later in Romans 8, we have the Spirit of Jesus living in us to empower us.
- b. Romans 8 talks about mindset, and setting our mind our Christ.
- c. Part of the believers mindset is recognizing we are not

I am so thankful that we are not slaves to sin because the law of the Spirit of Christ has set us free from the law of sin and death.

I am not a slave to sin because:

2. God condemned sin in the flesh by sending Jesus. Vs. 3.

A. Condemnation is concerned with the legal penalty.

- 1. To be condemned is to be found guilty and to be punished.
- 2. Sin has to be condemned.
- 3. God is too good, too just, and too holy to give sin a pass.
- 4. And, especially in Romans 8:1-3, it is God’s condemnation of sin that is in view.

a. Satan can use the threat of condemnation, punishment, guilt, and shame as weapons against us.

b. But he has no power to penalize us or find us guilty because he isn't the judge.

B. God is the judge because God alone is holy.

1. It was God's law that was transgressed.

2. Only God could pronounce judgment and issue condemnation.

3. And sin had to be condemned.

C. God did not give sin a pass.

1. Instead, God condemned sin and removed the penalty of sin (wages of sin is death) through Jesus.

2. This only applies to those who are "in Christ Jesus."

3. And we become "in Jesus" through faith, believing that Jesus is the Son of God, that He did live a sinless life, and He died so that the righteous requirement would be fulfilled.

4. We believe Jesus did arise from the dead and ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of the Father, and Jesus sends His Spirit to dwell in us.

D. Galatians, which is almost a shorter version of Romans, tells it like this:

Galatians 3:10-14 (CSB)

¹⁰For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, because it is written, **Everyone who does not do everything written in the book of the law is cursed.** ¹¹Now it is clear that no one is justified before God by the law, because **the righteous will live by faith.** ¹²But the law is not based on faith; instead, **the one who does these things will live by them.** ¹³Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, because it is written, **Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.** ¹⁴The purpose was that the

blessing of Abraham would come to the Gentiles by Christ Jesus, so that we could receive the promised Spirit through faith.

E. I love to read history, and I recently finished a book about the life of Daniel Boone and his many confrontations with both the British and the American Indians.

1. At least once in his life, Daniel Boone had to run through what was called the "gauntlet."

a. The gauntlet was a form of punishment and torture where the Native Americans would create two parallel lines and would make the captive or prisoner run between them.

b. While the person ran, the Indians would strike at the captive.

2. During the Revolutionary War, Daniel Boone was captured and forced to run the gauntlet.

a. In Boone's case, when he ran, the chief ensured that he wouldn't be killed, so many of the warriors did not have their clubs and tomahawks but sticks and switches.

b. Boone ran the gauntlet and survived in pretty good shape.

3. But many did not.

a. Those captives that were marked for death would often be painted black.

b. As the captive was made to run the gauntlet, the warriors would swing their war clubs and tomahawks with the intention of injuring, maiming, and killing.

c. And if the captive survived, there often awaited one warrior at the end who would ensure that the captive would die.

4. Let's apply this illustration for our purposes:

- a. We were all condemned to die, painted black, and marked for death because of our sin and transgression.
- b. We were sins captive, and sin would have its way with us.
- c. When we read that “there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus in Romans 8:1-2, that doesn’t mean that God eliminated the “gauntlet,” but instead that Christ ran it in our place.
- d. Furthermore, we are no longer painted black, marking us for death, but instead, we are washed clean by the Blood of Jesus.
- e. We don’t have to face punishment and death for our sin, because Gal 3:13 says, ¹³Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, because it is written, **Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.**

I am not a slave to sin because God condemned sin through Jesus.

I am not a slave to sin because:

3. Jesus satisfied God’s requirement. Vs. 4.

A. Sacrifices and offerings are pretty hard for us Americans to grasp.

- 1. If you’ve ever tried to read Exodus, Leviticus, or Numbers, you might be scratching your head asking, “Why?”
- 2. And hear it from me, that’s a REALLY good question.
- 3. Today I can’t answer the question of “why?” as well as I can answer the question of “what.”

Romans 8: 3 For what the law could not do since it was weakened by the flesh, God did. He condemned sin in the flesh by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh as a sin offering, ⁴in order that the law’s requirement would be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

B. The Apostle Paul says that Jesus was a sin offering.

1. And with the connection in verse to the law, The Apostle Paul is pointing us to the Old Testament Law.

2. That takes us to the wonderful but complex book of Leviticus.

C. Leviticus 4 teaches about the sin offering.

1. Chapter 4 begins with, "When someone sins unintentionally against any of the Lord's commands..."

2. Then, for over 30 verses, details are given on how to atone for that sin.

D. A quick summary: When someone realized they had sinned, they were to bring an appropriate sacrifice.

1. Surprisingly, at least in Leviticus 4, 5, 6, the sacrifice required was not based on type of sin but on the position of the sinner.

- a. If a priest sinned, or if they were atoning for the nation's sins, the sins could only be cleansed by the blood of a young, perfect bull. (The most expensive sacrifice).

- b. If the sinner was a leader in Israel, he needed to bring an unblemished male goat.

- c. Common people needed a female goat, or if they could not afford it, they could bring two turtledoves.

2. When it comes to sin in Leviticus, there appear to me to be two general rules.

- a. The greater the sin, the greater the sacrifice.

- b. The higher your position of authority, the costlier the sacrifice.

E. But how do you atone for the sins of the world?

1. God did it by sending His perfect, sinless Son as the sacrifice.

2. The greater the sin, the greater the sacrifice, and nothing, and no one is greater than Jesus.

3. **Romans 8:32 (CSB)**

³² He did not even spare his own Son but gave him up for us all. How will he not also with him grant us everything?

I am not a slave to sin because Jesus offered Himself as a sin offering so the righteous requirement has been fulfilled.

Lastly, I am not a slave to sin because:

4. I am in Christ Jesus. Vs. 1

A. 47 times in Paul's letters, he uses the prepositional phrase "in Christ Jesus."

1. Prepositions express relationship, and here it tells us where to find no condemnation.

2. We can only find it in relationship with Jesus.

B. It is faith that puts us with Him.

1. Isn't it funny that, as complicated as parts of Romans is, it points us to this:

2. If you stay with Jesus, you're good.

a. It is super simple and super complex.

b. For all of Roman's complexity, it comes down to the reality that Jesus did all of the heavy lifting.

C. Because I'm in Christ Jesus, and because Jesus has done so much for me, I want to live for Him and with Him.

1. And the Spirit empowers us to that very thing.

2. Before, honoring and serving God with all our hearts, minds, and souls always missed the mark.

a. To paraphrase the great Bob Uecker:

b. "Just a bit outside."

3. But the new Law of the Spirit in Christ Jesus means we CAN serve God, honor Him, and bring Him glory.

Apply: Because you are in Christ Jesus, you can live for Him.

A. You don't have to sin.

1. Because you are not a sin to your sinful flesh any longer.
2. Yes, that is hard to walk out but now that you know that is the goal, stop giving yourself an excuse to walk in sin any longer.
3. Walk in Forgiveness, not excuse.

B. Because I'm in Christ Jesus, my motivation to live for Him is now different.

1. A law mindset says I will do what I'm supposed to do because I don't want to be punished.
2. If your only reason not to do something is so you don't go to hell, that is still the spirit of Law and condemnation.

C. What's my motivation to not sin?

1. I love this quote by Timothy Keller:
2. The thing Jesus lives for, the purpose of his entire life, is to make us holy, fulfilling "the righteous requirements of the law." This is the greatest possible motive for living a holy life. Whenever we sin, we endeavor to frustrate the aim and purpose of the entire life, death and ministry of Jesus Christ! If this doesn't work as an incentive for living a holy life, nothing will.¹
3. Because Jesus came solely to fulfill the righteous requirements of the law, to set us free from the law that compels and enslaves us to servitude to sin, when we know better and sin anyway, we "frustrate the aim and purpose of the entire life, death and ministry of Jesus Christ."

Prayer: Lord, Help me to walk in freedom from sin AND honor you.

¹ Timothy Keller, *Romans 8-16 for You*, ed. Carl Laferton, God's Word for You (The Good Book Company, 2015), 16.