

The Good News of Romans 8

I love getting good news, but don't we all. Recently my son went to work with FedEx after working at a job for many, many years that was taking a toll on his body. Working for FedEx is no walk in the park, but he loves it and he's quite satisfied with being one of their contract drivers. He is like me, I enjoyed driving and being on the streets by myself in a company vehicle. That's good news.

Around the first of the month our mic system at church, as most of you know, went kaput and after calling in a sound system expert we determined that it really was kaput. So I researched different mic systems similar to our now broken one and ordered one that has gotten good reviews. That was April 12. I received an email the next day informing me that the manufacturer would keep me abreast of my orders shipping status. Then I got another email telling me that my order was being delayed due to transportation problems in China and I would not receive my product until May 23. That was a bummer. Then I got another email saying it would now be arriving on May 10. That was better but still much later than I had hoped.

Well, this Monday, April 26, I got an email saying that it would arrive on that very day, April 26 via Prime. Now that was good news. And sure enough, it arrived that very day. Seriously. I almost shouted. I felt like a little kid getting what he wanted for Christmas. That is good news for our entire congregation.

Now, take your Bibles and turn to Romans chapter 8 and I am going to remind you of the fantastic outline the apostle Paul, unbeknownst to him, hid in this chapter. This chapter holds so much good news I thought we would all benefit from hearing it again. I know you have heard a version of this from this pulpit some time ago, but this is the new revised edition of that previous sermon.

First, Romans 8:1. "We will never be condemned." *Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*

When the apostle Paul wrote this letter to the saints in Rome, they would have been familiar with that word condemned in a very different sense than what you and I see in it. They had witnessed how the Romans

condemned and executed their non-Roman citizens who were charge with a capital offense which could have been anything from murder to insulting a Roman soldier who was in a bad mood to speaking ill of the Emperor to attending church where Caesar was not considered divine. Remember, these Christians were living under one of the most **psycho Caesars** to ever curse the Roman Empire, **Emperor Nero**. He has been called “One of the most despicable manifestations of human flesh ever to disgrace this planet.” The history of this mad man is too gross to mention in mixed company. The saints who were martyred under Lenin and Stalin and Hitler knew something about this kind of condemnation.

It was under Nero that the persecution of Christians was taken to the next level, if that were possible, when the perverted emperor began using saints as lights for his garden parties. He would impale them on huge poles and soak their bodies in fuel oil and set them on fire to provide the needed lighting. And, to entertain the masses, he would have the Christians he had taken prisoner clothed in bloody animal skins and set in the Roman Colosseum to be devoured by either wild dogs or lions and tigers and bears. That was the picture of condemnation the Roman saints would have conjured up when they got to this part of the letter.

Being that all disciples of Christ serve God and not man, any man, we are not to fear any man, be he emperor, president, king, ayatollah or dictator.

Second, Every Christian has a divine-implanted forever-kind-of freedom from condemnation.

Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. I would guess that some of you here at Eastway remember how I pointed out the significance of that little word “now.” The Greek word translated now is an adverb that I refer to as “an adverb of time.” It literally means now as in right now. There is a Greek conjunction translated now that could also be translated yet or but or even. This adverb means now now.

That means that *Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus* applies to each of us forever. We are not now

condemned. We will not be condemned next week. We will not be condemned next year or ten years from now. Now in this verse will still mean now next week and so forth and so on. And that is a divinely-implanted forever-kind-of freedom from condemnation.

Now since I am a stickler for Biblical context, I want to remind you of why the word “therefore” begins Romans 8:1.

It points us back in the immediate context to chapter 7, verses 24-25, where Paul has reached the conclusion that God is going to deliver us in the future from “*the body of this death*” which is the source of our wretchedness. **But** in the meantime, Paul is informing us that we are stuck in these flesh and blood, mortal and corrupt human bodies until we die or we’re caught up in the rapture.

Listen to how Paul puts himself in this verse. ***Romans 7:25** Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other hand, I myself, with my flesh am serving the law of sin.* And that was the great apostle Paul saying that about himself. It isn’t all the story, but it is a very important part of it.

That explains why we constantly experience the battle between the flesh and the spirit. Our remaining corruption or remaining sinfulness will always be around to annoy us. And since it is God’s doing that we are this way, I can live with life the way it is. It isn’t like we choose to be this way or get any pleasure out of our remaining sinfulness. It is how God has decided to leave us for the time being that in all things He might get the glory. And I can live with that. God said it and that settles it.

The **Second point in this outline of Romans 8, “we will never be rejected.”**

³¹ *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? (Rom. 8:31 NAU)*

Some of you at Eastway will remember that the phrase in that verse, “If God is for us,” is grammatically speaking, a first class condition. And a first class condition assumes that what is being stated is

true. So, we can read that phrase this way, “If God is for us, **and He is,**” or, “**Since God is for us.**” And it’s just like the word now. It means that God is always for us. The next time you are hard on yourself because of that sin you just committed, listen for that still small voice in the back of your mind telling you, “I am for you. I am not against you.”

³¹ *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, and He is, who is against us?* Since we know that God is for us and always will be, we can know that He will never reject us.

Having grown up in a home where I and my brother were physically and mentally and emotionally abused, I expected to be rejected by almost everyone, especially people in authority like my teachers and later my bosses at work. And then like all teenage boys, I was almost deathly afraid of being rejected by girls I wanted to date. It did not turn out that way, most of the time, but that fear of rejection was always lurking in the back of my mind. And that transferred over into my relationship with the Lord Jesus. I for a longtime expected God to reject me. I allowed my remaining sinfulness to determine my relationship with Him. And I was wrong and ignorant of the finished work of Christ on the cross and how God applied that finished work to me. And I was wrong, thinking that God is like one of us. He is not.

Beloved, once loved by God, always loved by God. Once adopted by God, always a child of God. Once justified, always justified. God will never reject His children anymore than He could reject Jesus.

No condemnation; no rejection.

Third, We will never be finally defeated. But we will face temporary defeats in this life.

Certain denominations erroneously teach that Christians are never to suffer anything or in anyway, including being sick. So, when one of their world-renowned healers died of heart disease years ago, his illness was never mentioned. And the fact that the man wore glasses never seemed to cross their deceived and blinded (no pun intended) minds. He had very poor vision all his life. Go figure.

But the error these people make concerning Romans 8:37 is they ignore Romans 8:36. Here's 8:37, ³⁷ *But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.* That's where they came up with their no defeat point. But, look at the previous verse that was there under the very eyes of those poor people. ³⁶ *Just as it is written, "FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED."* It is so true that we will never be finally defeated. But, beloved, we will face temporary defeats in some form or another. Things will not always go the way we want them to go or hoped they would go, including things we are doing as servants of the Lord Jesus.

Finally, outline point **#4, "No separation. We will never be separated."**

So, we have seen no condemnation, no rejection, no final defeat. And now we come to the final piece of our outline and the intended climax to this chapter. ³⁸ *For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,* ³⁹ *nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* (Rom. 8:38-39 NAU).

Check out that list. Death, life, angels, principalities, things present, things to come, powers, height, depth, any other created thing. And go back to v.35, tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, or sword. None of the above will or can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus.

But the one item or thing I wish Paul had included in those two lists is sin. I wish he had said outright, "sin will never separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus." But he didn't. And do you know why? I am convinced it is because he has just spent over eight chapters telling us that very thing, sin will never separate those who are in Christ from the love of God that is in Christ.

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It's the same for everyone who believes in Jesus and is saved. It's the same for everyone who has by the grace of God heard and believed the gospel. We can know without a doubt that nothing in this life can separate us from a force as powerful as the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And if that doesn't satisfy you, then maybe the blood of Christ will. ⁵ *This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.*

⁶ *If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;*

⁷ *but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.*

We will never be condemned; we will never be rejected; we will never be finally defeated; and we will never be separated.

And that, beloved, is good news.