

No Condemnation - For Those in Christ

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Date: 27 September 2026

Preacher: BK Smith

[0:00] Please have a seat. Please turn with me in your Bibles to Romans chapter 8.

! I'm excited about getting into Romans 8 this morning, so I want to just thank you for your patience in waiting to get here.

However, I'm going to make you wait a little bit longer before we actually get into the text. And I know it's October, usually this is the kind of talk that a pastor has, but I kind of wanted to just share with you a little bit of a pastor's perspective of what's upcoming.

What are some of the things that we as elders are thinking about, praying for? There's a new ministry opportunity that is before us, and I want to inform you of that.

So let's just call this a little bit of a pastor's talk before we get into the text. So I want to give you guys a little bit of a diagram that I drew up.

[1:26] Shane has that for us. And essentially when I sit at my desk and I draw something up like this, I'm creating an image to describe what ministry looks like.

So if you notice, at the very top is God. So the ministries that we are called to do are below God. The first part, the first top of the triangle is worship.

What happens here on a Sunday night, or Sunday night, Sunday morning. And it provides for us kind of the heat of the furnace to drive all other ministries.

The next section is discipleship. Discipleship, what we're called to do, the Lord calls us according to Matthew 28. Our responsibility is to disciple.

And then the third, the bottom layer is what it is. The ministries that we have at this church that are based on the gifts that God has given the people here at this church.

[2:32] All right? So that's what it looks like when I draw it on paper. But when I do it in my head, this is what it looks like. All right? Nice, beautiful mountain, right?

There's a God-like experience being at the top. As we come, we worship. We hear God's word. We're under his worship. There's three primary goals happen at the peak.

And the first is we want three things to happen every Sunday morning. One, we want you to hear the unapologetic preaching of God's word. We believe that God's word not only is sufficient, it is authoritative for everything that we do.

And we come under that word. Thus, whether it's me or Dave or someone who's guest preaching, that is the goal. The unapologetic preaching. This is what God's word says.

Now you have to deal with the implications of that in your lives. Number two, we believe in unashamed adoration. Worship. Worship that is given to the Lord, not just through preaching, but our singing time.

[3:37] Our praying time. Our giving time. And our reading of God's word. And then the third element that I believe healthy churches are characterized by, and I think you guys do this very well, it's unbeatable hospitality.

To be welcomed. Church is a new place. Some of you today might be the first time at church. We want this, that you'd be welcomed, that you would come, you'd have a nice coffee, sit down. We want you to be comfortable to hear what is that God would have for you under his word that will be preached.

The second element, like I said, is that discipleship. We believe, and that's one of our priorities, is to make sure that we are discipling.

The truth of the matter is, it is God and only God that grows a church. He's the only one that can make a church grow. But he gives us a responsibility.

And that responsibility is to grow people into the likeness of Christ. That's discipleship. Our primary means of discipleship that we've chosen is the growth group, small group model.

[4:51] Because it's a place where you can be known. You can have people love you. You get to use your gifts in that smaller group more often. And you can have someone pray for you at a more intimate level.

We want you to be known in a community of believers. So we have that. And that's also what drives why we have junior Sunday school. It's why we have youth ministry.

And as God would have as he raised up other gifted people to lead other ministries, we pray that those things would happen. But our non-negotiables, the three priorities, are going to be the growth groups, youth group, and children's ministry.

We want to make sure everyone has an opportunity to be disciplined. Now I'm going to read to you what our mission statement says. Our mission statement reads, To be a church where people are transformed into fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

You've heard this mantra. Dave has said it. We long to see lost people saved. Amen. Right?

Through the power of the gospel. We long to see saved people growing in Christ-like maturity.

[6:05] And three, we want to see mature disciples multiplying. Which means you growing in your faith and joining us to live out this mission where you live, work, and serve all to the glory of God.

Right? There's no, we're not doing it for the glory of SBC. We do it for the glory of God. Amen? So that's kind of what drives our thinking when we make some of the decisions.

And it's going to make sense in a little bit. Questions have arisen. You know, with Dave Crente leaving, a lot of questions have been asked. You know, are we replacing Dave?

One of the other questions that has come out, we're no longer associated with FEB, the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches. So questions have been asked. Are we a part of that?

And what's coming next? So a question would be, what's going on with Grace Kids has come up.

So I want you to understand the model that we have that we are thinking about.

[7:12] Now, this bottom level to the model that I have up here, gift-based ministries, that is the product of worship.

You notice there's that river that's flowing down, right? That's the river that comes from God who gives new life. People come, they grow in the faith, they're disciplined, and then they're like, hey, BK, I've got these gifts that God has given me.

I want to use them for God's glory. So that's when we take selective type of ministries and we introduce them to the body. So the one would be Grace Kids that we inherited in the merger.

Now, Pastor Dave had a passion and a gift for leading that ministry. The way we're approaching it is right now, we're not going forward with that ministry unless there's someone here in the body wants to step up and into that leadership role.

Does that make sense? Without someone who has both the characters that we're looking for leadership and the passion, that's how we make that decision.

[8:25] It's either we go forward with that ministry or we don't. The last thing you want is me or the rest of the elders guilting you to show up to do that type of ministry.

That's a ministry a lot of churches said, hey, we're doing, but they see very little fruit in it. Because God just really hasn't blessed it. So we kind of look, it's God's will for us to go with that ministry.

One or two of you would step up and say, hey, we would really like to be a part to give leadership to it. The other aspect, I'm going to back up a little bit under the discipleship.

One of the issues, we've been blessed with a lot of new believers coming to Christ. Either getting saved or God calling people here, wanting to grow in the faith.

And we know that Pastor Dave kind of heads up the soul care ministry, which is the biblical counseling, which he offers free for anybody that attends at this church.

[9:26] But the other part of his responsibilities is working with new believers, new attenders. And he does these projects.

So one of the things, if you're new, you want to know about Christ, you would talk to Pastor Dave. And he'll partner you with someone to walk with you one-on-one in the word.

We use a book. It's called Growing in Christ. And it's just looking at what it is to grow in Jesus.

Because when someone gets saved, they're put into this new body.

And some people have been a Christian here since the 60s, if not the 50s. Right? In case you don't know what that means, it's a long time. A lot of maturity. And sometimes dropping them into a growth group can be overwhelming.

How does this work? All that kind of stuff. So we kind of want a way to do an on-ramp into that area. Another ministry that we use, that we just are announcing, which is run by Josh DeMarco, is our Everyman and Warrior.

[10:27] Everyman and Warrior is essentially taking a synthesis of what God's word says to help men become the men that God has called them to. I'd recommend this for every man in the church.

We've had people who've been saved for 30 years. And we've had people go through the process who've been saved for a year. It just involves, what does my relationship look like with this new faith in Jesus Christ, with God?

What does my faith look like with my wife? How do I lead my wife in my home? And there's also talks about relationship to money, to work, other areas. Just kind of using that text to help drive us. So we only do that is because we've got people who are willing to step into it. Another example that we have, we've got a few of the women in younger families are pretty excited about Christian education.

So they're kind of working at seeing if we're eventually going to have a Christian school. So they're kind of moving ahead as they work with homeschoolers and having a co-op where maybe Lord would have us have a Christian school here.

[11:38] So that's one of those. If those people don't have that passion, that's not something that we're pushing forward. Does that make sense to everyone?

Can I get an amen? Amen. I just want to know we're still Baptist here. Okay. Now here's another interesting ministry that we've been invited into.

You guys have all heard of this business called Amazon. Anybody not clear on that? Well, Amazon has this warehouse where they receive all the returned goods.

You know, you can use something from Amazon. I don't like it. You send it back. They actually keep it in a warehouse. They don't send it back to China or Japan or wherever that product. It's kept here. And Coastal Church in downtown Vancouver has asked if we'd be willing to partner with them to help distribute the goods that are returned.

[12:43] So this past week, I was able to go meet the leader and I went into the warehouse and it's filled with everything that you can imagine. From garden hoses to lipstick to toys to all types of jackets and clothing.

You name it, it's in there. So, there's a couple things that I immediately thought. A, these boxes that we have for Operation Christmas Child.

We can send a team down. You can load up like a thousand of those boxes. All right? That would take quite a few volunteers. You help go through. Find what kids would want.

We can use that. The other thing is, when it comes to Christmas time, there's the hamper that we use. We can fill those hampers. But, they also give us this opportunity where we ourselves can become what's called a distribution center for those goods.

What that means is, and we would be using the other property for this, they can literally bring a pallet or up to 12, 24 pallets for us.

[13:54] Each pallet has 26 boxes filled with who knows what. And it would be our responsibility to go through those goods and give them out to the community.

You with me on that? So, there's a couple of things there. It's like every time you open the box, it's like Christmas Day. You don't know what's in there. But, the person we're looking for, if we're going to do this ministry, I'm looking for someone that would be passionate both to lead and organize. Volunteer. So, basically, you had a couple hours in the week. We'd ask you to go, and you just go through the boxes. Each pallet has between \$3,000 and \$5,000 worth of goods on it.

So, it's significant. So, what we would need would be someone who can partner with other, I don't want to say ministries. There's certainly going to be ministries.

But, even social groups here that are looking for these things. This is a wonderful opportunity. And, Wendy, when Stanley kind of was liking this idea and seeing it before I was, what a great opportunity it is to bless our community with people who have real needs.

[15:12] And, we can come kind of a hub to do that. So, it's kind of exciting. I would hope that's just another opportunity.

So, it's something we go forward with if you guys want to go forward with it. And, the way I look at it, if someone wants to help to step in and lead, and people who want to join them in driving that ministry.

Clear as mud? All right. That's kind of how we look at those ministries. So, as much as we love Grace Kids without someone to drive that, it's not possible to keep going. Even though I love this Amazon thing, I'm not going to go forward unless you guys share that love and a desire to outreach into the community.

So, one other question that I'm going to add to, to finish this off. Will we hire another pastor? I believe the answer is yes. And, one of the things that we're doing is looking for someone who can complement the gifts that are already here at the church.

[16:20] Which means, some of the giftings that Dave and I do not have that would fulfill a greater balance within the church. One of the areas that I've thought about is having someone who can lead the music.

Because, in case you guys don't know, these guys are fantastic musicians. And, they've been volunteer-based for many, many years. And, they do a great job. But, to take it to that next level. To work with youth. To work with other type of ministries within the church. It's difficult because they're already given their time and work. But, to have someone that could be dedicated maybe 20 hours.

And, I've already talked to the musicians. That would be something good. To have someone who can even work with the younger generation bringing up musicians.

But, I'm not 100% on that. This is why I'm going to ask you to pray. And, we're going to pray in a moment.

[17:19] And, this prayer thing. I've been working. And, let me just ask the last question. We're not with the Baptists. Who do we need to be with?

Because, some people will ask the question. Well, who's going to provide accountability and all that? First of all, the greatest point of accountability is to Jesus Christ himself. And, it's the elders of the church.

And, it's your responsibility to make sure we're biblical elders. That you accept us. That's why we have these AGMs and these meetings. To make sure those things happen. So, as an example.

If you notice. I have the. According to the bylaws. I have the power to hire someone into the role.

But, that person is not affirmed to be an elder. But, it can't be by me.

It has to be by you. So, that's kind of how that process works. You guys are responsible. I can bring in people to do that function. But, it's up to you to make that assessment.

[18:13] Whether or not they are elder qualified. And, ready to be. To serve in that type of role. So, as far as being a part of the FEB.

Is there a loss? Absolutely not. There's been some administrative stuff. That they've helped us with. But, we've already replaced that. In fact. The nominations are kind of going away.

And, what's happening is. There is other groupings of churches. That are more like-minded. In philosophy of ministry. That are connecting. That are doing things. As an example.

Our youth kids just had a great time last week. At Stillwood Camp. And, that was organized by Redeemer Church. In Abbotsford. Every year.

They invite us in. Another opportunity is coming up for the young adults. And, I would say. 40 years the age of younger. Cloverdale Baptist has invited us into that.

[19:09] And, they've got Andy Steiger. Who's going to be teaching there. And, Andy Steiger is the head of Apologetics Canada. Great, incredible speaker. So, we're kind of invited in.

So, we already have these relationships created with different organizations. And, just so you know. We're considered to be an Acts 29 church. That means we give money to support church planning around the world.

I actually serve on the council for the Gospel Coalition Canada. So, just kind of wired in with those guys. I also do work with Grace To You Canada.

And, there's another ministry called 6-4 Pastor Prayer Fellowship. So, with all that said.

Before I get into Romans 8. I just thought we would pray. I joined this. It's called the 6-4 Pastor Prayer Fellowship.

[20:09] Because, I felt a deeper desire to augment my prayer life as a pastor. And, with that, to bring you guys with me.

To just dig deeper into that prayer element. So, over the next while, we're going to be doing some things together. But, as much as we are a church that prays.

I want us to be qualified as a praying church first. That there is a balance that needs to be happened between the preaching of the word and prayer. And, I'm excited because some of this is already happening at the growth group level.

Where we're able to be intimate and open. And, just cry out to God about what He's calling to. So, what I'd like to do now is I'd like to lead us in prayer.

There's a new future ahead of us. I'm praying that you would join us in this prayer of what God is calling us to. Both as a church and as individual people who have gifts and desire to be used by God.

[21:23] You willing to do that with me? All right. Let's go to the Lord. Dear most Lord, dear Lord, holy heavenly Father.

We thank you for the God that you are. Lord, I pray as just as we get into Romans 8 today. And, as we continue into this passage, we would clearly see your magnificent and awesome character. Which shines forth in such great love for us. Father, as a church, as a gathered group of believers here.

Father, it is our desire to be obedient to you. To use our gifts, our spiritual gifts that you have given to us to bring glory to you.

And, Lord, I'm asking this church what you are calling them to. Father, if there's some, may you stir them up.

[22:33] If there's any here that has this passion and desire to lead Grace Kids, I pray they would make their names known. That they would have a desire to take on that leadership.

Father, the other aspect is just this Amazon opportunity. We have this building that we can use. That we can use it for your glory to demonstrate love.

And supplying some real needs for people. And it gives us an opportunity to make inroads into the community. That perhaps some of us have never had the opportunity to do.

And thank you for prayer. That we can come together and adore you. Thank you in our blessings and to thank you in our hardships.

Father, I'm convinced the more we understand and know your character, the deeper our prayer life becomes. Father, I pray that you would light that fire in us.

[23:48] And I pray that you would grant me wisdom, both to me and the elders, as we lead and pray. For Father, we desire to see your hand of blessing upon us.

Father, we cry out for miracles. We want to see broken hearts made new. Hearts that once rejected you, now embracing you.

Father, I believe those things don't happen because of programs or systems. They happen because you make it so.

And there's a responsibility that we have as church. Who come and worship you every Sunday. We worship you by serving each other during the week. So, Father, I ask that you would stir the hearts of the saints here.

[25:01] If they're willing and able to serve in such a way, would they make it known to the leadership? I pray blessings upon them for even thinking about these things.

And as they come to you in prayer, asking for these things to happen, I pray that you would make it so. Father, thank you for the responsibility of discipling souls.

And you've given many here who are partaking in that endeavor. Thank you, Jesus. In your name we pray. Amen.

Alright, thanks for humoring me with that discussion. But I just wanted you to know kind of where we're going, what we're thinking, and what's happening.

Alright, Romans 8. You got your Bibles open to Romans 8. Now, I want you to understand something. First of all, we're going to be here for a couple of months.

[26:10] You might say, is that a little bit of overkill? Perhaps it might be a few years. Romans 8 is what many people consider the greatest chapter in all the Bible.

Now, I know that's kind of a weird or a funny thing to say, that a chapter is somehow greater than the others. But the teaching found within this chapter is monumental.

And I thought I'd just read you some of the quotes that have occurred through the centuries by different biblical scholars on the subject. One writes, Romans 8 is the inner sanctuary within the cathedral of Christian faith.

Romans is the tree of life in the midst of the Garden of Eden. It is the highest peak in the range of mountains. On this subject of mountains, James' voice adds his voice to it.

He says, there is a mountaintop in the final paragraph. That is the Mount Everest of the letter. And thus the highest peak in the highest Himalayan range of Scripture.

[27 : 34] Excuse me, I'm battling a post-vacation cult here. One last quote says, If the Bible was a ring and the book of Romans its precious stone, chapter 8 would be the sparkling point of the jewel.

Romans 8 is considered the most loved, the most beautiful, the most hopeful, the most theologically rich, and one of the greatest supreme life-changing chapters in all of God's Word.

What I read to you is just simply a small sample of what some of the heroes of our faith have written. My hope, my prayer, is that someday you would lend your voice to say the absolute same thing about how these truths that we are about to learn echo in your heart as well.

Now, for you that are new to the church and you haven't been with us through the first seven chapters, let me have the pleasure of sharing with you why this chapter matters.

You see, Romans chapter 8 speaks to those who love Jesus. Romans chapter 8 speaks to those who love Jesus and for those who are tired, exhausted.

[29 : 15] For Christians that are tired of failing, it's written to those who are tired of trying, of tiring, of making promises and breaking those promises.

It's written to someone who, hey, we believe Jesus Christ saved us, but you wonder if God is tired of me.

It's the thought that enters in your head. You know you're accepted, but you wonder if God still loves you.

Let me read for you this morning's text. Romans 8.1 There is, therefore, now, no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

There is, therefore, now, no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Let's be honest.

[30 : 30] I believe we could recite this verse over and over and let it wash over us so our hearts would truly settle on the great news, this great truth that Paul is telling us here.

You see, to understand this wonderful news, you need to understand the problem. We need to understand the longing of every man and woman through the millennia who've always sought to have answered.

You see, if you've been here, you know that the book of Romans addresses the questions that mankind cannot escape. The first question that every man and woman who is asked that has walked this face of the earth is, what is wrong with this world?

And what is wrong with me? Why do I do the things I do not want to do? From Romans 1 to Romans 3.20, Paul has exposed our sin.

Now, for some of you, sin may be a new word or a religious term you do not understand. And you might be thinking that it means to do something wrong or to make a mistake.

[31 : 49] See, the fact is, God in the garden made us to love Him and to love one another. But we put ourselves first.

We decided we want to do what is right. We want to do what matters and how we will live in our own minds, meaning we did what we considered right.

We did what we consider that matters and how we will live. It's called rebellion. And here's the thing.

Rebellion, this sin, comes out of ordinary ways. Right? That's why we often find ourselves tearing someone down to make ourselves look better. We excuse in ourselves what we condemn in others. We refuse to apologize because we'd rather protect our pride than repairing hurts. And oftentimes, we do something kind because we know it will get attention and people will like us.

[33 : 00] Sin is also, we know someone needs help and we look away. So you see, sin is not just solely defined by what we do.

It's often defined by what we don't do. And Paul explains to us that this problem of sin reaches every human heart including even the most respectable religious heart.

We are corrupted. It's who we are and what we do. Now, once we understand that truth, the second question evolves.

That question is knowing and admitting that I am a sinner and I continue to sin, what hope is there for me? What hope? How can I get out of this death?

How can I be made right with God? The bad news is we cannot fix ourselves. The good news is God has told us He will fix us for us.

[34 : 06] God receives sinners through Jesus Christ who died and rose again. We receive His righteousness as a free gift and we are then justified by faith.

So now I know what is wrong with me. I now know that Jesus makes my relationship with God possible but as every Christian now asks, why do I struggle to change?

Why is it so hard to lose these old habits? The way I live now is really not that different from the way I lived yesterday.

And that's the third question. Can I really change? And will God ultimately complete that change?

This is where we are in the story of Romans between chapters 6 and 8.

It is about our new life in Christ, our struggle with sin and the certainty of coming glory. Romans 9 to 11 asks the question, has God failed to keep His promises to Israel where God or Paul defends the faithfulness of God and finally chapters 12 through 16 answers, asks the question, how should I live in light of this gospel?

[35 : 31] Now that I've received this mercy, it demands a response. And this mercy reshapes my worship, it reshapes our relationships, our service and our daily obedience.

This is the road through Romans upon which we are traveling. And this morning we stand where struggling Christians desperately need to stand.

See, chapter 7 is a hard lesson. There Paul shows us something we find painfully difficult to learn. And it's this truth that knowing God's commands does not give us the power to obey His commands.

right? Right? We might know what is right and good, but the law doesn't give me the power to do right and good.

Like, we know the law is holy, we know God's commandments are good, but there's this power of indwelling sin within us that is so powerful it overrules the law.

[36 : 39] It's better to understand the law like a mirror. The mirror can show you you have dirt on your face but it can't wash you.

The God's law exposes our sin with perfect accuracy. The law, but the law cannot give a sinful heart the life it needs. And here's the crazy thing and this is why Romans 7 exists because our response is Jesus has forgiven me.

Thank you Jesus I've got it from here now. Thank you for saving me I'm now going to live my way under my power and that's why you can't because I can do the law I'm a Christian now.

You can't. Give me the rules God. Give me stronger resolution and I promise you God this week I will become the person I should be.

Has anybody here said that? Can you relate to that? You know we believe we're saved and then comes that familiar temptation. Maybe it's a sharp tongue a hidden resentment it's a bitterness towards someone that creeps into our heart or it's a forgiveness that is not given when someone asks us or it's the decision we promised God we'd never make again and we do it.

[38 : 18] We knew the command we wanted to obey yet we found out soon enough that knowledge and determination is insufficient. as I taught I believe that chapter seven describes the struggle of a believer who delights in God's law yet discovers the continuing power of indwelling sin.

The lesson is clear God's good law cannot rescue us through the resources of our flesh. so here we are standing at the foot of Romans 8 there's this majestic you know what it's like it's like being in Squamish we're just starting the road up to the mountains Romans 8 announces that God has given us something that we desperately need because we cannot rescue ourselves hear the cry of man in Romans 7 24 wretched man that I am who will deliver me from this body of death Paul wonderfully writes the answer is Jesus Christ the God who justifies us also gives us his spirit to transform us and here's the fact you never grow up in maturity ever to a point where you no longer need the spirit get that more mature in your knowledge does not mean less dependence on the spirit it's almost more increased dependence on the spirit you see

Romans 8 begins with a promise and ends in a promise and it's filled with promises from beginning to end what's interesting about this chapter it has tears groanings and suffering yet we learn through it all God keeps his people now there's a debate there is a debate amongst the scholars I go through these commentaries and what what is the main focus of this chapter some will write well it's about the Holy Spirit it's the teaching of the Holy Spirit which it is then some would say man it's a

focus on salvation the focus on salvation and it is and I'd like to take the position that is both of these but so much more and I'll quote Martin Luther Jones he says the great pastoral theme in Romans 8 is the assurance and final security of everyone who's been justified in Jesus Christ so what that means is God is magnified and glorified in Romans 8 unlike anywhere else how's that for an introduction did I overdo it too much too little all right so this morning I'm going to get into the main body and I'm just going to I'm just going to define three simple words that are found in the text that will help us understand this verse all right fair enough three words first word I want us to look at is that word therefore therefore there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus what Paul is telling us is that this wonderful truth that there's no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus is built upon the teaching from Romans 1 to 7 simple enough right if you missed it our sermons are online we also have them on Apple podcast I would encourage you to read them but Paul is basing this truth that God that there's no condemnations for those who are in Jesus Christ and we get this because we understand why we're guilty we understand about Christ's sacrifice we understand we've been justified by faith we understand we have now peace with God we have access to God's glory in Romans 5 hope of his glory and that we're united with Jesus therefore there is no condemnation so ultimately it says we were enemies now we are reconciled so that's what that therefore tells us what came before now the second word that I want us to pay attention to right now is the word now now one author writes now signals a new era of salvation history one in which God's covenantal promises are being fulfilled when his people are enjoying the freedom from condemnation [43:33] God promised now and that might seem simple but there's some real significance to this term now it carries the weight of what God has done in history right Jesus has come he obeyed died and risen the promised Holy Spirit has been given and a new age has dawned and those who to belong to Christ share in its blessings already you with me on that one you're gonna have blessings hey you get it now the fact is we await our resurrected bodies we're waiting for sin to be abolished amen can't happen soon enough we know but our freedom from condemnation happens now now why is this important and I want you to think of what we do with

God's promises oftentimes we take a promise and we move it to the future right one day when I've conquered this habit I'll live for Jesus one day when my prayers are better Jesus will use me more one day when I have proved that I really mean it then perhaps I can be sure that God accepts me no no no no Paul says now now if you are in Christ your acceptance is not based on your own self improvement plan your acceptance is based today because of what Jesus did amen and the rest of this chapter shows why that verdict will stand the God who justifies will bring his people to glory and here's the truth we need to know people how we feel in the moment of life's trials are not an indicator of truth you with me on that how

I feel in life's trials are not an indicator of truth let me give you some examples what this means because this truth changes how you and I understand suffering today it means that when we get a hard health diagnosis this does not mean Christ has stopped being your righteousness it means that a season of grief does not mean that your father is disappointed in you and questioning whether he should have saved you we all get there right maybe I'm being punished for so and so I did 30 years I knew I should have returned that Mars bar to 9-11 but you know I was stupid I stole it and maybe now that's why I can't buy a house you know we just associate these things believing that we are condemned now you might be in jail because you stole! that Mars bar that's a whole different thing but we start to equate what what's happened what have I done I don't deserve this you see what's powerful about Romans 8 is it actually teaches us to groan with hope teaches us to groan with hope we have no condemnation now but we will have glorification in the future because even our pain lies within the care of God that this is the God who promised to bring us home I'm not going to lie to you and tell you that I understand perfectly the theology of God's providence but I can tell you that we can trust the love that

[48:11] God revealed to us at the cross God tells me something I can trust it because of who he is Romans 8 we will learn that dependence on his spirit will call us to action it's going to call us to pray to obey scripture to seek fellowship with other believers and to put sin to death and we do those things relying on the strength of God that he supplies because the truth is the Christian life involves real effort you with me that's what that now means it's an important word so we understand that therefore it's based on those teachings those original three questions that were answered we have the now now

I want you to understand this word condemnation let's be honest it's a serious word right it speaks of God's judicial sentence against sin and also the punishment that happens because of sin you see the question is not whether we stand guilty before the holy judge of the earth all mankind does but if you are in Christ you now stand before God in righteousness because Jesus Christ has taken your sin and put it on himself and given us his righteousness so now are we guilty not at all and he has to do that because

God's holiness he cannot accept the sin in his presence he's not like an old grandfather who winks at the sin his grandson might do because that would make him unjust and God is not unjust the fact is a God who shrugged at evil would offer absolutely no hope for those of us who've been crushed by evil see Romans has shown us our guilt from several directions chapter one Paul tells us that we suppress the truth that God has revealed to himself in creation we see it we know it we live in the greatest city that suppresses the truth of God they know it push it down chapter two Paul informs us that even our conscience tells us what we're doing is wrong that's why we feel guilty man that wasn't good that

I stole that it wasn't good that I fudged the numbers on that statement and took a couple grand home right it's just our conscience is against us and the third chapter then reveals God's law and then if anybody was boasting in their own righteousness God's law shuts them up very quickly and then chapter five Paul taught us that we're sons of Adam since Adam fell in the garden we've been infected with sin so not only are we infected with the sin we sin we're in sin and we sin we're part of a human race where Adam was our head our representative but when you were in Jesus Christ Jesus becomes that head amen you see we belong to a fallen humanity and our own willing sins reveal that fallen condition so if you were here and you're thinking ah you know first time

I heard that word sin I'm not sinner let me ask you have you ever withheld love have you ever cherished pride twisted the truth how about resisted God's call you see our guilt is both deeper and more personal than any man wants to admit and that includes me as well my friends here's the thing we all need God's mercy so it begs the question how can this righteous God declare that there is no condemnation for sinners who belong to Jesus look at your text verse three it said God sent his own son and condemned sin in his flesh that's what I mean when he took our sin and he put it on his own son and here's the thing

[53:27] God gave us his son in love and Jesus his son offered himself up in love God's justice was satisfied and God's mercy came to us at an immeasurable cost and here's the glory of God his holiness remains spotless as he welcomes us home do you get what's going on there that's why we can freely come with no condemn nation now what's interesting if you're reading a King James Bible I'm not picking on you Brian or anything like that anybody else does but because it was one of the first Bibles a lot of people think there's another verse if you were memorizing verses if you have an ESV it says the verse ends with

Christ Jesus if you have a King James it says who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit it seems to be adding this condition and you know anything about Bible translations they use these family of manuscripts and the King James version took from the manuscripts that were the most of it whereas the ESV used manuscripts that were closest to the time of the initial writing and the early manuscript evidence supports this shorter reason now why am I telling you this because it seems like there's a condition and I don't think the King James version is doing it on purpose they actually repeated chapter four into chapter one and we see this with a lot of copies when people start copying you forget where you are and you rewrite it and I believe that's what happened and it says the ESV version helps us hear the announcement and wonderful clarity that the ground of our acceptance is

Christ there's no other work past that that the spirit produces a changed life in those who belong to him so what I'm saying is salvation produces obedience obedience doesn't produce salvation you with me on that one that's basically what I'm getting at we need to understand that the same grace that removes condemnation also begins to break sin's dominion the fact is you cannot embrace Christ as your refuge while treating his transforming work as relevant irrelevant or not needed but your progress in holiness will never become the foundation of God's verdict what that means is if he's declared you righteous you're declared righteous forevermore that is what justification is so hear the final words of

Jesus of Paul here sorry for those who are in Christ Jesus that promise is made to someone specific you know the truth is being in church is a precious privilege having Christian parents is a

gift knowing the language of faith is helpful yet none of those things is the same as being in Christ you see to be in Christ means to be united to him it means belonging to the savior through faith it means that his death that is represented on the cross behind me counts for you and that his righteousness is yours and his spirit dwells within you my question for you is is that where your hope rests because if your hope rests on anything other than

Jesus Christ my friend you are lost fact is we all make arguments to justify ourselves right I'm nice my intentions were good look at all the good things that I've done the message of Romans is pretty simple all that stuff that you've done all that even all that religious stuff lay it down quit defending yourself and simply turn to Jesus see what's here is we know that when we sin we feel condemnation don't we but guess what that's not from God where do you think that's coming from you see when you sin you just confess it honestly ultimately when we sin we are all like [58:52] Adam we feel the urge to hide from God and we will try to make it up in some way I'm going to tell you right here right now don't just be honest confess it thank him for Christ and the sacrifice that he gave for us and ask the spirit for strength to obey and then take the next faithful step!

apologize if you hurt someone tell the truth refuse the temptation seek help in counseling fight the sin with the spirit's power open your Bible come to church those are the means of grace that God gives us in order to live the spirit filled life see that is when our journey into Romans 8 begins begins with the character of the God who saves us the fact is God is holy enough to judge every sin and God is loving enough to give us his son and God is faithful enough to finish what he begun! God I hope you hear Paul's words right here right now therefore!

now! no condemnation! no condemnation those who are in Christ Jesus let me pray dear holy heavenly father just as we this first verse is filled with such an incredible dramatic promise it's we think about it and meditate on these words it's actually quite overwhelming fact is we're we're much aware of our own wrongdoings our own sin our own traps that we've fallen into traps that we've made traps that we willingly fall into stubbornness wanting things our own way Lord there's a multitude that I could spend eternity naming but you give us freedom from all those things that once we are in you there is no condemn nation you do not condemn us you free us and I father I pray for the soul that is here that is perhaps struggling with the implications of their sin or even the consequences of their sins I pray that as they put their faith in you they can understand and know what it is to have no condemnation to know that they are freely and utterly loved by you but you're not just leaving them there you're calling them to more you're calling them to be in the means of grace don't go out of here on their own well I'm no longer condemned because the fact of the matter is to be alone outside of the church chances are you're getting right back into that same stuff we need each other and that's just not people that's pastors too we need each other we need to pray with one another we need to pray for one another we need to love one another care for one another because there's going to be days when we're feeling strong and we're going to be able to minister to those that are feeling weak and the next week it could be those that were once weak are now strong ministering to those that are strong who are feeling weak but we live in this rejoicing truth there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ

[62:56] Jesus so father I pray that my prayer is sincere for those here that we love you we love what you've done for us we love that you continue to work in our hearts through the power of the Holy Spirit and Lord I don't know what the sin is I pray that you'd bring conviction upon our wrongdoing our wrong thinking even sometimes the right things are wrong because we're not doing it to glorify you we're doing it to glorify ourselves so father for those that are suffering we lift up our friend Cam we lift up our other friends that are suffering through medical tests whether it be cancer or some other shortcomings as our bodies begin to break down in this sinful world

I pray that you'll sustain them you'll hold them let them know that you'll never let them go and that you are with them in their suffering their hurts so God let us know that you are good and let us not forget that we ask these things in your most grateful and wonderful name amen to you to to to you to!