

## **Able To Please God – Romans 8:1-11**

Bible Study ~ 8/3/16

Grace Church of Lockeford

Next in our examination of the blessings in Christ is Romans 8. Romans 6 spelled out that we are no longer slaves to sin. But Paul made it clear that we must choose who we serve. In Ch. 7 Paul demonstrates the battle that exists within us between our old and new nature. The negative realities presented are offset here in Ch. 8 as Paul proclaims that we are able to please God. We will examine three reasons we are able to please God.

### **1. Able Because Of Requirements Met vv. 1-4**

v. 1 is an often quoted verse. It is powerful in its claims and majestic in its wording. There is no condemnation for those in Christ! Variant – NU text does not have “who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.” On the one hand it is not a necessary statement because the same wording appears in v. 4. On the other hand, it does serve to clarify those who are not condemned. It is those who are in Christ Jesus who are also those who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. Paul then goes on to define who those are. Either way, in these verses Paul is defining who those not condemned in v. 1 are. But don’t miss the message. We will never face condemnation!

v. 2 “For” has the idea of “because”. This is why those in v. 1 are not condemn. They are not condemned because the law of life has set them free from the law of death. But notice these are very specific laws. The law of life “in Christ Jesus”. Life outside of Christ still brings condemnation and death. It is only when we have life in Christ that we are set free from the law of sin and death. It is this life in Christ that enables us to be without condemnation. But how does “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” set us free? That’s what v. 3 is about.

v. 3 Again “for” has the idea of “because”. Essentially Paul is saying this is how it is possible. The law (a reference to the Mosaic Law) was weak through the flesh making it impossible for the Law to bring deliverance. This is an important point. The Law failed, but it didn’t fail because it was flawed. The Law failed to bring us salvation because of our flesh. Because all mankind are sinners by nature and choice we cannot keep the law, therefore, the law was weak “through the flesh”. So, what the Law could not accomplish because of our weakness God the Father accomplished when He sent His Son. He sent Jesus in the likeness of sinful flesh. Christ was sinless, therefore He bore an earthly body but it was not a sinful one. He came “on account of sin” and condemned sin in the flesh. Christ conquered sin by being “in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15). His condemnation of sin in the flesh accomplished something that is detailed in v. 4.

v. 4 the righteous requirement of the law is perfection. We meet this requirement through Christ. When we accept Christ we no longer walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. The righteousness of Christ is credited to our account and through that righteousness we fulfill the requirements of the Law. We are able to please God because the requirements of perfection have been met in Christ and imputed (credited) to us! What incredible blessing! But that’s not all! **We are also...**

### **2. Able Because Of A Spiritual Mind vv. 5-8**

In these verses Paul details the difference between those who please God and those who don’t.

v. 5 deals with what consumes the mind. The one who is living according to the flesh is consumed with the things of the flesh. The one who lives according to the Spirit is consumed by the things of the Spirit. Both mindsets require deliberate purposeful action. We choose what our minds are set on. What we set our minds on dictates the course our life will take. Will it be spiritual things or fleshly things?

v. 6 gives us added incentive or motivation to focus on spiritual things. A carnal mind is a dead mind, a spiritual mind is life and peace. The unbeliever is consumed with fleshly, carnal things. All the things they care about ultimately end with death and vanish like a puff of smoke. The believer is spiritually

mindful and as such enjoys eternal life and the peace of God that passes all understanding. Why are these things true? That is addressed in v. 7.

v. 7 The carnal mind is enmity against God. “Enmity” (ἔχθρα *echthra*) means “Hostility. A state of deep-seated ill-will.” The fleshly mind is diametrically opposed to the things of God. This is why the carnal mind leads to death! Life is only found in God through Christ Jesus. Anything else leads to death. Because the fleshly mind is against God it is impossible for it to be subject to Him or His law. “Subject” (ὑποτάσσω *hypotassō*) means “Subordinate; submissive. To be or become inclined or willing to submit to orders or wishes of others or showing such inclination.” Because the fleshly mind is opposed to God, it cannot submit itself to Him. The end result is v. 8.

v. 8 Those who are in the flesh, cannot please God. Apart from Christ and the spiritual mind that we are given through faith in Him, there is no hope of pleasing God! But v. 4 stated that we do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit! Therefore, we have the ability to please God! Through the blood of Christ, we have been enabled to please him! What wonder! What incredible joy! That we who were enemies, lost broken, and hostile to God are not only “brought near by the blood of Christ” (Eph. 2:13), but are given the ability to please God! The final reason we are able to please God is given in vv. 9-11. **We are...**

### **3. Able Because Of The Indwelling Spirit vv. 9-11**

v. 9 Having just stated that those in the flesh cannot please God Paul gives a glorious proclamation. We are not in the flesh! Those who have trusted Christ and are indwelt by the Holy Spirit are not in the flesh, they are in the Spirit. Those who do not have the indwelling Spirit are not Christ's and therefore cannot please God. We receive the Holy Spirit at salvation, so any who do not have the Spirit are not saved. The result of having Christ in us are given in v. 10.

v. 10 “If” in this context has the idea of “since”. Since Christ is in you the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. This is a restatement of the arguments presented in Chs. 6-7. Our sin nature is alive and well this side of heaven. But through Christ we have the ability to not choose sin. So while our flesh, our old nature, is dead because of sin, the Spirit has given us life. The righteousness spoken of here is the righteousness of Christ that is credited to our account. One day this life will be extended to our mortal bodies as well. This is seen in v. 11.

v. 11 The Holy Spirit indwells the believer at the moment of salvation. Since He dwells in us He will give us life just as He gave the physical body of Christ life at His resurrection. This refers to after we stand before the judgment seat of Christ and are given our glorified bodies. It is the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit that gives us the ability to please God. If it were not for the Holy Spirit, we would have no power to live as we ought.

We have the ability to please God. Doing so requires have a mind that is focused on Spiritual things. This mind comes through the Holy Spirit as we yield ourselves to His control. Though our sin natures fight against us in this life, one day we will receive new bodies and spend eternity in the glory and praise of God!

**CHALLENGE:** Walk, live, and think – not according to the flesh – but according to the Spirit.