

Romans 7:24-8:1—Jesus Is The Only One Who Can Deliverer Us From The Power Of Sin

Memory Verse

Romans 12:1-2 NKJV

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Revision and Introduction

How do we go from experiencing the life of frustration, misery, depression, and defeat because we are living in the power of self (living according to the desires of the sinful nature), to finally surrendering to Jesus and asking Him to do for us what we can't do ourselves? Last time we learned that there is a battle going on inside every believer: the evil desires of the flesh or sinful nature warring against the godly desires of our spirit or new nature. The Bible uses several analogies to help us understand this transition from being dominated or controlled by our sinful nature to being controlled by the Holy Spirit.

A) Learning to live according to facts and not feelings

2 Corinthians 5:7 NKJV

For we walk by faith, not by sight.

I may feel like I have no choice but to give into that temptation, but the fact is that the temptation has no power over me. Remember what we learned in Romans 6:1-14:

1. **Know** the power of sin is broken (the focus is on the mind—understanding)
2. **Reckon** this to be true (the focus is on the heart—believing)
3. **Yield** our bodies to God's service (the focus is on the will—obeying)

B) Ceasing to depend on our own strength and depending on God instead

Hebrews 4:10 AMP

For he who has once entered [God's] rest also has ceased from [the weariness and pain] of human labours, just as God rested from those labours peculiarly His own. [Genesis 2:2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.]

Just like God worked on His creation for six days and then rested on the seventh day, so God invites us to cease from our human effort and labour in our battle against the old nature, and depend on Him and His strength instead. This is the spiritual reality that the Sabbath represents (resting on the seventh day is only the shadow or type).

C) Learning to trust in God's mighty power that is always within us

Ephesians 3:20 AMP

Now to Him Who, by (in consequence of) the [action of His] power that is at work within us, is able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly, far over and above all that we [dare] ask or think [infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, hopes, or dreams]

Because we have the God the Holy Spirit living in us, the fact is that there is nothing that God asks us to do that we can't easily do. The power and ability is always there, it's just not utilised. It's like pushing the car instead of starting the engine and driving it.

Outline:

1. The law is powerless to free us from the power of the sinful nature: only Jesus can (Romans 7:24-25)
2. Romans 8—An introduction
3. Romans 8—An outline
4. Freedom from Judgment—No Condemnation (Romans 8:1)

Romans 7:21-8:4 NKJV

I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. ²² For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. ²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. ²⁴ O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

^{8:1} There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. ³ For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

1. The law is powerless to free us from the power of the sinful nature: only Jesus can

Romans 7:24-25 NKJV

O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Romans 7:24-25 NLT

Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? ²⁵ Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God's law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin.

Romans 7:24-25 AMP

O unhappy and pitiable and wretched man that I am! Who will release and deliver me from [the shackles of] this body of death?

²⁵ O thank God! [He will!] through Jesus Christ (the Anointed One) our Lord! So then indeed I, of myself with the mind and heart, serve the Law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Paul comes to the end of himself—he finally gives up trying to be good using human effort (the definition of legalism) and chooses to surrender and submit to God instead

v 24 **O wretched man that I am!:** The Greek word translated “**Wretched**” means “miserable, distressed, a hard life, suffering, or *wretched through the exhaustion of hard labor.*” Like Paul did, every person will eventually come to this place of complete exhaustion—it may take months, or it may take years (some people are more stubborn or strong willed than others), but it will happen. We will realise that we are fighting an impossible battle, one that we can never win—the battle of trying to obey God's commands and live the Christian life by the power of the sinful nature (self).

When we finally come to realise that in and of ourselves we don't have the ability to love and obey God like we want to, we will become desperate to find a solution. It's like a drowning man becomes more and more desperate to be saved as he becomes less and less able to keep his head above water—why? Because he becomes more and more aware that he will not be able to save himself. Every one of us must come to this point of giving up on ourselves before we will finally die to self and seek Jesus' help. This is what it means to deny ourselves and experience victory over sin—we must first come to the end of ourselves—we must learn that in and of ourselves, we we have no power or ability to put into action the desires of the new nature. Wiersbe describes this well:

“The believer has an old nature that wants to keep him in bondage; “I will get free from these old sins!” the Christian says to himself. “I determine here and now that I will not do this any longer.” What happens? He exerts all his willpower and energy, and for a time succeeds; but then when he least expects it, he falls again. Why? Because he tried to overcome his old nature with Law, and the Law cannot deliver us from the old nature. When you move under the Law, you are only making the old nature stronger; because “the strength of sin is the Law” (1 Corinthians 15:56). Instead of being a dynamo that gives us power to overcome, the Law is a magnet that draws out of us all kinds of sin and corruption. The inward man may delight in the Law of God (Psalm 119:35), but the old nature delights in breaking the Law of God. No wonder the believer under Law becomes tired and discouraged, and eventually gives up! He is a captive, and his condition is “wretched.” (*The Greek word indicates a person who is exhausted after a battle.*) What could be more wretched than exerting all your energy to try to live a good life, only to discover that the best you do is still not good enough!” (Warren Wiersbe)

“It is worth bearing in mind that the great saints through the ages do not commonly say, ‘How good I am!’ Rather, they are apt to bewail their sinfulness.” (Morris)

v 24 **O wretched man that I am!**: Can you hear the desperation in Paul's writing? “The entire tone of the statement shows that Paul is *desperate* for deliverance. He is overwhelmed with a sense of his own powerlessness and sinfulness. We must come to the same place of desperation to find victory.

Your desire must go beyond a vague hope to be better. You must cry out *against yourself* and cry out *unto God* with the desperation Paul had.” (David Guzik)

The alternatives to putting your trust in Jesus instead of self

Once we come to this place of utter helplessness and powerlessness, it is not an automatic choice to stop trusting in self, and start to trust in and rely on Jesus to give us the strength to obey and enjoy a life of obedience (the good life). There are two other sinful and destructive options.

Firstly, just like the first generation of Israelites did when they finally realised that they had no power or ability in and of themselves to obey God's command to enter the promised land and defeat the enemies there, they still chose not to trust and depend on God; instead they basically gave up on following God. They wanted to go back to Egypt, to go back to the world. Why? Because what God was asking of them was going to require too much sacrifice and they still loved the things of the world, the things they left behind in Egypt.

However, just like it was impossible for the children of Israel to go back to Egypt, so to is for the Christian. The believer who refuses to enter the promised land can never enjoy the things of the world like they used to before they were saved. Instead, like the first generation of the Israelites who came out of Egypt, the carnal or fleshly Christian will live a miserable existence in the wilderness—not willing to enjoy the good things that God promised them, and also not able to enjoy worldly pleasures like they used to. Why? Because every time they sin they experience God’s discipline and they grieve the Holy Spirit.

Secondly, just like the pharisees, a believer can deny the obvious and become self-righteous. They will invent a fake reality in which they are righteous and accepted by God, but in fact their hearts are as cold as ice. They will choose some rules to follow, and then judge others when they don’t keep their arbitrary standard of good works. Empty religion and dead faith becomes their way of life, and they become blind to the truth that they have rejected. Again, a miserable life.

It’s important to understand that both these sinful responses to the depravity of our sinful nature revealed by the Scriptures can be in the same person at different times. A carnal Christian can switch or vasalcate between theses two sinful responses, going well for a time and being proud about it, and then diving into sin for a time. But now we come to the third and godly response—we look to Jesus!

It’s all about relationship—only those who abide in Christ will bear good fruit

v 24-25 **Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!** Finally, after referring to *himself* around 40 times since Romans 7:13, Paul looks up—he has finally and eventually gone from being self-focused and self-obsessed, to looking outside of himself. The question has changed from, “How can I deliver myself?”, to, “Who will deliver me?” As discussed above, Paul has given up on himself and is now willing to accept God’s help.

“It is not the voice of one desponding or doubting, but of one breathing and panting after deliverance.” (Poole)

The “**Who**” is important. It’s not just knowing about Jesus, but actually knowing Jesus and being in a close and intimate relationship with Jesus.

John 15:4-5 AMP

Dwell in Me, and I will dwell in you. [Live in Me, and I will live in you.] Just as no branch can bear fruit of itself without abiding in (being vitally united to) the vine, neither can you bear fruit unless you abide in Me.

⁵ I am the Vine; you are the branches. Whoever lives in Me and I in him bears much (abundant) fruit. However, apart from Me [cut off from vital union with Me] you can do nothing.

v 25 **I thank God:** Legalism makes us selfish and ungrateful. Living by the Spirit causes us to have gratitude towards God for all that He has, and is, and will do for us. We can know that we are walking in the Spirit when we are grateful for all He has done for us. We will experience contentment, satisfaction, and peace.

v 25 **Through Jesus Christ:** Jesus stands between us and the Father. He is the faithful Mediator who is always interceding on our behalf (see 1 Timothy 2:5, Hebrews 7:25). It is only through Jesus that we have access to the Throne of Grace where we can receive help whenever we need it (see Hebrews 4:16).

v 25 **Our Lord:** This defines the relationship that is required. I must be the servant, and Jesus my master. Until I humble myself and give up control of my life, praying, “not my will but Yours be done”, I am relying on my own strength and not Gods—I will eventually fail.

What it looks like to be self-obsessed and self-focused in practice

Before we move on, it's worthwhile to understand the different ways that we can seek to help ourselves, how we can try to overcome the evil desires of our sinful nature using anything but God's power. Firstly we can seek to try to overcome sin by sheer force of will; we make “a new years resolution” to “turn over a new leaf”—of course there is only short term success—often very short term.

Secondly, we can rely on procedures, plans, and programs. In doing so we deceive ourselves into thinking that *only* by *doing* certain things like: being a part of an accountability group, committing to read the Bible every day for 30 minutes, listening to a sermon a day, going through a 12 step program or any other program, getting counselling, or going through some self-help or self-esteem book which makes us feel good about ourselves, that we can change ourselves, overcome sin, and grow to love God more. However, this is never effective in the long term.

Colossians 2:23 AMP

Such [practices] have indeed the outward appearance [that popularly passes] for wisdom, in promoting self-imposed rigour of devotion *and* delight in self-humiliation *and* severity of discipline of the body, but they are of no value in checking the indulgence of the flesh (the lower nature). [Instead, they do not honour God but serve only to indulge the flesh.]

Colossians 2:23 NLT

These rules may seem wise because they require strong devotion, pious self-denial, and severe bodily discipline. But they provide no help in conquering a person's evil desires.

- Some people think that they just need to know more about what to do to obey God, but even though the law teaches them what to do, they still can't do it.
- Some people think that they just need to get more motivated, but even though the law encourages them to do what is right, they still can't do it.
- Some people think that they just need to know themselves better, but even though the law as a doctor perfectly diagnoses their sin problem, they still are not changed because the law can only reveal.

Again, the only answer is to die to self, to submit ourselves to God and pray, “not my will but Your's be done”. We need a Saviour Who *has* saved us from the penalty of sin, Who *is* saving us from the power of sin, and Who *will* save us from the presence of sin.

The “body of death”—the presence of sin in our lives

v 24 **Who will deliver me from this body of death?** This could be a reference to ancient kings who would punish those guilty of first degree murder by tying to them the decomposing body of the victim.

“In Paul's day, the sentence of a man convicted of first-degree murder could be to be tied to the body of his victim. Often, the stench alone would kill the murderer. It is possibly this Roman practice to which Paul is referring when he cries, “Who will free me from the failures, shortcomings, and sinful tendencies I'm forced to drag behind me wherever I go?”” (Jon Courson)

“It was the custom of ancient tyrants, when they wished to put men to the most fearful punishments, to tie a dead body to them, placing the two back to back; and there was the living man, with a dead body closely strapped to him, rotting, putrid, corrupting, and this he must drag with him wherever he went. Now, this is just what the Christian has to do. He has within him the new life; he has a living and undying principle, which the Holy Spirit has put within him, but he feels that everyday he has to drag about with him this dead body, this body of death, a thing as loathsome, as hideous, as abominable to his new life, as a dead stinking carcass would be to a living man.” (Spurgeon)

Whether or not Paul was referring to the ancient practice of tying a corpse to the murderer, it is a good picture of what it is like for the believer to have to live, day after day, fighting against their vile and ugly sin nature which is still a part of them. Any believer who understands, and accepts as being true, what the law reveals concerning the utter depravity of their sinful nature, is disgusted and revolted by the thought that something so evil and sinful can still be a part of them. As a result they cannot wait until the day comes when they get their resurrection body and are finally free from this **body of death**—*this is being set free from the presence of sin.*

Also, until that day comes, by the power of the Holy Spirit, *they consistently put to death all the terribly sinful desires of their sinful nature*—“And those who belong to Christ Jesus (the Messiah) have crucified the flesh (the godless human nature) with its passions and appetites and desires” (Galatians 5:24 AMP)—*this is being set free from the power of sin.*

The reality of life as a believer—the old nature will always be there, but we can have victory over it if we trust in Christ

v 25 **So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin:** Like it or not, there will be a constant struggle between the old and new natures, but we don't have to always be losing. Jesus doesn't take away the struggle, and He doesn't take over and do everything for us, but He does promise to work through us—it's a partnership, with us as the junior partner (see 1 Corinthians 3:9 and Matthew 11:28-30). We only experience this partnership with Christ when we are submitted to Him, after having reckoned our *old man* to be dead indeed to sin.

Galatians 2:20 AMP

I [my old man or old identity, see Romans 6:6] have been crucified with Christ [in Him I have shared His crucifixion]; it is no longer I who live, but Christ (the Messiah) lives in me; and the life I now live in the body I live by faith in (by adherence to and reliance on and complete trust in) the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

“The glorious truth remains: there *is* victory in Jesus! Jesus didn't come and die just to give us more or better rules, but to live out His victory through those who believe. The message of the gospel is that there is victory over sin, hate, death, and all evil as we surrender our lives to Jesus and let Him live out victory through us.” (David Guzik)

2. Romans 8—An introduction

After describing in agonising detail the frustrated, depressing, defeated, and discouraging my-will-be-done life that the unsubmitted believer experiences in Romans 7:13-25, we now come to see what life for the Christian can look like when they choose to submit to God and let the Spirit rule their lives, living the Your-will-be-done life. There is so much good news in Romans 8 as it brings to conclusion what Paul has been teaching in the previous chapters.

“If anyone is wrestling with depression, I have good news for you: You’re in the right place, for Romans 8 is the true antidote for depression. You see, when a person is going through depression, it is always in one of three areas. He is either haunted by something in his past, anxious about something in his future, or weighed down by something presently. Romans 8 is the perfect solution for each of these situations. Verse 1 declares there is no condemnation concerning the past. Verses 38, 39 promise there can be no separation from God’s love in the future. And verse 28 states that all things are working together for good in the present. Now, if we believe this, there’s no room for depression, and if we’ll embrace it, we’ll experience an alleviation of the depressed spirit that inflicts us so easily. Perhaps that is why Dr. Donald Barnhouse said that whenever a believer’s Bible accidentally falls on the floor, it should automatically open to Romans 8.” (Jon Courson)

3. Romans 8—An outline

Romans 8 has been called the Christian’s declaration of freedom. The emphasis is on the Holy Spirit who is mentioned 19 times. Remember, “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (2 Corinthians 3:17). There are four ways that the Christian is free :

- Freedom from Judgment—No Condemnation (Romans 8:1–4)
- Freedom from Defeat—No Obligation (Romans 8:5–17)
- Freedom from Discouragement—No Frustration (Romans 8:18–30)
- Freedom from Fear—No Separation (Romans 8:31–39) (Warren Wiersbe)

4. Romans 8:1-4 Freedom from Judgment—No Condemnation

Romans 8:1-4 NKJV

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. ³ For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Romans 8:1-4 NLT

So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. ² And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. ³ The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin’s control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. ⁴ He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit.

What we will find is that Paul tells us in verse 1 that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (saved or born again), and then He goes on to give us three reasons why.

- A) The law has no claim on believers any more (v 2)
- B) The law cannot condemn believers any more (v 3)
- C) The law cannot control believers any more (v 4)

No condemnation

Romans 8:1 NKJV

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

Romans 8:1 NLT

So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.

v 1 **Therefore:** Romans 8 builds on the teaching from the preceding chapters. It is the continuation of a logical argument that Paul is making. We will see this as we go through the chapter.

v 1 **No condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus:** Paul here gives the only condition that we need to meet to enjoy the verdict “**no condemnation**”, the only condition being that we “are in Christ Jesus”. This means that once a person is saved or born again, they have moved from being condemned, to having **no condemnation**: their legal status has changed from “guilty” to “not guilty”.

Why were we condemned as unbelievers?

In Romans 3:19-20, Paul says that all people are condemned. Why? Because everyone has broken the law; the law condemns us because we are born as sinners and therefore sin.

Also in Romans 5:16 Paul gives us another reason why we are condemned—the whole human race is born identified with Adam, and because Adam was condemned because of His sin, so are we all. Adam’s one sin resulted in the condemnation of the entire human race.

(Romans 5:16 NLT)

“And the result of God’s gracious gift [Jesus being our substitutionary sacrifice and His death being the payment for our sins] is very different from the result of that one man’s sin. For Adam’s sin led to condemnation, but God’s free gift leads to our being made right with God [we are justified, declared “not guilty”], even though we are guilty of many sins”.

Why the believer’s new identity as being “in Christ” is so important

Jesus deals with both reasons for our being condemned. Firstly, He paid the penalty for all the sins of all mankind—*And He [that same Jesus Himself] is the propitiation (the atoning sacrifice) for our sins, and not for ours alone but also for [the sins of] the whole world* (1 John 2:2 AMP). Simply put, Jesus paid my fine, my sin debt, in full, so there are no more charges against me.

Secondly, when I trust Jesus to save me from my sin (that’s why He came, see Matthew 1:21), I receive a new identity. My old identity is “in Adam”, but my new identity is “in Christ”. When I was in Adam, whatever He did, I was counted as having done. Therefore, since Adam sinned and was declared guilty, then God also saw me as having sinned and being guilty. That’s what Paul meant when he said that Adam’s one sin brought condemnation to all mankind.

However, as a believer I now have a new identity. I am no longer “in Adam”, that’s my old identity. Now I am “in Christ”, I have a new identity. Because Jesus is perfect or sinless, and because I am “in Christ”, God also sees me as being perfect or sinless. Again, because Jesus kept the entire law perfectly, and because I am “in Christ”, then God also sees me as having kept the entire law perfectly just like Christ did.

Jon Courson explains why it's so important that our new identity is "**in Christ Jesus**": "A friend came by one day with a couple boxes of Häagen-Dazs bars—the dark chocolate-covered ones—my favourites. Now, if you've ever read the ingredients on the side panel of a Häagen-Dazs box, you know they're sinful. And yet that sinfully delicious Häagen-Dazs is now hidden and buried in me. You no longer see it.

So, too—you are *in Christ*—with all of your sinful tendencies, calories, and fat grams. Thus, when the Father looks on you, He doesn't see you with all of your failings and shortcomings. No, He sees you robed with the righteousness of Christ Jesus (Isaiah 61:10). He doesn't see you in your sin; He sees you in His Son. Therefore, there's no condemnation whatsoever. Regardless of where you've been or how badly you've failed, regardless of who you are or where you are, there is *no condemnation*."

"The simple declaration of **no condemnation** comes to those who are **in Christ Jesus**. Since God the Father does not condemn Jesus, neither can the Father condemn those who are **in Jesus**. They *are* not condemned, they *will* not be condemned, and they *cannot* be condemned. ... if we are one with Jesus and He is our head, we can't be condemned. You can't acquit the head and condemn the hand. You can't drown the foot as long as the head is out of water. Joined to Him, we hear the verdict: "**no condemnation**." (David Guzik)

No condemnation doesn't mean no mistakes, no failures or no sin

All through the Bible we see people making serious mistakes, sinning greatly. David committed adultery and murder, and Abraham lied about his wife. While they did suffer the practical or everyday consequences of sin, *they did not suffer condemnation*. Instead they received complete forgiveness. Consider what Paul wrote using king David as an example:

Romans 4:5-8 NLT

But people are counted as righteous, not because of their work, but because of their faith in God who forgives sinners. ⁶ David also spoke of this when he described the happiness of those who are declared righteous without working for it:

⁷ "Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sins are put out of sight.

⁸ Yes, what joy for those whose record the Lord has cleared of sin."

The only condition for "no condemnation" is to receive Christ

v 1 **Who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit**: "These words are not found in the earliest ancient manuscripts of the Book of Romans and they do not agree with the flow of Paul's context here. They were probably added by a copyist who either made a mistake or thought he could "help" Paul by adding these words from Romans 8:4.

While it is true that those who are **in Christ** *should* not and *do* not consistently **walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit**, this is not a *condition* for their status of **no condemnation**. [Only] Our position in Jesus Christ [and not our good works] is the reason for our standing of **no condemnation**." (David Guzik)

"The most learned men assure us that it is no part of the original text. I cannot just now go into the reasons for this conclusion, but they are very good and solid. The oldest copies are without it, the versions do not sustain it, and the fathers who quoted abundance of Scripture do not quote this sentence." (Spurgeon)

No condemnation—A practical application

John 8:1-11 NKJV

But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ² Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them. ³ Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, ⁴ they said to Him, “Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. ⁵ Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?” ⁶ This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear.

⁷ So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, “He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.” ⁸ And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. ⁹ Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. ¹⁰ When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, “Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?”

¹¹ She said, “No one, Lord.”

And Jesus said to her, “Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.”

In verse 4 the scribes and pharisees called Jesus Teacher or Rabbi. They were not submitted to Jesus, in fact they hated Him, although they did respect His authority as a Bible teacher. Their sins were not forgiven; they walked away guilty and condemned.

In contrast, in verse 11 the woman confesses Jesus as “Lord”. Romans 10:9-10 tell us that: *If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved.* From this point on the woman caught in Adultery was forgiven and free. Jesus said to her, “Neither do I condemn you”. The woman was free from the penalty of sin.

However, what Jesus said next was just as profound; “go and sin no more”. This is Jesus telling the woman that she was also free from the power of sin. Jon Courson explains: “Listen, precious people. I don’t believe Jesus’ tone with the woman taken in adultery was, “I’ll let you off the hook this time, lady. But if it happens again, you’ll be in big trouble.” No, I believe His tone was, “Go your way a free woman. By the Word I’m sharing with you, and the love I’m showing to you, I’m giving you liberation from your tendency to indulge your flesh, and freeing you to live in an entirely different lifestyle.” And I believe there was a smile on His face, not a finger in her face as He said it.”

It’s so important to understand that God’s forgiveness is freely given to all who call upon His name (see Romans 10:13). And once a person is saved then God’s commands that used to condemn us suddenly become His promises. For example, the command “You shall not lie”, is to the Christian the promise that you now have the power, through the Holy Spirit living in you, to not lie any more—you are free to obey, you are no longer under bondage to sin. This message of freedom from the penalty and power of sin is what Paul teaches in Romans chapter 8.