

Romans 8:1-4—The Power Of The Life Giving Spirit Has Freed You From The Power Of Sin That Leads To Death

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.

General outline for Romans 8

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)

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 AMP

Therefore, [there is] now no condemnation (no adjudging guilty of wrong) for those who are in Christ Jesus, who live [and] walk not after the dictates of the flesh, but after the dictates of the Spirit. [John 3:18.]

² For the law of the Spirit of life [which is] in Christ Jesus [the law of our new being] has freed me from the law of sin and of death.

³ For God has done what the Law could not do, [its power] being weakened by the flesh [the entire nature of man without the Holy Spirit]. Sending His own Son in the guise of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, [God] condemned sin in the flesh [subdued, overcame, deprived it of its power over all who accept that sacrifice], [Lev. 7:37.]

⁴ So that the righteous and just requirement of the Law might be fully met in us who live and move not in the ways of the flesh but in the ways of the Spirit [our lives governed not by the standards and according to the dictates of the flesh, but controlled by the Holy 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.

Outline:

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.

1. The law has no claim on believers any more (v 2)
2. The law cannot condemn believers any more (v 3)
3. The law cannot control believers any more (v 4)

Revision: 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.

Last time we saw that the believer is declared to be legally not guilty in God's court: Nothing they can do will ever change that verdict. Because the believer is **in Christ**, when the Father looks at him, He sees Christ, and not the believer. The Father therefore sees every believer as being as perfect and as righteous as Jesus Himself (see 2 Corinthians 5:21). This is what it means for there to be no condemnation for those who are in Christ. Paul now make three statements concerning the believer and the Law to explain why the law has no power over the Christian anymore.

Remember, however, that although Christ's sacrifice is sufficient to pay for all of the sins of all mankind (see 1 John 2:2), the free gift of forgiveness must first be received for it to be efficacious (effective to produce the intended result). God is the willing gift giver, but it is up to each individual to be a willing gift receiver; only then will all the individual's sins, past, present, and future, be removed and separated from them as far as the east is from the west (see Psalm 103:12). This is why, even though Christ died for the sins of the whole world, not everyone is automatically saved. Salvation is a gift that must be freely received as we respond by faith and repentance to the Holy Spirit as He convicts the world of sin, righteous and judgement (see Mark 1:15, John 16:8-11, Acts 16:31, 19:4, Romans 10:9, 1 Corinthians 1:21).

2. The Law has no claim on believers anymore—being set free from the law of sin and death

Romans 8:2 NKJV

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

Romans 8:2 AMP

For the law of the Spirit of life [which is] in Christ Jesus [the law of our new being] has freed me from the law of sin and of death.

Romans 8:2 NLT

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.

What is the Law of sin and death?

v 2 **The law of sin and death:** What is **the law of sin and death**? Remember that Paul said that the law is perfect, and if we were perfect, there would be no problem—the law would acquit us and we would be able to stand before God, completely innocent and accepted by Him. However, no-one is perfect, and therefore the perfect law condemns us, declaring all men to be guilty before God (see Romans 3:19-20). This is what it means to be condemned.

The law also has another harmful effect on sinful man. Instinctively, we would think that being told to do the right thing would cause us to do the right thing, but the opposite is the case—*because of the utter sinfulness of our sinful nature, the perfect law actually stimulates our sinful nature to sin* (see Romans 7:1-6 below as well as 7:7-25). It's the old wet paint scenario—the wet paint sign has the opposite effect than the painter intended. The painter doesn't want people to touch the wet paint and ruin his work. However, because the sign says to not touch, everyone will be tempted to touch the wall just because the sign said not to. In reality, the best thing the painter could do is not put the sign on the freshly painted wall, then no-one would think or be tempted to touch the wet paint.

This “wet paint sign” effect that the law has on sinful man is called **the law of sin and death**. Just like the law of gravity causes all things to fall downward, **the law of sin and death** causes the sinful nature to want to sin more when we try to sin less: simply put, *the more we try not to sin, the more we want to sin—the effect being that we are powerless to stop sinning* (see Romans 7:5). Again, **the law of sin and death** is the power or force or principle that causes us to only want to do more of the wrong thing when we try to do the right thing. Saying that everyone is under **the law of sin and death** is just another way of saying that sin has power over every human being (except Jesus, who was perfect), or, all humanity is under the power of sin. In summary, every human being is born in bondage to sin because of **the law of sin and death**.

How is the believer set free from the Law of sin and death when they are saved?

Paul now reminds us of one reason why the believer cannot be condemned and is free from the power of sin—they are **free from the law of sin and death**. But how? Paul explained to us, back in Romans 7:1-6, that the believer is dead to the law through the body of Christ. When a person is born again, it's literally like they died in a spiritual sense, and so were released from their “marriage” to the law. And when they rose again, it's literally like they were married or joined to Christ.

Romans 7:1-6 NLT

Now, dear brothers and sisters—you who are familiar with the law—don't you know that the law applies only while a person is living? ² For example, when a woman marries, the law binds her to her husband as long as he is alive. But if he dies, the laws of marriage no longer apply to her. ³ So while her husband is alive, she would be committing adultery if she married another man. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law and does not commit adultery when she remarries.

⁴ **So, my dear brothers and sisters, this is the point: You died to the power of the law [became dead to the law] when you died with Christ. And now you are united with [married to] the one who was raised from the dead. As a result, we can produce a harvest of good deeds for God.** ⁵ When we were controlled by our old nature, sinful desires were at work within us, *and the law aroused these evil desires that produced a harvest of sinful deeds, resulting in death.* ⁶ **But now we have been released from the law, for we died to it and are no longer captive to its power [the law of sin and death]. Now we can serve God, not in the old way of obeying the letter of the law, but in the new way of living in the Spirit [the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus].**

It's all because of the Father's greatest gift—The giving of His only Son (John 3:16)

v 2 **In Christ Jesus:** Again, we only enjoy the privilege of having access to God's mercy and help because of what Jesus did for us at the cross. The only reason that the Holy Spirit can live inside of the believer is because he is declared by God to be perfectly righteous in his standing before Him because he is **in Christ Jesus** (see 2 Corinthians 5:21).

What is the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus?

v 2 **The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus:** What is **the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus**? It is the opposite of law of sin and death that caused us to sin; the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus actually empowers us to *do* the things that please God, the things that our new nature naturally wants to do.

Notice that it involves the Spirit of life. We have already learned that “*the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty [freedom].*” Here we learn that the only way to overcome *sin and death* is by learning to submit to the Holy Spirit and so live by a new law or principle **the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus**.

What’s at stake for the believer—why is obedience so important?

As we go through Romans 8, there is a comparison between the effect of sin which results in death, and the effect of the Spirit working in us when we are submitted to Him, which is life (Romans 8:5-6 is one example). The life and death spoken of here is not eternal life or eternal death, but the practical consequences of our God given free choices. Romans 8:5-6 tells us that when the believer chooses to be submitted to the Spirit, he experiences life, and when he chooses to submit to his sinful nature, he experiences death.

These practical consequences of sin are described by Jesus in John 10:10 (NLT)—*The thief’s purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying [abundant] life.* Satan is the great joy stealer. Satan promises joy, but actually only steals it; he is the father of lies and deception. God is the great joy giver, and He always keeps His promises; all who submit themselves to God will experience the special kind of joy, hope, confidence, love, and peace, that does not depend on circumstances—the world can’t give it and the world can’t take it away.

All believers have an infinitely rich Father, but many still choose to live as spiritual paupers. This is not God’s perfect will, but rather His permissive will, as He allows believers to choose whether or not to respond to His love and love Him above all else (if we love the things of the world, then we have made ourselves enemies of God in a practical sense—see James 4:4). True love can never be forced: God will never force us to love Him. In the end, it all comes down to how much we want to be in a love relationship with God—it’s only ever been about mankind enjoying a love relationship with God—it’s why God made it possible for all of humanity to be saved in the first place.

How does the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus make me free from the Law of sin and death?

v 2 **The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death:** What does it mean that we are free from the **law of sin and death**, when we still have those sinful tendencies within us? It means that **the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is infinitely stronger than the law of sin and death**.

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]

An analogy: The Law of aerodynamics is greater than or more powerful than the Law of gravity

Here, the analogy of how the two physical Laws of gravity and aerodynamics affect the flight of an aeroplane, helps greatly to understand how the above two spiritual laws work in us. Consider the law of gravity to be like **the Law of sin and death** which seeks to pull us down and keep us grounded, mired in sin. Consider the Law of aerodynamics to be like the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Also consider an aeroplane to represent a person—either stuck on the ground as it is ruled or dominated by the Law of gravity, or flying in the air as it is ruled or dominated by the Law of aerodynamics.

The analogy: Without fuel, the engines of the plane can't run, and the plane can't fly. It's that simple. The law of gravity is dominating the plane and it's never going to get off the ground. However, with fuel, the engines can fire up and the plane can take off, soaring into the sky and fulfilling the purpose for which it was created—to fly.

The problem: We have learned that it's not the will or desire to do the right thing that is lacking, but rather the power to put what we want to do into practice—*For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot perform it. [I have the intention and urge to do what is right, but no power to carry it out.]* (Romans 7:18 AMP). We want to fly but have no power to do so, we can't get ourselves off the ground.

The solution: God promised that after Jesus ascended, He would send the Holy Spirit, and when the Holy Spirit came *upon* us, then we would receive the power to be His witnesses (one who testifies on behalf of God)—*But you shall receive power (ability, efficiency, and might) when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria and to the ends (the very bounds) of the earth* (Acts 1:8 AMP). [Note: the Holy Spirit *upon* us is different to the Holy Spirit *in* us—by definition, all believers have the Holy Spirit dwelling or living *in* them, see Romans 8:9, 2 Corinthians 1:22, 5:5, Ephesians 1:4]

Again, this receiving of the power we need to be able to live the life that God calls us to live is also described as “walking in the Spirit” (see Galatians 5:16, 25), walking in the light (see Ephesians 5:8, 1 John 1:7), “being filled with the Spirit” (see Ephesians 5:18), and “entering into God's rest and so ceasing from our own works” (see Hebrews 4:10).

The power has a purpose: God desires us to be living martyrs, living sacrifices

Simply put, when we are submitted to God, the Holy Spirit comes *upon* us, enabling our lives become a living witness or testimony of who God is—we represent Him—and by our attitudes, thoughts, words, and actions all being consistent with who God is—we are a living testimony or witness of who God is. It is fair to say that the Christian is on trial every day as they stand before the people around them: is there enough evidence to convict them of being a Christian?

The Greek word translated **witnesses** in Acts 1:8 is *martys*, the word from which we get our word “martyr”. We usually think of a martyr as someone who is willing to testify that they love God by being willing to give their life for Jesus, but the word originally had a wider meaning.

Martyr: “Hence, one who sacrifices his life, his station, or what is of great value to him, for the sake of principle, or to sustain a cause.” (American Heritage Dictionary)

Martyr: “A martyr is someone who suffers persecution and death for advocating, renouncing, or refusing to renounce or advocate, a religious belief or other cause as demanded by an external party. In colloquial usage, the term can also refer to any person who suffers a significant consequence in protest or support of a cause.” (Wikipedia)

In a very real sense, the believer faces persecution every day—their new nature is persecuted and oppressed from within by their sinful nature, and from without by the world and the devil. This is why Jesus commands us to count the cost before we commit to following Him. To follow Christ, to be a Jesus freak, to live as a martyr, to present our bodies as a living sacrifice means a lot of sacrifice—I must be willing to, everyday, deny myself (submit my will to God's), and take up my cross (be willing to suffer for the sake of the gospel)—otherwise I will not be able to follow Christ (see Luke 9:23, Romans 12:1-2, and Galatians 5:24). I must give up my sinful pleasures. I must give up my pride. I must give up my own will and what I want. I must choose to make the painful choice of saying no to my sinful nature.

2 Corinthians 5:20 shows just how important it is for our plane to get off the ground; for us to, by faith, choose to submit to the Holy Spirit's authority over us and so allow Him to empower us to fulfill the good works that God planned for us to do in advance (see Ephesians 2:10).

2 Corinthians 5:20 AMP—*We are Christ's ambassadors or representatives*

So we are Christ's ambassadors, God making His appeal as it were through us. We [as Christ's personal representatives] beg you for His sake to lay hold of the divine favour [now offered you] and be reconciled to God.

Truly this is a life and death matter. We are talking about people's eternal destiny. Yes people have to make up their own minds, but it's a serious matter when a believer fails to live up to their calling and instead turns people away from the cross, away from Jesus, by their hypocritical lifestyle. Like Paul says in Galatians 5:25 NKJV, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit"—in other words, "If you claim to be a Christian then live like one".

What happens if I'm not living by the power of the Spirit?

1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1 AMP

So then, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you may do, do all for the honour and glory of God. ³² **Do not let yourselves be [hindrances by giving] an offense to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God [do not lead others into sin by your mode of life];** ³³ Just as I myself strive to please [to accommodate myself to the opinions, desires, and interests of others, adapting myself to] all men in everything I do, not aiming at or considering my own profit and advantage, but that of the many in order that they may be saved.

^{11:1} **Pattern yourselves after me [follow my example], as I imitate and follow Christ** (the Messiah).

Some of the negative consequences can be seen or deduced from the above verses:

1. God is not glorified, in fact He is shamed and dishonoured (see 1 Corinthians 10:31).
2. The carnal or worldly Christian is a hindrance and leads others into sin. "**Do not let yourselves be [hindrances by giving] an offense to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God [do not lead others into sin by your mode of life]**" (1 Corinthians 10:32 AMP).

Every believer is an example, either a good one or a bad one. A bad example will cause unbelievers to turn away from the gospel. A bad example will also often cause, especially other weak believers, to stumble and fall into or continue in sin. If I am living by the power of the Spirit, then I should be able to say like Paul, "**Pattern yourselves after me [follow my example], as I imitate and follow Christ**" (1 Corinthians 11:1 AMP)

3. Instead of being selfless and accommodating myself to others and not seeking my own profit and advantage, I am the opposite (see 1 Corinthians 10:33).
4. Carnal Christians will lose their eternal reward (see 2 John 8).

I want to be filled with the Spirit, but I'm not. I'm still living a sinful or defeated life. Why?

Seeking God's power to live a good life for my own benefit is selfish—it's still living by the power of the sinful nature—I'm still being driven by selfish desires. For example, many seek or want God's help to overcome sin because they don't like the nasty consequences of their sin: broken relationships, broken families, a damaged reputation, bad marriages, poor health, financial ruin, addictions etc. Others seek God's power in their lives to build their own kingdoms, whether it be a happy family, a successful business, a prosperous career, a good reputation, or just general wellbeing. However, this is not submitting my will to God's will—it's just using God to get what I want, like rubbing the lamp and asking the genie for a wish. *It's only as I willingly and genuinely submit to God and make what He wants what I want that I will experience His power.* Like we learned last week, each of us must come to that place of wretchedness, being exhausted by the hard labour of trying to live the Christian life on our own strength (see Romans 7:24-25).

Consider the second time that the disciples were filled with the Spirit (the first time was in Acts 2:1-4), and see how easy it was for them to walk the talk once they were fully submitted to the Holy Spirit.

Acts 4:23-35 NLT

As soon as they were freed, Peter and John returned to the other believers and told them what the leading priests and elders had said. ²⁴ When they heard the report, all the believers lifted their voices together in prayer to God: "O Sovereign Lord, Creator of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them—²⁵ you spoke long ago by the Holy Spirit through our ancestor David, your servant, saying,

'Why were the nations so angry? Why did they waste their time with futile plans? ²⁶ The kings of the earth prepared for battle; the rulers gathered together against the Lord and against his Messiah.'

²⁷ "In fact, this has happened here in this very city! For Herod Antipas, Pontius Pilate the governor, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were all united against Jesus, your holy servant, whom you anointed. ²⁸ But everything they did was determined beforehand according to your will. ²⁹ And now, O Lord, hear their threats, and give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word. ³⁰ Stretch out your hand with healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus."

³¹ After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness.

³² All the believers were united in heart and mind. And they felt that what they owned was not their own, so they shared everything they had. ³³ The apostles testified powerfully to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God's great blessing was upon them all. ³⁴ There were no needy people among them, because those who owned land or houses would sell them ³⁵ and bring the money to the apostles to give to those in need.

A summary of what happened in Acts 4:23-35:

— Peter and John were persecuted (arrested) for preaching the gospel and healing someone.

— After being released, they didn't complain, but rather rejoiced, recognising that their they were being persecuted, just like their Saviour had been only a couple of months prior when He was nailed to a cross.

— They recognised God's sovereignty over their lives, and were willing to follow Jesus' example and continue to suffer persecution if it was a part of God's will for their lives (*they denied themselves*).

— They asked God to continue to give them the strength to continue to do the things that caused them to suffer in the first place: preach the gospel and help people (*they took up their cross*).

— The result of being filled with the Spirit was that they the Spirit gave them the power to do what they could not do in their own strength—they continued to preach the gospel and heal people (*they were able to follow Jesus*).

— Another sign that they were filled with the Spirit was they they experienced *koinonia* fellowship: genuine Christian selflessness and likemindedness, as they all worked together towards the same goal of glorifying God.

Why did I spend so much time on being filled with the Spirit? It's simple, if our motivation is wrong, if we have the wrong purpose in mind, then we won't receive anything from God. We will not experience the day by day wonder and miracle of being filled with the Spirit and living a life that pleases God as Christ lives His life through me (see Galatians 2:20). Submitting or yielding to the Spirit really is all about "not my will be done, but Your will be done"; it's about a change of attitude. It's so easy to pretend to be a good Christian, but still be living for myself; deep down, no matter what I tell others and even myself, I can still be trying to work the system so that I get what I want, just playing church.

James 4:3 NLT

And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure.

The only way to have true power is to have true submission—"not my will but Your's be done". I'm living for you and for your pleasure, and not my own (see Matthew 26:39). Again, we must come to that place of wretchedness (see Romans 7:24-25), where we let go and let God, we take that step of faith and give up control of our lives to God.

What are the practical consequences of the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus making me free from the Law of sin and death?

The fact that the believer is dead to, or free from the law has tremendous ramifications:

1. No condemnation—freedom from the penalty of sin: The believer doesn't *have* to keep the law, instead he *wants* to keep the law. There is no minimum standard of righteousness that we must attain, because Jesus kept the Law perfectly for us already. Now for the believer it's just the choice of "How close to I want to be to God today?", or "How much of God's love do I want to enjoy today?"
2. Freedom from the power of sin: The believer doesn't have to sin. We will see this in Romans 8:12-13. The believer only sins because he willingly chooses to live by **the law of sin and death** (be dominated by their sinful nature), instead of living by **the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus**.
3. Freedom from the fear of death: The believer no longer has to fear death because the law can no longer condemn us. We have been, are, and always will be accepted by God.

2. The law cannot condemn believers any more

Romans 8:3 NKJV

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.

Romans 8:3 AMP

For God has done what the Law could not do, [its power] being weakened by the flesh [the entire nature of man without the Holy Spirit]. Sending His own Son in the guise of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, [God] condemned sin in the flesh [subdued, overcame, deprived it of its power over all who accept that sacrifice], [Lev. 7:37.]

Romans 8:3 NLT

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.

Romans 8:3 is God's declaration that He has done for us what no other human could do. He came down from Heaven to earth, lived a perfect life, and then become the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all mankind. Therefore, those who are in Christ are counted as having kept the Law perfectly. Christ's perfect life and righteousness is imputed or credited to all those who choose to repent and believe (see 2 Corinthians 5:21).

"The weakness of the law lies in the fact that we can't keep it. Folks, you can write, "I'm going to pray three hours every morning" in your journal. You can post, "I will read my Bible three hours every night" on your fridge, But sooner or later, you'll find the weakness lies not in those commitments, but in your own flesh. That's why Paul rejoices that God took care of the matter by sending His own Son—that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled not by us, but in us, as the Spirit guides us spontaneously, leads us daily, corrects us constantly, and frees us practically." (Jon Courson)

"The law is weak to us, because we are weak to it: the sun cannot give light to blind eye, not from any impotency in itself, but merely from the incapacity of the subject it shines upon." (Poole)

"The Law cannot condemn you. Why? Because Christ has already suffered that condemnation for you on the cross. The Law could not save; it can only condemn. But God sent His Son to save us and do what the Law could not do. Jesus did not come as an angel; He came as a man. He did not come "in sinful flesh," for that would have made Him a sinner. He came in the likeness of sinful flesh, as a man. He bore our sins in His body on the cross.

The "law of double jeopardy" states that a man cannot be tried twice for the same crime. Since Jesus Christ paid the penalty for your sins, and since you are "in Christ," God will not condemn you." (Warren Wiersbe)

3. The law cannot control believers any more

Romans 8:4 NKJV

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 8:4 AMP

So that the righteous and just requirement of the Law might be fully met in us who live and move not in the ways of the flesh but in the ways of the Spirit [our lives governed not by the standards and according to the dictates of the flesh, but controlled by the Holy Spirit].

Romans 8:4 NLT

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.

Romans 8:4 is God's declaration that the power of sin, the law of sin and death, has no control over us any more.

"The Law cannot control you. The believer lives a righteous life, not in the power of the Law, but in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Law does not have the power to produce holiness; it can only reveal and condemn sin. But the indwelling Holy Spirit enables you to walk in obedience to God's will. The righteousness that God demands in His Law is fulfilled in you through the Spirit's power. In the Holy Spirit, you have life and liberty (Rom. 8:2) and "the pursuit of happiness" (Rom. 8:4).

The legalist tries to obey God in his own strength and fails to measure up to the righteousness that God demands. The Spirit-led Christian, as he yields to the Lord, experiences the sanctifying work of the Spirit in his life. "For it is God that works in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13)." (Warren Wiersbe)

v 4 **That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us:** "Because Jesus fulfilled the **righteous requirement of the law**, and because we are in Christ, we fulfill the law. The law is fulfilled in us in regard to *obedience*, because Jesus' righteousness stands for ours. The law is fulfilled in us in regard to *punishment*, because any punishment demanded by the law was poured out upon Jesus.

Paul does not say that *we* fulfill the **righteous requirement of the law**. He carefully says that the righteous requirement of the law is **fulfilled in us**. It isn't fulfilled *by us*, but **in us**. Simply put, Jesus is our substitute. Jesus was treated as a sinner so we can be treated as righteous." (David Guzik)

Summary and conclusion

v 4 **In us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit:** This is *not* a condition of our salvation... "if you do this then you will be considered righteous". Rather, it is a description the Spirit led life that God desires all believers to enjoy. The believer who walks according to the flesh, following their sinful nature, is living out the "Romans 7 struggle"; a miserable life marked by frustration and defeat. However, God's desire is for us to "**walk... according to the Spirit**", to "**follow the Spirit**", meaning to walk in obedience to the Spirit, and allow the Spirit to rule over our flesh. This is how we can walk in victory.

"Observe carefully that the flesh is there: he does not walk after it, but it is there. It is there, striving and warring, vexing and grieving, and it will be there till he is taken up into heaven. It is there as an alien and detested force, and not there so as to have dominion over him. He does not walk after it, nor practically obey it. He does not accept it as his guide, nor allow it to drive him into rebellion." (Spurgeon)