

No Condemnation

Chris Cunningham | Added: Jul 14, 2009 | Category: Theology

No condemnation? Here we are, unable to do even the good, that, because of the new birth, we desire to do. The new nature desiring to refrain from sin, not wanting to dishonour our Lord, and yet so wicked that we cannot help but commit the vilest evil with our hearts, hands and haughty lips. Reduced to self-proclaimed wretchedness and forced to cry for deliverance from a pit of helpless despair of self ... and yet, ... no condemnation? There can only be one explanation for this. Grace.

We are the woman, caught in the very act of adultery, and clearly sentenced to Hell by the law, and yet, the One whose law we transgressed says, "I do not condemn thee, go ... " How is this accomplished? We have the answer here: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 7:24, 25). Delivered through Jesus Christ our Lord. How does He deliver us? By taking our condemnation upon Himself. Barabbas went free because the Lord Jesus Christ took the cross that he would have hung upon. He could tell the woman taken in adultery, "neither do I condemn thee," because He had obtained eternal redemption for her, as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. We, too, go free, uncondemned, because Christ took our place under the wrath of God, for our sin, and gave us His place in the favour and blessing of God. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (2 Corinthians 5:21).

No condemnation to them

Having declared that through Christ Jesus the wretched are delivered, Paul adds that there is no condemnation to them. Who are these people of whom he speaks, this certain, specific "them" who are not condemned. "Them", which are in Christ Jesus. To be in Christ Jesus is to be represented by Him. As all died "in" Adam, in Christ, all are made alive (1 Corinthians 15:22), that is, all whom He represented. Adam represented all of mankind, and "in him" all of mankind sinned and died spiritually. Christ represents His sheep, His people, His spiritual Israel, and every one of them shall be freed from sin, made righteous because He bore their sin and imputed His righteousness to them, indeed, He Himself became their Righteousness and now these two glorious words are mine! NO CONDEMNATION!

Note that our verses do not say "there is no condemnation to them which

walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Our walk does not earn us freedom from condemnation. It says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, and then these ones are further described as walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Our non-condemnation is a result of what He did, not what we have done. What we have done is what brought condemnation to begin with, and we can do nothing to change or help that. Even our "righteousnesses" are filthy rags in God's sight (Isaiah 64:6). Our walk after the Spirit is a result of salvation, not a cause of it.

Two natures in every believer

In chapter 7 we have two natures identified which are in every believer. One is called "sin that dwelleth in me", the other is described as wanting to do good, and as not having done the evil that the other does (7:20). One is said to serve the law of God, and the other, the law of sin. Here they are called flesh and spirit. Those who walk after the Spirit are not sinless, because they are still flesh also. But neither does sin have dominion over them, because, by God's grace and the work of Christ for and in them, they are spirit. Our flesh is still just as wicked as ever it was and always shall be. It never improves. Those who deny the existence of the new nature are forced to attribute worship, love for God, faith and all other graces to an improved flesh, an influenced flesh, but this is just an example of one error leading to another.

We are still flesh, and with that flesh we still serve the law of sin (7:25), and we always will, but thank God, we walk after the Spirit. We do love God, though, because of the flesh, we do not yet love Him as He is worthy to be loved. We worship God, yet, the flesh hinders us in it. We believe while being forced to cry, "Help thou mine unbelief". We acknowledge our sin, by His grace, but we also praise Him who hath made us free insomuch that we do believe on Him, and "He that believeth on him is not condemned ..." (John 3:18). No condemnation. Hallelujah!

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