



**Welcome to Grace Communion  
New Brunswick**

**July 12, 2020**

**SERMON**

**My CHAINS ARE GONE**



# SCRIPTURE READING

**ROMANS 8:1-12 (ESV)**



“1 ¶ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,”

**Romans 8:1-11 (ESV)**



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**“4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.**

**5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.**

**6 To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.”**

**Romans 8:1-11 (ESV)**



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**“7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot.**

**8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.**

**9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.”**

**Romans 8:1-11 (ESV)**



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**“10 ¶ But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.**

**11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.”**  
**(Ro 8:10-11 ESV)**

**Romans 8:1-11 (ESV)**



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THESE ARE THE WORDS OF THE LIVING GOD

THANK YOU FOR YOUR LIBERATION AS WE LIVE  
ACCORDING TO THE THE SPIRIT

AMEN



As we look at this passage of Scripture, it is important to remember two very important points:

- 1 – Who is God
- 2- The context (next slide)

**“Now an intermediary implies more than one, but  
God is one.” (Ga 3:20 ESV)**

**WHO IS GOD**



**“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” (Mt 28:19 ESV)**

## WHO IS GOD



God is one meaning that he is one being in three persons. Consequently, God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Spirit never act independently from one another. They have the same essence. They have the same will. They never act independently from one another although they have different functions.

It is important to remember that we human beings are created in God's image. God does not exist in our human image. God is spirit. Consequently, it's important that we accept God's revelation about himself and not impose on him how we think he reveals himself, a mistake we often make.

Some of the objections that I receive or hear with those who do not believe that God is one being three-persons is that it does not make sense. It is true that it does not make any sense looking at it from a human point of view. We accept in faith how God reveals himself.

I encourage you to review the series on **"Who Is the Holy Spirit"** by Gary Deddo available on our [www.worshipim.ca](http://www.worshipim.ca) website.

**“To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Ro 1:7 ESV)**

God is addressing Christians, believers, followers of Jesus Christ.



God is not addressing people of the world. He is specifically addressing those who are called.

Who is God and who the audience of this letter is are both important factors to understand and appreciate what the apostle Paul wrote to these early Christians.

In Romans 7, the apostle Paul wrote about how the law of God found in the Old Testament, even if good in itself, could not liberate us from sin to give us life.

He also spoke about the fact that without Christ we are sold and slave to sin. On our own, we cannot overcome it.

Some think that if we try enough, we can come to a point where we can observe the 10 Commandments and or the sermon on the Mount fully. Somehow, if we act like athletes and try hard enough, we will overcome. The reality is that we can never reach God's perfect righteousness without receiving it as a gift from Him.

Some think that we can overcome human nature and our sinful tendencies through education. For example, if we teach enough about racism, discrimination will be

alleviated or disappear. The desire to achieve is there but the ability to reach this goal on global scale eludes us.

This is not to say that education is not important. It is very important. In the church, Jesus is to be the cornerstone of our education. Whatever we study, we are to study from His perspective keeping in mind the truth of the Bible.

There are so many other examples we could point to, smoking being one. There is ample evidence that smoking has negative effects on our health. Education has not stopped the practice of the tobacco industry being a multi-billion-dollar industry.

Some think that if we look to science, we can somehow reengineer and overcome our sinful tendencies.

As human beings, we desire perfect human conditions. We want to live in a world of justice where love predominates. However, as a society, we want to do it our way apart from God.

It does not work. We desire love and justice because we are created in God's image. We are drawn to God's standards of perfection and justice just as the needle on the compass is attracted by the North Pole. However, we don't have it within ourselves to attain God's perfection.

We have to admit that we are all tainted by sin. We have to admit there is a type of virus within our flesh that draws and pulls us down. We want to do good but too often we are attracted to play in the mud, as it were.

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We ought not to get depressed about the pervasive influence of sin anchored in our flesh, in our physical bodies.

I went through an operation a little more than a week ago. I knew I was sick because I hurt. I went to the hospital on the recommendation of nurses and paramedics because I had the hope that the medical professional at the hospital would be able to deal with and alleviate my suffering. By God's grace, they did. I am very grateful although I came out with one less organ in my body!

Sin and death are not the final answer. We have a doctor, a healer who can bring us completely back to what we were meant to be in the first place.- sinless and flawless human beings. This is why the apostle Paul could say, **“Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” .... (Ro 7:25 ESV)**

The following is the good news!



**“1 ¶ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.**

**2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.**

Set free from condemnation  
Romans 8:1-4



**3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,**

**4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.” (Ro 8:1-4 ESV)**

Sin condemned in the flesh



These are very powerful encouraging verses. What the Bible clearly says is we are no longer condemned to the slavery of sin and death in Christ Jesus.

Jesus has condemned sin in the flesh for all people. All people do not know this good news yet. Jesus' sacrifice is sufficient for all people.

(Next slide)

## Everyone Is Included but Not Everyone yet United to Jesus

- “17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

18 All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation;

19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.” (2Co 5:17-19 ESV)



It is important to realize that the sacrifice of Jesus is sufficient and is for everybody.

Prior to God’s revelation, we all suffer from blindness about this truth. When God the Holy Spirit opens our minds to the consequence of the precious sacrifice of Jesus of Nazareth, we come to realize that all our sinfulness, all our guilt, all of our shame has been assumed by Jesus when he died on the cross. In the incarnation, he became fully human. What Jesus did on the cross is called the great exchange. He took our sin and death upon himself to give us his life.

We live in faith. The back of sin has been completely broken in our life. We are now free to receive His righteousness. We are now free to live as the adopted children of God, who we are. **“See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.” (1Jo 3:1 ESV)**

God is love. What are the characteristics of God’s love?

1- God is Love  
& He Loves  
the World.  
Gave His Son



2- God loves us but for  
us to be in a  
relationship, we must  
love Him in return.  
Relationships are  
reciprocal.

3- “Love is something that must be freely accepted. An imposed love is no love at all. God has created us with the capacity to love and to respond to love.” ...

“What does all this point to? Simply that God created us with the freedom to say “no”.

Quote from “**The Spirit of Grace**”  
by Alister McGrath pages 34-35



United to Christ, we accept and embrace the fact that sin has been condemned in the flesh. We are new creations no longer slaves to sin. We are now free to serve and live in the gift of righteousness which God has given us in Christ. Christ is our righteousness. Our old sinful nature has been crucified and is dead!

Whether anyone accepts or rejects this truth expressed by the apostle Paul does not change who God is in his attitude towards us. It does not change the fact that the cross sin and that has been defeated and condemned. When everything is said and done, both sin and death will be destroyed, that being the last enemy to be destroyed as we read in 1 Corinthians 15.

**“5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.**

**6 To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.**

**7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot.**

**8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.” (Ro 8:5-8 ESV)**



Galatians 5:19-23 describes well the contrast between what it means to live in the Spirit and what it means to live in the flesh.

The word **“Mind”** comes from a Greek word **“phronema which, far from being contrasted with action, is an underlying attitude of life that determines behaviour”.**

*(From The International Bible Commentary by F.F. Bruce, General Editor page 1331)*

Living in the Spirit is evident by the fruit God produces in our life: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

It means that living by the Spirit we also walk by the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit empowers us to live as new creation, as the children of God. It is evident that the Holy Spirit will not force himself on us but will guide us. We are not to grieve the Holy Spirit.

Each of us has a choice to say “no” to God. This is not how the apostle Paul saw the Christians in Rome. He pointed them to the fact that there are differences between living in the Spirit and living in the flesh.

This is the same point that Jesus made in the parable of the vine in John 15. Jesus said that he was the true vine. God the Father is the vine-dresser. Jesus makes it very clear in that parable that to bear fruit we must abide in Jesus and Jesus in us. Apart from him, we cannot do anything. Apart from him, we wither and die.

We have a vine in the backyard. This year, we cut it down to the root and buried the root. We were kind of hoping that it would die. To our surprise, it is sprouting very healthy branches and leaves. The root of the vine stayed very much alive. We expect by next year it will be just as big as it was before producing delicious fruits, delicious grapes. All the branches that we cut which were separated from the roots all died within a short period of time. We threw them away.

The point is we need to abide. We are indeed liberated from sin. Because of what Jesus has done for us, in Christ, we are completely pure although in this life, we are still tainted by sin.

As George Ladd says, “We are in **‘THE PRESENCE OF THE FUTURE’** (title of his book).

Jesus has said an emphatic **‘no’** to sin in his death on the cross and an emphatic **‘yes’** to life in his resurrection.

**“9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.**

**10 ¶ But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.**

**11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwell in you.” (Ro 8:9-11 ESV)**



The apostle Paul had confidence that the Spirit of God lived in them.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of both God the Father and of Jesus Christ. When the Holy Spirit lives in us, Jesus lives in us.

How do we know we have the Spirit of God?

**“For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.” (Ro 8:14 ESV)**

**“The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,” (Ro 8:16 ESV)**

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**“Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.” (1Co 12:3 ESV)**



The Spirit of God is not a Spirit of slavery. We are free from the bondage of sin and the bondage to sin.

We carry in ourselves, in the jars of clay that we are, a precious treasure: Jesus of Nazareth, fully God fully man.

Our chains are completely gone. In Jesus Christ there is no condemnation anymore because Jesus has taken care of everything during the whole of his life on earth including his incarnation, his physical life, his death on the cross, his resurrection and his ascension to the Father’s throne!

How privileged we are.

Next week, we will expound on this subject even more. As we abide in the vine, I pray that with the love of God poured in our hearts, our love for God will grow, our love for our brothers and sisters in the church will grow and that will see those who still are stuck in the blindness of the flesh with the love, with the hope and with the mind of Jesus which we have as the Spirit of Christ lives and dwells in us!

Let us pray