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# The Epistle of Romans

The Justification of the Ungodly

Chapter 8 Verses 1-11

Before we move on to Romans 8, we must examine this idea of being simultaneously sinner and saint. We not only see this taught in Romans 7:14-25, but we see it in Galatians 5:16-26, James 3:8-12, Colossians 3:1-11, and 1 John 1:8-10 & 5:18 (to name a few).

Secondly, we need to remember that being simultaneously sinner and saint is talked about in different ways. See below:

Old Man – New Man  
Flesh – Spirit  
Outer Man – Inner Man  
Adam – Christ  
Old self – New Self

But back to Romans 7. What is the result of being simultaneously sinner and saint? It is the outcry in verse 24.

*Miserable – wretched – distressed!*

These words capture what Paul is saying about living as *simul*. We also hear several more words of his outcry: who will *snatch/rescue/deliver* me from death? These words show that Paul is entirely helpless to solve this ongoing battle – the civil war – with his old Adam.

So, what is the solution to this ongoing tension? The solution and answer are in Paul's cry of thanksgiving – Jesus. Yes, Jesus, because the victory has already been won (See 1 Corinthians 15:57).

We now move on to Romans 8:1-11. The first thing we have to notice is verse 1. What is the difference between the following two sentences?

*There is now no sin for those in Christ Jesus.*

*There is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus.*

It is important to note that Paul *does not* say that we have no sin. But he says that there is no condemnation of sin in Christ.

And there is more for the Christian. As the Christian lives with this ongoing civil war within, he/she is given the Holy Spirit. And with the Holy Spirit, we are given *hope!*

First, regarding hope, we must understand that hope is similar yet different from faith. It has been said before that faith is what begins our spiritual lives as Christians, and hope is what continues our Christian lives. In other words, the word hope often has a futuristic aspect to it.

or something outside of us that we cling to. And so, when Paul uses the word *hope*, he is referring to something/someone who takes our mind off of the present circumstances and refocuses us to something better. Hope keeps us going amid the troublesome times.

But what or who gives us hope? The answer – as we have already heard – is the Spirit of Hope (i.e., the Holy Spirit).

In Romans 1-5, Paul only mentioned the Holy Spirit 5 times. However, in Romans Chapter 8, the Holy Spirit is mentioned 21 times! Furthermore, there are no imperatives (Law commands) in Romans Chapter 8. The reason why? We are led by the Holy Spirit in this Christian life, not driven by Law.

But does this mean that we don't need the Law as Christians? It is true that a Christian – according to the New Man – does not require the Law (see 1 Timothy 1:9). However, we must never forget that we are always saint *and* sinner. And because we will always have this sinful nature, we will always need the Law to curb our sinful nature, expose our sinful nature, and reveal what God's will is so that the sinful nature does not trick us into false good works.

So, what does all of this mean? It means that we live this sanctified life by the power of the Spirit, not the Law. The Law does not give the power and ability to begin or to carry out its commands.

C.F.W. Walther comments on this saying, *"The attempt to make men godly by means of the Law and to induce even those who are already believers in Christ to do good by holding up the Law and issuing commands to them, is a very gross confounding of Law and Gospel. This is altogether contrary to the purpose which the Law is to serve after the Fall."* What Walther is showing us is that forced obedience is not true obedience! He is showing how completely foolish it is of a preacher to think that preaching the Law – for moral improvement – will make his flock more pious!

So, what shall a preacher do? What is Paul showing us in Romans 8? Paul is showing us what Luther shows us in the Small Catechism, that this life of a Christian is motivated, led, and guided by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel! Remember the explanation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Article? The Holy Spirit calls us through the Gospel, enlightens us, makes us holy, and keeps us in the true faith!

We are claimed, possessed, and owned by the Holy Spirit. We are made instruments and tools in conversion. Indeed, as instruments and tools of God the Holy Spirit, we only do good to the extent that He rules, leads, and guides us. If He would withdraw His gracious hand, we could not for one moment remain in the faith, let alone bear good fruit.

