

No condemnation for those in Christ (Quality: Very good)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 22 March 1998

Preacher: Farley, Raymond John (1939-2008)

[0 : 00] Depending upon the help of the Lord, dear friends, I invite your prayer for attention to the first verse in particular, the first verse of chapter 8 of Romans.

Romans chapter 8 and verse 1. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who will not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

I think perhaps I ought to read the last verse of the previous chapter to, as it were, put the balance of the sins.

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. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who will not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

This very deep portion of the Word of God which we read this morning is in itself quite complicated to understand, and needs the light of God upon it to show us clearly the meaning thereof.

[1 : 19] But we see so much the beautiful doctrine of justification and its twin sister sanctification, working together in the working out of the thoughts which the Apostle was here, led to leave us on record by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

And the encouraging part of it is that we can read through the chapters 5 and 6 and feel so unable perhaps to enter into it, because we may feel it's too high, I cannot attain unto it.

And yet we find then that the Apostle, in the end of the 7th chapter, finds that he too has a difficulty with the flesh and the sin in dwelling sin.

And he says, the good I would, I do not. And then a little later, the evil I would not, that I do. And he realizes the great wrestle, as it were, betwixt the old man of sin and the new man of grace.

And he says he comes to this conclusion, having considered what this wrestling is, and what a trial it is to the people of God, as they are called to walk the life of faith in a body of sin and death, and how we need help day by day to do so, and faith, the gift of God, to be given to us to enable us to keep our eyes on Jesus fixed, and there our hope to stay, that we may be enabled to press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

[3 : 07] We can only do so with that faith which is given to us, that we are justified by faith, not by faith in itself, but by faith in our object, faith in Christ Jesus, faith in that one who has attained all for his people.

There is therefore now no condemnation to who? To them which are in Christ Jesus, that little word in is all important, it's the hinge of your and my eternal soul's destiny, eternal destiny.

Are we in Christ Jesus? It's no good, my dear friends, hearing of Jesus in an academic way, and you could perhaps study and read deep books, and be very well lettered in the understanding of the doctrine, and still not be found in Christ Jesus, and that's the all important thing, to know of a refuge is only any use if you are in that refuge.

It's no good for a man who is on the mountainside with his sheep, knowing of his shepherd's stone hut, three miles away, and a blizzard comes up, he can't reach it, so he's not in it, so it's no good to him at all.

He may well know where it is, he may well know and have heard about it, and have first hand knowledge of it, in its geographic situation, but if he's not in it, he's not in the refuge, and he's open to the terror of the storm, and the tempest.

[4 : 42] And dear friends, if we're not found in Christ Jesus, we're open to the tempest and the storm, of the outpouring of an eternal, the wrath of an eternal God against sin. And when we come to that last and great and terrible day of judgment, which we shall all come to, whether we believe in God or not, today people say, oh, I don't believe in God, and they say it in such a dismissive manner, as if somehow or other they're not believing in God, as dispense with God.

God is a reality. And we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. And how shall we stand there? Shall we stand there in fear and trembling?

Or shall we stand there with a bend, or kneel before him, with a bended knee, with outstretched arms, in glory and welcome, and hear those words, come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, or will it be?

Depart from me, ye cursed, I never knew you, into everlasting misery. This time, my dear friends, if we live to be a hundred years, it's but a moment.

But a moment. If I put a pinhead on that mat, on that carpet down there, it would be less in proportion to the whole area of the carpet, than a hundred years is in eternity's light, because we cannot understand it.

[6 : 06] And even that falls short of illustration. But to give you some idea, so where will our souls spend eternity? How important it is, the apostles work through these precious doctrines to direct the souls of the people of God, and to show that they're not justified by works.

Moses gave the law. The law is good. The law is perfect. The law cannot save any. The reason is this, that fallen sinners who fell in Adam cannot keep the law.

They break it. And that was shown very much in the fact that, the foreshadowing of the fact that Moses came down from the mount, and when he saw the idolatry of the children of Israel in making the golden calf, those first tablets of the law, the Ten Commandments, were dropped to the ground and broken.

And that's as we are in Adam, my dear friends. Broken. The law is broken. That's as we are by nature. We are the subjects of a broken law. And you'll remember that in the mercy of God there was another set of tablets due in due time.

God called Moses to the mount a second time and gave the second tablets of the law in his mercy. And what did that foreshadow?

[7 : 29] It foreshadowed the covenant of grace. That new and better covenant which we read of in Hebrews. And that mercy which God would show.

And that it would be by grace that the souls of his church would be saved, not by the keeping of the law because we couldn't. So the fallen in Adam were each one.

An aptitude to sin like the needle on the compass has to the north. As we're born, we have an aptitude to sin. You don't have to teach your offspring to do naughty things.

I know already. But you have to wrestle long and hard to get them to do right things and teach them right ways. We're born in sin and shape in iniquity. And the law has condemned us each.

We're all under the broken laws. We're born. It's only by grace that we can be saved. And that through faith, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and in his accomplished and finished work.

[8 : 31] And to them which are in Christ Jesus. Dear friends, are you, am I, in Christ Jesus? I ask you that question not to answer me, but to answer as before your maker, before whom you and I will have to stand, as I've already said at that great and terrible day of judgment.

But my dear friends, those who are in Christ Jesus, those who know him now, those who come to him in prayer and plead mercy and forgiveness in his precious name, they will find that when they come to the judgment seat, they will have an advocate with the Father.

One to speak, as it were, in heaven's high courts above for them. And how important that is, how important it is for one to have a barrister to represent one in ordinary courts, in the courts of the land.

To try to represent oneself in the complexities and twists of the law, especially in these days, is virtually an impossibility unless we've studied the law. We need one to represent us.

How much more so is the case for our eternal souls? Because the outcome is so vital for our eternal souls, isn't it? It's an eternal outcome. It's not, I don't make light of it, it's not just a five years imprisonment or whatever if the judgment was a wrong judgment.

[9 : 57] Which it could never be, of course, with the just judge of all the earth. But if we're guilty, my friends, there's only one way of salvation and that's through the precious blood of Christ the Lamb.

The one who is to his people that refuge from the outpouring of the wrath of God against sin. A refuge for sinners the gospel makes known.

It is found in the merits of Jesus alone. Nowhere else, you'll find no other merits anywhere else. One hymn writer says, no helping self I find and yet have sought it well.

The native treasure of my mind is sin and death and hell. And so we prove it, do we not? Another hymn writer says, I sinned and stumbled but the more.

He tried to do that which he knew to be right, which the law commanded and he failed miserably. And so do we all.

[11 : 01] And we are conscious of it, dear friends. Is there any dear soul here this morning who feels under a heavy weight and burden of sin? And that is assisted by Satan at times.

And he shows us, he tempts us to sin. And then he brings our sins up before us that he's tempted us to sin. And then he tells us that we've sinned beyond the reach of prayer.

And he's a liar. And I find I have to keep warning about that because it seems to me if my experience is anything to go by at all and those who I hear are the dear godly saints of God, they have to wrestle with this problem.

They fall into sin. And it's the same thing as the apostle says. He finds in his body this aptitude to sin. The good he would, he does not.

He would do good but evil is present with him. And that is a wrestle, isn't it? And it's a perplexing wrestle. And yet, my dear friends, the Lord Jesus knows this, you know.

[12 : 04] His human heart he still retains though thrown in highest bliss and feels each tempted member's pains for our afflictions. Here's the hymn writer says, and what a mercy that is.

And in the affliction of temptation, how we need to cry, to Jesus and plead the name of Jesus. You know, it's the only thing that I believe will send that old tempter fleeing.

And that's the name of Jesus. The knowledge that you pray in Jesus' name will send that old tempter fleeing. And nothing else will. You might wrestle, naturally speaking, might and main, mentally, with all your capacity to free yourself from a temptation.

And you'll find that you don't make much progress. But until you come and plead the name of Jesus, and I'm sure I've used the illustration before here, but I'll do it again because you see the saints of God bear the same record right throughout the ages.

And Luther was suffering like the Apostle Paul was at the hand of Satan who had shown him the great length of his sin in his dream. He'd shown him in his dream this endless scroll of Luther's sins.

[13 : 19] And it went on and on and on and on. And Luther had to confess that it was a true record of his sins, as it were. And yet, when it came to the end and it came to the day's date, Luther said to Satan, Now take your pen and in red ink write the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin and he said, the devil was gone.

I like that. You see, he cannot bear. And you know, it just reminds me too about that record of the Lord Jesus when he was on earth, when he dealt with the mad Gadarene.

And he came there and that poor man was possessed of a legion of devils, wasn't he? And how he cut himself and damaged himself and frightened all the people around him.

and the poor man was in a terrible state. And yet, you see, those devils recognised the Lord Jesus and they were fearful. And they cried, as you remember, that they cried out from the poor man and asked that the Lord might cast them into the swine and not to torment them before their time.

So that teaches us something, doesn't it? That even the devils know that their days are numbered and that the devils themselves know that they're destined for the bottomless pit and they are to be tormented eternally.

[14 : 44] They even know that because that tells us so, doesn't it? And yet, you see, they cried out and the Lord sent them into that herd of swine. And you see how then they were self-destructive how they went down and perished into the ocean by the way.

And that man was then found clothed and in his right mind. And now when we have much temptation within and we're the subjects of these temptations and the weight of our own sin which brings us into perplexity, my dear friends, the only way of escape is to come to this dear man, Christ Jesus our Lord, and plead that for pardon for our sin and then to find that we're clothed, clothed in a right mind if you like.

We find then that all things, as I said in prayer, another aspect where we come to the Lord's house perhaps feeling churned up, perhaps you've had hindrances and aggravations during the week and you come feeling so unfit for worship and yet you've ventured and you've ventured because it's the Lord's day and because you've found in time past that it's been a benefit to your soul and you come and as enabled you endeavor to worship and you might feel so unworthy of worshiping God because of your sin.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. You see, your desire, dear friend, is to the spirit.

Your desire is that of the spirit. You didn't have that desire to come and plead pardon and forgiveness of sin. You were in the subject of conviction of sin by what you were as you were born from, inherited from the first Adam.

[16 : 40] The inheritance you had from your first Adam was an aptitude to sin and a prayerless state of mind and a rebellious state of mind that I will not have this man to reign over me.

That is the nature's inheritance but the spirit's inheritance of the last Adam. You remember that the Lord Jesus Christ when he was about to return to glory to go back to the bosom of his father in his throne before he ascended he said to the disciples I will pray the father that he send you another comforter and dear friends we have that comforter today that comforter will remain until the Lord Jesus comes again with all the holy angels with him.

We have the promise of that in the day of grace and we believe we proved it from time to time and the Holy Spirit is the one who gives you that desire to pray that realisation of the conviction of your sin which brings you to prayer this aching void my old pastor used to say which this world cannot fill no matter how rich you might be how famous you might be how many things you may have acquired in life they'll bring you no real peace of mind only the precious blood of this dear lamb as of a lamb without spot and without blemish will bring you any peace there is therefore now no condemnation so there was condemnation you were condemned I was condemned as I was born as you were born in the likeness and similitude of our first father Adam we were condemned but there is therefore there is therefore because of the justification of the faith which we've read of in these chapters which Paul has laid out before us because of this faith therefore there is now no condemnation condemnation to them so if there's no condemnation there is justification and sanctification all my friends what a blessed truth there is contained in these words if only

I had the ability to bring it out as I would there is not there might be there is a blessed humble certainty here for the believer there is therefore now there was there is not any longer there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus because they are in Christ Jesus they are out of the world they are in Christ Jesus they are the subject to the work of the Holy Spirit they are in the Spirit they walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit dear friends you may feel oh wish I felt I could walk after the Spirit you may feel oh I've come so short I have a few spiritual thoughts and a multitude of worldly thoughts I still have a draw to this world

I would leave it but it still takes up my thought and time and there is a certain love I can't seem to shed myself of of this world it is a bother isn't it dear friends I sympathise with you I know exactly how you feel and as this wrestle and we come to a low place and we feel well what can we do can any good thing dwell here in this heart of mine swarmed alas in every part what evils do I see one him rider says doesn't he it's so perplexing we endeavour to do better and we seem to fail well my dear friends there's one who didn't fail there's one whose purpose was undaunted there is one who steadfastly set his face to go to

[21 : 02] Jerusalem knowing what laid before him and it was there to die in the sinner's place he knew what he must need suffer but he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem nothing would deter him and when it came to that solemn reference which we have in Matthew 26 and from the 36 verse onward there we read that solemn portion where he said my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death yet he was not deterred we find it here he pleaded with his father if it be possible let this pass from me I believe we see there the extremity of his humanity being put to the utmost stress and test of obedience to his father as man his divinity though understood beyond that and in his divinity he said nevertheless not my will but thine be done his humanity was brought by the knowledge of his divinity

I believe to see the necessity of it he never flinched nevertheless thy will be done and he went forward knowing what lay before him knowing that the judgment hall lay before him knowing that calvary lay before him knowing that he must be spread on that cruel cross and his dear hands nailed to a cross of wood and the crown of thorns put upon his dear brow and all my dear friends because he loved his people because of that covenant of mercy which was formed when he was still in the bosom of the father in eternity past there was a covenant a covenant of grace and we sung a little bit in that hymn in the last hymn and so it is that for these people there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh now the hardness of this pathway my friends has been walked out that price has been paid for the sins of his dear people and now his spirit indicts your spirit to call upon his name when you are led into prayer when you feel you cannot but help pray when you feel your wretchedness and your sin to such a degree it is the holy spirit that shows you that my dear friends and it is the holy spirit that makes you cry out to god for pardon and forgiveness and that proves dear friends that you are in Christ

Jesus and you are walking after the spirit but after the spirit it is it is a desire within you come give me Christ or else I die nothing else will satisfy give me Christ or else I die is that your desire dear friend is that something which recurs I believe the dear people of God at times they come perhaps days weeks months and sometimes even years into the desert where they seem to have no oasis they have no sweet refreshments they would and yet there are still those outward pourings of their spirit to God in seeking they feel their deadness I had one dear man say to me long way from here a little while back he said I feel so dead Mr. Farley he said I feel so dead

I said just a minute stop there a minute you feel dead my dear friends if you feel dead you're alive because dead souls feel nothing take the nature take the natural view of it a corpse feels nothing but it doesn't matter how sick a person is they still might cry for water in the hospital however sick they may be a drink refreshment they know they need my dear friends however low you might be today or I might be today however low we might feel if we have a thirst you didn't give yourself that thirst you are amongst those who walk after the spirit it's the spirit that gives you that thirst oh every one thirsteth come ye to the waters yes it's living souls that thirst my friends dead souls don't thirst and so those who have that thirst after Christ they're those who are walking after the spirit and yes you might feel dead but you're not dead if you feel dead you're only dead if you're totally careless and prayerless and have no concern at all those who go on and feel their leanness those who go on and feel that and look in to Jesus to be so necessary well my dear friends in Christ

Jesus let me just give you quickly one or two examples to take home and think about we find that in Noah's day the outpouring of the wrath of God against sin must destroy the ancient world but a blessed but comes here there were eight souls who were the covenant vessels of mercy and a hundred and twenty years God waited patiently and as it were bore the wickedness of the ancient world for the construction of the ark excuse me for the construction of the ark and its completion why that eight souls will be saved to replenish the earth again and God shut the door and God shut that door and shut

[27 : 28] Noah and his loved ones in and God shut in that door my friends and there's a solemn thought here shut them in and he shut the rest of the world out to their destruction they were kept safe in that ark I said earlier on about the law being kept the new tables of the law tablets of the law were put in the ark prepared of God and they were put in there for their safe keeping and my friends that is a foreshadowing of what Christ is in keeping the law for his dear people it was as it were a prophetic act which the Old Testament ceremonial law remembered throughout those years and the ark kept the tables of the law safe and Christ my dear friends has kept the law in every jot and tittle perfect why do we know this because there came a voice from glory which said this is my beloved son in whom

I am well pleased and so we see that in Christ Jesus the law is kept the law is fulfilled the law is satisfied if you like Moses as the law giver is satisfied and I believe we see a further inclination a further that's not the word I wanted a further representation of that at that time at the ascension when no it was at the transfiguration when Moses and Elijah appeared you see Moses being the law giver and Elijah the prophet and we see that follows right through the scripture now the law was kept in Christ Jesus and therefore it's kept for sinners in Christ Jesus my dear friends airbroken law is kept by him the father is satisfied why is that well it's because of that robe of righteousness which is spotless full and free because that work of the

Lord Jesus Christ is like a robe of righteousness given to each one of the souls of the dear people of God that robe of his righteousness his finished perfect work is as a robe of righteousness to cover their sins and the father views the church in his beloved son and so that's why it's so important for us to understand that we must be found in Christ and the apostle says that I might win Christ and be found in him it's his ambition isn't it it is yours is it mine that's the all important thing my friends do you have an ambition that you might win Christ and be found in him is he to you altogether lovely the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely is a precious Christ precious to your soul or my dear friends if you're a sinner weighed down by sin under condemnation before that you might be found in

Christ Jesus there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit one short thing and then I must close top lady knew about it didn't he top lady knew what it was to be in Christ Jesus what a beautiful view he had when he composed that hymn rock of ages cleft for me where was he standing in a rock where was that rock I viewed it the one that's claimed to be the rock that he stood in once some 30 years ago on holiday it's raised above the level of the flood plain it's a rock to stand up on it's solid but it's cleft like that and you can stand back in it and so you can just picture that in the storm there stood top lady safe warm and dry from the tempest my dear friends rock of age is cleft for me let me hide myself in thee let the water and the blood from thy riven side which flowed be of sin the double cure cleanse me from its guilt and power in

Christ Jesus the dear Lord Jesus bore the outpouring of the wrath of sin the just judgments of an offended holy holy holy God against sin at Calvary upon his own dear head as he hung on Calvary's cross he bore it all he bore it in the room and place of each one who are walking after the spirit those who are followers of him those who plead off and create in me a clean heart oh God and renew a right spirit within me like we read in Psalm 51 a test for you go on and pick up your Bible and read Psalm 51 and if you find your heart going with the psalmist there take courage my dear friends create in me a clean heart take not thy holy spirit from me he says doesn't he and isn't that the pleading of the living soul the pleading of the living soul

[33 : 08] I believe it is has been so sweet to me especially since I been ill soon after that psalm oh it's a psalm of mercy he knew about mercy the mercy of his God he knew that he sinned and he knew how wretched his sin had been and how deplorable in God's eyes and yet he would look again like Jonah who would look again toward his holy temple and how he found their pardon and forgiveness and so my dear friends will every praying soul who pleads in the name of Jesus and confesses with godly contrition and repentance for sin the precious name and blood of the crucified saviour oh dear friends may we not miss the mark may we not come and go to the house of God and it all fall on dry ears deaf ears I mean and be as the hinge of a door which comes and goes with no more understanding may we each be given that understanding of how vital the eternal destiny of our eternal souls is we are here now and we have today is the day of grace and we read do we not today harden not your heart as in the provocation come unto him all ye that fear

God do dear friends think on these things because it's all important may the Lord pardon anything that has been of self and bless all that has been of himself for his great name sake amen