

Romans

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November 13, 2024
Romans 8:1-4



Vss. 1

- Verse 1 begins with a “therefore, and when you see a “therefore” in scripture you must ask “what’s it there for?” Therefore is a connecting statement pointing backwards, essentially meaning that that which is to come is true because of something that is behind. The background for this therefore can be viewed broadly as the letter to the Romans so far, the first 7 chapters, but also more specifically the preceding 2 verses, the last two of chapter 7.
 - In the final verses of Chapter 7 Paul laments, saying “what a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me...?” then answers is with “Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord.” This seemingly answers the question of who will rescue Paul, but he then continues that he is in his mind a slave to God’s law, but in his flesh a slave to sin.
 - The reality of our deliverance and salvation through Jesus, as well as the “already but not fully yet” experience of sanctification is the backdrop leading up to the “Therefore.”
- Verse one continues, first stating that there has been a change due to the Therefore “there is now,” meaning that previously this was not the case, then qualifying the first change he is claiming; “There is No Condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”
 - Condemnation is the legal outcome of a guilty verdict in a court case, Paul is framing this as a legal argument and stating that now, unlike before, there is no guilty verdict or punishment outcome of the “trial” that he is describing. He continues to qualify to whom this applies, those who are IN Christ Jesus.

Vss. 2

- The second verse begins with the word “Gar” in the original language, and is often translated “for” or “because.” John Piper has pointed out that this word can be viewed in one of two ways, either causative, that the following statement is the reason the previous statement is true, or evidentiary, that the following statement is proof that the previous statement is true. Given this understanding it is important to distinguish which meaning is applied here.
 - If Causitive the statement is essentially that because the Law of the spirit has set you free from the law of Death you now have no Condemnation.

- o If Evidentiary the statement is essentially that the fact that the law of the spirit has set you free proves that there is now no condemnation.
- ▢ The second change that Paul is claiming, linking back to the “therefore” in verse one is that something has been changed for you, that you’ve been set free from the law of sin and death. The first claim was legal, no condemnation, the second claim is regarding allegiance and ownership.
 - o The claim is that you belonged to the law of sin and death but now that ownership has been voided and you are free from that laws rule.

Vss. 3

- ▢ Verse 3 again begins with the word “Gar” in the original language but here it is more clear that it is being used to mean a cause, due to the past tense description and reasoning. Verse 3 states that the original state, before the “there is now” in verse one, the law was powerless to do something because it was weakened by the flesh.
 - o This is echoing Romans 7:7-8 which states that while the law was good it was seized by sin and rather than bringing life brought death.
- ▢ Verse 3 continues that while the law was powerless God was not and he took action, sending his own Son in the flesh, looking like those who were slaves to sin, and the reason he sent him was “for sin.” This is sometimes translated as a sin offering, however the language is literally “for sin.” More specifically the first word for is “Peri” in the original language, meaning “about, concerning, or in reference to,” and then the word “Hamatia,” which means sin and can also be used to mean offense or breach of the law.
- ▢ Finally Verse 3 concludes with “And so he condemned Sin in the flesh.” The outcome of Jesus being sent in the flesh “for Sin” was to condemn sin in his flesh, to take on the sins of the world and on the cross pronounce condemnation on the Sins or “crimes” themselves on the cross in his own body.

Vss. 4

- ▢ Verse 4 continues the thought, stating that Jesus’s condemnation of Sin in the flesh was in order that the righteous, or just, requirement of the law might be fully met in us. Essentially that rather than our previous status as guilty offenders Christ satisfied justice and exercised judgement on Sin, leaving us innocent in the eyes of the “court” meaning there is no condemnation.
- ▢ Finally verse 4 ends by Paul again qualifying who he’s talking about, those who do not live according to the flesh but according the spirit.
- ▢ The last two verses answer the question of which meaning “gar” had in verse two. Verses 3 and 4 outline that the Law was powerless and we were on our way to be condemned when Jesus was sent and because of that both those things changed, there is now no condemnation, and

co-evident with that is that Jesus has empowered the law of the spirit and through it frees us from the law of sin and death.

- o That these two changes Paul has claimed are Co-evident or evidence of the same cause means that the “gar” in verse 2 meant that the following statement was evidence of the claim that there is no condemnation in Christ Jesus.
- o This is also clear with the connecting phrases of verse 1 and 2, the qualification for those who are not condemned is that they are In Christ, and the reason the law was able to set us free is Through Christ. The work of Christ on the cross is the cause behind both these effects. Since one is true we can know the other is.
 - Paul shows in the therefore that this process is not immediate or fully yet, but that our continued sanctification in these verses is evidence that we’ve been justified and that there is no longer condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.