

The Pilgrimage To A Spirit-Led Life

Part Twenty-One

Last time we covered **Romans 8:28-30** in which Paul outlines the Plan of God for mankind from eternity to eternity.

Paul now in the final verses of chapter eight brings us to the only possible conclusion of what we have studied in the previous chapters.

Romans 8:31-39 [NIV] *“What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? **Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died, more than that, who was raised to life, is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**”*

Paul repeats the conclusion that he stated at the beginning of this chapter *“no condemnation”*.

The greatest tool that Satan has against us is condemnation, being made to feel guilty.

There is a vast difference between being made to feel guilty and conviction of sin.

John 16:8 [NIV] *“When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:”*

The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin. He is specific and practical.

He shows us what we have done wrong, tells us what we have to do to put it right, and then the moment we have made the course correction [repented] it is all over and done with.

The blood of Christ eradicating the penalty of our sin, leaving us with a clear conscience, guilt free.

Satan however wants us to remain feeling guilty.

He will plant doubt into our mind as to whether we did sin or if we did, have we really repented and can we be sure God has forgiven us?

We then continue to feel guilty [and with it very negative].

Isaiah 43:25 [NIV] *“I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.”*

God’s attitude is, when you are shown sin and repent, I forgive and forget so don’t keep on reminding me of the past covered sin so I have to forget them yet again.

Guilt comes from our enemy; conviction from our friend.

Be very cautious about any preacher or teacher who leaves you feeling guilty for their words are not the words God would utter.

God is not in the business of making people feel guilty, Satan is.

God is seeking to show us how we can become righteous not guilty.

If God is for us it doesn't really matter who may be against us. [One plus God is a majority]

If we want to know just how committed God is to us, look at the cross.

When we are in times of temptation and doubt, don't try to work it out in our own minds, just turn to the cross and remember God's total commitment and love to us, and our victory over sin, flesh and death.

Once God has accepted us as His Child, He is totally committed to us for eternity.

God says to us, *'if you want to know just how much I value you as my child, look at the price I paid for you!!'*

Who can bring a charge against those whom God has chosen?

- a) If a person is acquitted [justified] by God, then they are saved from every other condemnation.
- b) Our belief in Jesus the Christ who died and rose again and now sits at God's throne as our advocate pleading for us makes us safe from any accuser.

God has done everything possible to keep us from coming under condemnation.

If people accuse us, God replies, *'I have justified you'*.

If people condemn us, God replies, *'The price has already been paid by the blood of Jesus the Christ.'*

Revelation 12:10 [NIV] *"Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down."*

Satan is the accuser of Christians.

When we judge and condemn one another we are doing Satan's work for him.

Matthew 7:1-5 [NIV] *"Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way as you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? **You hypocrite,** first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."*

When we judge and condemn one another and still think we are Christians, remember God calls us hypocrites.

The most common form of judging and condemnation is what we call gossip; God calls it the work of the devil!!

Malachi 3:17 [NIV] *"They will be mine," says the LORD Almighty, "in the day when I make up my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as in compassion a man spares his son who serves him."*

Your brethren are precious in God's sight and God calls us jewels [pearls] in His Crown.

Zechariah 9:16 [NIV] *“The LORD their God will save them on that day as the flock of his people. They will sparkle in his land like jewels in a crown.”*

How many times have we prayed about people and accused them before God?

People whom God has forgiven and justified and who stand Holy before God because of what God has done for them [as well as us] through His Son, Jesus the Christ.

Such accusing prayers add up to a presumptuous sin.

Psalms 19:13-14 [New King James] *“Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; Let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, and I shall be innocent of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.”*

“Sin” – to step over a know line.

“Transgression” – rebellion against lawful authority.

Only God is qualified to judge and condemn.

If we **cannot** thank God for something in a person, don't pray for them, for our prayers will be presumptuous and negative.

You will find that almost every time Paul prayed for people, he started by thanking God for them.

Too often it is our friends who, perhaps without fully realising what they are doing, who condemn us, through gossip or non-spirit-led comments.

With friends like that, who needs enemies!!

One thing is made very clear by God's Word, God will not tolerate those who condemn His Children whom He has justified, for God has pledged Himself to maintain our cause.

We have an expert advocate in Jesus the Christ.

Hebrews 3:1 [NIV] *“Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.”*

“Apostle” – one who is sent.

High Priest. Jesus the Christ [Saviour].

Hebrews 7:25 [NIV] *“Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.”*

Eternal advocate – ever lives to be our advocate.

It is interesting to consider the lifespan of Jesus the Son of Man (a) 30 years of family life; (b) 3½ years of public preaching; (c) over 2,000 years of intercession as our advocate.

What does this tell us about priorities?

1 John 2:1 [NIV] *“My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defence, Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.”*

“IF” [which is very likely] “we sin” we have the most expert advocate in the whole universe to speak on our behalf.

Hebrews 4:15-16 [NIV] *“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are, yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”*

Jesus our High Priest knows exactly what it is like to be tempted to sin.

Isaiah 54:17 [NIV] *“no weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and this is their vindication from me,” declares the LORD.”*

Talking about God’s People.

There will be weapons [hostility] against us **but** it will fail to fulfil the desires of those who bring it.

We will be accused of many things by many people but note God will give us the ability to refute them.

How?

1 Corinthians 2:1-7 [NIV] *“When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, so that your faith might not rest on men’s wisdom, but on God’s power. We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. No, we speak of God’s secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began.”*

By access to God’s secret wisdom.

We now come to the glorious climax of these eight chapters of Romans.

But we cannot attain this triumphant goal without making the long and often painful journey of the preceding chapters that bring us to a complete realisation of

- a) what we are;
- b) how we desperately need God’s Grace;
- c) that by faith in what God has done for us through Jesus the Christ we can not only be reconciled to our Creator and have all past sin wiped out, but receive as a gift God’s Righteousness;
- d) that then in this state of righteousness we are without condemnation.

Romans 8:35-39 [NIV] *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

Now the doors are wide open for us to enter into an intimate relationship with our Risen Lord, and never be separated from His Great Love.

Revelation 1:8 [NIV] *“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”*

Christ is the beginning and Christ is the end. He is the alpha and omega.

Revelation 1:11 [NIV] *“which said: “Write on a scroll what you see and **send it to the seven churches:** to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.”*

[to be read in all churches]

Colossians 3:1-17 [NIV] *“**Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.** For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all. **Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.** Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. **Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace.** And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. **And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”***

We haven’t arrived until we experience this intimate relationship with Jesus the Christ and walk with him day by day being guided and empowered by him.

Philippians 4:11-13 [NIV] *“I am not saying this because I am in need, **for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.** I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. **I can do everything through him who gives me strength.”***

This is what *“walking in the spirit”* means.