

Romans #16 - Life in the Spirit New Father

- All right. If you've got your Bible, go to Romans 8. We're gonna spend a number of months going through Romans 8, starting with a seven hour sermon today in Romans 8:1-17. If you're laughing, that means you're new. If you're not laughing, it means you're one of our regular attenders. You know that's a prophecy predicting the future. All right. So here's where we find ourselves in this great book of Romans. And by the way, grab a free study guide on the way out or online at realfaith.com. Wanna help you learn God's Word. And you're at the Trinity Church. And this is the central conviction for the Christian of who God is. Some will say that there is one God, others will say that there are many gods, only Christians believe that there's one God; three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit. They do relationship and love and communication. They care for, they look out for, they serve one another. And that ultimately, to become a Christian is to enter into relationship with God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit. Each of them loves and serves us in a particular and a unique way. We're gonna look at all three today. We're gonna look at how Jesus lives for you, how the Holy Spirit lives in you, and how God the Father lives with you. So we'll just jump right in, Jesus lives for you, Romans 8:1-4. One of the most famous verses in the whole Bible. There is therefore now, right now. So not sometime in the future, right now, no zero, none, not a little bit, condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. We'll unpack that. For the law of the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law weakened by the flesh could not do. The flesh there is our sinful nature. It's our rebellious predisposition. By sending his own Son, that's Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the likeness of sinful flesh, God became a man, and for our sin, He conquered sin in the flesh in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. He's given us two paths here. And the one path is the path that pretty much everyone except for the Christian ultimately takes. And that is the path of living under the law leads to failure and condemnation. When he's talking here about law, he's talking first and foremost about God's laws. And you need to know that God does not change because God always gets it right the first time. You and I, we need to make a lot of addendums and edits to what we believe. When God speaks, He never changes what He says because He gets it right the first time. We call that God's law. This is God's Word and it contains God's laws. These are reflections of God's character. God says, this is right, this is wrong. Do this, don't do that. Those are His laws, they're overall people's times and places. Some people will say, but that's not our culture. Your culture is wrong. Well, that's not what my people believe. Your people are going to hell. The point is that ultimately, if you disagree with God, you are...

- [Congregation] Wrong.

- You're wrong. And some people say that's very offensive. Yes, actually, if you keep reading the book, it says that people will be offended. So we anticipated that, it's still true. And you just proved it true by being offended by what it says. God's laws do not change. When we disagree with God's laws, we need to be the ones who change. And the problem is living under the law is

that the law is good, but he says that we have this proclivity toward rebellion. That we have something called the flesh. And this works itself out in one of two ways. How many of you are the rule keepers? Rule keepers, raise your hand. I know you want to. I know you're like, yes, tell me what to do. I would love to do that, I'd love to raise my hand. Yes, okay, you're rule keepers. How many of you are rule breakers? No hands go up. Those people are like, I saw one finger. Okay, so you're there, you're there? No, it was this naughty mind. So, what happens is some of you are rule keepers, some of you are rule breakers, right? How many of you grew up in a family and the kids were different. We had five kids. I had one daughter who was a rule keeper, rule keeper. I won't say which one but we've narrowed it down to a 50/50 chance. Okay? So, one of my daughters was a rule keeper, she loved rules. If you gave her a rule, she would keep the rule, she would enforce the rule, and then she would impose the rule on the other children. She was interning to be a cruel dictator of a small country as a child. Now, one day she thought that she disobeyed one of my rules because she was doing something. It wasn't particularly rebellious or bad. She was just sort of doing something out of order. And I didn't even say it loud, and I didn't say it negatively, I just said her, and she threw up. Just the possibility that she violated a rule, made her sick to her stomach. My son's never had that experience. My sons were the rule breakers. How many of you, you were that kid? Your parents gave you a rule, that's the first thing you're gonna do, is break that rule. Okay? Either way, this is a demonstration of the flesh. The rule breakers, they know that the law is good and they are bad. They don't even try, they just break the rules. That's why if you give a bunch of Bible verses to somebody who doesn't have the Holy Spirit, and they're a rule breaker, it's just gonna get worse.

- [Man] Yes, yes.

- Yes, yes, says, yes. Okay? That's a dad testifying publicly. Now, all his parenting just made sense. I kept quoting versus, the kid got worse. Yeah, because without the Holy Spirit, it's just more rules to break. For some of us that are the rule keepers, the problem with the law is that the law is good, we are bad, and no matter how hard we try, we fail and we fall short. Because God's standard is perfection. Jesus says, be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect. And the point is simply this, that the law is good and we are bad. And if the law is over us, whether we're rule keepers or rule breakers, we ultimately come to the conclusion that we can't keep all of those laws.

- [Congregation] Amen.

- There are whole religions. In fact, most religions, other than Christianity, are exclusively law-based. Here's the law, you need to keep it, otherwise you're gonna get punished. So, for example, Islam is a law-based religion. You do the right things, you don't do the wrong things, your good deeds outweigh your bad deeds. Judaism is a law-based religion. Cults like Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons. And if you're in the valley and you're a Mormon, you just found out you've been in a cult. Welcome to the Trinity Church. That ultimately those are law-based. Here are the rules. There are good people, bad people; good people keep the laws, bad people don't keep the laws. God likes good people, He doesn't like bad people. The truth is

all people are bad, all people are lawbreakers and all people need Jesus. He alone is good.

- [Congregation] Amen.

- Furthermore, the way this works itself out, there are even a Christian versions of this sadly. Some of you grew up in very law-based, legalistic, rule-based non-relational homes. Your parents would tell you what to do, but they would never help you to do it. And they would just pile rule and law upon rule and law. What happens for people who live under that, once they leave a law-based environment, they don't know that the opposite of law is ultimately freedom, they believe it is rebellion. And as a result, people that have lived under a very oppressive religious, maybe even Christian environment, when they hit college, for example, they go crazy, they lose their mind and they rebel. 'Cause they're like, well, if it's all or nothing, then I can't obey God because I'm imperfect. Therefore I'm gonna sin, I'm gonna sin big and I'm gonna break all the laws. We call this your freshman year. Okay, we just do. So ultimately, some people look at this and say, yeah, that's why I reject religion. Let me say that this spirit exists in a non-religious form. I'll talk about the woke joke folk. We'll just talk about what's going on in our culture. Right now, if you go onto a university campus, do they have their own version of the law?

- [Congregation] Yes.

- Oh yes. And what happens if you disobeyed the law? You are judged and punished, you are condemned. So you need to refer to people by their chosen pronoun, not their God-given pronoun. Let's say, for example, you're on social media. Do they have their own laws?

- [Congregation] Yes.

- Yes, they call them community standards, which is a joke, 'cause I've seen the community and they have no standards. Nonetheless. So I'm tired of being on social media. So let me just get myself kicked off right now. They've already throttled me for millions to hundreds of thousands a month. That's where I'm at. Because ultimately they would say, oh, we have these rules, these laws. And you can't say certain things, otherwise we're going to judge you to our laws, and that we're gonna punish you and condemn you. We're either going to throttle you or we're going to literally just remove you. So there aren't secular versions of this, right? Any of you met the mask folks? I'm not gonna say whether I'm pro or anti-mask, but the anti-mask or a little law-ish. Pull your mask up, it is up. Pull it further up. Well, that'd be over my eyes and I can't see where I'm going. I'm drinking. No, you can't drink. You can't drink for nine months. Well, okay. Okay. What happens is, as soon as you make a few rules, there are always people who feel like, good thing I'm here, I'll enforce them. Karen. Okay? Okay? How many of us right now we're not liking living under the law? Right, right, right? That's why all the California license plates are out in our parking lot. Walk up, okay? We're glad to have you, you're ruining our home prices and you are not allowed to vote. Okay, so. Okay? Okay, we do love you, but not as much as we should. Living under law is not a real joyful, cheerful environment. So ultimately, there is another option,

and that is half number two, living under the Spirit leads to Jesus and freedom. And the point is this; God's standard is not good, it's perfect. There's an impossibility for you and I to perfectly obey God's law, in our mind, in our heart, with our words and deeds. And the Bible says, we slipped into it earlier in Romans; all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. And so, if God has an impossible standard, then God alone is the one who is able to meet that standard, because God alone is perfect. And the story is, he tells us that the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the second member of the Trinity, He took on the likeness of human flesh. Now some will say that this may indicate or infer that Jesus Christ had a sin nature. I do not believe that that is what it is saying. I believe when it says, He came in the likeness of human flesh, meaning that God added to His divinity humanity. In addition to His spiritual existence, He assumed a physical existence, and He entered into human history as the God man, Jesus Christ. Saying that He's in the likeness of us means He looked like us, He lived like us, He suffered like us. But He did so like Adam. And we looked in Romans 5:12-21; at the first man, Adam, he was not created with a sin nature. He sinned, and as a result, we now inherit a sin nature from him. I believe Jesus, in 1 Corinthians 15:45, called the last Adam, He begins like Adam without a sin nature while on the earth. He's perfect. And Jesus never sins in thought, word or deed. He perfectly fulfills all the demands of the law. And so, we even have this language we use in our culture. That is nobody's perfect. Well, there is one guy, we're so imperfect, we killed Him. We thought there was something wrong with Him because He wasn't like us. Now, the problem is, we're all wrong and He's all right, that ultimately, we should be like Him. There's nothing wrong with Him, there's something wrong with each of us and it's called sin. And so, Jesus comes and He fulfills the law. And we're told here, by the power of the Holy Spirit. By the power of the Holy Spirit. And this is gonna then really connect with the next point, which is that Jesus also gives us the Holy Spirit so we can live by His power. I wrote a whole book on this called "Spirit-Filled Jesus." Jesus lived by the power of the Holy Spirit. He gives us the Holy Spirit so we can live by His power. And what He says is for us, all of this is then given to us, it is imputed to us, it is reckoned to us, it is granted to us in Christ. Okay? And what that means is that Jesus Christ took your place and puts you in His place. When Jesus went to the cross, He was fulfilling the demands of the law, that the wage for sin is death. And when Jesus died, He didn't die for His sin, 'cause He had none, He died for our sin. Amen?

- [Congregation] Amen.

- This is why we love Jesus so much. I don't know who has done something incredible for you, but if someone dies for you, that is the person who is most committed to you. And no one is as committed to us as the Lord, Jesus Christ. He dies to pay the debt of law; the wage for sin is death. And then it tells us that He raises from death. He conquers Satan, sin, death, hell the wrath of God. And on the cross, Martin Luther called it the great exchange. And that's what he's referring to here in Romans 8:1-4. Jesus took your place and put you in His place. So He got the condemnation, you got the salvation. He got the damnation, you got the forgiveness. He got the separation, you got the reconciliation. He got the death, you get the life. Okay? And this is why we love Jesus so much. He took our place and He put us in His place. And He says that all of this is available to those who are, quote unquote, in Christ, in Christ. This is a little phrase

that is pregnant with big implications. The Apostle Paul uses this language some 216 times into 13 New Testament books that he pens. He uses in Christ, in Him and in the beloved. I wrote a whole nother book called "Who Do You Think You Are," basically on those two words, in Christ. And I looked at it through the book of Ephesians. Now we are only called Christians three times in the New Testament, and it tends to be a pejorative nickname given to us by our enemies. 'Cause Christian means little Christ. Oh, you're trying to be a little Jesus? Yeah, that's what I'm hoping for. I mean, I'm not Jesus, but I'd like to be a little bit like Jesus, that's what I'm shooting for. They gave it to us as a negative and pejorative nickname. The New Testament only calls us Christians three times. 216 times were said to be in Christ, in Him, in the Beloved. This language is not found outside of Paul. And what this is, this is your positional standing in the sight of God. Okay? Like right now, let's say you're in a will, you have a legal status for an inheritance. Let's say you're adopted, you're in a family. Let's say you are married, you're in a covenant. That when you're in, you can never be out. That when you're in, you are loved. When you're in, you're accepted. When you're in, you are blessed. If you are in Christ, you're in. How many of you, much of your life has been out? It's been rejection, not acceptance. It's been exclusion, not inclusion. If you're in Christ, you're in. You're in for everything that God has for you. And you're in forever. And because Jesus already died for all your sins, you cannot be cast out once you are let in Christ. And so, the real difference between these two paths, the first path is really about rules, the second path is really about relationship. Rules aren't bad, but we are bad. Therefore, we need a relationship with Jesus to walk the path with us. In the same way, right now, a lot of students are struggling because kids are going to school at home, on the computer, which means they're not going to school. Okay? How many of you are running the underwear academy? Right now, you're running it. Your kids wake up at the crack of launch and you're their teacher, and sit there in their underwear and play Fortnite and call it school. Okay, that's what's going on. The problem is, you can have a lot of textbooks, but you need a teacher. You can get a lot of rules, but you need a relationship. You can be told what to do, but you're not gonna figure it out unless somebody helps you figure out how to do it. And so, what he's talking about here is this; that God's laws are like the textbook or the rules. They're perfectly good, but we're perfectly bad. Therefore we'll never figure out how to live according to what God says. So Jesus comes, He lives perfectly, He takes away our sin, He gives us His righteousness, and then He sends the Holy Spirit to walk the path with us so that we can learn how to walk in the footsteps of Jesus following in His character and example through our relationship in Christ. What I'm telling you is this; in addition to the Bible, you need a relationship with Jesus Christ. You need both. You need the Word of God and you need the Son of God to walk in relationship with you. Now, let me hit this one piece here that He says in Romans 8:1. And this is one of the most famous, most quoted, but sometimes least understood Scripture. So let me revisit it. Romans 8:1. "There is therefore now," not in the future, not just someday when you die, but right now, "No," zero, none, "Condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Let me talk about condemnation. And ultimately, we do have condemnation continually in our culture. I would say that there right now, if I could just speak broadly momentarily, that our culture is right now, a culture of condemnation.

- [Man] That's right.

- That people will make their opinions of what the laws should be. And if you disobeyed their law, they are literally going to judge and condemn you. We call this cancel culture. Cancel culture is condemnation culture. And the problem in our day is the technology is like God; it knows everything and forgets nothing. So if you say or do anything that ultimately those who make the laws, or at least their version thereof, would find or deem unacceptable, then you are punished and you are banished. And ultimately, this spirit of condemnation is destroying our entire culture. There's no forgiveness, there's no hope, there's no second chance. It's everybody sitting in the God seat saying, we made rules, we're rendering court, we're executing verdicts, we're going to crucify you, we condemn you and we cancel you. That's the world in which we live. And it all started with Satan in heaven. He decided he would criticize God. He didn't think God was doing a good job, and he didn't necessarily agree with the rules. And then he was cast down to the earth, and he's been continuing the same thing. And now he's gotten jobs on platforms and social media, hosting sites in college, university curriculum. That's just the world that we live in. Now let me speak from a cultural to a personal perspective. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Now in John 8:44, Jesus tells us that Satan is the father of lies. That every lie, he burts. Okay? And that ultimately, there are two ways that he lies about condemnation. Number one, he tells the non-Christian that they're not condemned. Okay, have you heard this?

- [Congregation] Yeah.

- The only trouble you can get in right now is saying that anyone else is in trouble. That's the only trouble. He says this in Isaiah 5:20. What are those who call evil, good? It's not abortion, it's choice. We're not fornicating, we love each other. We're not cohabitating, we're saving rent money. See, Satan got a . That's what he got. So he's rebranded everything. That's all that he's done. We're not rebelling, we're seeking justice. What are those who call evil, good and good, evil, who put darkness for light, and who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter? So what the enemy does in our world, he goes to those who are not Christians, and he says, there is therefore now no condemnation. And everybody cheers. But he forgets the last half of the verse; in Christ. Has nothing to do with Jesus. Has nothing to do with God. Has nothing to do with repentance of sin, or receiving of salvation. That ultimately you're fine as you are. You don't need to change, whatever works for you, you do you. Which is what everybody in hell is doing. And ultimately, I need you to know this. If you are not a Christian, if you are not in Christ, you are in danger, you are in trouble. That God has a problem with you. Somebody say, well, I don't have a problem with God. That doesn't really matter. God has a problem with you. He made you, He made our planet, He gave us His law and you have violated it. In the same way, criminals don't take the law nearly as strongly as those whom they commit their crimes against you. You and I are the criminals. We are the rebels. We are the law breakers. And it is absolutely just in right for God. And today we talk so much about justice, justice. I keep asking, when do we talk about cosmic justice? When do we talk about God's justice? If everybody else gets justice, how come God's not allowed to get justice? And ultimately, if you don't know Christ, if you're not in Christ, you are separated from God, you are an enemy of God, and there is

condemnation for you because you are not in Christ. My job is to love you enough to tell you the truth, your job is to make the most important decision you're ever gonna make. And that is, will you receive Jesus Christ and go from being condemned to in Christ? Because lots of people say, I don't wanna be condemned. Well, do you want Jesus Christ? No. The only way to not be condemned is to be with Jesus Christ. The other way that Satan lies, he tells believers that they're condemned. You can feel it in the room. He's been speaking to you. That's why we're here today. This is a great day for you. This is the day that you're gonna know the truth, and the truth is gonna set you free. Let me explain to you why many Christians believe they are condemned when the Bible says they are not. Revelation 12:10 says that the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down. So in context, Revelation 12:7-9, talks about the war in heaven in the unseen realm; where God made angels and they declared war on Him. Satan became a critic of God, not a servant of God. Be very careful with critical theory and critical culture that you don't spend your time running around criticizing everyone, because that all started in heaven when Satan decided that he would criticize God. And as a result, some demons joined him and said, you know what? We don't think there's justice up here. We don't like the way this kingdom is architected. In fact, God, we feel like we should have an election. And that ultimately, we should get some new leadership. There was a war in heaven. And Satan lost and he was cast down to the earth; Revelation 12:7-9. Revelation 12:10 then says, how his campaign as the accuser, the critic, the condemner, went from heaven to earth. It says again, Revelation 12:10-11: The accuser of our brothers, talking about his relationship with believers, has been thrown down, he's now working on the earth, who accuses them day and night. 24 hours a day, seven days a week, Satan is accusing you. He's the accuser. He wants those who are in Christ to think that they are condemned. See, it doesn't need to be true, it just needs to be believed to destroy your life. See, I've been totally faithful to my wife since March 12th, 1988, our first date. If she doesn't believe that, it's not true, but it ruins our relationship. It doesn't need to be true to destroy you, it just needs to be believed by you to destroy you. So the accuser is gonna tell you a lot of things that are not true because he's the father of lies. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb, Jesus, and the word of their testimony, I'm with him. So, let me give you three ways that people who are in Christ, and there's no condemnation, they live under condemnation that is not from Christ. Number one, some of you condemn yourself. Some of you do. Some of you are well aware of your sin. You look back and you're like, I can't believe I said I did that. That was horrible. You're like, I can't forgive myself. It sounds holy, but it's actually really hottie. It's saying, Jesus, you came, and you live the life I've not lived and died the definition of died, and you paid the price that I should have paid. And on the cross, you prayed for me, Father, forgive them. And then you died to answer your prayer. But Jesus, I just don't think that was enough. I know you forgive me, and I can't forgive myself. My question is, when did you climb above Jesus on the org chart for forgiveness? Yeah, it's like, Jesus, you say yes, but I say, no. Jesus is like, actually if I say, it's yes It's not so much about you for giving yourself, but accepting the forgiveness that Jesus Christ gives you and applying it to yourself. 'Cause some of you will give a lot of grace to other people but not to yourself. And something in us, and it is part of our flesh, is I need to participate. That's not grace. Or I need to pay God back, I need to do something. That's the flesh. That's actually part of your rebellion. That's not part of your righteousness. Because Jesus plus anything, ruins everything. Some of you, however, you have

a very tender conscience. Some of you really do love God. You really do wanna do the right thing. You're so keenly aware of your shortcomings. Like I just, I always feel condemned 'cause I'm so aware of all of my faults, flaws and failures. And my answer would be, you need to be more aware of Jesus' successes, victories and triumphs. See, condemnation happens when I think of me. Worship happens when I think of Jesus. If you're struggling with condemnation, you've probably fixed your eyes on yourself and not fixed your eyes on Jesus. And I'm not saying that what you've done is not important, I'm saying what He has done is more important. I'm not saying that what you've done is not big, what I'm telling you is what He has done is bigger. Some of you, you struggle to live under condemnation because you're condemning yourself. Now, some of you, it's not you that's condemning you, it's your archeologist. Let me explain this. Okay? All of your sin, past, present and future was buried with who? Jesus. Here's the archeologist. The archeologist says, let me dig that up. Let me dig. I know it was buried with Jesus, but I wanna dig it up 'cause someone talked about it. Okay? Many of us have an archeologist in our life. Some of you, this is family. This is why the holidays are horrible. So are every Christmas. You get a nervous side to it, you PTSD, you're like, I can't go. Because every year you don't know who's gonna be the chosen member for the roast. You ever seen those comedy central old school rows? They pick one person and then everybody just takes turns over the course of hours, trashing them. Some of your families, they think this is fun. It's not fun. It's condemnation. You go to Thanksgiving, you go to Christmas, all of a sudden, hi, who are we gonna roast this year? Then the next hour. Isn't this great when let's say you're dating, and you finally bring your loved one home. Your parents are like, oh, I got stuff to tell you. You're like, oh gosh, oh gosh, I didn't wanna shovel for Christmas. Don't dig that up. And they talk about everything. They start at your birth. They were naughty, they would throw up, they put their poop on the wall. And you're like, we're gonna start air. And then they move through the teen years and it does not get better. And then they get to college. And then all of your ex boyfriends and girlfriends. And I said it that way 'cause that's the world we live in. That's how confused we are. And then what happens is, by the time it's all said and done, we've dug up everything in your life that is embarrassing, shameful, grievous, that Jesus died for, and you've repented of it. That's not who you are. That's not what you're doing. That's not how you look. Like, I'm a new creation, that's not me. Well, while you're doing is your digging it up. And let me say this as well. Sometimes when you are a new creation and you're hanging out with old friends, they like to do the archeology. They're telling you who you were because they're hoping that you will go back to who you were. This is why it's sometimes hard for a new Christian to live their new life, because they're going back and hanging out with their old archeologists. Remember what we used to do? Let's do it. And you're like, that's not who I am. That person is dead, I'm a new person in Christ, that's not me anymore. Sometimes archeologists in our life will condemn us and dig up our past so that they can control us and they can win arguments. Okay? This happens in marriage. True or false? There are certain things in marriage, once you've been married for more than 15 minutes, you've got something. First 15 minutes, you don't got much. Once you're married 15 minutes, you're like, I got my get out of jail free card, now I found it. And what could happen is if you're arguing, you can bring that up. And what it is, it brings the spirit of condemnation into the relationship. It splits the relationship and it ends the conversation. Okay? Do you think this ever happens in our marriage, with Grace and I? It does, so pray for me. She does this to me, it's

tough. It's not that funny. I mean, it's hypothetically possible that I'm the good one. Come on. So, I'll be honest with you. So Grace and I were married, and when we would get into an argument, there were a few things from her past that if I would dig them up, it would bring the spirit of condemnation into the relationship, it would shut her down and then I would win, but I would lose. And I did this for years to my wife. I was her archeologist. 'Cause the Bible says that love doesn't keep a record of wrongs. Right? Forgiveness is you make the record, and then you forgive the record, and you don't keep the record. Right? Colossians 2:13-15, the record of your sin was nailed to the cross of Jesus. He had a record, but He didn't keep the record, He forgave the record. But what I would do is I would bring it up. And it was wrong. And it actually brought a spirit of condemnation into our relationship. So one day, I realized this is what I'm doing to my wife. And her name is Grace. So I probably should give her...

- [Congregation] Grace.

- I mean, I should've seen this coming. Okay. Like, if your wife's name is Grace, maybe she should get some Grace. So one day I bought a shovel. And it was kind of one of those kind of RD, fixer-upper art piece shovels. And it's got a container on it that holds a Mason jar. It's a decorative piece. And so, I took a receipt from an old school store and I wrote a few verses on it. And one of the first verses I wrote was Romans 8. There is now, therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ. And I put that and I said, paid in full by Jesus Christ. And I put it in the Mason jar, and it was hanging on the front of the shovel. And I gave it to my wife, Grace. I said, I ask your forgiveness for being your archeologist. I'm giving you this shovel as a peace offering. Please don't hit me with it and dig a hole to put my body in it. And there is now no condemnation in Christ, and you are in Christ, there is no condemnation. Okay? My wife hung it in the bathroom. She's got her sink and mirror, I got my sink and mirror, it's hung between the two of us. I start every day with a shovel. Okay? Every day with a shovel. But what was happening was, there was no condemnation in Christ, but with Grace, there was condemnation in marriage. Even though our marriage was in Christ, the way I was treating her is not the way that Christ was treating her. The third way that believers who have no condemnation because they are in Christ experience condemnation, is through demonic attack. Okay, let me explain this. This comes out of 25 years of pastoral work, meeting with a lot of people, including a lot of new Christians. And the big idea is this, that everything that God creates, Satan counterfeits. Okay? So God creates conviction, Satan counterfeits with condemnation. Let me explain briefly the difference. Conviction is hopeful. All right? Jesus says that he would send the Holy Spirit to convict us. Satan sends unholy spirits to condemn us. It's the counterfeit. Conviction is hopeful. This is like a parent going to a child and saying, I love you, I'm for you, I see greatness in your future, but this issue is wrong and it's going to hurt your character and it's going to limit your future. So let's repent of that, let's get rid of that. Jesus already died for it. So I don't need to punish you, He was already punished. Let's repent of that, give that to Jesus, get that out of the way, so you can move on with the future and the destiny that God has for you and the hope that I have for you. Condemnation is not hopeful, it's hopeless. And we use words like always and never when we echo our accuser. You always do, what? Fill in the blank. You never... Fill in the blank. You'll never change. And sometimes then we label people with a name, and what we're

giving them is an identity, not in Christ and His victory, but in themselves and their failure. You are an idiot, you are a mess, you are a disaster, you are a failure. The difference as well between conviction and condemnation; conviction is very specific, condemnation is very general. God's a good Father. When He comes here, He's like, okay, here's the issue. You know exactly what it is. He names it. When the Holy Spirit convicts you, you know exactly what it is. You're like, I know what that is. When Satan condemns you, you have no idea. You feel bad, you don't know why. You feel wrong but you don't know how to make it right. I'll give you an example. I was at a grocery store some years ago. I was in, I think it was in the cereal aisle. I'm just looking at cereal. There's so much cereal by the way. I mean, it was overwhelm, I need to take a nap. I was like, this is a big decision. You know, there's so much cereal. And in the aisle with me is another dad with a little kid. And I don't know what the kid did, the dad just started yelling at the kid. Just literally yelling at the kid. Why do you do that? What's wrong with you? You're driving me crazy. I'm so sick of you. They're just yelling at the kid. The kid had no idea what they'd done. The kid looked at me and went. There, he looked at me like to bring him in. I looked at the kid, I was like. So here we are in the cereal lot. The kid looks at their dad, and they're like, what did I do? That's it. If you're too stupid not to figure it out, I'm not gonna tell you. So, I felt it was time for a ministry. So I walked up to the dad and I told him, I said, "Sir," I said, "Your fatherhood reminds me of Satan." Okay? No, I'm like this all the time. Okay? Cereal aisle pulpit, same guy. Okay? He looks at me, he's like, this is none of your business. I said, you yelled at him in the cereal aisle, I'm in the cereal aisle, you made it my business. I said, "What did the kid do wrong?" He said, "Nothing, I'm just sick of him." I said, "You're an abusive father. You're an abusive father." I said, "You can't punish your child unless they did something specific. And even if they did something specific, you don't punish them, you instruct and correct them. 'Cause the goal is not to defeat them, but to direct them." I looked at him, I said, "You're a horrible dad." I said, "The reason you may have a horrible son is you may be training him to be like you." I said, "So before you yell at him, maybe you should yell at yourself." Then I said, "Maybe if you would change, you'd have a son who had a different kind of relationship with you." We're going at it in the grocery store. Okay? The son's watching. Satan is like an abusive parent. He just yells at you and you have no idea why. He hits you and you're like, what did I do? And some of you will think it's God. God, why are you yelling at me? God's like, that's not me kid. God, why are you hitting me? I don't hit my kids. Father's like, that's not me. That's the father of lies. That's not your Father in heaven. Some of you think that God's been yelling at you. He's not. Some of you think that God has been hitting you and He's not. God convicts you so He can build His relationship, Satan condemns you so he can break that relationship. And what I've learned in ministry is that Satan has a tell. And when I say, Satan, I mean Satan and demons; divine beings in the unseen realm. How many of you play poker? Okay? A couple are honest people. And then a bunch of dishonest people. Okay, so, if you played poker, the key is not just to play your cards, but to play the other player. And what you're looking for is their tell. If they smile, get out. They're really excited. If they get nervous eye twitch, double down, okay? They'll tell. Satan has a tell. He uses the second person pronoun of you. I'll give you an example. In Genesis 3, with Adam and Eve, he says, when you eat, you, there's the tell, will become like God. He goes to Jesus, Matthew 4, Luke 4, if you, there's the tell, are the son of God. Satan speaks in the second person. Now, how many of you don't speak to yourself in the

second person? Okay? If you do, leave now, go get help. Okay? We speak of ourselves in the first person. I told Grace today, I said, "I'm gonna go on and preach, I'm gonna meet with somebody afterward, then I'm gonna come home and we're gonna go run an errand." First person, I. You is second person. Here's the trick. There's now no condemnation in Christ, but there is condemnation from your enemy and your accuser and the father of lies. And he's gonna speak to you in the second person. And the problem is, you're either gonna think it's God or you. If you think it's you, you think you have self contempt. Okay? If you think it's God, you can have God contempt. You're gonna think God hates you. That God is against you. So, let's just do this. You are a blank, in your life. What do you often think or here, to fill in that blank. You are a...

- [Man] Failure.

- Failure. You are a failure. Is that true? The answer is, well, I'm in Christ and He's not. You wanna talk about me? I wanna talk about Him. You wanna talk about my performance? I'm gonna talk about His performance. When I stand before God, He won't be with my resume, but with His resume. He says, you are a failure, and God says, you are in Christ. Christ is no failure. Therefore, I was a failure, Jesus fixed it, so I'm doing better. What else do you hear? You are a...

- [Man] Sinner.

- You are a sinner. Is that true? Yeah. Until you were in Christ. Oh boy, how much trouble do I wanna get in today? Every day, this is the big decision. I told you in Romans early on that there's something called total depravity that all of your person, outward deed motive is infected and affected by sin. But your nature changes. You become a new creation in Christ, old things pass away, old things are becoming new when you're in Christ. The Bible says, anyone who is in Christ, there's Paul's language, is a new creation. The Bible refers to a Christian as a sinner in the New Testament, perhaps three times. I think all of those are possibly in the book of James and they're all contested. Hundreds of times, the new Testament says that a Christian is a saint or a holy one or righteous. Sin explains some of what you do, saint explains all of who you are. Sin is what you have done, and saint is what Jesus has done to make a sinner a saint. It doesn't mean you're perfect, it means you're new, and that Jesus is going to conclude by making you perfect. So when Satan comes and says, you're a sinner, well, but I'm in Christ. So, I'm gonna say, and I'm not perfect, but when Jesus is done, I will be. So Satan, if you wanna talk about future, I'll talk about mine and I'll talk about yours. Okay, what else do you hear? You are a...

- [Woman] A burden.

- A burden. You're a burden. You're a problem. In Christ, I have one who lifts my burdens. In Christ, I have one who fixes my problems. See, again, condemnation is what happens when we talk about you. Worship is what happens when we talk about Jesus. How many of you, you hear in the second person and then you rephrase it in the first? I talked to one girl some years ago. Just the Holy Spirit brings some counseling sessions to mind. Sweet girl, new Christian, had a troubled past, but she really met Jesus. I mean, He got her all at once. Her heart was all in, she

loved Jesus. She was a sweet girl. And she's dating this horrible guy, just total loser. He's living with her, he's sleeping with her, he's freeloading off her, he's yelling at her, and he's cheating on her. And I asked her, I said, "Why? Why do you put up with that?" She said, "Because I'm damaged goods. I don't deserve any better." I was like, "What exactly do you hear?" She said, "Well, I hear all the time; you're damaged goods, you're not a virgin, you're broken, you're a mess, you don't deserve any better." I said, "Okay, so somebody is talking to you." I said, "Do you think that's God?" She looked at me and she said, "I don't know." I said, "Well, I do." I used my two daughters as an example. I said, "I've got two beautiful..." The girls were little at the time. I got two beautiful daughters. I said, "Do you think I would ever say that to my daughters? You're broken. You're damaged. You're damaged goods. You can't do any better. You don't deserve any better." I said, "Do you ever think I would even think to say that to my little girls?" She started crying, she said, "No, Pastor Mark, you would never say that to your daughters." I said, "He's your Father, you're His daughter." The Father would never say that over His daughter. Now the father of lies would. She looked at me and she said, "So I don't hate myself?" No. She said, "I've been taking medication and going to therapy." And let me say, some people need medication and some people need therapy. But a pill doesn't fix a demon. Only the truth sets you free. She said, "And God doesn't hate me?" No. In fact, Jesus died for you, that's how much He loves you. He doesn't see me as dirty? No, all God's people in the Bible wear white 'cause they're clean. So I'm not filthy? No. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. You're cleansed from all unrighteousness and there's no condemnation. She started crying. She's like, "So I could break up with him?" Now we have found the end zone. Yes. She ended up marrying a guy who loved Jesus. She ended up going into ministry. She ended up becoming a pastor's wife. And she tells other women who they are in Christ. Some of you have been so lied to. And I'm so sorry, but this is a day of deliverance for you. You're not rejected, you're accepted. You're not damaged, you're healed. You're not cursed, you're blessed. You're not out, you're in Christ. Well, isn't that a burden lifter? Okay, I need you to think through the things in your life that the enemy has been speaking to you. What is he saying? I literally have told people, I want you to make a journal, just get a journal, put a line down the middle; all the second person stuff that you hear, and then everything that the Scripture say. If it's second person, it's either Satan or a demon or God that is saying it. If it's Satan or a demon, you need to counterbalance it with what God is saying. And that's the truth. And Jesus says, the truth will set you free. That light exposes darkness. That you can either believe who Satan says you are or who God says you are. If you believe who Satan says you are, you will have no condemnation in Christ, but you will live under condemnation, that you don't have to if you're in Christ. I love you, I want you to free. And I want you to help set other people free. And if you know the truth, the truth sets you free. Okay? So number one, Jesus lives for you. And then number two, the Spirit lives in you. Okay, this is where Jesus takes the same power that empowered His life. He puts it in you. For those who live according to the flesh, that's rebellion, set their minds on the things of the flesh. That's all they're thinking about. But those who live according to the Spirit, the Holy Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. But to the mind on the flesh is what? It's death. Our whole world is dead and dying. But to set the mind on the spirit is life and peace. 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. Those who are in

the flesh cannot please God. You say, I'm a good person, cannot please God. I'm a moral person, cannot please God. I have hashtags and parades and I have causes and isms, all of which cannot please God. Only God pleases God. Unless it's God's work for you, in you, through you, it is not pleasing to God 'cause it's not godly. 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. But if Christ is in you. He just told us that we were in Christ, and now he's saying that Christ is in you. Let me explain this real quick. Positionally, you are in Christ. Practically, Christ is in you. Positionally being in Christ means that His righteousness is imputed to you. It's credited to your account, that the Holy Spirit is imparted to you, he dwells in you. For the Christian, Christ is imparted and imputed. It is positional and it is practical that his righteousness is in your account and his spirit is in your soul. It's both end. Okay? This is so that the life of Jesus Christ is not just to be admired, but to be experienced. The body is dead because of sin, the Spirit of life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he raised Christ Jesus from the dead, there's power, will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you. Okay, let me just explain this. We were made for perfect, so we long for perfect. When God got done with the world, it was good, when he got done with humanity, was very good. Now, everything is very bad. And something in us can't accept it. We wanna go back to that which is good and very good. We long for perfection. We're always frustrated. That's why we're always working on our cars, working on our homes, working on our body, working on our bank accounts, working on our business, working on our spouse, working on our kid, and it never works because something's gone wrong in this world. Sin is infected and affected everything. But we still long for this perfection. And what happens is we can't get perfect, so we settled for new. So some of you, welcome to Arizona, it's your new home, but it ain't perfect. This is why some of you keep buying new things, but it ain't perfect. This is why even when technology comes out, everybody's got to have the new technology. What does it do? The same thing as the old technology for twice the cost. Awesome, I'm in. 'Cause I just got to do new. Now what he's saying here is the Holy Spirit, he does new that results in perfect. Okay? So let me say this as a Christian. Are you perfect? No. You should have been more definitive on that point. Okay? But as a Christian, are you new? Yes. Okay? And what Satan will say is, you're not perfect, and what God will say, you are new and when I'm done, you will be perfect. So you're new and gonna be perfect. And he talks to her about seven aspects or elements of this newness. Number one, new relationship with God; goes from does not belong to Him, to Christ is in you. How many of you, you met God, you're like, I got a new relationship with God. Like, I didn't know God, now I do know God, I didn't love God, now I do love God. New relationship with God. Number two, new mind. He says, the mind on the things of the flesh versus the mind on the things of the Spirit. How many of you, you became a Christian, the Holy Spirit came in here like, I just think differently. I used to think that was good, now I think it's bad. I used to think I was right, now I think it's wrong. I thought it was light., now I think it's dark. By the way, I see things as really different. You get a brand new mind, you think differently. This is where some of you become Christians, and then you go back and talk to your former friends who are non-Christians, they don't even know what you're talking about. Like who are you? You're like, new. That's who I am. I'm thinking differently. Number three, you get a new nature. He talks about the flesh versus the Spirit. And the flesh is you

without God, and the Spirit is you with God. And what he's talking about here is a brand new nature. See, in our world, people wanna fix everything out here. God starts in here. Right? A good tree bears good fruit, a bad tree bears bad fruit. The main thing is to work on the tree and the fruit will follow. So what He does, He takes out our old nature, He puts in the Holy Spirit and the new nature. And now God begins the new process and the perfection process at the deepest level of being. This is what people will teach us; counselors, therapists, who mean well, but they don't have access to the soul, all they can get us to do is manage our outer life, they have no impact on the inner life. The diagnostic manual for mental disorders doesn't even list one time the human soul in the treatment of human conditions. How can you help someone unless you address issues of nature and soul? You may change their behavior, but only God can change their nature. In addition, you get new desires. He says, you were hostile to God, and then you submit to God's laws. This is the thing about the Christian life that the non-Christian totally doesn't understand. 'Cause the non-Christian hates everything that the Spirit of God wants you to love. People ask all the time, why do you read the Bible? I like it. Why do you pray? I like to pray. Why do you give your first 10%? I feel like it's nice that God lets keep 90. Like I'm fine. It's His money. All of a sudden life is very different. So if you're here, you need to know that we like to talk about it, this church, it's not about what you have to do, it's about what you get to do. I don't tell people, you have to read your Bible, you have to pray, you have to make love to your spouse, you have to eat ice cream. I just ruined everything that could have been awesome. That in fact would be a perfect date night. And I just... Right? Not everything goes on the internet. I'll just tell you what I'm thinking. Okay? We'll edit it later. But what happens is religion takes get tos and makes them into have tos. And the new nature, you're like, I wanna love God, I wanna worship, I wanna sing, I wanna learn the Bible. I was talking to a brand new Christian here at the church and they were like, I started reading the Bible, I love it. It's awesome, it's so exciting, it's so fun. I used to love Netflix. Now I love the Bible. Yeah, welcome, welcome, welcome to new. I had a woman come home the other day, her husband was reading the Bible. She's like, what are you doing? He was like, I don't know. I don't know. I don't, I don't know. I just heard it. She's like, how come you're not watching ESPN. He's like, I don't know. We're now in the miracle category, right? ESPN is off, Bible is open. Welcome to new son, welcome. Just new. This is where the Christian life is the joyful life. He talks here about freedom. You're free to do the things that the Spirit of God wants you to do. New power says you cannot submit to God versus the Spirit of God that dwells in you. Now you have a new power. You used to have things in your life, you're like, well I'll never change. No, I can. I'll never stop that. No, you could. I just need to work around that, ignore that, deny that, hide that, minimize that, control that. Or you know what Jesus died for? He didn't crucify that. You get to be new. You have a new power, new life. He says, you have a life that cannot please God versus righteousness. Now it's not a perfect life, but it's a new life. So let me say this; don't be discouraged by where you're not, be encouraged how far you've traveled. Some of you, you've made tremendous progress. And you're like, I'm not perfect yet. Well, join the rest of us. Until Jesus comes back, calls us by name, and we get out of the grave, as long as we're here, friends, we're working progress. We're not perfect, but we're new. And Jesus is walking us on that path to perfection. And lastly, there's a new destiny. He talks about death versus life. And the good news is this; if you receive Jesus Christ and you have the Holy Spirit, he says the

same powerful Spirit that raised Christ from the dead will also raise your mortal body. And your body's gonna come out of the grave. But this new process will end in a perfection that lasts forever. And this is the spirit of God in you. And here's the good news; he who began a good work in you, will see it through to the day of completion. Once you're in, you'll never be out. Once you've been accepted, you'll never be rejected. Because once you're adopted, you're never orphaned. And that's his last point. Jesus lives for you, the Spirit lives in you and the Father lives with you. He's gonna get us to God, the Father. So then brothers, we're family. I love you. I'd be all in not 'cause I'm angry, 'cause I'm passionate. And this is positionally inclusive of the ladies. The males had the legal status, and they wanted to make sure that the males and females were equal. So they gave them the legal status of executors of the estate as brothers. We are debtors, not to the flesh, just to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die. But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body. Jesus died so you could put stuff to death. You will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are Sons of God. For you to not receive the spirit of slavery. You either live under a spirit of sonship or a spirit of slavery. You did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you've received the spirit of adoption. There's our word. We're gonna hit this a little bit later when we get into predestination and election; Romans 9, 10 and 11. I've got a whole ebook I've written for you called Duck Duck Doom, on predestination. I was gonna call it duck, duck, damn, but you shouldn't say that in church, so I called it doom. In adoption, we don't pick our Father, our Father picks us. Adoption as sons by whom we cry, Abba Father. 15 times in the Old Testament, God is referred to as Father, 165 times on the lips of Jesus, The Son of God, he's called Father. We dealt with that in the Pre-life Jesus series. The Spirit himself bears witness with our Spirit, the Holy Spirit with our soul, that we are children of God. And if children, then heirs, full inheritance. Heirs of God. And fellow heirs with Christ. Jesus is the Son of God. And positionally, if you in Christ, you get all of the inheritance of the sons of God. Providing we suffer with him. You just got to get through this life in order that we may also be glorified with Him. Let me say this. In the ancient world, it was a perilous thing to be a child. It was a dangerous predicament. You had no legal rights. Your father literally was the law and there was no law above your father. Your father could beat you, he could rape you, he could manure you, he could kill you. Children were not widely regarded. If a child was unwanted; maybe it was a girl and they wanted the boy to work on the farm. Or maybe it was a child that was born with some disability, or maybe it was an illegitimate birth. They would oftentimes take that baby and literally put it out on the curbside with the trash. Imagine you're going for a walk in your neighborhood, everybody's got their trash out, and you hear something, and you open the lid, and there's a baby. That baby had no legal rights, they were completely rejected, they were abandoned, they were discarded. They were unwanted. What people would do then, they would take that baby and they would make them a slave. Now they're treated as property, not as family. They're beaten, they're abused. They're treated like animals. The girls are made into prostitutes. The boys are made into slaves. The only hope for a child under those circumstances in the first century Roman empire, to which the Apostle Paul writes, is the occasion where a good man would come and adopt the child. How often did this happen? Never. So imagine, imagine you're that child, okay? You're rejected, you're abandoned, you have no legal rights, you have no guardianship, you have no family, you have no home. And you know that most likely some man

is coming. And if you're a boy, he's going to beat you and enslave you and maybe kill you. If you're a girl, he's probably going to rape you, and then he is going to sex traffic you. And you're that kid. And you're scared, and you're anxious, and you're lonely. You're powerless. And you're cowering and you're hiding. And then you hear behind you heavy, footsteps of a grown man. And you hear a voice that says, turn around. And you turn around. And that man smiles, and he gets down on his knee, and he says, I've adopted you, I'm your dad. I'm sorry for everything you've been through. You're safe now. I can do whatever I want, I wanna bless you. You have nothing. Everything that I have is now yours. I am very strong and I'll use all of my strength to protect you. I've got a house for you, I've got food for you, I've got an inheritance for you, I've got brothers and sisters for you. You were lost, now you're found. You were a slave, now you're son. You've been adopted. I have chosen you. I picked you to be mine. And now you're in. And once you're in, you'll never be out. This is the story of every Christian. This is the father heart of God for you. And all you need is to be in Christ. So I'm gonna ask you, are you in Christ? Has the Son of God made you a child of God? If you've never given your sin to Jesus, you need to do that right now. God loved you so much that He sent Jesus as your big brother, the Son of God, to live for you. And then they sent the Holy Spirit to live in you. And then the Father has a place prepared for you so that He can live with you. Men, I really want your household to have the Father's heart flowing through you to your children. It matters a lot to me; that the Father's heart would be your heart. And for those of you who have never had a personal relationship with God, it begins right now. This is where you give your sin and you receive His Son. Amen? And we're gonna celebrate that with baptism. This is where we show that Jesus lived, died and rose. And we have new life because we're new people in Christ. And if you've never been baptized, never given your life to Jesus, never prayed to have a relationship with God, we would encourage you to go to the back, and we'd love to pray with you, meet with you, give you shirt, T-shirt, towels, and then we're gonna throw a big party and celebrate. Amen?

- [Congregation] Amen.

- Okay? And some of you are prodigals. You know that God is your Father, but you've run away from home for a long time. You're wondering, what happens if I return? Well, the story of the prodigal is that the dad ran to embrace and bless the prodigal. The Father's heart is not changed for you, because once you're in, you're never out. And once His heart is open, it's never closed.