**Sermon Preview for Sunday, May 4, 2014:**

*The Spirit-Directed Life:*

*(1) Free From Condemnation, Free for Goodness*

**Text: Read Romans 8:1-4**



**Romans 8:1**

“Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus

**Sadly, there is condemnation outside of Christ Jesus.**

The word *condemnation* most naturally belongs in a courtroom

 setting. A judge condemns when he gives a sentence of guilty and

 then pronounces a punishment that fits the crime. Some modern

 people acknowledge their sin and realize it deserves to be judged

 by God. They know they are worthy of condemnation. Others

 downplay sin and deny there is God who judges it. They say:

 “*There never has been condemnation”*

 This is quite different than Paul who says,

 *“Therefore there is* ***now*** *no condemnation* ***for those who***

 ***are in Christ Jesus.****”*

 Those who claim, “There is no such thing as guilt”, often feel

 haunted by sin and guilt feelings. They feel insecure and

 unacceptable, as if they are not living up. In Romans 3:23 Paul

 teaches, “ that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

 Not all guilt is false guilt. Sometimes the guilt you feel points to a

 guilt that is real. We are sinners, trapped in guilt. WE desperately

 need freedom from condemnation.

“In one of his diaries Franz Kafka (a great 20th century writer) says: “The state in which we find ourselves today is sinful, quite independent of guilt.” In other words, we live in a world now where we don’t believe in judgment, we don’t believe in sin, and still feel that there is something wrong with us.” –Tim Keller, ***King’s Cross,*** page 73

**Observation and Interpretation**

* **“No condemnation”—**the sense here means total freedom

From condemnation.

 --Paul **is not saying** “you are temporarily free from

 condemnation” but totally free from it.

* “**The law of the Spirit who gives life”**

--Sometimes law means “controlling power”. The controlling power of the Holy Spirit has set us free from the grip of the controlling power of sin and death.

* **“What the law was powerless to do”—**The NIV text note says:

**“**The law was not able to overcome sin. It could point out, condemn and even stimulate sin, but it could not remove it , and it could not enable believers to obey that law perfectly.”

* **“To be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh”**

God condemned our sin in Jesus flesh. God’s sent His son to be a sin offering; to do this righteous work of taking our condemnation. As Paul says in Romans 5:18, “Just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people.”

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***Reflection***

**Never condemned**

 “Verse one does *not* say, ‘There are no sins, there are no

accusations, there are no valid complaints, there are no disciplines.’ A Christian is not above correction. A Christian is not always right.  *But a Christian is never condemned under the judgment of God.*

--Ray Ortlund Jr, ***Supernatural Living for Natural People,*** 20

**The law of the Spirit who gives life**

 He (the Holy Spirit) internalizes the triumphs of Christ

crucified within the depths of the human being, so that our inclinations start changing from evil to good. The law cannot do that. The law tells us to pump harder, but the Holy Spirit makes springs of living water flow from within.

--Ray Ortlund Jr, ***Supernatural Living for Natural People, 15***

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**Jesus primarily came as a savior:**

“It is a delusion to think that humanity needs only a better

model for life. Its plight is more desperate. It needs a savior from bondage to sin, and the price of deliverance was the suffering and death of a sacrificial victim.”

--James Edwards, ***Understanding the Bible: Romans, @38%***

**In order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met it us**

The Holy Spirit reveals the essence of the law and enables

 Christians to conform to its fundamental intent, even if not its

 every detail. The Christian is like a man who has the right tune in

 his head but cannot remember all the words.

--James Edwards, ***Understanding the Bible: Romans @38%***

**Fully met in us…who live by the Spirit**

Holiness is the ultimate purpose of the incarnation & atonement.

**--**John Stott, **Romans:God’s Good News for the World, 221**

**Application**

**1) “Court is Adjourned”—**Every day we find ourselves living

in a world full of unfair condemnation. IF God judges you

as acceptable in his sight, then that’s what you are. Only His verdict carries authority. Now when a verdict is in, the court is adjourned. Each day Pastor Tim Keller puts a piece of paper in his pocket with these three words on it: “**Court is Adjourned.”**

 **--Do you ever struggle with insecurity or the condemning**

 **standards of others?** This week remind yourself: **“Court is**

**adjourned”**, you are totally accepted by the High King!

**2) “Spirit Directed Living”**

--Read the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20) or Jesus 7

 commands in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:17-48).

 Which of these commandments are difficult for you?

 Since God has given the Holy Spirit to enliven and direct

 Christ’s people, pray each day for His help to obey.

--**Example: Spirit of Christ, I struggle with anger, but you are greater than anger. Please empower me to speak and act patiently, as Christ would if He were in my place. In Jesus name, Amen.**