

## Romans 8:1b

*who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.*

Oh, don't you just love this verse? Wait a minute, this is not a complete verse. I think the one we all love is:

† ***There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, Romans 8:1a***

“Yeah, that’s the one” you may be thinking, “Where I feel no condemnation because I am in Christ Jesus, yep, that’s the ticket.” But did you realize that this is only half of the verse (note the “8:1a”) and today’s devotional verse is the second half (note the “8:1b”). So, together as one verse it reads as:

† ***Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.***

That’s why it’s so important to read a verse in it’s entirety, or the rule of thumb is what is known as 20/20 vision into the word of God, which is to read at least 20 verse before and 20 verses after a verse to get the entire context of it. So sure, there is “***now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus,***” but there is more to it then just that. Do you see it? “***who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.***”

What is walking in the flesh, verses walking in the Spirit? Well, if we use our rule of thumb to read ahead, verses 5 and 6 actually tells us.

† ***Romans 8:5-7 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.***

Or as the NLT puts it

† ***Romans 8:5-6 (NLT2) Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace.***

Simply put, if you are constantly thinking about sin, to the point that you try to figure out how to do it and then willfully do it, or you live a sinful lifestyle everyday, and it’s a normal lifestyle for

you, then you are walking according to the flesh. And according to our favorite verse, you can not experience “*no condemnation*” because you are not walking according to the Spirit, but the flesh.

So does that mean you should feel condemned to hell? That’s a tough question that is really between you and the Lord. But think about this, there is nowhere in the bible where we read of someone going forward in an altar call to be saved. There is also no specific prayer that we read of where someone prayed a specific prayer, and that’s the magic words to get saved with.

Now the bible does say to “**confess**” our sins to the Lord and “**repent**”, and the only way you can confess is by praying (Talking to God). But a lot of people stop right there and think that they went forward on a Sunday, or at a Easter Service, or at a crusade and said this little prayer, so they are saved. But confession is only half of it, It’s like confessing that you are an alcoholic but you never stop drinking. You need to do the other half and the other half is to repent (not repeat), and if that word, repent, sounds like fingernails on a chalkboard to you, you may want to stop and ask yourself if you really are saved, because you may be feeling condemnation, because you are not saved. But once again, you need to talk to the Lord about it.

It would be like taking today’s verse and reading it as: *There is therefore condemnation to those who are not in Christ Jesus, and who walk according to the flesh, but not according to the Spirit.*

But if you are a true believer and are saved, sure you will have sinful thoughts and that’s usually the enemy who puts it in our heads, maybe thoughts from the past and you struggle with them, because you have repented of that sin already. But here it is 2, 3, 4 10, years later and that thought comes up and you struggle with it, And the enemy puts that thought in your head, because the enemy wants you to sin again. But the key word is “**struggle**”, because if you struggle, then that means you are wanting to be obedient to the Lord and you are fighting against sinning, which is not a physical battle, but a spiritual one.

† **Ephesians 6:12** *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

So, if you do struggle and pray and ask the Lord to help you with a sin, that’s a good thing and you should not feel any condemnation, because you have chosen to walk in the Spirit.

But if not... You may want to talk to the Lord about it then. I am not judging anyone here, but Jesus taught us.

† **Luke 6:43-44** *For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush.*

Simply, you can not call yourself a Christian and willfully live a sinful life, which includes willful sinning, no prayer life, no time in the word, not being a part of a church, not going to church every week, thinking of only yourself, not tithing, etc.... Now none of these will save you, but they will show evidence if you are saved or not, if not then you are trying to be a fig growing on a thorn bush, or an Apple growing on a Poison Ivy bush, it just won't happen.

- † **Luke 6:43-44 (NLT2)** *A good tree can't produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can't produce good fruit. A tree is identified by its fruit. Figs never grow on thornbushes, nor grapes on bramble bushes.*
  
- † **Matthew 4:17** *From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*