

Thankful (3) (Romans 8:1-2)

Thankful I Am Different

Introduction: Today, I want to talk about what it means to be thankful to be "in Christ" and how and why that makes us very different people today.

I. "In Christ" means freedom from condemnation: (v.1)

A. The word condemnation Paul uses here -

1. Paul uses the word only 3 times in all the New Testament, (and all there are used here in Romans.)
2. In every case, it is used exclusively in a judicial setting referring to a verdict of guilty and the penalty for that verdict.

B. The work of Condemnation –

1. It's a legal term often used in judicial contexts, implying both the judgment itself and the consequences that follow.
2. It doesn't just mean "feeling guilty" or "feeling condemned"; it's a full, legally binding declaration of guilt, accompanied by the punishment accompanied with that guilt. (*Rom. 5:12, 7:13; 6:16, 21,23; Luke 16:24-25*).
3. For those who refuse to believe in Jesus, all those who would trust in anything other than God's grace and the sacrifice of His only begotten Son, *are condemned already* because they are trusting in the flesh. (*Rom. 8:3; John 3:16-18; Rom 1:18-32; Gal 1:8-9*).

So, Paul has told us for seven chapters – All men are sinners and under condemnation of the wrath of just and holy God – but in Chapter 8, something changed – it is different he says for those who are "In Christ!" (Jn 5:24; Rom 8:1-4 ; Col 2:14)

C. The work of Jesus, removes our condemnation - (2 Cor. 5:21)

This is the depth of the freedom Paul is describing for those who are "in Christ."

- a. Freedom from guilt and shame:
- b. Confidence in God's love
- c. The barriers between us and God have been broken down by Jesus, and we are free to live in close relationship with Him.
- d. Living in Freedom, not fear:
- e. But being "in Christ" means we can now live in freedom, without fear of God's wrath or condemnation.

In summary, Paul's use of condemnation in Romans 8:1 underscores a profound truth: In Christ, there is not only freedom from guilt but also from punishment. This is what enables us to live free in true peace and joy, fully reconciled to God.

II. "In Christ" means living in the power of the Spirit: (v. 2)

A. You're free to live a new life through the Holy Spirit.

This is where the Christian life gets exciting—and a little intimidating.

B. When Paul talks about "the law of the Spirit of life, in Christ" he's introducing a new way of living, one that contrasts sharply with the "law of sin and death."

1. Here, "law of the Spirit" can be understood as a principle or a guiding force that governs us.
2. *The Role of the Holy Spirit: This "law" is not a set of rules, but rather the active, life-giving power of the Holy Spirit working in the lives of believers.*
3. *Life in the Spirit: The Spirit of life doesn't just add something extra to our lives; it fundamentally changes us.*
4. *The law of the Spirit revives what was spiritually dead and enables us to live in relationship with God, experiencing His guidance, empowerment, and peace.*

Rom 8:2 shows us that in Christ, we are completely different and liberated people. The Spirit brings us life, breaks the chains of sin, and replaces condemnation with a lasting freedom.

III. "In Christ" means finding true purpose: (v. 3-4)

Being "in Christ" isn't just about what we're saved from; it's about what we're saved for.

A. God accomplished what we could not - *Now we're free to live without the pressure being too weak to fulfill the righteous requirement of the law. And just live freedom of God's grace for His glory.*

B. Jesus condemned sin in the flesh - Paul explains "By God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh," Jesus dealt with sin once and for all—He condemned it, breaking its power over us. So, our new purpose in Christ is to live free from sin's control, not because we are sinless in ourselves, but because Christ has broken sin's power.

C. Fulfilling the law by walking according to the Spirit is our new purpose (v.4)

D. Living with purpose in the Spirit's power (Galatians 5:22-23). Our lives become a reflection of God's love and grace, impacting others and bringing glory to Him.

Being "in Christ" aligns us with God's purpose for our lives, and that purpose always involves glorifying God and loving others.

Conclusion: So, what does it mean to be "in Christ"? It means we can be thankful that we are very different people.

- It means no condemnation, no shame.
- It means having the power to live a transformed life through the Spirit; and...
- It means walking in a purpose that's eternal. *This isn't just a lofty concept—it's a life-changing reality!*

As we go into this week, let's carry these truths with us. And when you're tempted to live for yourself, remember that you are "in Christ"—you have a higher calling!