

Romans 8:1 states: "There is therefore now no condemnation..." This is surely one of the most brutally abused verses in the Bible. This verse is given in counsel to those who complain about feeling guilty, and given as a rebuke to those who would dare to preach the Word of God in anything other than a hand patting and encouraging manner. Men have said to me that preaching must always build up the hearer, and never put "condemnation" on them. I have been told that any preaching that brings condemnation is ungodly, and must be of the devil, since the devil is the accuser of the brethren.

This is simply hogwash. It would take even the most uneducated reader about 20 seconds to see that this scripture is not a blanket lifting of all condemnation, but rather a beautiful promise based on clear conditions. If you were reading the King James version, you would see a glimpse of the conditions right in the same verse. But no matter what Bible you are reading, if you will read 8 verses you will see an entirely different message than what is most often preached from this passage. As is often the case, the verses that surround the modern day preacher's favorites are his least favorite, and so neglected into oblivion.

Lets take time to read the first 8 verses now.

¹ There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. ²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. ³For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: ⁴ That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. ⁵For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. ⁶For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. ⁷Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. ⁸ So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

First let's consider the conditions to this freedom from condemnation: 1) which are in Christ Jesus; 2) who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. It is not a promise to anyone who darkens the door of a church, or telephones a radio minister for counsel, but rather to those who are in Christ Jesus, and walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. I am going to demonstrate how these two conditions are really one condition. The one who is

in Christ Jesus walks after the Spirit, and the one who walks after the flesh **IS NOT IN CHRIST**.

For the time being, I am going to pass over verse 2 - 4, except to point out that if your Bible is missing the condition to freedom from condemnation in verse one you can see it in verse 4. I will re-visit these verses in an upcoming article about being free from the law. But here I want to focus on what it means to walk after the flesh.

Look at verse 5, "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh". What is the mark of one who is after the flesh - they "do mind the things of the flesh." So what are the things of the flesh? Is this strictly about fornication, pornography and adultery? No. Those things are certainly fleshly things, but the phrase "things of the flesh" used here is much broader. Paul here is talking about people who spend all there energy worrying about themselves.

These people constantly fret over finances. They constantly lust after things they can't afford, or worse, buy things they can't afford, with money they don't have. This leads to more fretting about finances. These people care too much about how they look, what kind of clothes they must wear to impress their neighbors, co-workers, school mates, or even total strangers. They are worried about what others will think of them.

These people buy a car for the status of it, and not for the need of transportation. These people feed their flesh with every kind of evil thought and imagination. They get their ideas and opinions from the television, radio, and newspaper, instead of from the Word of God.

James calls them the friends of the world. They love the world and every thing it has to offer. Their standards may seem high, but for the right price, they will do anything. One who minds the things of the flesh may be honest most of the time, and talk about this honesty, until it really costs him. When the truth, and keeping his promises will cost him money, stand back. Do you want to know if you are fleshly minded? How you do your taxes is a good test. Will you lie if it will bring you down a bracket?

Verse 6 tells us that to be carnally minded is death, verse 7 says it is enmity against God, and verse 8 tells us that it cannot please God. Let's look at the word enmity for a minute. The word enmity means active hostility and hatred. **The carnal mind is actively hostile toward**

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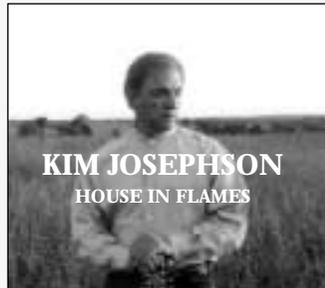
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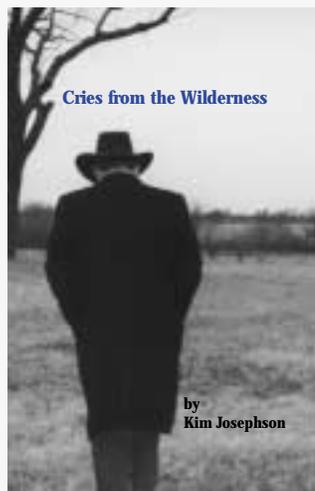
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The Reason

by Kim Josephson

Everywhere I go I see a certain kind of sadness
So many lonely people and so many lonely eyes
Eking out a living in their quiet desperation
So many lonely people who just live a life of lies.

Chorus

It's the kind of thing that puts you on your knees
Thanking the Savior by the grace of God
you've seen the light and held on to the Truth,

The city man created is a sea of desolation
People wander aimlessly not knowing what to do
It's a system man created where man becomes the loser
People grasp at anything
they think they can hold on to.

Chorus

So what is it then that blinds us
To the quiet plight of others?
What is it then that makes us hoard
this gift of God alone?
As we stagnate in our silence
To the dying world around us
And we hold the Truth unrighteously
as if we'd never known.

It's the kind of thing that puts you on your knees
begging the Savior to forgive you for your sinfulness
and forgive you for your pride
It's the kind of thing that puts you on your knees
begging the Savior
And reminds you of your own sin
The reason
That He died.

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No Condemnation (continued from back page)

God! Hear me. If you are carnally minded, always looking to the arm of the flesh, and to the natural for help and satisfaction, **then you are the enemy of God.** You are God's enemy. This is why Paul concludes that the carnal mind cannot please God. It is at war with God!

Notice that Paul tell us that the spiritual mind is "life and peace", well, he then goes on to tell us that the carnal mind is "death and war". James says it this way: "*Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity [active hostility] with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*" (James 4:4). And in 1 John, the beloved disciple states it this way: "*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*" (1 John 2:15)

So understand this, **if you are carnally minded you can count on condemnation! In fact, the wrath of God abides on you. You cannot please God, you are His enemy.** The only thing that will please God is faith. (Heb 11:6) The faith that pleases God, simply put, is reckoning yourself dead and useless in your own salvation, and throwing yourself on the mercy of God. As long as you are solving all your problems, by your own machination, and meeting all your own needs, acting as your own provider, you are living in the realm of the carnal mind.

It is time to put down the weapons of your warfare against God, (your lusts, your fears, and your self sufficiency) and repent before the holy God you oppose. Put your faith in Him for He truly is worthy. Walk after the Spirit, and live.