

The Now and Forever Joys of Being in Christ  
Romans 8:1-11

**I. Some things change everything**

**A. Election Year**

1. In 9 days voters will choose national, state, and local leaders
2. Some suggest this election will have the greatest impact in our nation's history
3. Throughout history, a single small action has changed the world
  - a. Adam ate the apple (result = a change in the relationship between God and the entire human race)
  - b. Moses climbed the mountain (result = the legal and social basis for western civilization!)
  - c. Jesus rose from the dead (result = a new hope, new life, new future)
  - d. Luther nailed 95 theological proposals on the door of the church in Wittenberg (result = a reformation that brought saving grace to billions)

**B. Romans**

1. In 9 days, you should vote, because your vote could be the one that changes the world,
2. but for today, Reformation Sunday, let's return to the biblical letter that changed Luther's mind about how sinful, hell-bound man can be reconciled and find favor with God.
3. Romans lays out God's eternal plan of salvation for us
  - a. From before time, God planned to reveal the majesty and depth of His love and glory by saving sinful man from certain death
  - b. Romans contains and explains in detail the gospel, the Good News of God's gracious and glorious work
    - (1) To reconcile us to Him
    - (2) To restore us to His favor
    - (3) To redeem us from our slavery to sin
    - (4) To rescue us from death and wrath
    - (5) To renew us into life and joy, now and forever
    - (6) To return us again to life in the His presence for which we were created

**II. The Gospel and Romans 8: Now and Forever Joy**

**A. "Therefore"**

1. **Romans 8:1 (ESV)** *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*
  - a. Therefore: What is the "therefore" there for?
  - b. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ. Why?
2. Romans 5
  - a. **Romans 5:16 (ESV)** *And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought*

*condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification.*

b. **Romans 5:18 (ESV) *Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.***

(1) One act of sin led to condemnation

(2) One act of divine righteousness leads to justification

3. THEREFORE!

a. Paul demonstrates through chs 5, 6, 7

(1) how the single act of Christ's righteous life and representative death provides the grounds for justification

(2) by releasing all who believe and trust Christ from the condemning function of the law

(a) The law reveals the sinfulness of sin

(b) The law imposes the righteous judgment of God on the sin and sinfulness of man

(c) The law condemns.

i) The law does not save

ii) The law cannot save

iii) It is neither the nature nor the purpose of God's law to save but to drive us to see our need of a Savior!

(3) Paul demonstrates that Jesus Christ is our God appointed, God-provided Savior!

b. **Therefore, those who by faith are united with Christ by the Spirit of God are no longer under condemnation of law but are free under grace.**

**B. What does this lack of condemnation signify?**

1. If you are, by faith and the work of the Spirit, "in Christ" . . .

a. Vs. 2 The law of the Spirit of life has set you free from the law of sin and death.

b. V. 3 God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do.

(1) V. 3 God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh

(2) God sent His Son expressly because of and to deal with sin

(3) God's action in sending Christ to live and die as the Savior condemns sin as unacceptable to God and worthy of death

(a) You don't have to wonder what God thinks about your sin

(b) You only have to look to the cross to see clearly what God thinks about sin in our lives!

2. Why does God save us and cause us through faith and the Spirit to be in Christ?

a. V. 4 So that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us

- (1) So that we might live the life of faith and obedience, loving God and aligned with His will, for which we were created
- (2) So that we might live not according to the demands of our sinful nature but according to the grace and will and word of God: the life produced by the Spirit of God in us
- b. V. 5 So that we are no longer driven by our sinful nature to constantly focus on self-serving sin but to live with our minds attuned to the Spirit of God who produces the fruit of righteousness in us.
- c. V. 6 So that in this world of chaos where candidates vie for power over your lives, you may find not fear and anxiety and anger and hopelessness but life and peace and love and hope and joy.
- d. Why does God save us?
  - (1) V. 9 so that we will no longer be in the flesh (self-serving sinners) but in the Spirit
  - (2) V. 9 so that we will belong to Christ
  - (3) V. 10 so that, even though the body dies as a result of living under sin in a fallen world, we will live!
    - (a) We will live the life of faith that saves the soul now
    - (b) And in the resurrection, our bodies will be raised and be like His glorious body through the power of the Spirit of God Who lives in us.
- e. Why does God save us?
  - (1) So that we will have new life and new hope now
  - (2) So that we will have eternal life and certain joy forever

### III. The Key Question

#### A. The key question

- 1. For us, though, is not what has God done for us.
- 2. The key question is, “Are we in Christ”?

#### B. In Christ

- 1. “There is therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”
- 2. The now and forever joys Paul expounds in these verses and throughout this 8<sup>th</sup> chapter are for those who are in Christ.
- 3. The key for experiencing the greatness and glory of God’s grace is that we be “in Christ Jesus.”
  - a. To be “in Christ” is to be united with Christ in a real, supernatural union accomplished by the Holy Spirit when we put our faith in Jesus as our Savior.
  - b. The Spirit unites us with Christ in His life and death and resurrection when we believe
  - c. That union, by the Spirit on account of faith, provides for us all the spiritual benefits for which Jesus came and lived and died.
    - (1) Faith is the gift of God
    - (2) Faith comes by hearing the word
    - (3) Faith is essential

4. God places faith within us so that we will put that God-given faith in Christ and be united with Christ by the Spirit

**C. Conclusion**

1. On this Reformation Sunday, God offers each of us a reformation of the heart, a reformation of our minds and wills, a reformation of our life and lifestyle, a reformation of our future.
  - a. God offers a reformation of our very nature through faith in Christ.
  - b. God, in love and grace, offers a spiritual reformation that will change our world, not from the outside in but from the inside out.
  - c. God offers a reformation that will remove guilt and fear and set us free to know true love and real life.
  - d. God offers a reformation full of hope, full of grace, full of power, promise, presence, and possibility.
  - e. God offers a reformation that will strengthen us against temptation and sin.
  - f. God offers a reformation that beckons us onward in faithfulness and joy.
  - g. God in Christ offers a reformation that makes everything new.
2. Won't you
  - a. Trust Him today?
  - b. Take God at His word, throw yourself on His mercy, embrace His promise, accept His offer, put your faith in Christ?
3. God is nailing His gospel proposals on the door of your heart.
  - a. Open the door.
  - b. Let Christ in.
  - c. Let God take you in.
  - d. Let your personal reformation begin.

HYMN *Higher Ground*