

The Trinity at Work in Salvation

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[0 : 00] Well, again, I'm glad you all are here this evening.

And last week we looked at the gospel of Jesus Christ! found in Romans 8, verse 1. And there is therefore now no condemnation at all for those who are in Christ Jesus.

And you know, God can express great truth with a minimum of words if He chooses to. There's a great word in that verse, just three letters, and that's that word now.

And I got to thinking about that with a little help from Dr. Boyce and Dr. MacArthur and Dr. Sproul. But I'm sure it was my independent thinking.

Now was when Paul wrote this. And now is in the 21st century. And everything in between.

[1 : 16] There's now no condemnation. And we can say with certainty that this is the gospel of Christ. The truth of no condemnation is not only the theme of the 8th chapter of Romans, it's the theme of the entire Word of God.

I find myself almost questioning God on this point of no condemnation. And the only doubt I have is I know me. I know what I've done over a lifetime.

I know my thoughts. I know my actions. And then I come face to face with some very wonderful news for all of us that are in Christ. This no condemnation doctrine.

And you come to the realization it's not based upon what you and I have done or failed to do. It is based upon what God has done.

And I sometimes wonder, the church at large, do we really understand and believe that statement?

Of course, looking around the classroom, I believe we do understand it and believe it.

[2 : 35] But let's face it, there are millions of churchgoers and some who don't go. They're just church members. And they only show up a couple times a year like yesterday.

And there are a lot of others who don't understand that statement. I believe one of the principal problems is many people consider salvation to be a cooperative effort between God and themselves.

In that world, God does His part, but He can only go so far. And then He pauses and He hopes that men and women will do their part.

I tell people, and I've got some good friends that hold that view. And I love them. And I'm gentle with them. I say, you're wrong as rain. And I tell people who view God in this manner that that's really a portrait of an impotent God.

They would have God sitting on the throne, wringing His hands, hoping someone might avail themselves of His wonderful plan of salvation.

[4 : 01] And if they don't, then the Father will look at the Son. Well, maybe tomorrow they will. That is a God of the imagination.

And that's a God that doesn't exist. And the world, but especially the church, the church world, needs to come to grips with this fact.

There's two types of people in the world. Those who are in Christ and who are therefore not under condemnation.

Those who are not in Christ and are still under condemnation. At one time, every human, including all of us, were found in the type 2 category.

We all start out there. So the question is, how do we get from type 2 to type 1? In other words, how do we go from condemnation to no condemnation?

[5 : 15] I've got a lot of relatives, including one son and some granddaughters that I'd like to explain that to. This is a vitally important question, brothers.

We've got to face facts here. Every one of us has friends and or family members that are still under the condemnation of God.

I had two retired police officers die in the last six months that were under the condemnation of God. I've got two Barthaloo police officers retired that are on their deathbeds, so to speak.

And they just have a few weeks or months left that are under the condemnation of God. How do we go from condemnation to no condemnation?

Do we earn it? Do we somehow attain it? Surely none of us would ever believe that we deserve it. Let me be clear on this point.

[6 : 33] It is not something we do. And neither does something that we attain. It is based solely on what God does by grace.

This sometimes shocks people, but it is nevertheless true. And actually, I got this from Dr. Adrian Rogers years ago when he was still alive. He said, we did not attain our salvation and we cannot maintain our salvation.

Salvation is attained by the grace of God and it is maintained by the continuing grace of God. I remember when he said that, he went ahead and he said, you know, there's a lot of people just don't believe that and they think that they attained it and they're going to maintain it.

And if they lose it, they'll get it back. I remember Dr. McBride used to attend the Thursday Bible study with pastors in Bartlesville. I think they had a couple of, did you go to that?

A couple of Dewey guys and Mike was like the lone Baptist guy there. And they were kind of making fun of our belief in eternal security and one of them spoke up and said, yeah, because Hebrews 6 clearly says you can lose your salvation.

[8 : 15] And Mike says, Dr. McBride said, I don't think you want to use that section because it says if you lose it, you can never get it back again.

So if you've ever lost it, what are you doing here? You're wasting your time if that's what that means. But it's not what it means. Let me read a very familiar portion of Scripture.

I take great comfort in this and can also be scared. Unfortunately, we don't read the whole thing. We read the first verse.

You'll probably recognize the first verse. If not from me, from Mike yesterday. 3, for God so loved the world that He gave His only Son.

And whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him.

[9 : 23] Whoever believes in Him is not condemned. That's good news. But there's a comma. But whoever does not believe is condemned already.

That's not good news. Because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment. The light has come into the world and people love the darkness rather than the light. because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light lest his work should be exposed.

But whoever does what is true comes to the light so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God. God. So there we see in inspired Scripture the two classes of people. Condemned not condemned. And the book of Romans makes it abundantly clear that God does the work in joining us to Christ.

[10 : 46] Let's go back to Romans chapter 8 verse 1 and then we'll read a little bit further. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus for the law of the spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

For God has done what the law weakened by the flesh could not do by sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin he condemned sin in the flesh in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

Well here we see the Trinity at work. He is at work in the salvation of a soul. We see in these words the work of God the Father God the Son and God the Holy Spirit as the one true God as he brings his people into the family of the saved.

And I want to break this down this evening into the respective persons of the Trinity in order to understand this great work.

And I'll begin with God the Father what has God the Father done for us in salvation? Well much in every way. For our purposes we can put them under two headings.

[12 : 26] First the Father sent his sinless son the Lord Jesus and he sent him in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering.

and we're going to develop that word tonight those words sin offering but that takes us back to the old covenant to Leviticus to the high priest the day of atonement I mean we could spend a year on that.

The second heading is that God the Father condemned sin and sinful man so that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in those who are joined to Christ.

And that is why we said last week that Romans 8 1 is the very heart of the gospel. These opening verses of chapter 8 really are a brief though comprehensive explanation of the good news of salvation which is another name for the gospel.

And those opening words of Romans are so rich with inerrant truth. I'm going to see if I can pull this off I may not be able to yeah maybe I'm going to pick up and not read what I just read but continue on 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 set their minds on the things of the spirit for to set the mind on the flesh is death but to set the mind on the spirit is life and peace for the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God for it does not submit to God's law indeed it cannot those who are in the flesh cannot please God you however are not in the flesh but in the spirit if in fact the spirit of God dwells in you anyone who does not have the spirit of Christ does not belong to him but if

[14 : 45] Christ is in you although the body is dead because of sin the spirit is life because of righteousness if the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his spirit who dwells in you and if you're keeping track that was Romans 8 1 all the way through 11 and we see in these words the doctrine of the incarnation God the father sending his son Jesus to be like sinful man though he was totally without any sin he who knew no sin became sin that we might become the righteousness of God in him and in verse 3 we see the word likeness this is a very important word we know that

Jesus was a real man he was unique being the God man no one but the Lord Jesus can claim to be the God man no one no angel no human and I say this with a softer tone God the father doesn't claim that God the spirit doesn't claim that Jesus is unique he is the God man he was a real man and that made him able to feel as we feel endure temptation as we hopefully endure temptation and eventually die as we too will someday but at no time did he become like us in regards to our sin or our sin nature he had no sin nature that never happened here is what the writer of the inspired book of

Hebrews said Hebrews 4 15 for we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are yet without sin Jesus went through temptations like we go through temptations John spoke to this in his first epistle I'm writing these things to you so that you may not sin but if anyone does sin we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous he is the propitiation for our sins that's 1 John 2 1 and 2 another thing the Father did in Romans chapter 8 dealt with justification God the Father condemned sin in Christ so we might be able to stand before God not as righteous in righteousness but in his holy and perfect righteousness in his righteousness Mike talked about that first John passage yesterday and he didn't go quite far enough for me maybe I just missed it but John says we don't sin and every commentary we don't make a life pattern of sin but we do sin and if you don't believe that read the first chapter of 1 John if you ever say you're without sin you're making God a liar because he says you do sin so that's not the issue the second person of the Trinity we want what has God the Son done for our salvation in the opening words of Romans chapter 8 there are two things that are made very clear in the book of Romans we've already touched on the fact that

Jesus became a sin offering but to whom was he a sin offering he was a sin offering to the father that is what we're told in the book of Hebrews without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins I remember when Paul Worsher great preacher of our day was invited for a series of messages to a church in the southeast part of the country that Sunday morning he preached on the cross of Christ and how Jesus was placed on the cross by the father to satisfy God's wrath directed at the sins of all who would believe ultimately Jesus went willingly to the cross so we wouldn't have to at 2 p.m.

[19 : 55] that afternoon as brother Worsher was in his hotel room praying and preparing for the evening message the local pastor came to visit that's never a good sign the church leaders had sent him and asked to verify his belief that God the father allowed Jesus to die on the cross to satisfy his wrath towards sinners for their sins and Paul Worsher said yes you've got that right I'm

thankful have that right and the pastor went on and he said our church totally rejects that idea we believe that Jesus was crucified in a war with Satan that Satan put him up there but Jesus was still victorious because he rose from the dead so that ultimately defeated

Satan and then the pastor told him don't bother to come back tonight or the rest of the week we've canceled the rest the remaining part of the service the revival we used to call them and that may sound amazing to us that a church would reject that they rejected the very gospel message and they didn't realize they were rejecting it I'd be worried that was a false church probably laced with some believers surely but they're on thin ice the first thing we note about the role of God the son was that he was sacrificed as a sin offering to the father he made propitiation for our sins in other words he satisfied or appeased God's wrath that's what propitiation means it is the satisfaction or the appeasement

I wish I could give the church that Paul Worsher visited this quote from Dr. Boyce what the apostle Paul has been saying in the book of Romans from the beginning is that we are all under wrath because of our wickedness the wrath of God is precisely our problem it must be dealt with how are we going to deal with it how do we deal with the wrath of God we cannot turn it aside all we do in this life serves only to increase the wrath of God since we accumulate wrath against ourselves constantly this is pre salvation by every thought we have everything we do only

God in the person of his son can turn wrath aside and this he has done but how did he do it he did it because Jesus bore it in our place on the cross that's how it was turned aside from all who would believe no one who fails to understand and believe this can be a Christian that's Dr.

Boyce's words you cannot be a Christian and reject this the second thing that God the son did on the cross was to provide redemption for all who would believe a great example that the Roman church would have understood was buying a slave from the slave market we used to have those in America in the south but there was a certain group of people that would buy slaves in the Roman world from the slave market for the purpose of setting him or her free that's a great example that's what Jesus did for us he bought us out of the slave market of sin to set us free when

[24 : 46] I sin I think about that I really shouldn't be doing this Lord based on what you've done for me Paul touches on this in Romans chapter 8 in that second verse through Christ Jesus the law of the spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death the apostle Paul is telling us there that he was once a slave to sin and death Paul yeah when he was called Saul he was busy killing Christians trying to destroy and stamp out the church Jesus freed him from that as the Lord has freed all who have ever been saved by him well we have a third person in the trinity God the spirit in the verse I quoted above we also see the holy spirit in the salvation of souls in salvation the spirit of

God joins us to Christ so that we then become beneficiaries of all that Christ has done he did it we get the benefits of that and you know Paul is very famous for using the phrase in Christ or in him throughout his writings all 13 books that he wrote he does so 164 times and many of those are in the book of Romans I'm going to hope not see if it's in Hebrews our union with Christ by the will of the father through the power of the spirit is not easy to understand it was difficult for Paul's readers it is difficult in our day and there are churches that reject it but

Jesus touched on this in the very great passages of John chapter 15 we refer to that as the vine and branches abide in me and I in you as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine neither can you unless you abide in me I am the vine you are the branches whoever abides in me and I in him he it is that bears much fruit for apart from me you can do nothing so here we see the apostle Paul using powerful images in his writings in Romans and we see John using powerful images in his writing of that gospel concerning our union with Christ and by the way just so you know in the world of growing things branches don't produce anything that comes from the vine to the branch sometimes

Paul compares church members as various parts of Christ's body he's famous for that he uses the example of a building describing us as his temple and Jesus as the chief cornerstone we've read that in several of the New Testament books so we can be part of his body we can be part of a building but his most powerful and most profound illustration is found when he writes in Ephesians of a husband and wife in marriage here's here's how Paul explains this great truth this is a profound mystery but

I'm talking about and he's comparing the wife and the husband I'm talking about Christ and the church that's what a Christian marriage is to be an example a human example of Christ and the church by joining us to Christ the Holy Spirit seals our salvation and makes possible the great

opening statement of Romans chapter 8 which you should have memorized by now therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus Paul teaches us the great truth of no condemnation based upon the work of the Father based upon the work of the Son and based upon the work of the Holy Spirit but I want to end this tonight with a cautionary note

[30 : 17] I'm not smart enough to come up with this this is provided to us by the late Dr. James Montgomery Boyce great man of God here's Dr.

Boyce but do not presume on the security of no condemnation this is a great doctrine for those who are truly in Christ but it is only for those who are in him make sure you are if you're not sure give the matter no rest until the Holy Spirit himself plants upon your heart the assurance that you really are in Christ I remember with fondness when we opened this whole study and I showed you a seven minute video of Dr.

MacArthur in the Q&A; that he does on a fifth Sunday in his church on Sunday night remember the little girl that went forward just in as she could be and she said you know I don't know if I'm a believer or not I have no assurance I have these blasphemous thoughts and I do what I don't want to do and I do sound like Romans Paul you know Dr.

MacArthur said let me ask you a series of questions and he went through all these questions and you know do you love God yes I love God do you love God's word yes I love to study God's word and he went through this whole litany and then he says do you want to obey God and all that he commands and she said yes but I can't do it alone and that's when John said of course not welcome to the club he said none of us can do it alone that's why we're all here you know he's got 5,000 people around her that's why we're all here none of us can do it alone we come together and worship Christ because he can do it it was a great moment in life of his church well we everything we discussed tonight and the last few weeks is central to pursuing holiness in an unholy world we're still on that theme by the way and we'll finish that theme in May let's let's close with a word of prayer gracious father I thank you for your inerrant word that even a child can understand

I remember when dr. mccarthur got a letter from a nine-year-old girl he said you preach so I can understand he said that's the best letter he ever received lord if there's anyone here that has doubts remember bring those to people you trust in the church let's talk about them let's go over them and understand there are times we all have had doubts in the past I have lord may we worship you in spirit and truth this week and always keep us safe bring us back Wednesday bring us back Sunday bring us back Monday and we'll carry on I pray in Jesus name say bye bye Thank you.