

The Groundwork for the Spirit

Walking according to the Spirit because of Christ's sin-condemning Work

Greg Reed, Sept. 28, 2025, ATS Series: Life in the Spirit – A Study on the Spirit as our Helper from Romans 8

“For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the **flesh**, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful **flesh** and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the **flesh**, so that the righteous requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the **flesh** but according to the Spirit.” (Romans 8:1-2).

“Because of our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the regenerating work of the Spirit of God has set us free from sin's power, sin's authority, sin's dominion, sin's sovereignty, sin's mastery and ultimately even sin's penalty. So we'll never know the punishment of sin because we have been set free from that because of Jesus Christ. Great and marvelous truth”

– John MacArthur

I. Intro:

- Why is a true believer's sanctification inseparable from his justification (recap of Rom 8:1-2):
No _____ (vs. 1)
No _____ (vs. 2)
- What does it mean to “walk according to the flesh”?

Table Discussion 1:

1) John Owen once wrote that the **“though the presence of sin can never be abolished in this life, nor the influence of sin altered (its tendency is always the same), its dominion Can, INDEED, must be destroyed if a man is to be a Christian.”**

Read what Jesus says to the Jewish leaders in John 8:34-38 and then what he says to his disciples in John 14:15-20. What must be true for someone to be truly “free” from sin according to these passages?

II. The Preparatory Work for the Spirit: Condemning Sin in the flesh

A. What does it mean to “condemn sin in the flesh”?

“...So that the righteous requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us” (vs. 4a)

- “Concerning sin”
- “the righteous requirement”
- “fulfilled in us”

B. Why was the Law unable to “condemn” sin?

“For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh” (v.3a)

1) The weakness of the flesh requires what the Law could not accomplish in and of itself (Rom 7:5-6)

2) The Gospel of Christ turns the sinner away from any and all boasting in the flesh (Phil. 3:3-4)

Table Discussion 2: *How does Paul’s contrast in Philippians 3 help you understand the contrast that Paul makes in Romans 8:4-5: the one who walks according to the flesh vs. according to the Spirit?*

C. Why did God need to send His son to condemn sin *in the flesh*?

“God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh,” (v.3b)

1. God’s Justice demands a perfect satisfaction: What the Law was impotent to do, God was more than able to do.

2. Sin’s penalty requires a completed sentence: God sent His Son as a sin offering.

3. God’s Law requires a perfect substitute: The Son condemned sin in the flesh for our sins, not His.

III. Concluding Implications

A. God’s **Inseparable Love** for us is revealed by His initiative to condemn sin for us

B. God’s **Unwavering Justice** is revealed by the Son sent to fulfill all righteousness.

C. God’s **Saving Power** is revealed by the Spirit sent to indwell every believer.