

ROMANS 5:12-8:39 | GIVING TESTIMONY TO THE VALIDITY OF THE MYSTERY

Supplemental Resource, Romans Graphically Presented, pgs. 5, 28

ROMANS 8:1-39 | THE STRUGGLE AND SURVIVAL OF GOD'S ELECT

Supplemental Resource, Romans Graphically Presented, pg. 28

ROMANS 8:1 | THE PREMISE FOR ALL - BLUE

Supplemental Resource, Romans Graphically Presented, pgs. 36

In the study of Romans, using the pronouns as the roadmap is most helpful. From the beginning it has been my position that the pronouns are as follows:

Pronoun	Refers To
First Person Singular	Paul
First Person Plural	The Apostles collectively
Second Person Plural	The Roman Jews
Third Person Plural	The Gentiles

Using this guide, we now note that Paul uses the third person plural, **them**, thus opening us to direct application of these verses. In chapter 8 Paul will move between **them**, **you** and **us**, and thus the chapter will contain some passages of direct application (blue) and some passages that do not belong to us (black).

The chapter begins with a universal statement, wholly positive in nature, that any **condemnation** which may have previously existed is not removed for **them which are in Christ Jesus**. Paul is unconcerned, here, as to *how they got to this position*, but only with the results.

The last phrase of the verse (**who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit**) is a topic on which he will elaborate on in verses 5-11. It is not a *qualifier* for the promise, but a *descriptor* of those **in Christ Jesus**.

ROMANS 8:2-4 | THE METHOD

VERSE 2 – BLUE

My *assumption* is that Paul's use of the **me** pronoun would be applicable to all **them which are in Christ Jesus** of verse 1, and that the use of the first-person, in this case, can be taken in context to include *any* in Christ Jesus. A passage like Galatians 5:1 could be used to support the broader application beyond Paul alone.

Though the word **Spirit** is capitalized, this is *always* a matter of interpretation. It is far from certain that this is a reference to the Holy Spirit. Bullinger interprets the phrase as, "the spiritual law of life" (The Companion Bible, Romans 8:2), although this makes *spiritual* an adjective rather than a noun and so would not be a good translation. Bullinger's position seems to be that it is a figure of speech and can be *understood* as an adjective.

But whether taken as the **Spirit** or *spirit*, the truth is the same, that Paul is claiming to be **free from the law of sin and death**. This law, it seems, is the curse of Adam upon all men. To be set free from this law is to be *free indeed*.

VERSE 3 – BLUE

The law had many benefits (as stated in chapter 7), but there were things that **the law could not do**. This is alluded to in Paul's declaration of the grace message in Acts 13:38-39. The passage does not say that the law could not make a person **free from the law of sin and death** (v. 2), for it certainly could! There was a **righteousness which is of the law** (Rom. 10:5) and this righteousness brought life (see Leviticus 18:5, which Paul quotes in Romans 10:5).

This verse says that the law could not have **condemned sin in the flesh** because **it was weak through the flesh**. That is, the *law* was sufficient, but *human weakness* made it impossible that the law would ever accomplish the work of righteousness (and thus life) to the point that a person could be **made...free** (v. 2). He or she could be *free right now* but, in the weakness of the flesh, might soon be entangled in sin (and thus death) again.

But Jesus **condemned sin in the flesh** by coming **in the likeness of sinful flesh** and winning the battle of the flesh. Now, those in Christ have had the final *condemnation of sin* and are **complete in him** (Col. 2:10), not needing to worry about future failures.

VERSE 4 – BLACK

God, through Jesus, **condemned sin** (v. 3), that is, *gave sin its final judgment*, in order that **the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled** in those Jews (**us**) which **walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit**. The emphasis here is not the *walking*, but the fact that this walk is **not after the flesh**, as required under the law.

Under what circumstances could a Jew enjoy **the righteousness of the law** under the law? Only by walking **after the flesh** (i.e.: *by works*). The word **after** is from the Greek *κατά* [kata], often understood as “according to.” When a Jew lived a righteous life, as defined in the law, according to the flesh, then the righteousness of the law was fulfilled in them (see Lk. 1:6, for example). But now, in Christ, **the righteousness of the law** could be fulfilled even in those who **walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit**. It is indeed a *new dispensation*.

ROMANS 8:5-11 | THE FLESH VERSUS THE SPIRIT

VERSE 5-8 - A GENERAL WORD – BLUE

Once again Paul speaks in general terms, using the pronoun **they** (v. 5). His teaching here is to live *in the spiritual realm* rather than in the *physical realm*. If one’s philosophy of life is limited to the *flesh* alone (they have a **carnal mind** -v. 7), then they will only find **death** (v. 6), because there is no eternal life offered by the physical world. The **carnal mind is enmity against God** (v. 7) because God is not *flesh* but *spirit*. The **law of God** (v. 7) always has its foundation in the spiritual, and thus **they that are in the flesh cannot please God** (v. 8).

For one who would be saved, they simply cannot live by giving attention to **the things of the flesh** (v. 5). To do so would cause them to miss the spiritual things of God. This would be true if these *fleshly things* are sensual carnalities, but also if they are *works-based* righteousness. Therefore, one should not take these verses to be a condemnation of “bad behavior” like *sex, drugs, and rock 'n roll*, but rather a condemnation of *flesh* versus *spirit*.

VERSES 9-11 – A WORD TO THE ROMAN JEWS – BLACK

VERSE 9 – BLACK

Paul comes again with the second-person plural pronoun, **ye** (v. 9), addressing specific comments to his Roman Jewish audience.

I take verse 9 in a more practical way than most. Paul is saying to the Roman Jews that *if your dependence is on the spiritual things of Christ, then you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit*. Many use this verse to determine things about the indwelling of the Spirit that are simply not taught in this verse, in my opinion. Rather, the verse teaches that *you can live in the flesh or in the spirit*. Further, I think there is a good argument to be made that neither occurrence of the word **Spirit** should be capitalized, if such capitalization gives reference to the Holy Ghost.

VERSE 10 - BLACK

Even with **Christ...in you**, Paul says to the Roman believers, **the body is dead because of sin**. That is, the *curse, including death, has not yet been lifted, sin has not yet been defeated*.

But, with **Christ...in you, the Spirit is life because of righteousness**. This would undoubtedly be *His righteousness*. Once again, it is open to interpretation as to whether **Spirit** is a reference to the Holy Ghost or *their personal spirit*.

Thus, Paul says that his audience is still in the grip of sin’s curse, but *spiritually* has overcome this curse.

VERSE 11 - BLACK

Even though death was a certainty for the recipients, Paul reminded them of the resurrection, in which God would **quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwellers in you**.

These two verses seem to indicate that Paul did not expect the rapture/resurrection to occur in his lifetime. If this is true, then we also know that Paul would have naturally expected believers to read his writings long after he was gone. Could this be the reason why he was so specific with the pronouns? If Paul had used a more general pronoun in verses 10-11, then wouldn’t we have to believe that *we will definitely die*?