

Teaching Series: The Glory of Righteousness

Title: Session 12 – Condemnation and Future Sins

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Date: April 21st, 2021

Cleansing the Conscience of Sins

Free of Condemnation

Another way your conscience is cleansed of the consciousness of sins is by realizing and acknowledging in your mind and heart that, even when you sinned, you still remain free of condemnation. Let's read the most famous passage on freedom of condemnation found in Romans 8:1-2:

Romans 8:1-2 (NKJV)

¹ There is therefore **now no condemnation** to those who are in Christ Jesus, who don't walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

Who is Paul referring to in the above passage? He addresses those who are in Christ, meaning the invisible church (which is the true church), and not the visible one. Now, what does it mean for you to be in Christ? It means that you are a born-again believer and a new creation. It means also that you are saved, justified, that you have eternal life, and have the Holy Spirit in you. These are all equivalent phrases about being in Christ. So, this passage is addressed to believers that still commit sinful actions.

In the physical and natural realm, when can a court of law condemn you? You are condemned when you break the law of the country you live in. In the spiritual realm, being condemned before God means that you are a sinner. What does "no condemnation" mean before God? It means justification, or having the "justified" legal status declared by God on you as a believer; it's right standing with God. That means you are "unblamable," as if you've never sinned. Justification is more than forgiveness of sins. In our inter-human relationships, forgiveness means that the wrong done to someone remains still unpaid, but the wronged party chooses to overlook it or forget about it. The phrase "forgiveness of sins" in relation to God can be used only in the sense that believers didn't pay themselves directly for their sins because of His mercy. But Someone paid. Christ is the One Who paid for them and in their stead, and they paid in Him. God didn't just overlook or forget their sins without any payment. Christ paid for them. Justification means that believers paid in full for their sins in Christ, and that they have been reborn into a new justified

creation that has never sinned. If you received Jesus Christ into your heart as your Savior, then you became justified, you paid in full for all your sins through Christ, and you have been reborn into a new justified creation that has never sinned and will never actually sin ever again. I will explain that in detail later. ***As a believer in Christ, all your sins - past, present, and future - have been completely and permanently removed, not just forgiven.***

In the story of Daniel, after he was thrown into the lions' den and God saved his life, if someone came to king Darius and told him that Daniel broke the law, it would have been unjust for the king to punish Daniel again for the same law break. Daniel had already been thrown once into the lions' den. In the same way, God's justice today demands our acquittal because of Christ's sacrifice. We are not justified based on mercy, but based on justice and righteousness, because our sins were paid in full in Christ. In the night of the Passover, when the people of Israel were getting ready to leave Egypt, God told them: "When I will pass through your door and see the blood (not your good works or your good name), I will pass over" (Exodus 12:13). Blood means that there has already been a death. Jesus died for us and that's why God's righteousness is on our side.

Many Christians read Romans 8:1-2 and, unconsciously, add to it in their mind the following phrase: "Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus ***[as long as they don't do sinful deeds]***." However, Paul addresses born-again believers in this verse, who still have sinful deeds in their lives. If they didn't have any sinful deeds at all, there would not be a reason for them to feel condemned in the first place, and the verse would be irrelevant. The apostle Paul has in mind exactly those people who were regenerated, who were made righteous, but still have sinful deeds in their lives, like you and me. It's exactly those deeds that have the tendency to make you, as a believer, feel condemned, although you are not condemned anymore.

Another way some Christians read the above verse is the following: "Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus ***[as long as they do works of righteousness and walk according to the Spirit]***." However, at the moment of salvation you have received an eternal redemption and justification, completely apart from works and independent of your good or bad works:

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NKJV)

⁸ For ***by grace*** you have been saved ***through faith***, and that not of yourselves; ***it's the gift of God***,

⁹ ***not of works***, lest anyone should boast.

Romans 3:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith *apart from the deeds of the Law*.

Salvation came by grace through faith and not through good works, which are the deeds of the Law. Faith is the only condition of receiving eternal justification. Good works are not a condition, but a natural effect, and a normal result of a genuine saving faith. ***Faith alone justifies, but not the faith that is alone.*** James seems to paint a slightly different picture than apostle Paul in James 2:14-26, by affirming both faith and good works as conditions for salvation, apparently contradicting Paul. I said “apparently” because James is not actually contradicting Paul and we will see why. Let’s read the passage from James 2:14-26:

James 2:14–26 (NKJV)

¹⁴ What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but doesn’t have works? Can faith save him?

¹⁵ If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food,

¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you don’t give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?

¹⁷ Thus also ***faith by itself, if it doesn’t have works, is dead.***

¹⁸ But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!

²⁰ But do you want to know, O foolish man, that ***faith without works is dead?***

²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?

²² Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?

²³ And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” And he was called the friend of God.

²⁴ You see then that ***a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.***

²⁵ Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?

²⁶ For as the body without the spirit is dead, so ***faith without works is dead also.***

James states in verse 24 that a man is justified by works as well, and not by faith alone. James seems to have been bent towards the Law more than apostle Paul, emphasizing the works more. However, James is not saying that believers need good works as the CAUSE of their justification. He is saying that they will have good works as a CONSEQUENCE of their justification. Works cannot be added as a primary condition to justification, but as a necessary result of a genuine faith. There is an indestructible connection between faith and works. For example, if electric power runs as it should, there will be light in your house. But you, as the owner of the house, cannot produce light by yourself to prove that you have electric power coming through to your house from the electrical plant.

Generally speaking, Christians have a genuine faith at the moment of salvation concerning the escape from hell in the future life, after death. However, most of them don’t apply the same simple faith to

sanctification and to good works in the present life. Because of wrong beliefs and wrong teaching, they are saved from hell, but they bear very few fruits of righteousness. They fail to do a lot of good works and are sometimes in doubt that their faith is even genuine or wonder if they are still saved or not. Good works should not be done by believers to obtain or MAINTAIN justification (salvation), but rather they should be done out of gratefulness and thanksgiving towards God for what He has done. Those good works will also receive rewards at the end of times. However, ***good works don't create faith; they only reveal a genuine faith that is alive.*** In the same way, the bad works or the lack of good works don't kill genuine faith, but only reveal a faith that was already dead in the first place.

If we go back in the Old Testament at the incident with king Solomon and the two mothers, what did Solomon look for when he decided to kill the healthy baby and share it between the two women? Did he look for a deed on the part of any of the two women that will deserve the healthy baby? Did he want to create a new relationship between any of those two women and the living baby, a relation that was not already there? Of course not! He was only looking for a deed that would prove what was already true; an action that would show who the real mother of that healthy baby was. Likewise, a genuine faith and relationship with Christ will eventually yield fruits of righteousness.

The Future Sins

Most believers agree that at the moment of salvation all their past sins have been forgiven and removed by the blood of Jesus. However, what about the future sins? Are you free of condemnation only until your next sin? Are future sins removed in time based on your confession, or are they removed at the moment of regeneration as well? Of course, our future sins were also removed at the moment of salvation, because we were made righteous forever in our spirit. Let's read again Hebrews 10:10-14:

Hebrews 10:10–14 (NKJV)

¹⁰ By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ ***once for all.***

¹¹ And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

¹² But this Man, after He had offered ***one sacrifice for sins forever***, sat down at the right hand of God,

¹³ from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.

¹⁴ For by ***one offering*** He has perfected ***forever (or for all time)*** those who are being sanctified.

Verse 10 says that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ ONCE FOR ALL. Then verse 12 says that He offered ONE sacrifice for ALL our sins FOREVER. Finally, verse 14 again says that

by ONE offering, He has PERFECTED us FOR ALL TIME. Even of sins that you haven't committed yet, you have already been forgiven. Hebrews 9:12, 15 say that He has obtained for you an ETERNAL REDEMPTION and an ETERNAL INHERITANCE. The term "ETERNAL" proves that redemption is not temporal or partial, but covers all time and all sins:

Hebrews 9:12 (NKJV)

¹² Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained *eternal redemption*.

Hebrews 9:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ And for this reason He is the Mediator of the New Covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the *eternal inheritance*.

By enlarge, the body of Christ believes in a momentary redemption and a momentary inheritance that is constantly in the state of fluctuation based on their performance. Based on how you act, you can lose your salvation, and then you need to be born again AGAIN. However, if you could indeed lose your salvation at your next sin, then the most loving thing that the Father God could do for you is to kill you, and take you to heaven immediately after you received Christ in your heart, so that you would remain saved. A softer perspective that some people adopt is that you don't lose your salvation and neither you go to hell at your next sin, but you lose all the benefits of salvation. They believe that, if you sin, God will not answer your prayers anymore, will not fellowship with you anymore, and will not be pleased with you anymore, until you remediate the situation. As a result, He will not release joy in your life, will not heal you, and will not make you prosper, unless you do the right thing. This interpretation is basically the same thing as the first perspective, but with lesser consequences, which are mostly related to this present, temporal and physical life and not to the future, eternal, and spiritual life. However, this is not what these verses are teaching.

Let me ask you this: When Jesus died for your sins on the cross, did you exist at that time on this earth? Most probably not. Therefore, that means all your sins for which Jesus died for, all the sins of your lifespan were future to Him. You have been eternally redeemed, you have received an eternal inheritance, and have been sanctified and perfected forever at the moment you believed in Jesus' sacrifice. That is nearly too good to be true!

Does that mean you can go ahead, and do whatever you want, and sin how much you want? Does that give you license to sin? Of course not. If you think that way, you need to be born again. This should rather encourage you even more to a right living before God. If you were truly born again, you would want to live

for God and not for yourself. You may be doing a poor job at it sometimes, but the truth will make you free: not free to sin, but free from sin. Sin doesn't affect God's relation to you, neither His blessings for you, because of Christ, but sin does affect you, it affects your mind, and your capacity to receive the blessings of God both for yourself and for others. Your sinful deeds lead to death that might not be necessarily manifested instantly and tangibly in the way you expect, but it's death manifested through confusion of your mind, depression, fear, unbelief, sickness, and ultimately even premature physical death. You will probably notice that when you sin, the devil and your conscience will directly attack your faith. They will tell you things like the following: "God is upset with you, your fellowship with Him is interrupted, the Holy Spirit left you, you are not loved anymore, and you are still a sinner." This is the death that I refer to. When you sin, it becomes more difficult for your mind to believe again the truth of God about you and it requires extra effort to counter those thoughts of death generated by your sinful actions. You are the one interested first and foremost in not sinning, because when you sin, you hurt yourself without even knowing.

The offence of your sins towards God has already been paid for, so it's not God getting hurt, but you are. It's not God stopping His power and His blessings flowing through you because of your sins, but you are. Yes, God is grieved when you sin, but grief is not anger or offence; it's rather a pain and a sadness of God, flowing out of God's love as a Father towards you, when He sees you destroying yourself, and playing with death. God doesn't reject you when you sin, because your sins have already been removed. God will never tell you: "I will not love you anymore if you do this," or "I will not bless you anymore if you do that," or "I will forsake you and interrupt My fellowship with you if you sin." John 10:10 tells us that the thief (Satan) doesn't come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. Our sinful actions give him the opportunity to do exactly that.

When you understand the goodness of God towards you, and when you get a revelation of His love for you, that He wiped out all your sins (past, present, and future), you cannot but love the Lord, and be in awe of Him. You would be so appreciative of what the Lord has done that you would serve and obey God more accidentally than you ever have done on purpose before. It would lead to a holy life!

Now, let's continue reading in Hebrews 10 from verse 15:

Hebrews 10:15–18 (NKJV)

¹⁵ But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before,

¹⁶ “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,”

¹⁷ then He adds, “Their sins and their lawless deeds *I will remember no more.*”

¹⁸ Now where there is remission of these, ***there is no longer an offering for sin.***

This passage includes a quotation from Jeremiah 31 beginning from verse 31, where God promised that the New Covenant would not be like the Old Covenant. Under the Old Covenant, people would come to the Lord, they would ask for forgiveness for their sins, they would offer an animal sacrifice, which symbolically would cleanse them, and this is how they had their relationship with God. However, as it says in Hebrews 9:9, these things never cleansed their conscience. They were still sin-conscious and they were still living under condemnation. But in the New Covenant, God has put His laws into our hearts and He has written them into our minds. He doesn’t remember our sins and lawless deeds anymore.

Furthermore, verse 18 from Hebrews 10 says a very striking thing: where there is remission of these sins, there is no longer an offering for sin. Extraordinary! Many Christians believe that every time they sin they have to go back and plead for God to apply Jesus’ blood on their sin. They believe they need to bring that sin under the blood. They feel that God is upset with them if they don’t confess their sins. They feel the need of waiting for some time before they even dare to come with their sin before God, especially if it’s a repeated one. In the meantime, until they get to that moment, they cannot even think about asking for something from God or rely on God to help them in any way. They think they are on their own and feel that they have placed themselves in the opposite camp with God. Finally, when they muster enough courage to come with their sin before God, they feel they need to cry as much and as sincere, as they possibly can, to assure God that they are really sorry for their sin. In that way, they make a kind of penitence for their sin and they punish themselves for it. They believe the more they cry, the more God will believe them, and finally will grant them forgiveness. You might have been in the same situation as these believers as well. I know I’ve done these things myself and went through these cycles for years, only to get back in the same place again and again. However, ***as far as God is concerned, He can never be upset again about your sin and wait for your heartfelt confession before granting forgiveness.*** All your sins have been PAID IN FULL by Christ, if you are in Christ. God can never be upset with Christ, right? Believers are no longer seen according to flesh, but according to Christ. Moreover, God being upset with you, would mean a double payment for your sin. That would make God unrighteous and would cheapen Christ’s sacrifice. Your crying of confession to be forgiven would be a human work added to the condition of being justified. If your future sins need your confession in order to be taken away, this would be like adding your

work of confession to the sacrifice of Jesus and doing the same thing the people of Israel did in the Old Testament through animal sacrifices over and over again (see Hebrews 10:11). I will talk later about 1 John 1:9, which might come to your mind right now.

You might say: “What about Isaiah 59:2-4 where it says that our sins put a separating wall between us and God, hide His face from us and He will not hear us?” Yes, that was true in Isaiah’s time, because nobody had paid for those sins yet. Christ had not died yet on the cross. In the Old Testament, when they sinned they had to bring sacrifices and repair their relationship with God, otherwise He would not hear them or help them. However, in the New Testament, Christ has paid already for any sin and has redeemed us from the curses of the Law and from all the consequences of our sinning:

Galatians 3:13 (NKJV)

¹³ Christ *has redeemed us from the curse of the Law*, having become a curse for us (for It’s written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”).

Christ redeemed you from all the curses of Deuteronomy 28, meaning that He paid the penalty of every breach of the Law for you, and in you. In the New Testament, our sins no longer put a dividing wall between us and God and He still hears us, even when we sin.

Imagine I was over to your house and your child walked into the kitchen and kneeled down and said: “Oh mom and dad, I know I don’t deserve anything, I know I didn’t make my bed today, I know I haven’t gotten the best grades, I know I am not doing everything I could. But could I, please, have something to eat? Please, please! Just a little bit of food, please; not too much, so I would not get proud, but just enough to survive. I may not deserve a whole meal, but could you give me a little bit?” And your child would continue to beg you that way. If I saw that, I would think, “Something is wrong with this relationship.” Children are to honor and respect parents, but there is nothing wrong with the kid just coming in and say: “I am hungry, I want something to eat.” .” In reality, parents enjoy a level of familiarity in their relationships with children, and they like when their children come and draw benefits from that mutually respectful and familiar relation, instead of begging fearfully for things they need. However, religion has taught us to come beg God for crumbs, and tell Him that we are so unworthy of anything we might need. If you feel this way, it means your conscience hasn’t been cleansed. You are not approaching God in the New Covenant way. You are acting as though there is still a separation between you and God, and this is evidence that your conscience hasn’t been cleansed by the blood of the Lord Jesus. Let’s read the next verses from the same

chapter 10 of the book of Hebrews:

Hebrews 10:19–22 (NKJV)

¹⁹ Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus,

²⁰ by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh,

²¹ and having a High Priest over the house of God,

²² Let's draw near with a true heart **in full assurance of faith**, having our hearts sprinkled from **an evil conscience** and our bodies washed with pure water.

We have to come to Him now by a new and living way. Verse 22 uses the expression “full assurance of faith.” There are various degrees of faith, trust, and reliance on God and on what Jesus did. You can just have faith and that’s the first level. But you can be assured of your faith and that’s the second level. Finally, you can have full assurance of faith. This verse says that we are supposed to have a full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience. You cannot come before God with a full assurance of faith and absolutely and totally confident if you haven’t cleansed your conscience. Unfortunately, this is where most Christians live. They live with a defiled conscience. They still have a conscience of sin or a consciousness of sin, and their own heart condemns them. They might not even have any specific sin on their mind at times, but they would still feel sinful, unworthy, indebted to God, and condemned. That means they didn’t cleanse their conscience of sin.