



General Topics :: No Condemnation or Guilt?

No Condemnation or Guilt? - posted by HomeFree89 (), on: 2008/1/5 14:16

Over the last couple of years, I have heard part of Romans 8:1 quoted, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus...". However, today I saw on another forum someone say there is no condemnation or guilt for the Christian.

The whole verse says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." I realize that there isn't condemnation as long as we walk in the Spirit, but doesn't the Lord use guilt to make us repent and get right with Him?

Jordan

Re: No Condemnation or Guilt? - posted by roadsign (), on: 2008/1/5 16:42

Quote:

----- but doesn't the Lord use guilt to make us repent and get right with Him?

Good observation, Jordan! Denying the potential for guilt is like applying an anaesthetic to the conscience. It is dangerous for us to go without sensors for the conscience. Guilt and pain are important functions. They help redirect us and avert harm. To say that guilt doesn't exist in Christians actually leaves them without the motivation to seek Christ for forgiveness and restitution. You are right on, there! Now THAT leaves them trapped in condemnation with no way out. They end up seeking alleviation in all kinds of fruitless ways - works, etc. What a horrible condition!

Did you notice the way the verse was interpreted using the addition of some words: "condemnation OR guilt"? That's just how the Serpent tempted Eve - by adding words to God's command: "Hath God said, you shall not eat OR touch"? Satan is the master of bad exegesis and uses it to divert us from Christ - as in the case you put forward here.

Jordan, Why not dig into Romans - do some in-depth study, and then see how the idea of "condemnation" fits in with Paul's theological message? You will be blessed! Romans is the theological centerpiece of Scripture.

And, by the way, praise God for the way he stirs you to examine and think - even if it is via bad interpreters.

Diane

Re: - posted by HomeFree89 (), on: 2008/1/6 18:04

Thank you for your reply, Diane. It was very helpful.

You are right, when we interpret Scripture we must be sure not to add (or subtract) to what is said. This is how we can get off track and it's how many false teachings are started.

The proposed study of Romans sounds good, maybe I'll do it sometime.

Thanks again!

Jordan

Re: No Condemnation or Guilt? - posted by Compton (), on: 2008/1/6 19:48

Quote:

-----...isn't condemnation as long as we walk in the Spirit

The other ditch on the other side of the road to avoid is the idea that the phrase 'walk in the Spirit' means to walk in utter perfection. In effect this interpretation says "There is now therefore no condemnation as long as we are perfect."

Any classroom exegesis for this verse will fall short of explaining the idea of 'walking in the Spirit.' I believe Paul was describing the life in Christ in a way like an eagle would describe being lofted upon air currents. Analysis of flight principles in the classroom serves some purpose, but we need to be patient with ourselves and others as we are actually learning to trust that something unseen like air can actually carry us.

That's just my experience with these verses, at least. Sadly for many saints, their confession of guilt for rebellious sin is not met with forgiveness and a pure heart, but with crippling shame without any remedy or end. This is akin to an eagle with a broken wing...and I believe should not be in the earnest Christian who can find rest knowing that all the promises of God are answered in Christ Jesus.

Blessings,

MC

Re: - posted by sojourner7 (), on: 2008/1/6 22:16

The Spirit brings conviction of sin and judgment to bring us to correction. We must stay sensitive and grieve not the Holy Spirit!!

Re: - posted by dohzman (), on: 2008/1/6 23:00

Quote:

----- The classroom exegesis for this verse will fall short of explaining the idea of 'walking in the Spirit.'

I remember one Saturday morning listening to a Christian radio talk show where callers from the listening area call in, anyway one young man called in with a certain problem and the radio teacher kept telling this man to just walk in the "spirit", that drove me nuts! Religious words :- (the teacher had no idea how to walk in the spirit, I believe the Word of God IS Spirit and when we do it we are walking in the spirit. Now I know that there are elements (sects) within the church that will say that a dogmatic call to absolute obedience to the written Word of God is legalism, so I will add this: Walk in the Light as He is in the light // 1 Jn 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

And we know that the light spoken of here is the illuminated areas of understanding into the will and purposes of God for one's life and that's an ever increasing base of knowledge and accountability to the Lord, based on His private dealings with each one of us.

Now that said, you can't walk in my understanding of God, but you can take from my understanding and seek the Lord and see for yourself. I will often take some aspect or portion of God's dealings with say a Finney, and diligently seek the Lord to make real that testimony in my own life, there have been times that the same anointing (Spirit) has moved on my life to bring me to the same place that Finney has been in, with the same reaction around me, but it's all God start to finish. I hope I'm clear here? BTW---M.Compton I trust to be having coffee with you next week, I'll call Tuesday morning this week :-)

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2008/1/7 3:42

Quote:

-----BTW---M.Compton I trust to be having coffee with you next week, I'll call tuesday morning this week

Excellent!

I also liked how you said that I cannot walk in your understanding of God, but that your understanding still profits me as I seek to walk with God myself.

Along these lines I wanted to share a little more from my own small understanding.

I have found that my understanding of walking in the Spirit (which is barely awakened compared to others) is linked to my understanding of my own poverty before God. Consider this well known passage from Romans 7: I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. Notice how Paul referenced the tenth commandment rather than the sixth Thou shalt not commit adultery. This is because before Paul understood the implications of the tenth, he felt he was obeying the 6th by not actually committing adultery. In other words, he was obeying the law according to his own unregenerate understanding and thus sensed no guilt and no need for forgiveness. This is why we must be careful to not equate walking in the Spirit to obeying the law, else we either underestimate the reach of the tenth commandment into our hearts, or we find ourselves slain by the law with no resurrection. But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

The tenth commandment, even as it was given during the birth of the nation of Israel at MT Sinai, was already anticipating the need for a New Birth. For as Paul observed, when this commandment hit home in his heart, the law left him with no defense. If we don't understand the final execution of self-righteousness that is brought to us in the tenth commandment, then we haven't been confronted yet with our true sin nature. If, in this state of delusion we find we feel no condemnation, it is not because of grace but because of darkness.

Paul understood that the tenth commandment was aimed at his heart and thus prevented him from thinking he was righteous on the basis that he could successfully conform his outer man to the other commandments. In this way, Paul is walking in the understanding Jesus taught: that a man commits adultery or murder in his heart just by the sinful instincts and passions that reside there.

So, walking in the Spirit is not a circular argument for taking us back to the Ten Commandments. Many seem to imply this, and create a conundrum for the awakened conscience. This is why I have a problem for those who say that their own clean conscience is holiness achieved...a conscience that truly has been hit with the tenth commandment never self-reverberates, but finds rest only in the objective and real righteousness of Christ. (But this is another, albeit related subject.)

Of course this struggle with the law always raises the question, if we are claiming the right to be lawless. Before I rush in to the obligatory answer I would like to offer a surprising answer: Yes, in one way we are to be lawless. Many times young Christians are handed a list of do's and don'ts...well mostly the don'ts...and led to believe that accomplishing this list will be a spiritual accomplishment. Well believe it or not, I actually see a little good in these lists for a short time...but in maturity they will be put away without much compulsion. Why?

The reason is conveyed in Romans 14. 14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

In a very real way we have traded one law for another: the law of Love. The latter is much harder to measure success by...but interestingly enough is free from measuring its success at all because walking in the Spirit is resting in the measure

ement of another more perfect metric.

So, for me this Walk in the Spirit, must begin with faith in the finished substitutionary work of Christ and continue in his perfect love afforded by his perfect salvation. We begin the New Birth by dying... being slain in our hearts from the truth and conviction of the perfect law. If we are resurrected from this death on any basis other than the work of Christ we are defeated already, because our flesh is sinful and does not obey in love but in self-preservation. If we do not continue in love for others we indicate that we are not walking in the Spirit with outward conformity to the law remaining our only compulsion.

We are not lawless, but the outward compulsion of the law, which is fear and death, is behind us as we have died and been resurrected with Christ's inward impulses of love.

Like I said, this is only my little bit to add to this important topic.

Blessings,

MC

Of course

Re: - posted by HomeFree89 (), on: 2008/1/8 16:24

Quote:

Compton wrote:

Quote:

-----...isn't condemnation as long as we walk in the Spirit

The other ditch on the other side of the road to avoid is the idea that the phrase 'walk in the Spirit' means to walk in utter perfection. In effect this interpretation says "There is now therefore no condemnation as long as we are perfect."

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Blessings,

MC

Hi MC,

I did not mean that we can walk in "utter perfection" by the phrase, "walk in the Spirit". I was meaning daily abiding in Christ and seeking to please Him moment by moment. :-)

Jordan

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2008/1/8 20:01

Jordan,

Quote:

-----I did not mean that we can walk in "utter perfection" by the phrase, "walk in the Spirit". I was meaning daily abiding in Christ and seeking to please Him moment by moment.

When I added these comments, I was thinking of a position that I've heard squeezed out of this text...I really wasn't thinking you were holding that position. My apologies if that seemed aimed right at you! It wasn't.

Actually, when I wrote that I was sitting up watching over one of my children who was sick, and deciding to use the time in some study...I was probably even less coherent than usual!

Blessings,

MC