



of Biblical Studies
Ephesians 2:4-9

THE PROBLEM & CURE FOR CONDEMNATION

COURSE COMMENTARY



1 John 4:17

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Course Requirements

- 1) Read Course Commentary
- 2) Take Mid Term Exam
- 3) Take Final Exam
- 4) Submit Exams to Dr. Gray @ graceESBS@bellsouth.net
- 5) Dr. Gray will email you your Course Grade

The Problem & Cure For Condemnation

Chapter One: The Gift of No Condemnation

The devil is smarter than many psychiatrists and psychologists because he does not deal with what is peripheral. He does not get distracted by superficial details. Do you know what the devil's name is? His name is not "murderer", even though he kills. It is not "thief", even though he steals. It is not "destroyer" either, even though he destroys. His name is Satan. In Hebrew, it means "the accuser"³. He is the prosecutor against you. A prosecutor never talks about any of your good points. He is there to prosecute you for every one of your failures. He will bring back every piece of dirty laundry and show you evidence after evidence of your failures. While we are trying to deal with stress and fear, the devil goes straight for the deepest root, and uses the law to heap guilt and condemnation on you. He knows that when you are under condemnation, fear, stress and all kinds of sicknesses will follow, so he goes straight for the jugular.

When you are under condemnation, fear, stress and all kinds of sicknesses will follow.

What should we do then? We should kill condemnation at its very root and eradicate it from our lives. So, when you hear the voice of the accuser, remind yourself that there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ⁴. Why? Because no matter what the devil condemns you of, the truth is that the blood of Jesus has been shed for the forgiveness of all your sins. There is not a sin, not one iota of guilt or condemnation that the devil can throw at you today that Jesus' blood has not completely removed.

No wonder Isaiah chapter 54 says that no weapon formed against you shall prosper. What is the weapon that the devil uses against you? We have learned that it is the law. The devil uses the law to condemn believers and remind them that

they have fallen short. But the Word of God declares, “No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgment you shall condemn.” (Isaiah 54:17). The devil uses his tongue to speak words of guilt and condemnation to you, but by the blood of Jesus, you have the authority and the power to condemn every word of judgment that comes against you!

The Gift Of No Condemnation

“Dr. Charles, if believers know that there is now no condemnation for them, won’t they go out and sin?”

Well, it is obvious that Jesus did not think so. Do you remember what He said to the woman who was caught in adultery?

John 8:10–11

“When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, “Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?” She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said to her, “Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.” –John 8:10-11 NKJV

Now, pay close attention to this: Jesus gave her the gift of “no condemnation” before He told her to go and sin no more. Yet, the church today says, “Go and sin no more first, and only then will we not condemn you.” That’s the reason people are shying away from churches. It is not because they are rebelling against Jesus. It is because they have not been introduced to the Jesus who gives the guilty sinner the gift of no condemnation!

Too often, non-believers have only been introduced to Christianity as a set of rules that only judges and condemns them. If you conduct a poll among non-believers to find out what they know about Christianity, many of them would probably be familiar only with the Ten Commandments. They know only about the law that kills and not the Person who came to bring life!

But my dear brother or sister, Christianity is not about laws. It is about Jesus and how He shed His blood for the forgiveness of our sins, for without blood, the Bible says that there is no forgiveness of sins (Hebrews 9:22). That is why Christianity is a relationship based on the shed blood of Jesus Christ. His blood washed away all our sins, and the laws that we were supposed to fulfill, He fulfilled on our behalf. Even Jesus Himself came against legalism. His strongest words were said to the religious Pharisees and not the sinners. I challenge you to find any instance in the Bible where Jesus called tax collectors or prostitutes a “brood of vipers”!¹

Now, let’s come back to the story of the woman caught in adultery. Let me ask you a question: Was the woman guilty? Yes, she was, absolutely. There is no doubt about that. The Bible states that she was “caught in adultery, in the very act” (John 8). But instead of condemning her according to the law of Moses, which required her to be stoned to death. The law of Moses always ministers condemnation and death (--the same as many “religious” people today), it cannot save the guilty sinner, Jesus showed her grace and gave her the gift of no condemnation.

Do you think that the woman would go off, look for her lover, and jump back into bed with him after she had received the gift of no condemnation? No, of course not! It is obvious that Jesus believed that when someone really has a revelation that God does not condemn them, they would have the power to get out of the vicious circle of sin. They would have the power to “go and sin no more”!

What are you going to put your trust in today? Jesus’ grace which swallows up sin? Or man’s fears that believers would use “grace” as a license for them to sin?

¹ Prince, *Destined to Reign*, p. 164-165.

Condemnation Perpetuates The Cycle Of Defeat

Let me tell you this: If you are under condemnation, you are doomed to repeat your sin. Why? Because when you are under condemnation, you feel guilty and condemned, and you believe that fellowship with God is broken. And since you believe that God is far away, you will end up committing that sin again. You may do something good that makes you feel that you have restored fellowship with God, but when you fail again, you start receiving condemnation again, and the cycle of defeat continues.

Jesus' method of countering sin is completely different. When you sin, He says to you, "Neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more." When you receive the gift of no condemnation from Him, you will know beyond any doubt that fellowship with God is never broken because the blood of Jesus continually cleanses you. Believing that you are the righteousness of God through Christ Jesus and simply receiving the gift of no condemnation give you the power to go and sin no more.²

Do Not Back Away From Grace

"Dr. Charles, I know of someone who says that he is under grace, but is clearly living in sin. Can a person be under grace and still live in sin?"

My brother or sister, do not back away from the gospel of grace just because you see some negative examples. The Bible says that sin shall not have dominion over you when you are not under law but under grace (Romans 8:1). So, if you are living in sin, you are definitely not under grace. You are not enjoying the gift of no condemnation and the free, unmerited favor of God. That is why sin has dominion over you. You cannot claim to be under grace when you continue to live in sin!" Such people become agents that the devil uses to instill suspicion and fear against the gospel of grace. But our part is not to back away from the gospel that Jesus

² Prince, *Destined to Reign*, p. 165-166.

preached just because a very small group of people use grace as an excuse for their lifestyle of sin.

If someone has really known and experienced grace and the gift of no condemnation, he or she will NOT want to live in sin. Sin will be the last thing on their mind! Let me put it very clearly: Anyone who is living in sin is not under grace and has not experienced the gift of no condemnation. Grace always results in victory over sin!

The Power To Sin No More

I believe that most believers desire to live lives that are glorifying to God and that most of us normal, rational human beings are NOT looking for an excuse to sin. But there is a struggle which Paul himself wrote about: “For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do.” (Romans 7:15).

I am writing to believers who have this genuine struggle with the law and who like Paul are crying out, “O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?” (Romans 7:24)

If this is your cry, then this is written especially for you: The person who will deliver you is Jesus. His amazing, incredible grace will save every “wretched man”. In all your helplessness, all your weaknesses and all your vulnerabilities, Jesus looks at you with His tender loving eyes and says to you, “Where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you? Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more.” (John 8:10-11)

Every time you fail in thought, word or deed, receive this afresh: There is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ. When Jesus died on the cross, all your failures were already condemned in His body. Today, you are free to live a victorious life not because of your obedience to the law, but because of your obedience of faith in Jesus’ blood and righteousness.

Every time you fail in thought, word or deed, receive this afresh: There is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ.³

Paul said, “For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh.” (Romans 8:3) What the law could not do, God did (notice the use of the past tense) by sending His Son. The law could not save the “wretched man” that we were. It could only condemn us. But God saved us by placing all the guilt, punishment and condemnation for our sins on Jesus’ body at Calvary.

Your inheritance today is no longer guilt, punishment and condemnation for your sins, but righteousness, peace and joy through Jesus Christ. This is God’s way for you to experience effortless success in your life. He has already done it all on your behalf. Your part is simply to believe and receive. That is how you walk in victory over sin, addictions, negative thoughts and every cycle of defeat that has you in bondage. Good news? That is the gospel of Jesus Christ!

³ Prince, *Destined to Reign*, p. 168.

Chapter Two: Condemnation Kills

One of the things that I was taught during my formative years as a Christian was that I had to search my heart for sin before I could worship the Lord. I was told to bow my head and search my heart for sin. Each time I did so, I felt like I was entering a dark and dingy storeroom filled with cobwebs. I pictured myself peering around and searching for all my sins with a little torchlight. And the more I searched, the more I felt unworthy to worship the Lord. The more I probed, the more I found, and I would start to feel too condemned to even think that I was qualified to enter His holy presence.

So instead of being more conscious of the love of my Savior, I became more and more self-conscious — more conscious of my sins, uncleanness, guilt and unworthiness. Initially, my hands would be raised and I'd be all ready to praise and worship God, but the more I searched my heart for sin, the more my hands would hang down with dejection and my head bow down with disappointment. How could I worship God? How could I have the courage and audacity to enter His courts with praise?

Come To Him Just As You Are

As I grew and matured in the things of God, I realized that the idea that you had to be “right” before you could worship Jesus is man’s tradition. The woman in Luke chapter 7, who came to Jesus with an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, simply fell at His feet and worshipped Him. She washed His feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair before anointing them with the oil. The Bible clearly records that the woman was a sinner, but it says nothing about her searching her heart or confessing her sins before she worshipped Jesus. She worshipped Him just as she was, and after that, Jesus said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” (Luke 7:37-39, 48).

Whatever your need is, come to Jesus. He is your Savior, your healer, your provider and your peace. He is your “I AM”. I think that the devil has tried to rob

us of this tremendous truth. Whatever your need is, whether you are mired in debt, trapped in a particular sin or fearful for your future, come to Jesus. He is your Savior. He is your healer. He is your provider. He is your peace. He is your forgiveness. He is your “I AM”, which means that He is the great “I AM” for whatever situation you are facing in your life.

Whatever lack you may be facing right now, He is your solution. Come and worship Him just as you are, and He will meet you at your point of need. You don't have to worry about your sin because you are worshipping your forgiver. You don't have to worry about your sickness because you are worshipping your healer. If believers really knew this truth, even wild horses would not be able to stop them from coming to worship God!

Do you know anyone who cleans himself before he takes a bath? Sounds ridiculous, right? Yet, there are people who avoid going to Jesus because they feel that they should “straighten things out” in their lives first. Can't they see that what they're really saying is that they need to clean themselves before they can take a bath? Come on, Jesus is the “bath” that makes us clean! He is the solution and He will help us straighten out what we will never be able to straighten out on our own. The lie that you have to clean yourself first is so entrenched in the church that many believers say, “Pastor, I don't want to come to Jesus until I make my life right.”⁴

If that is your refrain, then the sad truth is that you will never come to Jesus because you will never come to a place where you can make your life “right”. Come to the bath and the bath will make you clean. Come just as you are with all your sins, and Jesus will wash you clean of all guilt and condemnation.

The world needs to hear this truth, and not be given a bunch of do's and don'ts. Preach the truth and the world will come flocking to churches for their answers. They are searching for the real thing and that's what we can offer them. But the real thing is not found in two pieces of stone. You cannot have a relationship with the cold, hard and impersonal law engraved on stones. But you can definitely have

⁴ Prince, *Destined to Reign*, p. 171.

a relationship with our Savior Jesus Christ. He is warm, loving and full of grace. People will flock to where the true gospel of Jesus is being preached — the gospel that God commissioned Paul to preach, the gospel of grace, forgiveness and no more condemnation!⁵

God's Grace Will Teach You To Deny Ungodliness

Do you know what can produce character, godliness and the fruit of the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ? Contrary to what some preachers of the law are saying, it is the unadulterated gospel of the grace of God that will produce all of these good fruit. The Bible states it plainly: “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age.” (Titus 2:11-12). Clearly, it is the “grace of God” that will produce sober, righteous and godly living!

What I love about preaching the gospel of grace is that God's Word is always being preached in its context. I honestly don't understand how those who oppose grace can still teach within the context of the Scriptures. It is not the “law of God” that appeared to teach man how to deny ungodliness and worldly lust. Yet, this is what you hear being preached all the time.

It is time to emphasize what the Bible emphasizes. The new covenant is all about the grace of God that brings salvation. And grace is not a teaching. Grace is not a doctrine. Grace is not a topic in Bible school curricula. Grace is a person and His name is Jesus. Grace “appeared to all men” teaching us the secret to godliness, character and holiness. He showed us that it is all found in Him and His work on the cross. When you have Him, you are godly. When you have Him, you are made righteous. When you have Him, good character will manifest. When you have Him, you are made holy!⁶

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Prince, *Destined to Reign*, p. 173.

Understanding Holiness

What is holiness? The conventional understanding of holiness is that it is about doing right. But check the word “holiness” in the original Greek and you will find that it is the word *hagiasmos*, which means “separation to God”⁷. Therefore, being holy means that you have been set apart, made uncommon from the rest of the world of unbelievers.

In the old covenant, when God set the children of Israel apart from the world, He insulated them from the plagues that were brought against Egypt. God takes care of His own. In the old covenant, He provided for the Israelites and protected them because they were made holy and set apart unto Him by the blood of bulls and goats. How much more for us in the new covenant, who are made holy and set apart unto God forever by the blood of the everlasting sacrifice of Jesus Christ!⁸

My brother or sister, God does not require you to search your heart and locate your sins before you can worship Him. When the psalmist David cried out, “Search me, O God, and know my heart,”⁴ he was asking God to search him. He was not searching his heart himself. In any case, today, all that God will find if He searches you is your righteousness in Jesus Christ, for He sees you as righteous, holy and forgiven. He has already declared, “Your sins and your lawless deeds I will remember no more.” (Hebrews 8:12)

How do you see yourself today? Are you more conscious of your sins, or are you more conscious of your righteousness and what Jesus’ blood has done? Tradition has taught us to be occupied with self, but grace teaches us to be occupied with Christ. The more you are occupied with yourself, the more dejected, oppressed and depressed you become. From whichever angle you see yourself, you’ll see ugliness, unworthiness and disqualification.⁹

⁷ Strong, NT: 38.

⁸ Prince, *Destined to Reign*, p. 173.

⁹ *Ibid*, p. 174.

To be occupied with Christ is to turn away from self and to see Jesus. He is like a precious diamond. When you hold Him up in the light of God's Word, whichever way you turn Him, He sparkles with rays of beauty, perfection, righteousness, holiness and wholeness. Can you see that? Look away from your own frailty and see Jesus because the Word of God says, "As He is, so are you in this world."⁶ Is Jesus holy? Then so are you!

Just how holy are you? Earlier on, I explained that you are not made holy by your thoughts and actions. You are made holy because of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. Now, let's go just a little deeper to examine the sacrifice that was made on your behalf.

The book of Leviticus talks about the five offerings of the old covenant: The burnt offering, peace offering, meal offering, sin offering and trespass offering. These offerings are shadows or typologies of what our Lord Jesus accomplished when He offered His life for us on the cross. Jesus, as our sacrificial offering, did such an amazing work that it takes five offerings to depict the one act of His sacrifice on the cross! I will just focus on two of the more important offerings in this book — the burnt offering and the sin offering.¹⁰

The Sin Offering

Let's focus on the sin offering first. According to the law, a man must bring a sin offering to the priest whenever he sins. Imagine that you are living in Old Testament times. You have sinned and you are now bringing a lamb as your sin offering to the priest.

The first thing that will happen is that the priest will examine the lamb to ensure that it has no blemishes. The lamb must be without blemish and perfect because it speaks of Jesus' perfection. Jesus knew no sin and committed no sin. He is the true sacrificial Lamb without blemish.

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 173.

After the priest has examined your sin offering, you must lay your hands on its head. Why must you lay your hands on the lamb's head? Laying hands on the animal that you bring to the priest is an act of identification. When you lay your hands on your sin offering, your sins are transferred to the innocent lamb. After you lay your hands on the lamb, you must kill it. The lamb must die because all your sins have been transferred to its body. And because it dies bearing your sins, you can go free.¹¹

In the same way, Jesus had to die on the cross with your sins so that you might go free. He was not murdered. He came to lay down His life for you and me⁷. He chose to become our sin offering on the cross. That is why, when John the Baptist saw Jesus, he said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"⁸ That is why Apostle Paul said, "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us." (2 Cor. 5:21).

Do you know what all this means, my brothers and sisters? It means that the moment you received Jesus Christ into your life, all your sins were transferred to Jesus... forever! Jesus died in your place as your sin offering, so that you might go free. What a wonderful Savior we have!

By Jesus' one sacrifice, you are forever perfected, every single day for the rest of your life.

But there is a big difference between the sin offering in the Old Testament and Jesus' sacrifice for you on the cross. In the Old Testament, the blood of bulls and goats could only provide a temporal covering for sin. Every time man failed, he had to offer another sin offering. Praise be to God that in the new covenant, the Bible declares that "by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14).

The blood of bulls and goats could never take away sins, so the sacrifices had to be offered repeatedly. But Jesus' sacrifice was "once for all" (Hebrews 10:10). It is a complete and finished work, and He never needs to be sacrificed again! Jesus is the

¹¹ Ibid, p. 175-176.

perfect sin offering. His blood does not just cover your sins temporarily. All your sins have been removed permanently! Even if you fail tomorrow, Jesus would not need to be offered again. His sacrifice has perfected you... for how long? Forever! You are forever perfected, every single day for the rest of your life. The blood of Jesus is continually cleansing you. You are now under the waterfall of forgiveness and you are sanctified perpetually. Hallelujah!¹²

The Burnt Offering

The sin offering speaks of your sins being transferred to the body of Jesus on the cross. That is why God does not want you to be conscious of your sins today. He wants you to be conscious of your forgiveness.

Let's look at the burnt offering now. The burnt offering is beautiful because while the sin offering speaks of Jesus taking your sins on His own body, the burnt offering speaks of the righteousness of Jesus being transferred to you at the cross.

When you read the book of Leviticus, you will see that of the five offerings, God put the sin offering last and the burnt offering first. Man puts it the other way around — we first come to God with all our sins, and all our sins are judged as a sin offering at the cross of Jesus. There is nothing wrong with this order, but God does not expect us to stop there. He wants us to know that Jesus did not just die for our sins, He also died as our burnt offering to make us well-pleasing, righteous and favored before God. That is why when the burnt offering is offered, it ascends as a “sweet aroma” to the Lord¹². (There is no sweet aroma in the sin offering.) The sweet aroma from the burnt offering speaks of Jesus' beauty, perfection and loveliness to the Father.¹³

This may be the first time you are hearing all this, so let me reiterate the difference. The sin offering speaks of your sins being transferred to Jesus, while the burnt offering speaks of Jesus' worthiness before God, His acceptance before God and

¹² Prince, *Destined to Reign*, p. 177.

¹³ Prince, *Destined to Reign*, p. 177-178.

His delight before His Father being transferred to you. Today, God favors you in exactly the same way He favors His Son.

If you believe that you don't deserve success but deserve to be punished, you will unconsciously punish yourself and cause yourself to fail.

Unfortunately, there are believers today who only understand that they have been forgiven. They do not understand that they have been made righteous as well by the cross of Jesus. Because of this, they have allowed themselves to come under condemnation. If this describes you, then rejoice — let the truth that God sees you clothed with the righteousness of His Son, because Jesus became your burnt offering at the cross, set you free today from every guilt and condemnation!¹⁴

Self-Condernation Is Destructive

The reason that some believers are sick, depressed and oppressed is that instead of being conscious of their righteousness in Christ, they have sin on their conscience. The moment they sin, they unconsciously feel that someone (usually themselves) must pay.

If this describes you, then pay attention because I am going to tell you what happens to you when you are conscious of your sins, instead of your forgiveness and righteousness. When you sin and come under condemnation, your mind and body begin to say, "He wants to punish himself, so let's make him pay." Your body will respond to this need for punishment, and you may start to develop depression and sickness in your body. Many believers are sick today not because of sin, for sin has already been punished on the body of Jesus, but because of condemnation. In the earlier chapters, we looked at condemnation from the accuser, but now I am talking to you about self-condernation and your unconscious desire to inflict punishment on yourself when you know that you have sinned.¹⁵

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 179.

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 179.

My brother or sister, self-condemnation is destructive. When you fail to see that Jesus has already borne your punishment, you will punish yourself, or take it out on your family with verbal or even physical abuse. If you believe that you deserve to be punished and that you do not deserve success, you will unconsciously activate a self-sabotaging mechanism to punish yourself and cause yourself to fail. You could be on the brink of a lucrative business contract, or about to embark on an exciting career opportunity, but somehow, you find yourself doing something that sabotages the entire deal and causes it to crumble before your eyes. Why? Because deep down you think that you do not deserve it.

Self-condemnation also manifests itself with destructive effect in relationships. If you are in a wonderful relationship with somebody who really loves and cares for you, you will inevitably do something that sabotages the relationship because again, something inside tells you that you do not deserve to be loved by this person.

Psychiatrists will tell you that a person with such behavior is driven by guilt and has a perpetual sense of wanting to punish himself. The world has all kinds of fancy terms to describe people who exhibit an unconscious desire for punishment, but it cannot show you how to overcome it. It takes a revelation of the finished work of Jesus to overcome it.¹⁶

Beloved, wake up and realize that Jesus has already been punished on your behalf. Stop condemning and punishing yourself because Jesus has already been condemned and punished on your behalf! If you say that you believe that God has forgiven you of all your sins, then why are you still feeling guilty? The existence of guilt and condemnation in your life tells you that you do not really believe that all your sins have been forgiven.¹⁷

In the Old Testament, the Israelites had a consciousness of sins because their repeated sacrifices reminded them of their sins. The blood of bulls and goats just

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 180.

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 181.

could not take away sins (Hebrews 10:1-4). However, today, believers have no business living with sin-consciousness because Jesus, their once-for-all sin offering, has already taken away all their sins! And because of the burnt offering of Jesus, they should be living with righteousness-consciousness!

Pay Attention If You Desire To Glorify God

Let me just qualify that I am writing to believers who have a desire to glorify God in their lives but are struggling with guilt and condemnation. If you are living in sin and have no desire to leave this kind of lifestyle, that's a different story. You can try not to be sin-conscious all you like, but you will not succeed simply because you are living in sin (for example, staying in an adulterous affair with no desire to terminate it). Get out of that lifestyle of sin by the grace of God!

Do you understand that there is a distinction? You can be struggling with sin-consciousness even though you are not living in sin. I am writing to those of you who desire to break out of the cycle of defeat that self-condemnation brings. I am writing to those of you who are trapped in the lie that you do not deserve success in life. I am writing to those of you who want to stop sabotaging yourself because of guilt and condemnation. I am writing to those of you who are not living in sin but are nevertheless struggling with sin-consciousness.¹⁸

Beloved, I am writing to those of you who have been robbed of the boldness to enter God's presence and worship Him because after "searching your heart", you have convinced yourself that you do not qualify. If I am describing you, my friend, I pray that today will be the day of your freedom.

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 181-182.

Jesus Was An Overpayment For All Your Sins

You and I owed God a sin debt that we could never pay. But Jesus has already paid our debt. In fact, He OVERPAID it so that we would never have the debt on our conscience ever again! Let me share an illustration with you that I pray will open your eyes to just how fully paid your debt is.

I'm going to use two of my friends for this illustration —Henry and Joe. Let's say that you borrowed \$50,000 from Joe and promised to pay him back in a month. But as time went by, you simply could not pay him the money. Now, even if Joe does not ask you for the money, what would happen to your relationship with him because of this debt on your conscience? Would you be going up to him and slapping him on the back, saying, "Hey, brother, how are you?" No way! If you ran into Joe, you would probably sheepishly mutter something like, "Oh, hi... er... sorry, I have to go now, see you around... er... sometime." Most of the time, you would probably go out of your way to avoid him.

Now, imagine that one day, Henry hears about your debt to Joe. And let's say that Henry is a billionaire and a good friend to you. He needs to fly off to Paris, but before he leaves, he goes to Joe to find out how much you owe him. Lawrence tells him that you owe him \$50,000. Henry gives him \$1 million! Of course, Joe is shocked. He protests, saying that you do not owe him that much money. But Henry insists on giving him US \$1 million because Henry loves you and wants to make sure that you will never feel the debt on your heart ever again.

So your debt is more than paid. But two things could still happen that would result in the debt remaining on your conscience. Let's imagine that Henry had to rush off to Paris and had no time to speak to you, so he tasks one of his assistants to inform you that your debt has already been paid. But when the assistant speaks to you, he fails to fully convey the fact that your debt has been paid, and that Lawrence has in fact, been enriched by Henry because of the debt you owed him. The assistant says, "Er... I was told to tell you that your debt has been paid. But I'm not very sure of

the details, so maybe it would be good for you to continue paying Lawrence whatever you can.”

What happened in this scenario? The messenger failed to convey the good news, and you are left with no assurance that your debt has really been paid and that you are free of it. This is sad, but do you know that this is precisely what is happening in the body of Christ? People are being told by preachers that Jesus did cry out “It is finished!” on the cross, but they are also being told that they still have to continue paying for their sin debts!

Let me ask you, once you have finished repaying the bank loan that you took for purchasing your house, do you still have to send in the monthly payments? Of course not! You should stop sending your checks to the bank because your debt has already been paid. If you continue to send those checks, you are wasting your time and money!

Let’s look at another possible scenario. Let’s say that Henry could not get in touch with you before flying off to Paris, so he tells a good friend of yours to tell you the good news that your debt has been fully paid. Your friend is so excited for you that he drives to your house even though it’s midnight and tells you, “Hallelujah! I’ve got good news for you! Your debt has been paid. In fact, it’s more than paid! You owed Lawrence \$50,000, but Henry gave Joe \$1 million to settle your debt!”

The messenger has conveyed the good news to you. It’s now up to you, the hearer, to believe the message. You can respond in disbelief, asking, “Are you sure? I’ve owed this debt for such a long time and now you’re telling me that it’s all paid up? You’re pulling my leg!” Or you can shout, “Hallelujah!” and rejoice over this unmerited gift from Henry that has cleared your debt completely! When the messenger has conveyed the good news to you, it’s now up to you to believe the message.

Let me ask you this: If you don’t believe the good news, is your debt still paid? One more time: If you refuse to believe that your debt has already been paid, is it still paid? Yes! Your unbelief does not change the fact that your debt has been fully paid. BUT your unbelief means that you will still have debt on your

conscience, and this will affect you negatively because every time you see Lawrence, you will still feel ashamed and want to avoid him! In contrast, if you believe the good news, you will not be avoiding Joe. In fact, knowing that he has become a millionaire because Henry overpaid your debt, you may even be bold enough to call him up and ask him for a treat!

My dear brothers and sisters, Jesus has already paid your sin debt fully. Do you know what you are doing each time you allow that debt to remain on your conscience? Every time you are sin-conscious, you are insulting the payment of our Lord Jesus Christ. You are saying that it is not enough. You are saying that the cross is not enough. And you know what? You are also insulting the One who received the payment for your sin debt. Each time you try to pay off your sin debt which has already been paid, you are saying that God is not satisfied with Jesus' payment even though the truth is that He is more than satisfied with Jesus' overpayment. Jesus is the beloved Son of the living God. How can you say that His sacrifice is not enough?

Does it really matter if you condemn yourself and allow your sin debt to remain on your conscience even after Jesus has overpaid it? Yes, it matters because apart from dishonoring the work of Jesus on the cross, sin-consciousness makes you avoid God, and can produce in you... condemnation, sicknesses, diseases, depression and a cycle of sin!¹⁹

Listen closely, my brothers and sisters, because of who Jesus is and the value of that one Man, the price that He paid for our sins was an overpayment. All the sinners put together cannot compare with the value of that one Man. Believe the good news and draw near to your Savior today! The Word of God declares to you that you can have "boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Hebrews 10:19). It declares to you that you can draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having your heart sprinkled from an evil conscience and your body washed with pure water. Rejoice, beloved!

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 185.

Listen More To The Gospel Of Jesus

“Dr. Charles, I want to stop being so conscious of my sins, but how can I do that?”

The way out of sin-consciousness is to hear more teaching on the finished work of Jesus, and how His blood has cleansed and forgiven you of all your sins. When you receive Jesus as your sin offering, your heart will be sprinkled with His blood from an “evil conscience” because your sins have already been punished on His body. An evil conscience is a conscience that is constantly conscious of your sins. As you listen to Christ-exalting teachings, you will begin to be more conscious of your forgiveness than of your sins. And the moment you stop carrying sin-consciousness and condemnation in your mind and heart, you will be washed with the pure water of God’s Word, which will begin to affect your physical body and bring healing to every part that is not well!

Some Christians are not able to receive healing because they are not able to receive forgiveness. They are still sin-conscious and doubt their forgiveness. They believe that God may have forgiven their past sins, but not the sins of their whole life. God knows that people need the assurance that their sins are forgiven before they can receive healing in their bodies, so the Bible makes this very clear. In Psalm 103, when the psalmist lists the “benefits” from the Lord, he starts with “who forgives all your iniquities” before moving on to “who heals all your diseases”.

When the man sick with the palsy was lowered through the roof and placed before Jesus, Jesus said, “Son, your sins are forgiven you,” before telling him to arise, take up his bed and go to his house (Matthew 9:2-7). Your sins are forgiven you, beloved. Stop punishing and condemning yourself! It’s time for you to freely receive your miracle from God! “But I have sinned. How can there be no punishment for my sin?”

I do not deny that sin must be punished, but I am declaring to you that all your sins have already been punished on the body of Jesus. He is your perfect sin offering and we who have received His forgiveness should have no more consciousness of sins.

Stop examining yourself and searching your heart for sin. Remember that when someone brings his sin offering to the priest, the priest does not examine him. He examines the sin offering. The priest is a picture of God. When you go to Him today, God does not examine you. He examines your sin offering. He examines Jesus, who is completely perfect and sinless, without spot, wrinkle or blemish. God accepts Jesus as your sin offering, and every one of your sins has been transferred onto His body!

Stop punishing yourself. Jesus has already been punished for your sins. Believe it and let your conscience be satisfied! Start enjoying all His benefits because they are your blood-bought rights. Read Psalm 103 and realize that forgiveness is yours. Healing is yours. Redemption from destruction is yours. Being crowned with loving kindness and tender mercies is yours. Renewal of youth is yours. Hallelujah! Simply believe that your sin debt has been settled and walk in these blessings today!

Stop punishing yourself. Jesus has already been punished for your sins. Believe it and let your conscience be satisfied!²⁰

²⁰ Ibid, 187-188.

Chapter Three: Freedom From Condemnation

She had struggled frantically when she was suddenly yanked from the bed and hauled into the streets by men from the temple. But she was no match for the rabble that had seized her, and her bare feet now struggled to find their footing as she was roughly shoved from all directions. Cold fear hammered deafeningly in her heart, almost drowning out the scornful taunts of the people drawn into the streets by the commotion. She had sinned, and she knew what was coming. A few when she was suddenly yanked from the bed and hauled into the streets by men from the temple. But she was no match for the rabble that had seized her, and her bare feet now struggled to find their footing as she was roughly shoved from all directions. Cold fear hammered deafeningly in her heart, almost drowning out the scornful taunts of the people drawn into the streets by the commotion. She had sinned, and she knew what was coming. A few a mistake to meet him alone. It was a terrible mistake, and now it was too late. According to the Law of Moses, capital punishment was the price for adultery. There was no escape.

Dragged into the temple precinct like a rag doll, she vaguely recognized the fragrance of the offerings being made on the bronze altar. Though she didn't understand the significance, the smell had always given her comfort as a child growing up in Jerusalem. Snatches of her father telling her that God would rain His blessings down upon their family as the smell of the sacrifice ascended to heaven flashed in her mind's eye, just before the mob of religious Pharisees abruptly stopped and threw her before the feet of a man they called Teacher.

She knew her trial had begun, that this man must be her chief executioner, the religious judge who would officially sentence her to death before they dragged her head and tried to cover her eyes with her hair as best as she could so that she could not see the clamoring crowd converging around her as they all awaited her sentence.

Then her merciless accusers fired the first salvo: “Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?” (John 8: 4–5). Anticipating further humiliation, she braced herself for the condemning words of judgment that she was sure would come from the teacher.

But she heard nothing except a deafening silence. It was as if the teacher had not heard the accusatory charges read against her. Then, from the corner of her eye, she saw the teacher stooping down and writing with His finger on the ground. The Pharisees, poised with rocks in their hands and infuriated by this delay, demanded, “What do you say, teacher? Do we stone her now?”

The teacher stood up before them, and she heard a voice so resounding with majesty that her breath caught in her throat. Articulating each word with a perfect blend of authority and compassion, He declared, “He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first” (John 8: 7). And then He stooped to the ground once more and resumed writing as though the leaders of the synagogue were not even there.

His words bewildered her. Who was this teacher? Why was He defending her, a sinful woman and an adulteress? Was this the man from the small village of Nazareth that everybody was talking about? The man who heals the blind and makes the lame walk again? The man whom they say hates legalism and loves sinners? Is this the man? Who is this man? As these questions whirled around in her frightened mind, she heard the sound of her salvation.

Clunk.

Clunk.

Clunk.

The rocks that would have battered her to death fell impotent to the ground. One by one, the sandals of those who had dragged her to the temple turned and moved

away. The crowds that had gathered also began to disperse, since it became clear that there would be no spectacle.

After some time, all she could see were the teacher's sandals. He lifted her head, and she saw His face for the first time. It was a face of compassion and love. Her face glowed with acceptance and assurance. She let her pent-up tears flow as He asked her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" (John 8: 10). Throughout her ordeal, no one had spoken to her. She had not mattered. All that had mattered was that she had done the deed and that it warranted her death. But now her accusers had left, and the man who had rescued her was speaking to her and looking at her as if she mattered.

Gratefully, she breathed, "No one, Lord!" She knew beyond a doubt that this teacher was no ordinary teacher. That is why she addressed Him as "Lord" and not "teacher" like the Pharisees did. He was the Jesus everyone was talking about. Then she heard the words that she would never forget for the rest of her life: "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more" (John 8: 11). As she made her way home, she recounted these words to herself over and over again, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more." He had saved her life, and she knew that it would never be the same again.

The Power of No Condemnation

Jesus demonstrated something very important in the account of the woman caught in adultery. What enables someone to have the power to overcome sin? The threat of the law obviously didn't stop the woman from committing adultery. But receiving Jesus' acceptance—knowing that even though she deserved to be stoned to death, He did not condemn her—that gave her the power to "go and sin no more."

Take a step back and examine what Jesus did. Jesus saved the woman righteously. He didn't say, "Don't stone her. Show mercy to her." What He said was, "Let he

who is without sin cast the first stone.” And on their own accord, the Pharisees and religious mob all left one by one.

Notice how, after that, Jesus did not ask the woman, “Why did you sin?” No, what He asked was, “Where are those who accuse you? Has no one condemned you?” It seems as if Jesus was more preoccupied with the condemnation of the sin than the sin itself. He made sure that she walked away not feeling the condemnation and shame. Let’s not reverse God’s order. When God says something comes first, it must come first. What God puts first, man cannot put last. God says “no condemnation” comes first, and then you can “go and sin no more.”

Christian religion has it in reverse. We say, “Go and sin no more first, then we won’t condemn you.” What we need to understand is that when there is no condemnation, people are empowered to live victorious lives, lives that glorify Jesus. This is where our empowerment comes from. Grace produces an effortless empowerment through the revelation of no condemnation. It is unmerited and completely undeserved. But we can receive it— this gift of no condemnation— because Jesus paid for it at the cross. When there is no condemnation, people are empowered to live victorious lives.

Truth be told, none of us could have cast the first stone at this woman. We have all sinned and fallen short. Our confidence today is not in our ability to keep God’s laws perfectly, but in the only one, Jesus Christ, who is the fulfillment of the law itself. In Christ, we are all on equal ground. If a brother or sister gets tangled in sin, our place is not to judge them, but to restore them by pointing them to the forgiveness and gift of no condemnation that is found in Jesus.

The only person that was there who is without sin and could have exercised judicial punishment on the woman was Jesus. Only He was qualified to cast the first stone, and He did not. Jesus was in the flesh to represent what was in God’s heart. It wasn’t judgment. His heart is unveiled in His grace and His forgiveness. I like to say it this way when describing what happened as the Pharisees waited to stone the woman: The Pharisees would if they could, but they could not. Jesus could if He would, but He would not. That’s our Jesus!

The Law Cannot Condemn You Today

Interestingly, the Bible is silent on what Jesus wrote on the ground with His finger. But I believe that when He stooped down, He was writing the Law of Moses. If you have ever been to Jerusalem and visited the temple precinct where Jesus would have met this woman, you would see that the floor of the temple precinct was made of hard stone. This means Jesus was not writing on dirt ground. He was writing with His finger on stone.

I believe that based on the passage and the fact that the ground on the Temple Mount is basically as it was when this incident took place, that Jesus was writing the law on stone. He was effectively saying to the Pharisees, “You presume to teach Me about the Law of Moses? I am He who wrote the law.” Jesus wrote twice on the ground with His finger, thus completing the typology, as we know that God wrote the Ten Commandments with His finger twice.

The first set of the Ten Commandments was destroyed by Moses when he saw the Israelites worshipping the golden calf at the foot of Mount Sinai. God then wrote another set on stones and gave it to Moses for it to be placed under the mercy seat in the Ark of the Covenant. The only person I have ever heard preach this is Joseph Prince and I believe this is exactly what Jesus was doing!

Do you know why it's so exciting to know what Jesus wrote on the ground that day? It's so significant because it shows us that the very author of God's perfect law does not use the law to judge and condemn us today. And it's not because God simply decided to be merciful on us. No! It's because Jesus Himself fulfilled all the righteous requirements of the law on our behalf and took upon Himself every curse and stroke of punishment for our sins on His own body at the cross. We are forgiven because He was judged. We are accepted because He was condemned!

Forgiveness and Healing Go Hand in Hand

There is another reason we can rejoice in the knowledge that Jesus has borne the punishment that was due us: forgiveness and healing go hand in hand. The Bible says that He who never broke a single law of God "... was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53: 5). Do you see how healing and the price for our forgiveness are so closely intertwined in God's Word?

Many today are struggling to heal themselves from their sicknesses, diseases, mental dysfunctions, and addictions. I want to announce to you today that our part is to receive forgiveness from Jesus and to believe that we are forgiven every single day. The more forgiveness-conscious we are, the more easily we will experience healing and liberty from every bodily ailment, mental oppression, and destructive habit.

One of my favorite psalms, Psalm 103, goes like this:

"Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases" (Psalm 103: 1–3).

Now which comes first? The consciousness that all your sins are forgiven precedes the healing of all your diseases! And the operative word here is all. Some of us are comfortable with receiving partial forgiveness in certain areas of our lives. But we refuse to allow Jesus' forgiveness to touch some dark areas— areas that we can't let go of and that we can't forgive ourselves for. Whatever those mistakes may be, I encourage you to allow Jesus to forgive you of all your sins and receive healing for all your diseases. My friend, let the past go. Let the mistakes go. Allow yourself to be free and learn to forgive yourself by receiving with an open-heart Jesus' total and complete forgiveness.

Jesus further supported this correlation between forgiveness and healing in His encounter with the man paralyzed with palsy. It was obvious that the man's great need was to be healed in his body. Desiring his healing, his four friends had even removed the tiling of the roof and lowered him down on a stretcher to get him to Jesus. But what was Jesus' first statement to him? Jesus said, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you," before healing him by saying, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house" (Matt. 9: 2, 6). Jesus knew that the man needed to receive forgiveness for all his sins before his body could experience total healing.

What are you paralyzed by today?

Fear?

An addiction?

Anxiety attacks?

Perhaps it's some bodily sickness?

Whatever your challenge, your answer is found in receiving a fresh revelation of just how much you are forgiven in Christ and believing that you are no longer under condemnation (see Romans 8: 1)!

The Transforming Power of Believing the Gospel

I want to share with you a testimony that illustrates the transforming power of the gospel:

Amazing changes in my life have started ever since I fed on the truths of the Gospel of Grace. I now have a joy and appreciation for life that I never had since

my teen years (and I am in my fifties). I have a permeating peace that manifests in every area of my life—from parenting to my finances to my health.

Initially, when I started listening to message on God's Grace, I did not believe what I was hearing regarding holiness, fullness of blessings, and righteousness through faith in the finished work of Christ. When I got sick and bedridden, I continued to watch as that was all I was able to do. Pastor Prince supported his teachings with Scripture and evidence from the Old Testament. I began to realize that what he was teaching was true. I began to read the Gospels and epistles with an enlightened mind and could clearly see that he was presenting the gospel.

Once I embraced these truths, my physical condition began to change. I had been suffering from a spinal cord and disc injury for which there was no cure. Spine specialists refused to operate on me unless I came to the stage when part of my body became paralyzed, which is the usual course of events. I had been in a state of pain and was physically incapacitated for more than two years.

Since feeding on these teachings, I have regained use of my body and most of the previously excruciating pain has subsided. Now I am able to relax and be confident and trust in the willingness and availability of the power and grace of God to heal me. This came as a result of increased faith, the elimination of condemnation, an understanding of Holy Communion, and an increased awareness of God's love for me.

I have also been freed from a ten-year habit of smoking cigarettes. I used to smoke in order to calm my nerves. I tried for years to break the habit but could not. I always felt so guilty for having such a weakness. But once I realized that God did not hold my weakness against me and that He accepted me unconditionally and would still bless me, I let go of all the worry and struggle over my habit. I began to experience peace and rest.

A few months later, I was able to quit smoking. It's as if the habit was effortlessly removed from my life, like it just dropped off of me. I know that it was the Spirit of God working in me to perfect me and give me the power to no longer crave for cigarettes.

Truly, my life has been transformed!

Only Receive

My Dear brother or sister, you too can experience this victory. It's time to stop hurting yourself. Jesus was hurt for all your sins. It's time to stop beating yourself. Jesus has taken all your beatings at the cross. It's time to stop cutting and punishing yourself because Jesus has received all the cutting and punishment on your behalf. It's time to stop asking yourself if you have done enough to earn God's forgiveness and acceptance. His forgiveness and grace are undeserved—they cannot be achieved; they can only be received. Have you ever given loved ones a gift for Christmas or for their birthday? All you want them to do is to take it from you and enjoy it. That's exactly how God wants you to receive His love and gift of no condemnation today.

Look to the cross today and pray:

Thank You, Jesus, for loving me. Today I receive Your complete forgiveness in my life, and I forgive myself for all my sins, mistakes, and failings. I release them all into Your loving hands. I declare that in You, I am completely forgiven, free, accepted, favored, righteous, blessed, and healed from every sickness and disease. Amen!

The more you let the waterfall of God's forgiveness and unmerited favor wash over you like this every day, the more you'll receive His health for your body and soundness for your mind. Whatever may have happened in the past, and whatever may be staring you in the face now, I encourage you to remember and believe that God loves you and has forgiven you. Now begin to enjoy His love and let His grace work in you and for you, to bring you to a place of greater health, emotional strength, peace, and enjoyment in life.

Closing Words

There were some surprises when doing the research for this commentary. Like many, I assumed that the topic of Condemnation was a fairly well understood subject. It was quite surprising to find how little most Christians (including myself) actually know about the subject.

The topic of Condemnation and its effects on people has been and remains a poorly understood subject. It is my prayer and hope that we may find that rediscovering the Biblical teachings about Condemnation can enrich our lives and our ministries.

Throughout this course, I have endeavored to show you the gospel of Jesus Christ through the Scriptures as well as through the testimony of others. Because of Jesus' finished work at the cross, He will never be angry with you nor rebuke you even when you fail. So don't ever forget the main clause of the new covenant, which says that your sins and your lawless deeds, He remembers no more!

Many believers are defeated today because they do not know the God of the new covenant of grace. I believe with all of my heart that because you took this wonderful journey with me you saw for yourself, all the things concerning Jesus Christ and His finished work, your heart would now burn with His extravagant love for you. Jesus truly puts the "amazing", the "wonderful" and the "marvelous" back into grace!

Today, God is all about blessing you with His grace — His undeserved, unearned and unmerited favor — in every area of your life. Stop trying to deserve and earn your own acceptance before God with your own works and efforts. It will only frustrate the grace of God and nullify the effects of the cross in your life. My Dear brother or sister, Jesus already finished the work! Believe with all your heart that it is not about what you need to do today, but about what has already been done and accomplished on your behalf.

My Beloved brothers and sisters, I have proclaimed to you the gospel of Jesus Christ and am fulfilling the commission He gave me to bring Jesus back to central place in the church by rolling away the stone and opening people's eyes to reveal more of Jesus and His finished work. I know that if you have believed this good news of His grace, your life has begun to be radically transformed, together with the countless believers around the world who have already been impacted by the Gospel Revolution. I pray that this course has torn down the fences of controversy that the enemy has erected around the teaching of God's grace and the gift of righteousness, so that you may indeed receive not just grace, but the "abundance of grace", and receive not just righteousness, but the "gift of righteousness", and start reigning in life. Start reigning over sin, over sickness, over condemnation, over financial lack and over the curse of the law through the ONE, Jesus Christ.

All that I have shared works most powerfully and effectively within the environment of the local church. These truths are for the greater good of the body of Christ and should never result in you becoming a law unto yourself. Beloved, I want to see you enjoying the safety of the covering of a local church where there is accountability and submission. This is where our blessings are tremendously multiplied.

I thank you for taking this journey with me and for giving me the opportunity to unveil more of Jesus to you. You have been a wonderful traveling companion. We should do this again soon! In the meantime, until the next course begins, BE BLESSED!!!

In His Grace, *Dr. Charles.*

I look forward to hearing from you about how our Lord Jesus has touched and impacted your life with His amazing grace.

It is all about Jesus and His finished work!

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