

*Pastor David Anglada' Message Outline  
Grace Lutheran Church and School  
Malverne, New York  
www.glcas.org*

**“At Once Condemned and Acquitted”**

**Romans 8:1-11**

*6<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
Sunday, July 12<sup>h</sup>, 2020*

1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. 3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5 For those who live according to the things of the flesh, but the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. 6 To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. 7 For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. 10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.<sup>1</sup>



**Prayer for Illumination:**

God, your word goes out and does not return empty but prospers that for which it was sent. By your Spirit, open our minds to your word this day, that we might walk according to your ways, for the sake of Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Good morning and how are you doing? I have a question for you, has this ever happen to you, that you hear a passage or selected texts from the Holy Scriptures and a hymn or a song of praise, a poem, a story, or a movie over takes your thoughts for a couple of seconds?

Here is an example of what I am alluding to. Every time I hear Romans chapter 8 verse 1: that say's "there is, therefore, now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

I am reminded of a 1995 movie entitled "Dead Man Walking." An American crime drama starring Susan Sarandon and Sean Penn.<sup>2</sup> Sister Helen Prejean, played by Susan Sarandon, establishes a special relationship with Matthew Poncelet, played by Sean Penn, a prisoner on death in Louisianan. Sister Helen becomes Matthew's spiritual adviser.

Matthew has been in prison for six years awaiting execution after being convicted and sentenced to death for killing a teenage couple. Matthew committed the crimes with a man named Carl Vitello, who was sentenced to life imprisonment.

As the day of his execution comes closer, Matthew asks Sister Helen to help him with a final appeal. The application for Matthews's legal appeal was declined.

When the day arrives for Matthew to be executed by lethal injection, as Matthew is taken away to the execution chamber for his lethal injection, from a distance, you can hear the voice of the guard saying "dead man walking," "dead man walking."

An individual who has been found guilty of a crime and is sentenced to death is called a "dead person walking."

In our second lesson, today from the book of Romans. We hear St. Paul say, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." St. Paul's message is not too complicated; we were all condemned to death; we were "Dead Person Walking." But God's Grace saved us all;

we were all condemned to death. But God sent his Son Jesus to pay the price of humanity's sinfulness and brokenness.

Paul says that there is no condemnation for those in the Messiah, Jesus! We have been acquitted from our death sentence.

Paul reminds the Christian Romans that the power of the Holy Spirit has offered humanity a new life in Christ, a new beginning. We are now born of the Spirit, which has transformed us into the likeness of Jesus Christ. We are indeed a unique people; we are children of God. We are children of the light. We are children of Good News. We children of a new birth.

Yes, we have been born again in Christ Jesus.

That is why we are a unique people. We live with the power of transformative love in the world. We are kind, we generous. We seek to do good in the world. We are a people of compassion.

The cross of Jesus eradicates humanity from the power of the law into the power of the Holy Spirit. From this life of the Holy Spirit, nothing can separate us from Christ Jesus. O' we belong to Jesus both in good times as well when we face challenging times.

Please note that in our reading today, Paul signals a contrast between: For those who are in Christ Jesus. St. Paul's say's the following:

1. Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus/law of sin and death.<sup>3</sup>
2. Flesh/Spirit.
3. In the flesh /in the Spirit.
4. According to the flesh/ according to the Spirit
5. Sin/righteousness.

The Apostle Paul is communicating to the Romans and us here at Grace Lutheran Church that there will be a difference between the followers of Jesus and non-followers of Jesus Christ. We were once lost, condemned to death but Go's amazing grace has saved us.

My good sisters and brothers St. Paul recognize that there will be opposing forces that will challenge our existence in Christ: Good over evil, darkness, verse light. We will always live with this paradox.

But thanks be to God that we are not condemned to death, we are not a “dead person walking,” Christ set us free from condemnation, we children of the light along as people of the Spirit.

Moreover, God dwells in us, along with the Spirit of Christ in us. Martin Luther taught us that in each one of us, there a living Jesus. Beloved in the Lord, there is a living Jesus in you; yes you.

We are truly favored and blessed by God because we are in Christ Jesus. So, stop complaining, stop being cranky, stop being angry at the world, start living a life of thanksgiving to God for saving you from eternal death, coupled by giving you a new spirit within you.

What is St. Paul getting at, to leave our old identities which were shaped by the structures of sin and death. Paul wants us to open our eyes and to see the beautiful reality created by Christ's death along with His resurrection. We are no longer ruled by sin or the power of death.

There is no condemnation because sin is not our master; Christ is the master.

**Response to the Word:**

Your word is a lamp to our feet, O God. Your instructions are a light to our path. Your decrees are a living heritage. Your teachings are a blessing in times of trial. Hold our hands and guide us, Holy One. Help us abide in your ways.<sup>4</sup>

**Blessing:**

May you go forth in joy and be led back in peace this day and always.<sup>5</sup>

***Questions for your consideration this coming week, read Romans Chapter 8 verses 1 to 3.<sup>6</sup>***

1. What does Paul's joyous announcement mean?
2. Does it mean we no longer sin?
3. Does it mean that sin no longer tempts us?

4. Does it mean that sin does not exist any longer?
5. What do you hear God saying to you personally in this story?
6. How do you live out your freedom in Christ?
7. How do you set your mind on the Holy Spirit?

Thank you for joining us this week, we hope that you will join us this Sunday at 10 am for virtual community gathering, you can join by visiting our website at [www.glcas.org](http://www.glcas.org) again that is [www.glcas.org](http://www.glcas.org)  
Remember, God loves you and cares for you!

### *Endnotes*

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<sup>1</sup> New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

<sup>2</sup> Wikipedia Information on the Movie “Dead Man Walking.”

<sup>3</sup> Marion L. Soards. Commentary on Romans 8: 1-11, Working Preacher (items 1-5).

<sup>4</sup> Marry Scifres and B.J. Beu ed. The Abingdon Worship Annual 2020 (Abingdon Press, Nashville, 2019), 154.

<sup>5</sup> Kimberly, Bracken and Long Ed. Feasting on the Word-Liturgies for Year A, Volume 2, Trinity Sunday Through Reign of Christ (Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, 2014), 78.

<sup>6</sup> All 7 questions formed by Pastor A. David Anglada