

## Romans Session 98

### Life in the Spirit 3

### The Route to Freedom, Substitution

**Romans 8:3 (NASB)**

**<sup>3</sup> For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh,**

We have already studied the reason for freedom, and that was Justification, now we are to see the route to Freedom, and it comes through substitution.

What we could not do he did. By being our substitute.

This verse is perhaps the most definitive and succinct statement of the substitutionary atonement to be found in Scripture.

It expresses the heart of the gospel message, the wondrous truth that Jesus Christ paid the penalty on behalf of every person who would turn from sin and trust in Him as Lord and Savior.

As in the previous verse, the conjunction **for** carries the meaning of **because** and gives an explanation, for what has just been stated.

Believers are set free from the law of sin and death and are made alive by the law of the Spirit of life because of what Jesus has done for them.

**The Law** can provoke sin in men and condemn them for it, but it cannot save them from its penalty.

**Galatians 3:10-11 (NASB)**

**<sup>10</sup> For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM."**

**<sup>11</sup> Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "THE RIGHTEOUS MAN SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."**

Later in the same chapter he says;

**Galatians 3:21 (NASB)**

**<sup>21</sup> Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law.**

God's holy law can only set forth the standards of His righteousness and show men how utterly incapable they are in themselves of fulfilling those standards.

Paul already said,

**Romans 7:10-11 (NASB)**

**<sup>10</sup> and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me;**

**<sup>11</sup> for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.**

When God created man, sin had no place in His creation. But when man fell, the alien power of sin corrupted his very being and condemned him to death, both physical and spiritual.

The whole human race was put under the curse of God.

Sin consigned fallen mankind to a divine debtor's prison, as it were, and the law became his jailer.

The law, given as the standard for living under divine blessing and joy, became a killer.

Although it is "holy and righteous and good" (Rom 7:12) the Law could not save men from sin because it was **weak through the flesh**.

The sinful corruption of **the flesh** made **the Law** powerless to same men.

**Acts 13:38-39 (NASB)**

<sup>38</sup> *"Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you,*

<sup>39</sup> *and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses.*

During His incarnation, Jesus was the embodiment of the law of Moses. He alone of all men who have ever lived or will ever live perfectly fulfilled the law of God.

**Matthew 5:17 (NASB)**

<sup>17</sup> *"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill*

During one of His discourses in the Temple, Jesus exposed the sinfulness of the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees, who, by their failure to throw stones at the woman taken in adultery, admitted they were not without sin

**John 8:3-10 (NASB)**

<sup>3</sup> *The scribes and the Pharisees \*brought a woman caught in adultery and having set her in the center of the court,*

<sup>4</sup> *they \*said to Him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act.*

<sup>5</sup> *"Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?"*

<sup>6</sup> *They were saying this, testing Him, so that they might have grounds for accusing Him. But Jesus stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground.*

<sup>7</sup> *But when they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up, and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her."*

<sup>8</sup> *Again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.*

<sup>9</sup> *When they heard it, they began to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones, and He was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the center of the court.*

<sup>10</sup> *Straightening up, Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?"*

Later on, that some occasion Jesus challenged His enemies to convict Him of any sin, and no one could do so or even tried.

**John 8:46 (NASB)**

<sup>46</sup> *"Which one of you convicts Me of sin?"*

Some people including many professing Christians, believe that they can achieve moral and spiritual perfection by living up to God's standards by their own power.

But James reminds us;

**James 2:10 (NASB)**

<sup>10</sup> *For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.*

In other words, even a single sin, no matter how small and no matter when committed, is sufficient to disqualify a person for heaven.

On one occasion a young man came to Jesus and said to Him;

**Matthew 19:16-22 (NASB)**

<sup>16</sup> *And someone came to Him and said, "Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?"*

<sup>17</sup> *And He said to him, "Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is only One who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments."*

<sup>18</sup> *Then he \*said to Him, "Which ones?" And Jesus said, "YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER; YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY; YOU SHALL NOT STEAL; YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS;*

<sup>19</sup> *HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER; and YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."*

<sup>20</sup> *The young man \*said to Him, "All these things I have kept; what am I still lacking?"*

<sup>21</sup> *Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."*

<sup>22</sup> *But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieving; for he was one who owned much property.*

This man was extremely religious. But he demonstrated that, despite his diligence in obeying the commandments, he failed to keep the two greatest commandments, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind and to love your neighbor as yourself; and Jesus said;

**Matthew 22:40 (NASB)**

<sup>40</sup> *"On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."*

The young man who came to Jesus was self-centered, selfish, and materialistic. His love for himself surpassed his love for God and for his fellow man. Consequently, his meticulous religious living counted for absolutely nothing before God.

God's law commands righteousness, but it cannot provide the means to achieve that righteousness.

Therefore, what the Law was unable to do for fallen man **God Himself did.**

**The Law** can condemn the sinner but only God can condemn and destroy sin, and that is what He has done on behalf of those who trust in His Son, by His coming to earth **in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin.**

Jesus Said;

**John 6:51 (NASB)**

<sup>51</sup> *"I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh."*

In His incarnation Jesus was completely a man, fully incarnated. But He was only **in the likeness of**, in the outward appearance of, **sinful flesh**.

**Hebrews 4:15 (NASB)**

**<sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.**

If He had not been fully human and fully sinless, He could not have offered an acceptable sacrifice to God for the sins of the world.

If Jesus Himself had not been without sin, He not only could not have made a sacrifice for fallen mankind but would have needed to have a sacrifice made on His own behalf.

Jesus resisted every temptation of Satan and denied sin into any part of His earthly life.

Sin was compelled to yield its supremacy in the **flesh** to the Victor, whereby Jesus Christ became sovereign over sin and its consequence, death.

Those who trust in Christ not only are saved from the penalty of sin by also are able for the first time to fulfill God's righteous standards.

The flesh of the believer is still weak and subject to sin, but the inner person is remade in the image of Christ and has the power through His Spirit to resist and overcome sin.

Speaking of His impending crucifixion, Jesus said:

**John 12:31 (NASB)**

**<sup>31</sup> "Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.**

In other words, by His death on the cross Christ condemned and conquered both sin and Satan.

He bore the fury of God's wrath on all sin, and in doing so broke sin's power over those who trust in His giving of Himself **as an offering for sin** on their behalf.

By trusting in Jesus Christ, those who formerly were children of Satan become children of God, those who were targets of God's wrath become recipients of His grace.

On the cross Jesus broke sin's power and assigned sin to its final destruction. In the process He was made sin;

**2 Corinthians 5:21 (NASB)**

**<sup>21</sup> He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**

**Hebrews 9:28 (NASB)**

**<sup>28</sup> so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many,**

Jesus teachings, miracles, and sinless life were of great importance in His earthly ministry. But His supreme purpose in coming to earth was to be **an offering for sin**. Without the sacrifice of Himself for the sins of the world, everything else Jesus did would have left men in their sins, still separated from God.

The only hope men have for salvation from their sin is in their trust in the **offering for sin** that Christ Himself made at Calvary.

And when He became that offering, He took upon Himself the penalty of death for the sins of all mankind.

In his commentary on Romans the nineteenth-century Scottish evangelist Robert Haldane wrote,

*"We see the Father assume the place of judge against His Son, in order to become the Father of those who were His enemies. The Father condemns the Son of His love, that He may absolve the children of wrath" (Exposition of Romans, p. 324).*

Jesus Christ condemned sin in the flesh. Whereas sin once condemned the believer, now Christ his Savior condemns sin, delivering the believer from sin's power and penalty, the Law condemns sin in the sense of exposing it for what it really is and in the sense of declaring its penalty of death

The Law cannot save or redeem man.

**1 Corinthians 15:55-57 (NASB)**

***55 "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?"***

***56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law;***

***57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.***

The Prophet Isaiah eloquently predicted the sacrifice of the Incarnate Christ, saying,

**Isaiah 53:4-8 (NASB)**

***4 Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted.***

***5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.***

***6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.***

***7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth.***

***8 By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due?***

He became our substitute on the cross and with death. He paid the price that was ours to pay. And so, by this act of sacrifice and substitution we are routed to freedom from any condemnation.

Now next time we will talk about the result of Freedom, in the word Sanctification