***The Punishment of Hell
RO93-02***

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Our subject is "Freedom from condemnation." This is segment number two in Romans 8:1-4.

**The Roman Catholic Mass**

The Phil Donahue program this week interviewed a black priest in the city of Chicago. This man conducts a school for 1,300 students in the inner city area. He described the area as the lowest socioeconomic level in the city of Chicago. The Donahue program that day also included another guest, a Roman Catholic lawyer from Florida, who had written to the priest in Chicago, objecting to the fact that 200 students had been expelled from this school, and the man in Florida had read about it in the newspaper. He was shocked when he read the reason for their expulsion. The reason was that these students and their parents had failed to attend mass every Sunday at the priest's church as per their signed agreement when they enrolled the children in the church school. Repeated absences from Mass were met with written reminders of the agreement that these parents had signed, and when they were ignored, expulsion was executed.

This particular school has the reputation of being a top quality educational institution in the city of Chicago, and has a waiting list of 1,000 pupils. One of the expelled students was there in the studio at the Donahue program, and she was a Methodist. And she complained about the unreasonableness of the demand that they attend mass every Sunday unless they had an excuse. She, of course, wanted the church's quality education for her child, but she did not want the parental responsibility that the priest deemed was essential for him to achieve his objective.

This parent, understandably, did not think that a person should have to go out and attend mass on a cold, snowy day. And Chicago has cold, snowy days. She did not think that a person should have to go to attend Mass on a hot, humid day. And Chicago has hot, humid days. She did not think that a person should have to attend mass when it's pleasant outside, and one might need to go to a picnic to refresh his soul.

So, she was very clear that this was a terribly tyrannical attitude. The studio audience, interestingly enough, fully agreed with her. They were clearly in disapproval of the priest’s policy, and they even booed him. Now when people boo you, that's a pretty good indication that you're on track in our society. The Roman Catholic priest had a defense for his tough policy. The reason, he said, for his tough policy on attendance at Mass is very simple. He said, "I want to get people into heaven." Well, the audience reeled back and said, "What?" He said, "I want to get people into heaven. Oh, sure, I want to educate their children. Oh, sure, I want to raise these black children from this low economic social level, and from this intellectual darkness upon them. I want to elevate their tastes. I want to raise them culturally to a level that they have never enjoyed before. Yes, I want all that. But my ultimate objective is to get them all into heaven. Therefore, I have this policy. I'm using the school," he indicated, "as a vehicle for getting people into heaven."

The priest indicated that he did not want people in his school who did not want to attend mass. "They," he said, "should really go to some other school where that requirement is not made." But attending mass is necessary to his objectives. So, those who want to come to his school must conform to that requirement. Parents enrolling in the school, furthermore, must attend several sessions of training in Roman Catholic beliefs. The objective is to give them an understanding of what the mass is about, and it's a form of evangelism outreach to convert people to Roman Catholicism. In short, the principle priest believes that a person gets into heaven via personal participation in the sacrifice of Christ, which is performed in the mass, and in the ritual of eating the bread and wine elements which the priest has converted into the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ. A person gets to heaven by being in the presence of that sacrifice. A person gets to heaven by eating those elements which have been converted. He believes that. He thinks that this is what is the truth. And very logically, then, he is ready to put the screws on people to get them to do that which is necessary to get them into heaven, and to keep them out of hell. And if the priest's objective is to get people into heaven, and the mass is the way to do it, then his requirement, we must admit, is well-taken indeed.

However, the great tragedy, as you all know, is that this tough, well-intentioned, dedicated priest will never get to heaven via the mass himself, let alone the parents and the children that he leads. The book of Romans has made it very clear to us that no condemnation with God, which is what the priest is seeking, can only be secured apart from anything we do. No condemnation is secured apart from anything we human beings do. The mass itself, of course, is a pagan practice. It's of pagan origin. It comes from the Babylonian mystery religion of the ancient world. And it was, in fact, a form of worship of Satan as the sun-god – not a worship of the Creator God. The mass, of course, does not really sacrifice Jesus Christ again for the sins of the worshipers, nor does it magically create the body and blood of Christ out of the bread and the wine. The Roman Catholic Church says that that's the case, but there is no Scripture for that.

However, there is considerable Scripture for the opposite. The Bible is very clear that Jesus Christ cannot in any way be sacrificed for sins again. Hebrews. 9:24-28 make that very clear indeed: For Christ has not entered into the holy places made with hands (that is, a building, a temple, or a tabernacle, which are but the figures (the symbols) of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters into the holy place every year with the blood of others." On earth, the tabernacle and the temple symbolize God's presence in heaven, and the sacrifice for sin was via an animal, and it never took. It never removed the problem of condemnation. Therefore, it had to be done again and again.

Now when Jesus came along and sacrificed Himself, it was different from the repeated sacrifices necessary on the part of those priests. Verse 26: "And then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world. But now, once, in the end of the ages, He has appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for Him, He shall appeared the second time without sin unto salvation." The writer of the book of Hebrews says, "You cannot sacrifice Christ again, as we die once and then face the judgment of a Holy God, so Jesus Christ died once to make it possible for us to face that judgment with no condemnation. You cannot repeat his sacrifice again.

Hebrews 10:12 says, "But this man (Jesus), after he had offered one sacrifice for sin forever, sat down on the right hand of God." The priests ministering in the Old Testament tabernacle never sat down. There wasn't a chair in the whole place, because they had to keep doing it again and again and again. It was all symbolic, and it never was complete.

Hebrews 10:14 says, "For by one offering, He had perfected forever them that our sanctified (those who have been set apart). That's what sanctified means here – who set apart to eternal life via the blood of Jesus Christ.

Then in Hebrews 10:18, we read, "Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. And I can assure you that the Bible is very clear that our sins have been forgiven. God has removed the sin problem. That is no longer the problem between God and ourselves. There was indeed a time when you and I were back-to-back, facing God. But when Christ died for the sins, He turned. And the problem of sin was removed. The issue is now: "Will you turn and face the Savior, and accept Him to be reconciled?"

So, indeed, the Bible is very clear. You cannot sacrifice Christ again, symbolically, or any other way, and it does no good to go through such a ritual. So, the sincere, high-minded priest will never go to heaven via the mass himself, let alone those he require us to attend that service as he celebrates it in his church. But this priest is a classic example of what Jesus was talking about in Matthew 15:8-14: "This people draw near unto Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me (their minds are far from Me), but in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." And that's what this priest is doing. He's a noble, tough character, and he has his heart on the right objectives. But he is teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. He is teaching a system of approaching God that was invented by the dark pagan minds that descended from Nimrod and his religious system back in Babylon.

Verse 10: "And He called the multitude, and said unto them, 'Hear and understand: not that which goes into the mouth defiles the man, but that witch coming out of the mouth: this defiles the man.'" For many years, until recent times, it was forbidden for a Roman Catholic to eat meat on Friday. So, everybody had to turn to fish, because they were told, "You will be fire yourself." I once was in a group of Roman Catholics with a priest who was present, and one of the people said, "Father, if I have soup in which there has been some beef boiled with the soup, can I eat the soup on Friday?" And he said, "No, it's contaminated by the meat." Jesus says, "That's nonsense. It's not what you eat that defiles you before God. It's what comes out of you that is reflecting what your problem is in being contaminated by a sin nature so that you you're under death in Adam.

Verse 12 says, "Then came His disciples and said unto Him, 'Don't you know that the Pharisees were offended after they heard this saying?'" Now the disciples were good boys who had gone to seminary, and they'd learned about public relations. They said, "Hey, Jesus, you know, that violates course 101 on PR. You know the Pharisees are saying that You eat this stuff, and You condemn Yourself before God. You know, couldn't you talk about something else, Lord, than have to just blurt something like that out and say that these men are wrong? These are the authorities. Do You know who You're talking about? These guys have degrees – some of them more than one. These are the boys who are in the know. Everybody respects them. And You're saying don't listen to these jokers."

"But He (Jesus) answered and said, "Every plant which my heavenly father has not planted shall be rooted up." And these people were planting falsehood. And Jesus says, "We're going to tear it out. We're not going to let anybody get stung by eating poisoned food." Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. And there is the Roman Catholic priest, in the city of Chicago, at the church school – the blind leading the blind, while he believes he is leading them into heaven, and he's willing to put himself on the line to get all the flak and abuse by saying, "Come to mass, and I will give your child a good education, and I demand that of you, so that you will get into heaven. I will facilitate," to use his words: "I will facilitate your entrance into heaven."

The glorious message of Paul in Romans is quite in contrast to that viewpoint. It is quite in contrast in that a person goes to heaven, Paul says, by being placed into Christ via the baptism of the Holy Spirit." A sinner who believes the gospel, and thereby receives the once-for-all sacrifice for sin performed by Jesus Christ is placed by the Holy Spirit into Christ at the point that he trusts in the Savior. The believer in Christ then has the absolute righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed to him, and thus he is justified before the Holy God.

So, the whole system was all of God and nothing of us. We just come to Him and say, “We're sinners; we're hopeless; and, we can do nothing.” You have the gift of eternal life. I'd like to have it. And I believe that your Son made it possible for me to secure that eternal life. I'm not going to come to you with my good works. I'm not going to come to you with promises of what a nice person I'll be hereafter. I'm not going to come to you with some religious ritual like water baptism or the Lord's Supper, because I know that if I add that to my salvation, then it's no longer faith. It's no longer a grace basis. But it has become a works basis. And if I trust in Christ and I add water baptism, I send myself to hell."

Now that's serious business. And it's time that people were well alerted to that. Romans 11:6 says that if it's not of grace, it's works; and, if it's works, it's not of grace. You cannot mix them partially. The position in Christ is received only as a gift from God, apart from human good works and religious rituals. In this way, a person is removed by God, we have learned, from the position of death in Adam to the position of eternal life in Jesus Christ. If only people indeed would learn and obey what the Bible has to say about getting into heaven, how simple it would be.

Indira Gandhi has learned this the hard way. Her country was the beneficiary of Christian heritage via the British people, but she opted to be a Hindu. And so she took a short walk the other day from her residence across the yard to her office. Before she finished that walk, she was in the presence of the God who authorized the writing of Romans to explain how a person gets to heaven. She has now learned the hard way the truth of the book of Romans. She has now learned the hard way how wrong she was when, so often, she would put her hands together in front of her and bow to a person, or bow to a crowd, and thus saying to them, "I recognize that you are God." That's what that means. To put your hands together and bow is to say, "God is an impersonal force, and He resides in all of us. That is the core teaching of Hinduism. When you see somebody do that, realize that that is what they're saying. Indira Gandhi understood what she was saying when she did that. And in your mind's ear, you can almost hear her screams of agony and her cries of pain. And she's not bowing to anybody now, because the God that she faced was a God of grace until that first bullet hit her body. Then he became the God of judgment. For her, there is no way out.

Romans 8:1 has taught us certain factors thus far that we should have in mind. Romans 8:1 strongly emphasizes something which never can be, namely a condemnation for the believer. For the one in Christ, there can be no declaration of moral guilt and sentencing to punishment. Thirdly, it has demonstrated that justification depends on being in Christ, not on how good a life one lives. Verse 1 has also shown us that the last part is false. It should not be in that verse: "Who walk not after the first, but after the Spirit." It is contrary to what has been taught in the first part of the verse. It actually contradicts it.

**What Would the Punishment Be?**

So, tremendous things have already thus far been established for us in Romans 8:1: "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus." That is a dramatic, wonderful statement. There is no condemnation. Specifically, what is that referring to? The word "condemnation," we told you, means that you have been judged guilty, and you have been assessed a punishment. You have been judged guilty, and now a punishment is to be executed upon you. "No condemnation" means no punishment possible. Well, specifically, what punishment is involved? If you understand what is behind "no condemnation," you almost break out in a cold sweat of relief that this is true of you because of your trust in Christ.

Here's the punishment, Matthew 25:41 says, "And then He shall say unto them, on the left (the unbelievers): "Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." "No condemnation" means no presence in hell, which is a place of fire and burning, and of suffering. The punishment of the cursed, furthermore, is everlasting. It is eternal. It is everlasting fire. There is no annihilation. Don't believe that Jehovah's Witnesses when they come up to you and say, "Well, if you don't believe, if you are not safe, you will simply be rubbed out of existence, and you will not be conscious, and you will not be aware. You will just be rubbed out. That is false, wrong, wrong. Hell is a place that people are in, and they are not consumed, but they do scream, and they do agonize because of the pain. It is real. It is literal.

**Hell**

We have an evidence for that, if you will compare to Scriptures. Revelation 19:20 says, "And the beast (that is, the antichrist) was taken. And with him (his associate – the ecclesiastical leader) the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast (during the tribulation), and them that worshiped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire, burning with brimstone. That's what we refer to as hell. The lake of fire burning with brimstone. A human being, the antichrist, and a human being, his associate, the false prophet, are together cast in, at the beginning of the millennium, into the lake of fire.

1,000 years rolls by, and we come to Revelation 20:10. 1,000 years later there is again a reference to these two. And notice what it says, "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night, forever and ever." 1,000 years later, the antichrist and his false prophet are very much alive; very much in pain; and, very much conscious of what is happening. And now they are joined by Satan, for whom the place was created in the first place. It is a punishment of burning flames. And you know that people who are in flames do not sit there in silence.

From time to time, people are in automobile accidents or airplane accidents where they are entrapped in the vehicle, and it's engulfed in flames. And if you're standing there, it's an agonizing sight to hear their screams, and sometimes even crying out for somebody to shoot them to put them out of their pain. And that's what's going to go on in the lake of fire. When you see that Romans 8:1 says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to all of you who are in Christ Jesus," you can breathe a sigh of relief of what could have been, but which the grace of God, and that alone, by His sovereign choice of you for eternal life, has preserved you from. This punishment is everlasting in the same way that the "no condemnation" of eternal life is also everlasting.

In Matthew 25:46, we read, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment (the unbeliever), and the righteous into eternal life." Our eternal life is not going to end, and in the same way, the eternal punishment does not in. No, you're not ripped out of existence. You continue in that excruciating pain indeed.

In Matthew 25:30, the conduct of those who are in hell is made even more specific, for Jesus says, "And cast the unprofitable servant (that is, the unbeliever) into outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Do you know when people gnash their teeth? People gnash their teeth when they are in excruciating pain, and they can't do anything about it. So, those who die outside of Jesus Christ cannot go to heaven. No ritual; no ceremony, religious or otherwise; no mass; no baptism; and, no Lord's Supper will take you into the presence of the living God, and out of the condemnation of hell.

John 8:21 says, "Then said Jesus again unto them: I go my way and you shall seek me and shall die in your sins. Where I go, you cannot come." He's speaking to people who would not receive His message, and who would not receive His claims. He said, "You are going to seek Me, but you're going to die in your sins because you will not accept Me as the one who has made it possible for you to escape no condemnation."

John 8:24 says, "I said, therefore, unto you, that you shall die in your sins, for if you believe not that I am, you shall die in your sins." Those who die outside of Jesus Christ cannot go to heaven. When the unbeliever dies in his sins, that means he has no justification in the sight of God. He has no absolute righteousness. That's what justification means, and therefore he is doomed.

**No Second Chance**

Furthermore, I must remind, you that there is no second chance. No matter what the Mormons say, there is no second chance. No matter what the Roman Catholics teach you about purgatory, there is no second chance. Once more, it is appointed until men once to die, but after this, the judgment. Those who die in unforgivable sin cannot go to Jesus Christ and share heaven's joys with Him. They are barred from heaven because they refused to trust in Christ alone for salvation. It's shocking, isn't it? They are barred from heaven, because they have not trusted in Jesus Christ alone, apart from any human doing in their salvation.

No Jew, therefore, can go to heaven if he rejects Jesus Christ. No Moslem can go into heaven if he refuses to trust in Jesus Christ alone as Savior, and they don't. No Hindu can go to heaven unless he received Jesus Christ alone as Savior, and they do not. No Buddhist can go to heaven unless he receives Christ, and he does not. No Roman Catholic can go to heaven unless he received Jesus Christ as Savior, apart from human works, and they do not. None of the cults, which mix trusting in Christ along with some work, will go to heaven.

How wonderful and how gracious God has been such that you have been informed, and that you have been able to see the truth. Consider yourself indeed a select company. You could be out there with the rest of those poor, deluded, sincere people doomed for all eternity.

Condemnation refers to that great pain of the suffering in the lake of fire and brimstone. "No condemnation" means that you are also preserved from standing at one of the most terrible judgments that God is ever going to execute on human beings. In the Bible, it's called the great white throne judgment. In Revelation 20:11, this judgment is described. We read, "And I saw a great white throne and him that sat on it (God), from Whose face the earth and the heavens fled away, and there was no place for them," suggesting that the throne is out in space, The unsaved dead come before this throne now in their resurrected bodies – all categories of unsaved dead: the famous; and, the unknown. They're all in the same boat. And even if their bodies are completely deteriorated, and even if they have been cremated, as Indira Gandhi was, and her ashes scattered on the sacred Ganges River as a final attempt to make it with God, the force out there, it will all be brought together, and Indira Gandhi, with all the rest of them, will stand there in her physical body.

**The Book of Life**

Verse 12, therefore, says, "And I saw the dead, small and great, the famous and infamous, stand before God, and the books (plural) were opened." A series of books are open: "And another book was opened." A single volume is open, which is described as "the book of life." And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works." A series of books is opened – a record on every human being who refused to accept Jesus Christ as Savior. It's God's book of life. That means it's a book in which every member of the human race, that has ever been born since Adam, is recorded. As they're born, they're recorded chronologically, down the line – each page. And this book is opened. That's the listing. They each have a separate page in the individual books, and on that page are listed all their sins and human good – all of their works. It's a record of the natural unsaved man producing his sins and his human good. They're all there on the page, all in great detail. This is actually what the person is using as a basis for claiming heaven. And it records the details of what he has done.

However, his sins and his good works are all the product of his sin nature, since he is an unbeliever. He is not regenerated. This is his list of sins, and his human good, and he has tried to balance them off, one against the other. He has found that society loves those human good things. They call it "compassion," and they call it things like being unselfish, and they call it things like love. Who does not want to be compassionate, unselfish, and loving? But God says, "You spew that compassion, and that love, and that unselfishness, out of your sin nature, and it is evil with Me and it will condemn you. There is no way of making it into heaven by having more good works than bad, because all of our human good is evil. Notice Isaiah 64:6. You know what it says: "All of our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Actually, I'm sorry to say that the more human good you produce, the greater will be your punishment in hell. That's the ironic thing. The very thing that you think is going to count with God – all these compassionate, unselfish, loving things that the old sin nature is capable of, and that you think is going to keep you out of hell, is what's going to give you the greater punishment.

In Luke 12:47, we read, "And that servant who knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to His will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not and did commit things worthy of stripes shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required. And to whom men have committed much, of him will they ask the more." So the Bible is clear that punishment in the lake of fire will be by degrees. No pun is intended there, but it will be by degrees, in terms of the sins in the human good that people have been guilty of. So, the more human good, the worst you sink yourself in the lake of fire.

Believers are also held accountable for the divine viewpoint advantage, I should mention, to which you have been born, or to which you have been instructed. Some of you had the advantage of being born into divine viewpoint families. Some of you have had the advantage of being educated in divine viewpoint, and God will hold you as accountable. And a life of reversionism failures and misery will result in eternal loss of rewards in the future.

Since the unbelievers have rejected the work of Jesus Christ on the cross on behalf of their sins, they must now be judged on the basis of their own works. That is, after all, what they wanted to do. That's what they were counting on doing – that they were going to make it while alive on this earth, on the basis of their own works. And now God says, "Let's take a look at your works. Let's see what the record has. You refused the work of Jesus Christ on the cross that would have covered it. Let's see what you have." And that's what we read about. In the middle of verse 12, they open the books of their works. Verse 13 says, "The seas give up the dead that were in it, and the dead and Hades delivered up the dead that were in them. And they were judged, every man according to their works." So, everybody is now faced with that record that he has left.

The place of condemnation is the lake of fire, which is the place of eternal death – eternal separation from God. And, we read in verse 14 then, "And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." Hades is a holding station now. It will be emptied into the lake of fire. It holds only unbelievers at this point in time. And this is described as the second death in addition to one's first physical death.

**Unlimited Atonement**

There is a single book, as I indicated, which is the book of life. In this book, we have a record of all the people who have been born into the human race? Their names have been recorded in this book because God has provided salvation for them. That's the doctrine of unlimited atonement. But those who were not born again at the point of physical death, we're told, have their names erased from life.

So, here we have, in Revelation 3:5: "He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot his name out of Life, but I will confess his name before my father and before the angels." You remember that we learned in the book of Revelation that the overcomer is the one John describes as the one who is born again. He is the one whose name will not be blotted out.

Well, here we have C. Boozer. He's got all these sins and human good works to try to balance it out with God. But he has never received Christ as Savior. So, he goes out into eternity, and at that point, his name is blotted out of the book of life. Now he's not alone. He has all of his friends that he thought were good buddies who are going to make it with him. And here's J. C. Danish, and he goes down with him too – a likely pair. And their names are blotted out of the life. They thought they were living it up high here. They were interested for compassionate things; for unselfish things; and, for loving things. They were good ole boys, but they refused the only provision that would work – the person and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Consequently, their names are rubbed out.

In time, there comes to be a final edition of the book of life. After God is through with His plan for the ages, the last name has been recorded; the last person has been born; and, the execution of the final judgment has been made. Then this book becomes a final edition, and then it is called the The Lamb's Book of Life, because then the only names in it are those of people who are born again, and who have eternal life. It contains only the names of those who are justified.

Revelation 13:8 says, "And all the dwell upon the earth shall worship Him, whose names were not written in the book of life of the Lamb. All those who dwell upon the earth shall worship the antichrist." Which people? Those whose names are not written in the final edition of The Lamb's Book of Life, slain from the foundation of the world.

**Eternal Security**

So, the lake of fire is the second and eternal death that one experiences in addition to his first physical death. For the believer in Jesus Christ, therefore, I'm happy to say, there is no condemnation. There is no possibility of ever experiencing the pains and the tears of the lake of fire. We Christians have two very important securities that are such a comfort to us. Number one is that we have the security of eternal life. That is an eternal security which has been provided by God Himself. That's what we read of in Ephesians 2:8-9: "For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast."

**Temporal Security**

So, here's the eternal security in our salvation, because it is entirely a work of God. It is a grace gift to us to believe. But then we have another security based upon that eternal security, and that is a temporal security – the security in our daily fellowship with God the Father, as the result of the filling of the Holy Spirit. There is no time when you cannot walk in full fellowship with God your Father. There is no time when you cannot be in a position where the Spirit of God fills you; that is, controls your life, and guides you. 1 John 1:9 tells us that: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This does not speak of unbelievers. So, don't read this verse to an unsaved person, and say, "If you want to go to heaven, start confessing your sins." The Bible is talking here to Christians who must confess their sins to God the Father – their known sins, which that will be forgiven. So, we have a tremendous security in temporal fellowship.

**The Concentric Circles**

Remember that we describe it like this. The outer circle is our eternal fellowship; and, the inner circle is our temporal fellowship. Once we accept Jesus Christ as Savior, we are into the inner circle of temporal fellowship. When we sin, we step out of the circle from spirituality to carnality, but we are still within the outer circle of our salvation. We are not lost. When we confess, we come back into the inner circle. God the Holy Spirit again is able to guide our lives. So, we are said to be filled with the spirit. Both of these are true simply because of John 3:16. We have eternal security; and, we have temporal security. It is that verse that we know so well: "For God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." With that everlasting life provided, which we have here – that's John 3:16, along with Ephesians 2:8-9 and 1 John 1:9. With that combination of verses, you have a winning team. And you have a security that is what all the world is looking for. Everybody who has any conscience at all knows that there is somebody out there Who has made this world (this creation). There is somebody out there that we are going to have to face, and He is going to have demands and expectations of us. And man's conscience declares to him that that expectation is the expectation of holiness. We know we don't make it.

So, we have the poor priest in Chicago trying to shove people through the pearly gates via the mass. We have people in Mormonism trying to shove people through the pearly gates with their temple rituals. We have people in Roman Catholicism trying to shove people through the pearly gates by calling upon them to live a good life and to behave themselves. We have people who are adding to the trust in Christ any number of human actions, and every one of them will ensure that they come under divine condemnation.

**Condemnation**

So, there is a lot in that simple word in Romans 8:1 – the word "condemnation:" There is therefore never any condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. There is never an occasion that you can expect to stand before the great white throne judgment. That is the place where unbelievers will stand. You won't have to stand there because you have eternal security. You cannot lose it. You will never stand once more in that place of doom. And you will never, therefore, be dismissed into the lake of fire, where for all eternity you will be conscious in your physical body, gnashing your teeth in the suffering and the pain, with the tears rolling down your cheeks. And worst of all, the memory of what might have been – the memory of the gospel you heard and rejected, and the memory of the Savior, whose great work replaced every work that you ever needed to try to come up with. How sad to think back upon what might have been when you are beyond the point of no return. Might that not be true of any of you today.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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