

MESSAGE OUTLINE

Grace: God is For Us

2. Christ Died to Free Us

September 17, 2023

Romans 8:1-4 (NIV)

¹Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ²because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. ³For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

We are set free

Therefore, there is now no condemnation

1. By Jesus' death on the cross.

God did by sending his own Son... to be a sin offering

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. **Romans 5:1-2 (NIV)**

2. By grace through faith in Christ Jesus.

for those who are in Christ Jesus

This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. **Romans 3:22-24 (NIV)**

3. To live by grace and by the Spirit in community.

Us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge another, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. **Romans 2:1 (NIV)**

Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters. ² One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. ³ The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them. **Romans 14:1-3 (NIV)**

Which have you experienced together at SBPC?

- Community
- Spiritual Transformation
- Lived Experience
- Discernment
- Truth-telling
- Celebration
- Kindness
- Brokenness
- Acknowledging Fear
- Conflict Transformation

from Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership by Ruth Haley Barton

NOTES

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

September 17, 2023

As needed, refer to the Order of Worship and Resources at solanabeach.church for sermon video, message outline, and small group questions print version.

CONNECT WITH GOD (Select one of the below practices or choose the practice from the previous week)

- **Listening to God (5-7 minutes)**

Alone: In a posture of stillness and openness, come to God with the intention to listen. Pray: "Lord, I am here. Quiet the noises and voices around me. Teach me to listen for You."

Journal: While you pray: listen and wait. Then, jot down any themes of images that come to your mind. Listening well also means listening with others and so you are encouraged to find a partner to share your experience.

- **Practice of Gratitude (3-5 minutes):** *Select and Play a song on the SBPC playlist.*

<https://solanabeach.church/grace-music-playlist>

- **As the song plays:**

- Listen. Breathe. Attend to the presence of God in your life at this moment.
- You may journal, draw, doodle, or simply close your eyes and breathe deeply. Let gratitude define the next few minutes.

CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER

Read: Romans 8:1-4, Romans 5:1-2, Romans 3:22–24, Romans 2:1 and Romans 14:1-3

- **Quiet Reflection (10 minutes):** Reflect on the questions below in writing, drawing, or quiet contemplation.
 - What words, phrases, or images stand out to you in Romans 8:1-4?
 - What connections do you see between the additional passages shared above and in the message outline?
 - What energizes you or what do you wonder about?

- **Pray:** for the Holy Spirit to open your heart to the words of Romans and pray for God's love to hold your conversation together even when questions or differences arise.
- **Together: Reflect together in pairs,** sharing what you noticed or observed in your own quiet reflection. (5-10 minutes)

CONNECT WITH SCRIPTURE (Select the best questions or customize the questions for your group. If you haven't already: **read** Romans 8:1-4, Romans 5:1-2, Romans 3:22–24, Romans 2:1 and Romans 14:1-3.)

- Review the main points from the sermon outline.
- What common or connecting themes do you see in the scripture verses listed above?
- How would you reword Romans 8:1-4, especially verse 1, for our context today?
- What do you think about condemnation? How might Paul's words (verse 1) shift your perspective or bring freedom into your life?
- What are some differences between living "according to the flesh" and "according to the Spirit" (verse 4)?
- How does Paul set apart the way of life in Christ from the way of the Roman Empire?
- What, if any, comparison can you make between our lives today and the lives of the early Christians in Rome?
- Which values of "Christian Community" listed in the message outline have you seen at SBPC? Which ones do you want to grow in more?

CONNECT WITH GOD'S MISSION IN THE WORLD

- What does it mean to 'live by grace and by the Spirit' in our community and in the world?

PRAYER

End the imaginative prayer practice by praying for one another and for your neighborhood, for strangers, friends, and the whole world. Pray that God's grace and peace be transformative not only in your life but in the lives of those you meet. Pray that you greet everyone with the grace and peace of God.