

NO CONDEMNATION!

Rom. 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

So you haven't heard of Larry Nassar?! ... He was your regular US athletics enthusiast. He is fifty-four now, but when he was fifteen he began working as a student athletic trainer. He attended university to earn a degree and further his passion. He married, had three children, and after more studies he graduated as a medical doctor, with expertise in training athletes. He excelled and became a medical college professor, and a team doctor in a sports High School. ... He had it all! ... However, last week, - after only seven days in court, - he was sentenced to 175 years in prison for paedophile crimes against 156 of his victims.

What must it be like to stand humiliated in front of a judge in a court of law awaiting sentence! You know you have done wrong ... and as you have listened to the counsel making their case against you, your guilt consumes you ... You know you deserve to be punished. What must it be like?!

In preparation for the Lord's Table, let's try again to grasp something of the extent of what Christ did to save us ... Larry Nassar heard the words of condemnation from the judge. He had lost his family, his job, his reputation, his freedom ... and for the rest of his life, he would be locked up in a prison. Condemned, with no repeal. ... How different, though, the words of Paul, **Rom. 8:1** There is therefore now *no* condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.

... In the courtroom, the *condemned* man, - Larry Nasser, - tearfully read out a statement to his victims, in which he said, "Your words these past several days, your words, have had a significant emotional effect on myself and has shaken me to my core ... I also realise what I'm feeling pales in comparison. I will carry your words with me for the rest of my days." ... Was he showing contrition, remorse, a deep sense of guilt? ... Here is how he continued ... He started to justify himself, "I was a good doctor, because my treatments worked and those patients that are now speaking out were the same ones that praised and came back over and over" ... and then he blamed others, "The media convinced them that it was wrong and bad. I was so manipulated by the Attorney-General and now [*the judge*]. ... Suddenly, it was evident he wasn't repentant, and he had no remorse.

His own words further condemned him, and he did not deserve anything less than the judgment he received. ... Evil has to be condemned. Justice has to be upheld. The guilty cannot be exonerated ... and so it is in God's law! ... God's law is higher than any court for He judges by His own standards, which are holy and pure and righteous, allowing for nothing less than total obedience.

But, in salvation, how can it be He gives us what we do not deserve, and does *not* give us what we *do* deserve? The answer comes in one word, - *grace*. God's grace is beyond anything we have a right to ... It is more than we can work to attain. Sin *demand*s the harshest condemnation for it is reprehensible before God. His character and nature are such He cannot tolerate it, - *that* is something God cannot do! It's a 'black and white' issue with Him, with no 'grey' areas.

On one hand, Larry Nasser seemed to be admitting his guilt, but on another hand, the more he spoke he condemned himself further and fully justified the judge's decision ... *guilty!* Yes, he had worked hard to get his degrees and be popular, and set himself up in good jobs, but his evil nature *controlled* and destroyed his life.

What is the Christian Gospel that renders a person as "No condemnation"? Notice Paul did not say, "There is no condemnation against them", - he did not say that for it would not be true ... There *is* condemnation against us for we have broken God's law, **Rom. 3:23** *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God* – that is God's accusation/judgment which condemns us ... However, the accusation against us has been dismissed from His courtroom and there is no case against God's people for His Word declares, *There is therefore now no condemnation*. God's people are no longer condemned!

That is because His Son Jesus stood at the judgment bar in Heaven, before the foundation of the world, and He appealed to His Father on our behalf. God saw into the world He would create, and He saw how sin would be permitted to ruin it, and how the people He would create would become sinners, and how He would have to judge them for He cannot abide sin. ... But standing in front of the judgment bar, - in the place where the condemned stand, - was His Son. And even before the first sin was committed, Jesus had already stepped forward to become like the Lamb slain. ... The sinner's only escape from their sin is through Him.

Punishment needed to be met, - it could not be avoided, it *had* to happen for God to be appeased, - and the Lord Jesus heard all the charges against His people ... and there was no way they could escape God's righteous judgment. And He saw the full extent of the punishment we would suffer if He did not take our place. So, in the will and plan and mercy of God, *He* presented Himself before His Father, to be sent to take that punishment by being sacrificed as the Lamb upon the altar of Calvary. He knew we could not withstand such chastisement, and He knew the full extent, - how harshly His Father would judge, - so He took our punishment, and He bore the penalty of God's righteous judgment in our place.

Look at God the Judge ... There is nothing in His character *unholy*. He has never broken any of His laws. Holiness is intrinsic to His nature. It is impossible for any of His holiness to wane or diminish with the years. He always has been holy, perfect, and sinless. ... His holiness defines His every thought, His every action, His every conversation and His every judgment. ... He is untouched by sin. He has no communion, - no fellowship, no association, no affinity, - with sin in any form. He accepts no excuses for sin, - small or great. God's standards are the highest.

... And those same standards of His holy law are implanted in the human heart. As children, we didn't have to be told what is right or wrong, - we *instinctively* knew. ... And when we look into God's Word, we are taught there what is right and what is wrong but then, we consider ourselves wise and we replace them with notions that fit our condition and we become hardened and our consciences are stifled.

In the previous chapter Paul illustrated how we stand, apart from Christ, **Rom. 7:14** *I am carnal, sold under sin ... ²¹ evil is present with me.* ... That is how Paul judged himself, - corrupt and depraved, not just in a small measure, but totally and completely. ... This is *Paul* writing, and yet even *he* confesses, *evil is present with me.* ... Larry Nassar tried to shift the blame to someone else and to excuse his guilt, but Paul didn't because he understood that apart from God's grace he was condemned with no hope of being saved, until God showed him the way of salvation, and *then* he proclaimed, **²⁵ I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.** ... That is how he realised Jesus had died for him and washed his sins away at Calvary

And through what the Saviour has done, here is the assurance for every believer, **Rom. 8:1** *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus ... No condemnation!* There was nothing left over that Paul had to 'clean up' himself, - Jesus dealt with it *all*. He left none of our sin, He took it *all* away ...

Jesus *died* for you. He *gave* His life for you. He suffered the condemnation God sentenced for *you* in the eternal fires of Hell. ... It was no easier for Jesus because as well as being the Son of God, He is also the son of man, - He was a human being as we are ... and the same nail prints in the hands and feet which would have been agony to us were agony to Him, - He suffered as we would have suffered physically ... But what made it infinitely worse for Jesus was He also suffered spiritually when His Father turned His face away ... when, upon His precious sinless body, all the sins of His people were poured, - the wrath of God was unleashed upon Him!

Imagine Jesus being punished for you and for me! Imagine Jesus suffering for the sins of a man like Larry Nassar! ... Larry Nassar can be saved if he would turn in

true repentance to the Lord ... That is how powerful God's salvation is, - there is none He cannot save, if only they would turn to Him and acknowledge their sin! ... Imagine Jesus suffering for the worst sinner ... and then imagine Him suffering in your place, for the sins you committed ... Would you like to mention some of those sins in your life which He took away? ... None of us come close to what Nassar did, but when we consider our sins before God, we daren't stand in judgment upon others for there go I, but for the grace of God.

When your faith is in the Lord Jesus for salvation, God no longer condemns you for the verse is so clear, ¹There is ... now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus ... This is an absolute no! You don't have to look at it a hundred times to work out what it means. *It means what it says* ... He has purchased His children at the cost of His Son's sacrifice, and He no longer condemns us!

I shall forever lift my eyes to Calvary
To view the cross where Jesus died for me
How marvellous the grace that caught my falling soul
He looked beyond my fault and saw my need.

None of God's redeemed are facing a lost eternity in Hell, for through the grace of God, He is preparing our place in Heaven, - that is the reality! ... Previously, Paul had been relating his failures, **Rom. 7:24** *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* ... His problem was dealt securely and eternally by believing in Jesus Christ as His Saviour, and as a consequence ... **Rom. 8:1** *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh [the Law], but after the Spirit.* ²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. *[The Law no longer claims me]* ³For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: *[The Law no longer condemns me]* ⁴That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. *[The Law no longer controls me].*

God's Law speaks of **PERFECTION** we cannot attain, but in Christ through grace He has made us His **POSSESSION**, and granted us His **PEACE**, **Jn. 14:27** *my peace I give unto you ... Phil. 4:7* *the peace of God, which passeth all understanding ...* It is His gift to you ... And you have no fear of death for you have no fear of *condemnation*.

So, what is left for you to do? There *is* something ... **Rom. 8:1** *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.* ... Your walk is your witness, your talk is your testimony, and your purpose is the proof you belong to Jesus. Therefore, let's show the evidence of His saving grace ... the work He will complete, to His Father's glory. Amen.

A previous version of this sermon ...

NO CONDEMNATION!

Rom. 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

What must it be like to stand in front of a judge in a court of law awaiting a terrible sentence! You know you have done wrong ... and as you have listened to the counsel making their case against you, you realise your guilt ... your absolute guilt! You know you deserve to be punished. What must it be like?!

Sometimes I wonder if we grasp, - as we ought to, - the extent of what Christ has saved us from. In fact, I was reading last night from an author who wrote, “Why am I such a block of ice? ... It’s not a disgrace to weep in the shadow of Calvary; the disgrace lies in not weeping. ... Weep ... over the sufferings and death which my sins brought on the sinless Saviour. ... Lord, deliver me from the curse of a dry-eyed Christianity!”

Isaac Watts wrote, “Alas! And did my Saviour bleed, And did my Sovereign die? ... Well might I hide my blushing face While His dear cross appears; Dissolve my heart in thankfulness, And melt my eyes to tears”. ... Surely there is no better occasion to consider this subject than at the Lord’s Table. ... **No condemnation!**

I often refer to other translations and manuscripts in my studies, and it particularly caught my attention how the old *Tyndale New Testament (1534)* and the *Bishops New Testament (1595)* translated this verse, “There is then no *damnation* to them which are in Christ Jesus”. This was the word the saints of God understood in the years following the Protestant Reformation when they suffered so faithfully for Christ. Matthew Henry (1662-1714) wrote, “It is the unspeakable privilege and comfort of all those that are in Christ Jesus that there is therefore now no condemnation to them.” He pointed out Paul didn’t say, “There is no accusation against them”, for there is ... but the accusation has been thrown out, it is no longer held against God’s people. Yes, there are occasions God *chastises* His people, but they are no longer under the damnation and condemnation that awaits those who reject Christ, the Redeemer and Lord.

You see, He has stood at the judgment bar in Heaven and He has appealed on our behalf. Yes, punishment was required to be met and He agreed to be sent to take

that punishment upon Himself and to be sacrificed as the Lamb upon the altar of Calvary. He took my punishment, - my *eternal* punishment, - and He bore the penalty of my judgment to satisfy the holy wrath of His Father.

What is God's standard each man, woman, boy and girl are measured against? It is not the standards or customs of a church, nor of a council of religious men. The standard against which we are all measured is **The Perfection of God's Holy Law**. God Himself is perfect, - so Jesus claimed, *your Father which is in Heaven is perfect* (Mt. 5:48). In Him, - wrote James, - there is *no variableness, neither shadow of turning* (1:17). ... There is nothing about His character that is *unholy*. Holiness is intrinsic in His nature. It is impossible for any of His holiness to wane or diminish with the years. He has never had to travel to the point where He has ultimately reached holiness, - He always has been holy, perfect, and sinless. ... His holiness defines His every thought, His every action, His every conversation and His every decision. Even in His wrath He allows not for one moment anything but holiness to determine what He does.

His perfection owns an awesome majesty. Kings and Queens, Presidents and Prime Ministers, dictators of every kind shall bow in humility before His holiness. Untouched by sin, He has no communion, - no fellowship, no association, no affinity, - with sin. He accepts no excuses for sin, - small or great, *Job 34:10 [Elihu], far be it from God, that he should do wickedness; and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity. ... 12 Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment ... Hab. 1:13 Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity.*

God's standards are the highest, ... unequalled, unparalleled and unrivalled by the religions and philosophies of this world. Such is **the perfection** against which we are measured! ... But, how are His standards revealed? The standards of God's holy law are implanted in the human heart. As children, we didn't have to be told what is right or wrong, - we *knew*. Then, as we got older we began to make excuses for our behaviour and we suppressed God's holy law, - our hearts hardened and our conscience stifled what we knew to be right, *Jer. 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? ... Eph. 2:3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

But more particularly, we know what is right and wrong because of God's special revelation, which is His Word. The Bible is the rulebook ... and not just for the believer, but also for the unbeliever! *All* mankind is responsible to be obedient to this Book! And yes, of course, it is the ultimate standard for God's people. This Book, - God's Word, the Bible, - has no other authority equal to it for it is the infallible and inerrant, inspired Word of the Holy God.

In the Old Testament, the purpose of the law God gave to Moses was to impress upon the children of Israel the holiness of God. For example, only once a year could one man alone, - the high priest, - enter His presence suitably prepared, in accordance with the instructions of God. Another example ... when the Jewish male would bring the sacrifice of his lamb, he had to make sure it fulfilled all the requirements of God, otherwise it would be rejected. ...

Another example ... when the Tabernacle was being built it had to strictly abide by the intricate specifications set forth by God. ... *God is holy*, everything about Him is holy, and He accepts nothing but the highest standards of His holiness to be upheld, and therefore *nothing* tainted with even the slightest tinge of sin is permitted into His presence.

It is no wonder, then, when we read of a man so conversant with the Law as Paul that we hear the cries of inadequacy, [Rom. 7:14](#) *For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. I have met with the holiness of God, and I have recognised my own sin and my unworthiness to be in His presence for what I hate, that do I (v.15) ... O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? (v.24).*

You see, As for God, his way is perfect ([II Sam. 22:31](#); [Ps. 18:30](#)) ... The law of the LORD is perfect, ... the testimony of the LORD is sure ([Ps. 19:7](#)). **How then, - in the perfection of God's holy law** which never changes, - is it possible for anyone to achieve such high standards? ... It is not possible, [Rom. 3:23](#) *for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. We all miserably fail when we enter God's examination room, - there is absolutely no pass rate possible! ...*

We have reasoned correctly that the sentence under which we have been convicted was a rightful decree in the light of **the Perfection of God's Holy Law**. However, our verse assures us, [There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus](#). ... This is an absolute no! You don't have to look at it a hundred different ways to try to work out what it means. *It means what it says* ... that even though we fall far short of **the perfection of God's holy law**, we, - the redeemed and purchased of the Lord, - have no longer any condemnation! We are not facing out into a lost eternity in Hell, but through the grace of God, by being dead unto sin we have been made *alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord* ([Rom. 6:11](#)). ... "Saved by grace alone, this is all my plea ... 'Twas grace that wrote my name In life's eternal book; 'Twas grace that gave me to the Lamb, Who all my sorrows took."

You see, the holy law of God has not diminished in any of its demands concerning its perfection and what God requires of us. Yes, previously, [Eph. 2:2](#) *[we] walked*

according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. We were walking contrary to the holiness of God, and we were incapable in ourselves to stop the decline until God began to work ... v. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved).

Our salvation is in Christ and in Christ alone. There is no other deliverance from sin apart from Him. Outside of the saving work of Christ there is no redemption. Neither religion nor the best of good works can save a single soul because **the perfection of God's holy law** is beyond any of us to achieve ... It makes far too many demands we can never meet. That is why Christ, - our Sacrifice on the cross of Calvary, - and none other, - became the perfection *for us* that God's holy law required and demanded. His perfection became ours through grace, bought at the cost of the shedding of the precious blood of His own dear Son.

In and of itself, Heb. 7:19 the [*perfect and holy*] law made nothing perfect, - it was a shadow of good things to come (10:1), - but the bringing in of a better hope did [*make perfect*]; by the which we draw nigh unto God ... for through Eph. 3:11 Christ Jesus our Lord: 12 ... we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. Were it not for God's sovereign work of grace displayed in His Son, there would be no salvation and no escape from the condemnation of God's everlasting wrath, but since the day and hour the Holy Spirit applied His work of regeneration to our souls we have been saved, Rom. 8:2 Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. [*The Law cannot claim you (v.2)*] 3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh [*The Law cannot condemn you (v.3)*]... 4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. [*The Law cannot control you (v.4)*] ... Titus 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; 7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

As a consequence, There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Yes, the Law speaks of **PERFECTION** we cannot attain, but Christ speaks of **POSSESSION** for He has removed, - once and for all, - the sin that was keeping us at enmity with God and He has reconciled us unto Himself by the cross (Eph. 2:16), and we have the assurance of Heaven, Jn. 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned ... **No condemnation!**

What a **PEACE!** ... “O Christ, in Thee my soul hath found, And found in Thee alone, The peace, the joy I sought so long, The bliss till now unknown.” ... “Far away in the depths of my spirit tonight Rolls a melody sweeter than psalm; In celestial-like strains it unceasingly falls O’er my soul like an infinite calm. ... Peace, peace, wonderful peace, Coming down from the Father above! ... What a treasure I have in this wonderful peace, Buried deep in the heart of my soul, So secure that no power can mine it away, While the years of eternity roll!”

This is a **peace** that is the blessed **possession** of the children of God. It is a **peace** in knowing Him as Saviour and Lord. He is not a Stranger, He is a Friend. I’m not afraid of standing before Him because He has washed all my sins away, and I am pure and perfect in His sight. My guilt has been removed. When I leave this scene of time I’m going home to the mansion my Saviour is preparing ... and I know He will receive me and I shall be with Him forever.

Another hymn writer wrote, “His grace is sufficient for me; Then why should I fear, with a Saviour so dear? His grace is sufficient for me. ... When I shall stand face to face with my King, Still to the word of His promise I’ll cling, And with the ransomed forever I’ll sing - His grace is sufficient for me.”

When you submit to the Lordship of Christ, He will keep the devil at bay. James tells us to [resist the devil and he will flee from you \(James 4:7\)](#)! You see, “In the Name of Jesus! We have the victory!” The devil cannot cope with the power and authority of that Name. When a sinner bows their head and accepts Christ into their heart, the devil has to move out! He cannot stay where the Saviour abides as Lord ... Oh yes, he can shout his threats from a distance, and he can cause as much bother as the Lord allows him, but when the Lord comes to live within you, the devil has to move out! ... And where the Saviour abides there is [no condemnation!](#)

Do I have to wait until Glory to enjoy this confidence in Christ? No, because Paul makes it very clear, [There is therefore *now* no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.](#) You don’t have to wait until you die, it is a present **possession**. I know some of you cannot give a time or a date when Christ came into your heart, and others perhaps just can’t remember ... but what are times and dates when matched against the everlastingness of eternity, - it is sufficient to know Christ has saved you ... and that *He* has a record of it!

No Condemnation! ... By rights, **the Perfection of God’s Holy Law** demands and requires condemnation. The demand was met by the Saviour dying on the cross so that His **PERFECTION** would become our **POSSESSION**. “Loved with everlasting

love, led by grace that love to know; Gracious Spirit from above, Thou hast taught me it is so! ... In a love which cannot cease, I am His, and He is mine.”

Christ has worked in you. He has taken out the old stony heart that would not allow the Gospel entrance, and He replaced it with a brand new heart, and body, and soul where the Holy Spirit resides today. *That* is a work of grace! Undeserved, unmerited ... for that’s what grace is, it is not of ourselves, ... it is not of works, lest any man should boast (Eph. 2:8, 9). It is the gift of God ... which God hath before ordained (2:8,10).

Believer, death and judgment and Hell are behind us, and grace and glory and Heaven are with us and before us. We shall not be terrified when we stand before Him, - we shall be with Him forever. The world cannot take away from us our blessed hope. They try to deny it and make us doubt it, but we know it’s true because of the testimony of the Holy Spirit within. Many of our brothers and sisters in foreign lands are losing their homes and their livelihoods because of their faith ... but one thing the enemy is never able to take away is the relationship we have with our Saviour.

We are coming to the Table, and I trust we have no other purpose or thoughts on our mind except those towards Him. *He* is our **Possession**, and *He* is our **Peace**, and *He* also is our **Perfection**. We don’t deserve what He has for us, but nonetheless it is ours because of His grace. We trust in His Word, *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

If you are not saved, is Christ making the Gospel known to you? Is it becoming plain for you to understand? Then, believe in Him to take your sins away, and He will become your Saviour and Lord. ... Our hymn as we come to the Table says ...

I know that my Redeemer
Lives crowned upon the throne;
Lord over earth and heaven
He saves, and He alone;
He conquered death by dying
Upon the accursed tree,
And from His death sprang glorious
Eternal life for me.

Christ conquered death by dying—
Jesus, Thy mortal pain
O’erthrew the King of Terrors
And brake the captive’s chain.
What though this earthly body
Obey Death’s dread behest?
The soul soars free rejoicing
To mansions of the blest.

I think upon my Saviour,
I trust His power to keep,
His mighty arm enfolds me

Awaking and in sleep.
Christ is my rock, my courage;
Christ is my soul's true life;
And Christ, - my still heart knows it, -
Will bear me through the strife.

Thus in Christ's name I'm living;
Thus in Christ's name I'll die;
I'll fear not though life's vigour
From Death's cold shadow fly.
O Grave, where is thy triumph? O Death, where is thy sting?
"Come when thou wilt, and welcome!" Secure in Christ I sing.