

Prayer of the Week:

O Lord, we pray that your grace may always precede and follow after us, that we may continually be given to good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

(Source: Book of Common Prayer 2019, Collects of the Christian Year, Proper Seventeen)

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom you have made.

We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

**No Condemnation****Romans 8:1-4 (NRSV)**

August 30th, 2020

Recap

Week One: Sovereignty is not about control, but about the ability of God to take the raw material of our lives and bring about new creation.

Week Two: Christian hope is rooted in resurrection. Resurrection is the ability of God to set things on a new course. That which seemed dead is given new life because of the redemptive purposes of God in the world and in our lives.

Week Three: We live in a body subject to death because of sin, but the spirit that brings life lives inside of us! This has opened up a new way of life for us!

Week Four: The flesh is the way of selfishness while the spirit is the way of self-giving love.

The Law of Sin

What is the law of sin that Paul refers to in verse two?

The law of sin is a way of talking about sin as a power or principle.

"I gladly agree with the Law on the inside, but I see a different law at work in my body. It wages a war against the law of my mind and takes me prisoner with the law of sin that is in my body. I'm a miserable human being. Who will deliver me from this dead corpse?" -Romans 7:22-24 (CEB)

Paul agrees with the Law of God in his mind (capital L - referring to the law given to Moses), but notices that there is another law (principle) at work in his body. He admits to the tension and says, "I'm miserable!"

In our context we might say, "I agree with the ways of the Kingdom of God in my mind, but I find there is another power at work within me that keeps me from it."

Sin is a power that enslaves us.

Sin is personified in Romans 8 in the same way the Ring of Power is personified in the Lord of the Rings books and films.

The Power of Sin Broken

"For God has done what the law....could not do by sending his own Son....to deal with sin." (vs. 3)

God condemned sin in the flesh of Jesus in order to break the power of sin in our lives! Therefore, we no longer stand condemned under the power of sin! Just as the power of the ring had to be exhausted in the fires of Mount Doom, so sin entered into the life and body of Jesus and its power was exhausted!

Since sin has been condemned, there is no condemnation for us! We once lived under a power too strong for us to defeat on our own, but thanks be to God that power has been defeated and we are no longer condemned!

There is no doubt about God's verdict about you - he is for you! You don't have to live in fear of God or judgement.

The passage closes with this: So that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us! We are free to live according to our lone allegiance which is Christ and the Kingdom.

We must cultivate this freedom through worship, prayer, spiritual disciplines and habits.