

## Regarding Romans 8:1-3

Jason P. Hilburn

In Romans 8:1, Paul wrote: *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."* He had already mentioned how they got into Christ in Romans 6:3 (baptism), and he explains what it means to *"walk after the Spirit"* in 8:7--being *"subject to the law of God,"* which he called *"the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus"* that made him free (8:2; cf. 6:17, 18; Jn. 6:63; 8:32). To briefly summarize regarding Romans 8:1: We are initially saved by grace from condemnation when baptized into Christ (cf. *"Save yourselves,"* Acts 2:37-41), and we must continue to be *"subject to"* (*walk after, be led by*) the Law the Spirit revealed to avoid condemnation (1 Jn. 1:6-10; 2:3-6; 1 Pet. 1:22; 2 Pet. 2:20-22; Heb. 4:11; 10:23-31; 12:14-17; Rev. 2:10, etc.).

There are three laws found in Romans 8:2-3:

- 1) ***"The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (8:2)***—This is the New Testament Law of Christ that the Holy Spirit revealed in the first century A.D. It is also referred to as *"the law of God"* in 8:7 (cf. *"Spirit"* and *"life"* vs. *"flesh"* and *"death"* in 8:1, 4-8, 12-14).
- 2) ***"The law of sin and death" (8:2)***—this is the general law that preceded both the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ, which basically means that all who sin (transgress God's Law) deserve death (cf. Gen. 2:17; Isa. 59:1, 2; Rom. 6:23, etc.).
- 3) ***"The law" of Moses (8:3)***—Most of the time when the apostle Paul simply says, *"the law,"* he is referring to the Law of Moses. Context bears this out in 8:3 also, and in any passage, words like *"law"* must be defined by context. The use of *"the law"* in 8:3 is also the same phraseology used in previous chapters (compare Paul simply saying, *"the law"* in 7:1, 4-9, 12, etc., when referring to the Law of Moses).

The main point of Romans 7 was that *"the law"* of Moses could not deliver anyone from the penalty for sin, which is death (7:24), and that is also what Paul is saying in 8:2-3. *"The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus"* did what *"the law"* of Moses could not do—deliver Paul from *"the law of sin and death"* (save him from condemnation, 8:1).