

November 21 Adult Spiritual Growth Class Synopsis

Unshakable Hope: Chapter 9: No Condemnation

Does your life reflect that you are free from condemnation?

We can find hope, rest and freedom in knowing for those who are in Christ Jesus, there is no condemnation (*Romans 8:1*). For certain, there is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God (*Romans 3:10-11*). Before our Holy God, in our sin, we all stand condemned. Yet in God's amazing and saving grace, Christ Jesus himself bore our sins in his body on the cross so that we might die to sins and live righteousness; by his wounds we have been healed. (*1Peter 2:24*) Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life, has set you free from the law of sin and death (*Romans 8:1-3*).

The conversion of the Apostle Paul (*Acts 9:1-20*) brings truth to the very words he writes in the book of Romans. "Now Saul, breathed threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord" (*Acts 9:1*). Saul, the self-righteous pharisee of pharisees, is "on the way" to Damascus with official letters authorizing the wholesale arrest of those who belong to "the Way." A light flashes around Saul. "Saul, Saul why are you persecuting me?" "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." God is in control of Saul's destiny. Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. He was led him by the hand into Damascus. For three days Saul was blind, and did not eat or drink anything. God enlists Ananias, a disciple from Damascus, to intercede on the still blinded Saul's behalf. The man who persecuted believers is now dependent upon one. In a vision, God instructs Ananias that Saul will be awaiting him as he too has experienced a vision. Citing Saul's notorious reputation, a very apprehensive Ananias voices his concerns. God does not refute the reluctant disciple's assessment but overrules his objection, confiding to Ananias that Saul will play an important role in the church's future. Saul will carry God's name to a different group of people in strange places: Gentiles, kings, and even children of Israel. Ananias relents and does as he is commanded. Going to Saul, he places his hands on Saul, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, and after taking some food, he regained his strength. Spending several days with the disciples in Damascus. now Paul began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. God chooses, God calls, and God does a new thing in the light of the resurrection of Jesus – there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus.

For certain, sin remains a present struggle for all believers. In Romans 7 Paul describes his struggle against the sinful nature. Paul writes, "Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me" (*Romans 7:21*) and, "What a wretched man I am!" (*Romans 7:24*). Paul expresses his hatred for the sinful nature which continues to war against his new nature in Christ. Paul hates the sin he commits, but he is also thankful because he has been set free from *slavery to sin*. He now has the ability to do what is good because Christ has delivered him (*Romans 7:25*). In Romans 8, Paul teaches that we as believers are not only free from bondage to sin, we are free from the inner emotions and thoughts that tend to bring feelings of condemnation when we commit sin (*Romans 8:2*). We as Christians are free from the "law of sin and death," which means, although we will commit sin, the Law no longer has the power to condemn us. We are not under the Law's condemnation because Jesus fulfilled ("filled-up, completed") the expectations of the Law perfectly, and believers are "in Christ" (*Romans*

8:3). Because believers are in Christ, we have the joy of being counted as righteous, simply because Christ is righteous (*Philippians 3:9*). Paul also points out that as Christians, even in our struggle, we will not live “according to the flesh”; that is, we will not persist in a constant state of sinful living (*Romans 8:5*) through the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, who dwells within us.

When burdened by questions of worth and guilt, we are assured of true rest in Christ (Matthew 11:28-30), whose yoke is easy and burden is light. We find a lasting rest for the soul from a works centered grace to a love centered grace.

We also find hope and peace knowing that we are forever being “kept” by Christ Jesus who unceasingly intercedes for us in heaven; we will always belong to Him. *“I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.”* (*John 10:28-30*)

A song to reflect and pray on:

[Come, Ye Thirsty - ft. Davy Flowers \(Lyrics\) | The Worship Initiative - YouTube](#)

Looking ahead – Sunday November 28

No class – Thanksgiving Holiday

Looking ahead – Sunday December 5

Chapter 10 – This Temporary Tomb

God’s Promise

1 Corinthians 15:54

Death has been swallowed up in victory.