

Lent Devotional April 20, 2019

SCRIPTURE

Romans 8:1-11

¹There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ²For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, ⁸and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

DEVOTIONAL

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Temptation easily lures us into setting our minds on “things of the flesh,” things that are worldly, the baser things in life that cause us to act according to our sinful nature. And creatures of a sinful nature, even living under the Law, cannot be reconciled to a right relationship with God.

But thanks be to God that, out of love, God made a way for reconciliation—a way to establish an intimate relationship between God and humanity through Jesus Christ, the divine and sinless Son of God, who defeated sin and death and who invites us to share in new life with him. Not through our works but through our faith in Christ Jesus and the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit, whom we invite to live in our hearts, we become transformed through the grace—the ill-deserved favor—of God. And so we are placed on the road of living a resurrected life with Christ.

In Christ there is no condemnation because there God has restored us to the right relationship we cannot achieve on our own. There the demands of God's holy nature are achieved on our behalf through the gracious gift God has already given us in Jesus Christ, our Savior. To God be all honor and glory!

PRAYER

Holy and most faithful God, we thank you for your grace and for the gift of your Son, Jesus. Help us turn away from the worldly life of sin and turn instead to Christ Jesus, so that your Spirit may dwell in us to give us life and peace. Thank you that, in Christ, we do not stand condemned. Thank you for your love and forgiveness which restore us to righteousness. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.