

GOSPEL MONOPOLY

3. FREE PARKING HVC, Jan. 19, 2020 Romans 8:1-4,15,17,35,37-38 (NLT)

When you play Monopoly, do you have the same rules for Free Parking as Frank described? Have you ever landed on it and received a windfall?

What kinds of “solutions” to the brokenness of the world are you most aware of?

Read (pray) the **ancient Celtic prayer** below that Frank cited. How does it strike you? Why does it seem so different? What do you like? Not care for?

*In the beginning, O God,
When the firm earth emerged from the
waters of life
You saw that it was good.
The fertile ground was moist
The seed was strong
And earth's profusion of color & scent was
born.*

*Awaken my senses this day
To the **goodness** that still stems from
Eden.
Awaken my senses
To the goodness that can still spring forth
in me
And in all that has life.*

Romans 8:1 (NLT)

So now there is **no condemnation** for those who belong to Christ Jesus.

What is your understanding of what it means to *belong to Christ Jesus*?

Did you understand the distinction Frank made between guilt and corruption? How is that a helpful distinction?

When did you become deeply aware of your own sin and spiritual inability?

Romans 8:2-3 (NLT)

And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins

When did you first become aware of the *power of the life-giving Spirit* in your life? In what ways have you been freed from the power of sin?

What elements of the “gospel” do you see in this passage?

What is the hardest part of this for you to understand? What questions does it raise for you?

What does Paul mean by *the weakness of our sinful nature*?

Frank referred to “legalism.” Can you think of other examples of legalism in our society/culture? What are some reasons you think it is so attractive?

Romans 8:4 (NLT)

*He did this so that the **just requirement** of the law would be **fully satisfied** for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit.*

Did you find the “ledger” illustration of debits and credits helpful? In what way?

How do these two translations from Romans 3 help make sense of it?

Romans 3:24 (CEB)

*but all are **treated as righteous** freely by his grace because of a **ransom** that was **paid by Christ Jesus**.*

Romans 3:24 (The Message)

*God did it for us. Out of sheer generosity he put us in **right standing** with himself. A pure gift. He got us out of the mess we’re in and restored us to where he always wanted us to be. And he did it by means of Jesus Christ.*

Romans 8:15 (NLT)

*So you have not received a spirit that makes you **fearful slaves**. Instead, you received God’s Spirit when he **adopted YOU** as his **own children**. Now we call him, “Abba, **Father**.”*

In what way do we think and act as *fearful slaves*? What kinds of things generate fear for you in your spiritual life?

What difference does it make that we are adopted by God? Why would it make us less fearful?

Romans 8:17 (NLT)

*And since we are his **children**, we are his **heirs**. In fact, **together with Christ** we are **heirs** of God’s glory. **But** if we are to share his **glory**, we must also share his **suffering**.*

What does the word “glory” mean to you? What would get you excited about it?!

What is the connection between glory and suffering? What kind of suffering do you think Paul has in mind?

In what way might God be putting you through the “school of hard knocks” right now? (*cf. Serendipity*)

Reflect on the following CS Lewis quote. When is the last time you even thought of something like this? Why do you think we do not give it more thought?

C. S. Lewis – *He will make the feeblest and filthiest of us into a god or goddess, dazzling, radiant, immortal creatures, pulsating all through with such energy and joy and wisdom and love as we cannot now imagine ...*

Romans 8:35 (NLT)

Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death?

With what on this list do you most identify? Fear?

Romans 8:37-38 (NLT)

No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us. And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow — not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love.

Can you think of times you have been strengthened by suffering?

In what ways have you felt sustained by Christ during difficult times?

Which of these “enemies” is most real to you? (cf. *Serendipity*)

How does this passage encourage you? How does it help you handle feelings of guilt and unworthiness?

On a scale of 1 (worst) to 10 (best), where are you in terms of hope and a positive attitude towards the future in your life?