from ver. 4, right enough in sense (see  
there), but out of place here, because this  
*moral* element of ‘those who are in Christ’  
is *not yet brought in:* the present assertion   
is *general*, and is made good in detail  
by and by. The clause is wanting in almost  
all our earliest copies.

**2.] For** (a reason why there is no condemnation)   
**the law** (method, or influence,  
as in viii. 23,— used here perhaps for  
sharper contrast to the *law of sin*, below)  
**of the Spirit of life** (the Lord and Giver of  
life—life used in an incipient higher sense  
than “I was alive,’ in ch. vii. 9,—see  
below) **in Christ Jesus** (which prevails in  
those who are in Christ Jesus. Or, we  
may take **in Christ Jesus** with **life**,—the  
Spirit of that life which is in Christ Jesus.  
Or, again, we may, in the original, join  
these words with the verb: *“set me free  
in Christ Jesus, from”* &c.) **set me free**(not, as A. V., “*hath* made me free:” he  
is speaking of a definite time when this  
took place, and referring to the period of  
his conversion. —There is no stronger  
proof to my mind of the identity of the  
speaker in the first person throughout  
with the Apostle himself, than this extension   
of that form of speaking into this  
chapter: nothing more clearly shews, that  
there he was describing a really existing  
state within himself, but insulating, and as  
it were *exaggerating* it [as so often], to  
bring out more clearly the glorious deliverance   
to follow) **from the law of sin**(vii. 25) **and death** (*death* again here  
bears a higher meaning than in ch. vii.  
*We are now on higher ground*:—condemnation   
having been mentioned, which  
is the punishment of sin, death now *involves*  
*that*, and is not only temporal misery, but  
eternal ruin also). — This ‘*law of the Spirit  
of life*’ having freed him from the law of  
sin and death, so that he serves another  
master, *all claim of sin on him is at an  
end*—he is acquitted, and there is no  
condemnation for him.

**3.] For** (explanation of ver. 2, shewing  
the method of this liberation) **what the  
law could not do** (i.e. that which was not  
in the power of the law. The expression in  
the original may mean either, ‘*that part of  
the law which was impossible,*’— ‘could not  
be obeyed,’— or, ‘*the inability of the law*?  
— or, ‘*that which was unable to be done by  
the law.*’ Of these the first is out of the  
question; the second would give the first  
clause the meaning, ‘*that wherein the inability   
of the law shewed itself,*’ viz. its  
powerlessness through the flesh. The third  
yields by far the best meaning: see below  
on the words “*through the flesh*”), in that  
(i.e. because : not ‘*wherein*,’ as in ch. ii.1,  
but ‘*in that:*’ this clause gives a reason  
and explanation of the inability) **it was  
weak** (the Apostle keeps in mind his defence   
of the holiness of the law undertaken  
in ch. vii., and as Chrysostom observes,  
“seems indeed to be depreciating the law,  
but if we pay accurate attention is really  
giving it the highest praise: for he does  
not say the *iniquity* of the law, but its  
*inability*: and again, ‘in that it *was weak*,’  
not ‘in that it wronged us,’ or, ‘in that it  
conspired against us’”) **through the flesh**  
(i.e. in *having to act* through the flesh;  
not, ‘on account of the flesh,’ i.e. of the  
hostility, or weakness, of the flesh. The  
flesh was the *medium through which* the  
law, — being a *law of carnal commandment*,  
Heb. vii. 16,—*wrought*, and *they that are  
in the flesh,* the *objects on which*), **God**  
(did) **sending his own Son** (the stress is on  
**His own**, and the word is pregnant with  
meaning:— His *own*, and therefore like  
Himself, holy and *sinless*. This implication  
should be borne in mind, as the suppressed  
antithesis to the word sin, three times repeated   
afterwards. Another antithesis may  
be implied: **His own**, and therefore *spiritual*,   
not acting merely through the  
flesh, though in its likeness, but bringing  
a higher spiritual life into the manhood)  
**in the likeness of the flesh of sin** (the  
flesh, *whose attribute and character was*SIN. The expression is not equivalent to  
*“sinful flesh,”* as in A. V., but implies far  
more:—not merely the contamination by,