

God's Love for His Own Romans 8:31-39

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Psychology tells us that a person cannot be a well-rounded individual until he is loved by someone. They say that many of the world's problems stem from the fact that people are starved for love. Every person needs someone else to care for and be concerned for him, for this gives people a sense of belonging, having purpose and being wanted.

But the Bible goes one step further (and it is a giant step) by saying that no individual can be a complete person until he understands and lives in the reality of God's love and wonderful plan for his life.

The Christian who is suffering spiritually finds great comfort in God's love for him. The struggling saint, through faith, rests back upon the unchanging love of God in Christ Jesus for him. This is the message that Paul wants to get across to us in the following message from Romans 8:31-39.

THE PLAN

"What shall we then say to these things?" "These things" are those Paul mentioned in Romans 8:29-30. There Paul made five great assertions about the purpose of God in the salvation of the Christian: Christians have been foreknown, predestinated, called, justified, and most certainly will be glorified by God.

God's plan for the Christian stretches from eternity to eternity, and his plan cannot fail. Thus the struggling saint can rest back upon God's sovereign purpose and know, with a confident assurance, that all things are going to work for good.

Now, based on God's purpose, Paul asks five questions without providing the answers:

1. *Verse 31:* If God is for us, who is against us?
2. *Verse 32:* He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, will He not also give us all things with him?
3. *Verse 33:* Who shall bring any charge against God's elect?

4. *Verse 34: Who is to condemn?*
5. *Verse 35: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?*

The apostle hurls these questions out into space, as it were, definitely, triumphantly, challenging any creature in heaven or earth or hell to answer them or to deny the truth that is contained in them. The answer is that nobody and nothing can harm the redeemed people of God.

THE CHRISTIAN HAS GOD ON HIS SIDE

“If [since] God is for us, who can be against us?” Paul asks “who” not “what,” for he is looking at the conflicts and trials from people — the world, the flesh and the devil.

God is for the Christian! God is not for the non-Christian or the unsaved. His wrath burns hot against their sin. But God is for the Christian. The Christian’s whole salvation is from God. What power or person or circumstance on earth or in hell or in heaven can interfere with the salvation process, stop it, or delay it? Nothing can come between the believer and his God because God is omnipotent!

THE CHRISTIAN HAS THE DEATH OF CHRIST APPLIED TO HIM

“He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?” Paul here argues from the greater to the lesser. If God did so wonderful a thing as to send Jesus to die in our place, it follows unquestionably that he will give us the lesser thing, namely, all the blessings that flow from salvation, particularly continuance in the faith till death and after death.

If God loved us so much that he sent this unspeakable and indescribable gift, his only Son, surely he will also meet all of our lesser spiritual needs.

Moody expressed it in a rather quaint way when he said that if Mr. Tiffany offered him the most valuable diamond he had as a gift, then surely he would not hesitate to ask him for a piece of brown wrapping paper in which to wrap it.

THE CHRISTIAN CANNOT BE CHARGED

“Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth.” Now Paul asks a question centered on a courtroom scene. If God, the judge, has declared each one

of his elect righteous based on the death of Jesus Christ for sin, who can bring one charge against them? If one brings charges against the elect of God, it is a charge against God himself, for God has completely and totally cleared the elect one from the guilt of sin by declaring him righteous. This shows the absolute and ultimate safety of believers in Christ. In this world sometimes our enemies charge or accuse us, sometimes our own conscience accuses us and the devil accuses us. But these accusations fall to the ground; they do not hurt us; they glance off like arrows from a shield. Why? Because we are God's elect whom he has justified, declaring us righteous in his sight!

THE CHRISTIAN CANNOT BE CONDEMNED

“Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” Since the elect are justified (declared righteous) they cannot be condemned. No one can bring a word of condemnation against God's people because they stand perfect in Christ.

The reasons the Christian cannot be condemned are:

1. Christ died for him.
2. Christ was resurrected and the Christian shares this resurrection life.
3. Christ is at the Father's right hand and in a place of power to protect the saints.
4. Christ is praying for us that we shall not falter as Christians in our walk with him.

THE CHRISTIAN CANNOT BE SEPARATED FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” Paul again speaks of persons in the word “who.” He is primarily looking at all the outward circumstances that wicked men who are enemies of the gospel can bring upon Christians to get them to deny their Lord. But nothing can separate the Christian from the love of Jesus Christ. Nothing in heaven, hell or earth can bring about this separation!

In the word “who” Paul is probably also looking behind the wicked deeds of men to the devil who is the persecutor of the elect. How he would like us to doubt God's love!

“Shall tribulation?” This means direct external troubles. The world will always persecute the Christian.

“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you” (John 15:18-19).

“Or distress?” This speaks of internal anguish of the soul because of the external persecutions of the world.

“Or persecution?” This is legal persecution brought by the state against the Christian. Christians in history have suffered terribly at the hands of the state. Only in America has the Christian been free from this kind of persecution because American government separates church and state. This may be rapidly vanishing however.

“Or famine?” This is lack of food.

“Or nakedness?” This means lack of proper clothing.

“Or peril?” This is living in constant danger because of a faithful testimony.

“Or sword?” This refers to martyrdom, the ultimate test of one’s faith in Christ.

Paul mentions all sorts of possible physical and mental forces that might snatch us out of Christ’s protecting hands, and then exclaims that none of these things can separate us from the love of God in Christ.

“As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” This is a quote from Psalm 44:22 which shows us that suffering, persecution and death are not new for God’s people. The early church and the Reformation eras give evidence of this fact too. Today there are many Christians who are giving their lives for Christ because they have taken their stand for the Lord. A missionary from Mexico told me that approximately six Christians per week give their lives for Christ in that country.

“Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.” We are conquerors *in* not *out of* these things. God gives us grace to stand in the time of persecution, whether mental, social or physical.

During my early days as a Christian, I received a great deal of social persecution from my parents, my college friends, and the enemies of the gospel on the college campus. There was such a tendency to yield and, if not yield to the pressure, to compromise the truth. So, I memorized Romans 8:38-39, and would repeat these verses hundreds of times a month, for

I knew that in the midst of these social persecutions that I was more than a conqueror! Looking back today, I know that God sustained me in all these persecutions.

The words “more than conquerors” translate one Greek word which means “hyper-conquerors.” We are super-conquerors because of God’s love in Christ for the Christian. The Christian is unconquerable! It is altogether through Christ who loved us, and not through human energy of any kind, that we are more than conquerors.

“For I am persuaded.” Paul had a fixed, unalterable and unshakable conviction that nothing could move him from the love of Christ. It is only when we become persuaded in our mind that God has a plan for us and loves us that we will begin to experience the reality of this truth.

“That neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth.” Now Paul mentions four spheres of existence, and nothing in these four spheres can separate us from the love of Christ:

1. The sphere of existence: life and death.
2. The sphere of created things: angels, principalities, powers.
3. The sphere of time: things present and things to come.
4. The sphere of space: height and depth.

“Nor any other creature [created thing].” No created being or thing can shake a Christian from his salvation or separate him from the love of God in Christ.

“Shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans chapter eight begins by proclaiming that there is “no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus,” and ends with the words there is no “separation from the love of God.” What a salvation! Salvation is a love story. “He loved us,” and “we love him because he first loved us!”

CONCLUSION

If there is anyone reading this who does not know Christ as personal Lord and Saviour, the Bible declares that you are lost in your sins, headed for eternal judgment. It also declares that you will never be a complete person until you know of the love of God in Christ Jesus in a personal way.

God spared not his own Son, but gave him as a sacrifice for sin. Will you receive Christ as Lord and Saviour, and become a recipient of his special love?