

## God's Never-failing Love – Romans 8:31-39

Bible Study ~ 8/24/16

Grace Church of Lockeford

Paul asks 7 questions, makes 7 statements, gives an OT quotation, and then closes with one of the most powerful declarations of the steadfast love of God that has ever been written. This section of Scripture contains detailed exposure of blessing that are truly life-transforming when we consider them. The questions, statements, and quotation are a Holy Spirit inspired set up for the declaration. **Paul begins by exploring the question...**

### 1. Who Can Be Against Us? vv. 31-32

Paul begins *v. 31* with a question. What can we say to these things? What things? The reality that we have been foreknown, predestined, called, justified, and glorified. This is not a yes or no question so there really isn't an implied answer. Again we note that Paul is driving his readers toward a conclusion. The conclusion is what will be given in *verses 37-39*. Paul wants us to reflect back on all he has said. The realities of *vv. 28-30* lead to his next question. If God is for us, who can be against us? If the one who foreknew, predestined, called, justified, and glorified us is for us. If He is on our side, who can stand in opposition to us? This question does have an expected response. The expected response is "no one"! This question is interesting because it is in the form of an "if, then" statement. If God is for us, and He is. Then no one can stand against us! He has already predestined, called, justified, and glorified us! It is a done deal! This awareness that no one can stand against us is fueled by the value placed on us by God. This is evidenced in the third question which Paul asks in *v. 32*.

God is for us so emphatically that He didn't spare His own (unique) Son. The idea of "spare" is "to refrain from harming." God did not refrain from harming His own Son. He delivered Him up, handed Him over, for us all and Paul's question declares that He will give us all things with Him. This is not a verse that teaches we have all things in Christ. It says we will be given all things with Him. Paul actually addressed this earlier in the chapter, *v. 17*. We are heirs with Christ. We will be glorified with Him and joined to Him in the marriage of the lamb. We are His bride. God foreknew us. He predestined, called, justified, and glorified. He willingly sacrificed His own son for our sin! In light of these things, how can anyone hope to stand against us?! **Paul next explores...**

### 2. Who Can Charge Us? vv. 33-34

*V. 33* begins with the words "who shall bring a charge". "Shall bring a charge" is one Greek word, ἐγκαλέω *egkaleō* *bring charges (against)*. *To formally accuse – to file a formal legal charge against*. This is a legal courtroom term. Paul again has an implied answer. The implied answer is no one! Elect literally means chosen. Here in this context it refers to believers; those who have been foreknown, predestined, called, justified, and glorified. In addition to having an implied answer, Paul gives us an answer to his own question. Since we are the elect of God and have been justified by Him, there are no charges that can be brought against us. Justified (δικαίωω *dikaioō*) means *to declare righteous*. *To pronounce a verdict that someone is in full accordance with the requirements of the law (of God)*. When God declares you righteous, that is the end of it! As David wrote in *Psalms 103:12* "*As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.*" The removal of our sin is so complete that all charges must be dropped. This is blessing beyond imagination! And yet it gets even better in *v. 34*!

The One to whom all judgment or condemnation belongs is our defense attorney! *John 5:22* tells us that all judgment has been committed to the Son. This word condemn is also a legal term. It is κατακρίνω *katakrinō* meaning *to declare guilty*. *To pronounce guilt and a punitive sentence on someone in a legal context*. The one who has the right to condemn us, the right to declare us guilty, He died in our place, rose again, is at God's right hand, a position of power and authority, and He intercedes on our behalf! When we are in Christ, walking in His will, pursuing Him, we are untouchable! Remember how Paul started this chapter. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus! These blessings are

overwhelming! We cannot be charged even though we are guilty because the judge has declared us righteous. We cannot be condemned because the one in charge of condemnation paid our penalty and is interceding on our behalf! To repeat Paul's own question, "What then shall we say to these things?" I can only think of one thing to say, Hallelujah! No one can be against us, no one can charge us. **Paul then explores...**

God is on our side. He is for us. No one can oppose us. No charges can be brought against us because we have been declared righteous! We must not live in fear, but in victory!

**CHALLENGE:** Be bold and unashamed for Christ because He has justified us and stands in our defense.

### 3. Who Can Separate Us? vv. 35-36

Here in [v. 35](#) we again have a question with an assumed answer. No one can separate us from the love of Christ. This word separate (*χωρίζω* chorizo) means *leave; separate; divide. To force, take, or pull apart.* Paul wants to communicate that nothing can force or pull us apart from the love of God! To illustrate this point Paul mentions several forms of suffering. **Tribulation** – *An oppressive state of physical, mental, social, or economic adversity.* **Distress** – *Trouble or difficulty of an especially oppressive and constricting condition.* **Persecution** – *The hunting down of adherents of a particular religion to inflict pain or death upon them; especially to destroy the religion by destroying the adherent or by forcing the adherent to renounce their beliefs.* **Famine** – *A severe shortage of food resulting in violent hunger, and starvation, and death.* **Nakedness** – *The state of being without clothing or covering of any kind.* **Peril** – *Danger; The condition of being susceptible to harm or injury.* **Sword** – *Death; The event of dying or departure from life understood as a death that would occur by a sword.* These are extreme illustrations of suffering that is deliberate and directly related to one's faith in Christ. Paul assumes that we will answer "well, no, those things can't separate you from the love of Christ, of course not!" Then why do we fear them so?! We are told they bring greater glory, maturity, and joy! They cannot change our position in Christ! So bring 'em on!

Paul then gives us a quote in [v. 36](#) taken from *Psalms 44:22* by the sons of Korah. Outsiders may argue that the reality of martyrdom and persecution proves that God doesn't love His children. In fact, this seems to be true of many today. You hear over and over how God wants us to be healthy, wealthy, and happy and it seems like the persecution of Christians all over the world is ignored! While it is a reality that Christians suffer and die for Christ, this does not mean we are separated from His love! On the contrary! It means we are blessed! In *Acts 5:41* the disciples rejoice that they are worthy to suffer for Christ! That is the attitude we are missing and we are missing it because we misunderstand what suffering is! Persecution is not a punishment; it is a confirmation that we are walking with Christ! *2 Timothy 3:12* states that if we desire to live Godly in Christ Jesus, we will suffer persecution. Trials, tests, and suffering are given by God to bring us to maturity! Since we "love God and are called according to His purpose" we can be confident that even these things work together for good! Therefore, they cannot separate us from the love of Christ! No one can be against us, no one can charge us, no one can separate us! **These truths bring us to Paul's final thought...**

### 4. Who Can Conquer Us? vv. 37-39

[V. 37](#) makes a declaration. In all these things. In the tribulation, the distress, the persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword and martyrdom; in all these things we are more than conquerors! Why? How? Through Him who loved us! Not just conquerors. More than. This is an interesting phrase. "We are more than conquerors" is the translation of one Greek word, *ὑπερνικάω* hypernikaō. This word literally means *to prevail completely. To defeat surpassingly, to utterly defeat beyond the norm.* Not in our own strength. But through Christ. "Through" is literally *because of.* We are more than conquerors because of Christ! Because of the one who loved us! When we face trials and suffering and persecution with Christ we are carried along in His victory and our conquering is an overwhelming triumph! That is what the

love of Christ does! It conquers. When we walk in the love of Christ we experience overwhelming victory! What a blessing!

After all this set up Paul gets to his grand summation. His declaration that everything has been building towards in [vv. 38-39](#). I love that Paul says he is persuaded. *πείθω* *peithō* *to be convinced. To be persuaded or sure of the truthfulness or validity of something.* This goes beyond mere knowledge to a truth that is deeply held. A truth that has been thoroughly investigated and tested. A truth that has stood all tests and has proved to be unassailable. Paul is persuaded, he is convinced, that neither dying nor living, nothing in heaven, on earth, or anything created can separate us from the love of God manifest in Christ Jesus our Lord. This is the greatness of the love of God manifest in Jesus Christ our Lord! Death cannot defeat it; life cannot alter it. Angels cannot challenge it and demons cannot steal it. The governing authorities of this earth cannot legislate it away! No present activity can tear the believer free from the love of God and no future event can ever turn His love away! The highest height of heaven cannot over shadow or block it out. The deepest depth of hell cannot drown it! There is nothing in all the vast universe that God has created that can divide the believer a single millimeter from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord! We are secure in Christ because God doesn't change! And because God doesn't change His love never fails! When He places His love upon you and me it is eternal, it is unchanging, and it is life transforming! We cannot be conquered because God cannot be conquered! His love cannot be changed because it is His and He is changeless! Since we are created beings we are included in this list! We can do nothing to change God's love for us!

What incredible blessings! We cannot be stood against, we cannot be charged, we cannot be separated, and we cannot be conquered! We are as secure in Christ as Christ Himself is secure in the Father! These truths are to awaken boldness in us! Boldness that runs after Christ and declares Him at every opportunity!

**CHALLENGE:** In light of the never-failing love of God, live and speak a bold proclamation of Christ!