

SERMON NOTES

By Pastor John Paul Miller

In The Grip of God's Grace

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans

Romans 8:31-39 - "A Hymn of Assurance"

Romans 8:31-39, *"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 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. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

As we come to the close of this magnificent eighth chapter of Romans, we find ourselves nearly breathless by the view from this soaring pinnacle of Divine revelation.

The chapter opened with '**No Condemnation**' (vs. 1) and ends with '**No Separation**' (vs. 39)

Today's text has been called, 'Paul's Hymn of Assurance'.

As Christians we have a 'new life', a 'new relationship', a 'new hope', a 'new help', a 'new knowledge', and now, last but not least, a 'new assurance'.

Notice how Paul opens up this section.

With a question (vs. 31) – 'What shall we say in response to this?'

In response to what?

Verses 28-30

Paul's response is to answer his own question by asking five more questions, to which there are no answers.

These five unanswerable questions, say's John Stott, "Paul hurls into space, as it were, in a spirit of bold defiance. He challenges anybody and everybody, in

heaven, earth or hell, to answer. For no-one, and nothing can harm the people whom God has foreknown, predestined, called, justified and glorified.”

Each of Paul’s five questions contain a truth that renders the question unanswerable.

1. Who can be against us? (vs. 31)

Romans 8:31, “...*If God be for us, who can be against us?*”

If Paul had simply asked, ‘who is against us?’ it could be very easily answered, for the child of God has many enemies.

1. The World – trying to conform us
2. Our Flesh – an ever present enemy
3. The Devil – 1 Peter 5:8, “*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.*”

Paul doesn’t ask this naïve question, the essence of his question is contained in the “If” clause.

“If”, or rather, “Since” God is for us, who can be against us?

The truth found in this question is “God is for us!”

Our enemies don’t stand a chance!

2. How will He not also...? (vs. 32)

Romans 8:32, “*He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*”

Suppose the apostle had simply asked, ‘will God not give us all things?’, we might be able to question God’s goodness.

But, Paul states the truth! (vs. 32)

1. That God His Son did not spare
2. That God delivered Him up for us

Paul points to the cross!

Who delivered us Jesus to die? Not Judas, for money; not Pilate, for fear; not Jews, for envy; But the Father, for love.

The argument is from the greater to the lesser.

In giving His son God gave everything. The cross is the guarantee of the continuing, unfailing love and generosity of God.

This verse is a blank check for our needs.

3. Who will bring any charge? (vs. 33)

Romans 8:33, *"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth."*

This question brings us into an imagined court room.

If you only took the question *'Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?...*

The answer would be:

- Satan
- Others

Paul's argument is that no prosecution can succeed, since God our judge has already justified us (vs. 30)

Remember, we are justified!

4. Who is he that condemns? (vs. 34)

Romans 8:34. *"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."*

The answer might be: 'my own heart', but we read in 1 John 3:20, *"For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things."*

Notice the truth of the text: Christ is not condemning you

Four reasons:

- It is Jesus who died for you
- It is Jesus who rose for you
- It is Jesus who is at the father's right hand interceding for you

Jesus is our (Gk:) Paraclete – one called alongside to help – It's the same as the word advocate – our defense attorney.

5. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ (vs. 35-39)

Romans 8:35-39, *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

As we come to this last great question, Paul himself tries to answer it (vs. 35)

1. Can **tribulation** – means pressure or affliction
2. Can **distress** – a tight difficult place
3. Can **persecution** – any form of harassment from the world for Christ’s sake
4. Can **famine** – a lack of anything but, especially food – hunger
5. Can **nakedness** – no clothes
6. Can **peril** – any kind of danger
7. Can **sword** – a large knife

Notice the quote in verse 36 – from Psalms 44:22 – *“For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”*

Lessons:

1. Paul suffered all of these things
2. Christians today are not immune from the sufferings of life

But – verse 37 – *“Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.”*

1. even in ‘all things’ (vs. 28) we are ‘Super Conquerors’
2. How? – through Him
3. that loved)past tense) us – The cross!

Paul now reaches his climax in verses 38-39 , *“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

For I am persuaded (vs. 38) or I stand fully convinced

Do you have this ‘blessed assurance’?

You can:

- God is for us

- Christ died for us
- God has justified us
- Christ intercedes for us
- Christ loves us

No power can separate us from His love!

Our assurance is anchored in the loving, unchanging, purpose, promise ,
and power of God.

Let me no more my comfort draw
From my frail hold of thee;
In this alone rejoice with awe –
Thy mighty grasp of me.