

# If God is for Us....

Romans 8:31-39

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**Introduction:** Any passage that starts out with “What then shall we say to these things” is begging for an answer. So what does God want us to think about as He ends chapter 8? They would be the surpassing blessings that He has bestowed on His Children.

They are Past Blessings....Your undeserved salvation.

**Romans 3:21-24** <sup>21</sup> But now apart from the Law *the* righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, <sup>22</sup> even *the* righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;

They are Present Blessings.....Your freedom from sin’s slavery and adoption as sons of God

**Romans 6:22-23** <sup>22</sup> But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life. <sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

They are your Future Blessings....Eternity in heaven and physical and spiritual conformity to Christ.

**Romans 8:28-30** <sup>28</sup> And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. <sup>29</sup> For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; <sup>30</sup> and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

Our Text today seems like it ought to be sung like a hymn to the safekeeping of the believer. John MacArthur called it a “poetic declaration of thanksgiving for God’s grace, in which His children will live and rejoice throughout all eternity.”

I confess to still being surprised by the reaction of some Christians to the concept of security or protection by God. I usually ask something like this, “you would protect and keep your own children even though they are imperfect... wouldn’t you? Why would you expect God to do anything less than you would do.

In an incredible spiritual miracle, God has placed His redeemed children into union with His own Son...thus giving them a standing that is identical to Christ's. This means that you are as welcome in heaven as Jesus. It means that in God's mind...what Christ has done you have done. But God has left us in this fallen world for a period of time.

This means that much of what Christ experienced we too experience in our broken and sinful bodies. We will arrive however safely home on His merit and not our own. Even when we do not pursue Him...He pursues us. When our love grows cold...His remains white hot. Jesus even sent the Holy Spirit to incessantly remind you about all these things, transform your inner man and even to pray for you in your distress...

**Romans 8:26-27** <sup>26</sup> In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us* with groanings too deep for words; <sup>27</sup> and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to *the will of God*.

I want you to come to the communion table today overwhelmed by your eternal standing as a deeply loved child of God. Let us see what God says you should conclude about your standing before Him and His love for you based on what Scripture has been saying....

**What then shall we say to these things? [31a]:** Paul is calling for a conclusion about God's care over your personal lives based on everything He has said about His saving of you. The argument really goes like this as we will see. If God moved heaven and earth to save you doesn't this means that He loves you infinitely and will keep you safely for eternity.

**If God is for us, who is against us? [31b]:** We don't need to belabor this. If God is God...the life giver and Sovereign ruler of everything. If He is on your side and desires your good, then who exactly is going to stop that from happening. And to begin this defense Paul takes us immediately back to the crossroads of history...The Cross.

**He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, [32a]:** You cannot live securely apart from the shadow of the Cross. It is the all-encompassing proof of the love of God for you. It is what gives John 3:16 its bite...its compelling relevance. Without the Cross the love of God is just a clever phrase. This is why Satan works tirelessly to stifle the preaching of the Cross...which is the Gospel of Christ. Now listen to me for a moment. The Gospel is NOT...God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life! Even the inventor of that phrase came to regret it late in life. The Gospel is God loves you and was willing to send His own son to enter humanity.....coming all the way to where you are and to suffer the same troubles, circumstances, rejections and even death. He did this all without sin so that He could die the death you should die! With The Cross before you, you will know the answer to Paul's question....

**How will He not also with Him freely give us all things? [32b]:** This argument goes like this. If God gave His sinless son to die for you....a sinner.... how will he not also

continue to care for you throughout eternity. We don't know exactly what "all things" means, but let me ask you; "how many is 'all' anyway?" It seems to be....are you ready? It seems to be everything that Christ possesses in heaven with the Father. It is every spiritual blessing in heaven.

**Ephesians 1:3** <sup>3</sup> Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every [all] spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ,

**Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies [33]:** Now here is this pesky word "elect." It means chosen. IT is the same word you would use if you went into a voting booth and chose a particular candidate off a list. I recently spoke to a lady who told me that she just could not get her mind around the thought of God choosing a person. But if you are a believer this morning you need to know that God wanted you. If you are not a believer that is because you don't want God. Go and make the offer of the gospel to people and see what their reaction is. Paul and Isaiah tell us that...

**Psalms 53:1** The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God," They are corrupt, and have committed abominable injustice; There is no one who does good. <sup>2</sup> God has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men To see if there is anyone who understands, Who seeks after God. <sup>3</sup> Every one of them has turned aside; together they have become corrupt; There is no one who does good, not even one.

If God did not chose to reveal himself to you, you would have never known Him. This means God loves you purposely. It does not mean that He just has a big reservoir of floating love and if you decide to jump into it He won't kick you out. It means that God looked out over the vastness of lost humanity and loved you. This does not mean He hates others. He shows His love daily for humanity. He sends rain and sunshine on unbelievers who hate him. He gives them families and children and pleasure and comforts. BUT He has chosen to justify you and to forgive all your sins in Christ. The question before us today is this.....Who is going to separate you...YOU!....beloved and chosen by God as His child...Who is going to bring a charge against you that could possibly cause your separation from Christ. Answer....Only God could do it and He is the one who gave His Son to die for you on the Cross. Conclusion...There is no one!

**Who is the one who condemns? [34a]** This is a final condemnation. The Final Judgment before which all unbelievers must appear. Is there someone you fear might condemn you on that final day.

**Revelation 20:11-15** <sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. <sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds....<sup>15</sup> And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Question: Where is the book of life? Have you ever seen it? Is there anybody here who thinks they could find it and write their names in it? This is why we need God to save us. He has the book and the quill. He wrote our names there the day he chose us.

**Christ Jesus is He who died [34b]** Jesus Himself was very precise about condemning judgment. All of it...in creation has been given to Him.

**John 5:21-22** <sup>21</sup> "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes. <sup>22</sup> "For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son,

This is, by the way, why you are not to condemn others. You are taking authority away from Christ. You and I are not to curse people or damn them...ever...not even in our minds. Jesus tried to explain, but most believers do not listen to him.

**Matthew 7:1-2** "Do not judge so that you will not be judged. <sup>2</sup> "For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.

“Judge” and “condemn” are the same Greek word. Jesus said that when you condemn someone for their sin, even their immorality you are affirming your own condemnation for those very things. It will not do to say....well...I didn't sin as badly as this other person. I only thought about sinning. I only hated them silently not openly. The point is this...God will condemn them when the time comes. You are to care for them and have mercy on them because this is what Christ did for you a sinner.

**He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. [34]:** Here is a complete Gospel claim for Christ. He died for your sins. He was raised because God is just and death cannot hold the righteous. He ascended into heaven because He is God the Son and that is where He came from and belongs and finally He lives there as your High Priest. He has offered His Blood for your sins and offers His prayers for your eternal sanctification and perfection.

So what do you think? Will Christ suddenly turn on you in the final judgment and throw you into hell because you have been weak and broken and fallen your whole life? After going to the Cross and the Grave for you. After returning to the Father and spending the last 2000 years praying for you? **Who is the one who condemns?**

**Who will separate us from the love of Christ? [35a]:** This is the heart of the matter now and it begins here and crescendos to the end of the chapter. Separate means keep you from or sever you from that life giving love. Paul offers a list of possibilities.

**Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? [35b]:** Not circumstances, or nature or wicked men.

**Tribulation** means strong pressure. It can be of any kind. It just feels like the weight of the world on you. **Distress** seems to be our response to it. As this life with its relationships, anxieties and constant needs pressure us...we become distressed.

**Persecution** is what Christ haters do to Christ lovers. It is going on in the world now and is never very far away at any given time. There are a lot of believers in America who fear it deeply. And...it is a concern, but mark this down somewhere...IT CANNOT SEPARATE YOU FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST!

**Famine:** There is famine in vast portions of Congo but it cannot destroy faith or separate God's dear children from His love. Love for Christ thrives in famine. As it does when people are **naked**. This means exposed or not properly clothed. Wearing rags or summer clothes in winter. Without a blanket or shoes. God still loves His children in these circumstances and the Holy Spirit still cries out to them that they are the children of God.

**Peril** has finally come to America. Much of the rest of the world lives with it every day. It means "danger." Something bad might happen to you and you don't know what or when. The sword would be the physical weapon wielded by peril. It is very uncomfortable but it can't make God stop loving you.

**Just as it is written, "FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED."**

[36]: Paul jumps in with a quote from the Psalmist. It is how he felt most of the time. He had it worse than almost all his readers. Nevertheless, he testifies that God's love toward him was undim

**But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. [37]:** We conquer the way Christ conquered these things because we are in union with Him. Not a single thing that happened to Christ damaged His relationship with the Father. In fact...they strengthened Him and brought glory to God. In the end God gave that glory back to Jesus and you are in union with Him. You will have a share in that glory because Christ has loved you and heaven and earth and hell, cannot stop that from happening.

**Philippians 2:8-13** <sup>8</sup> Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. <sup>12</sup> So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; <sup>13</sup> for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.

**For I am convinced [38a]:** Three things have convinced Paul of what he is about to say. One is the Scripture. He trusted it and so should you. Listen to what Paul thought about it....

**2 Timothy 3:15-17** <sup>15</sup> and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; <sup>17</sup> so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

The second thing is Christ and His life on earth. He knew how that turned out. He knew that Christ rose victorious from the grave conquering all attempts of man and Satan to destroy Him and His standing with the Father. Satan tormented Him in the desert for 40 days, but without success. The Jews had Him brutally murdered....but again without success...He Arose!

The third thing was his [Paul's] own experience with Christ. Listen my friends. If you are a child of Christ you already know that He has saved you and kept you. The older you get the more you should know this, but instead we all run the risk of becoming bitter and angry with God. What passes for the gospel in our day says that the Christian life should be free of need, anxiety and even sickness. If you follow Christ and give your money and allegiance then He will make your life prosperous and trouble-free. It is no wonder that so many are not enjoying their salvation. Our Christian life is a walk on the wild side! It is passing through the same circumstances, disappointments and anxieties that all men have passed through. Even our sinless Jesus passed through them. But God is with us. He keeps us and His Holy Spirit comforts us. Christ church is intended to be the soil in which we take root in this world and His Word...The Bible is the food that nourishes our lives. Paul knew these things and under inspiration wrote them in the Bible for you. HE WAS CONVINCED that the following things could never separate us from the love of God that is in Christ.

**Death or Life [38b]:** All men know this is coming. We chose not to think about it much. It is normal to fear it and be anxious about it. It is the great equalizer.

It is likely that more of you are fearful of life this morning than you are of death. Like I said...we chose not to think about death much, but life....that is a different story. We start in on that anxiety the second our eyes open in the morning and it stays with us well into the night. Life is where all this stuff happens that

**Nor angels, nor principalities [38c]:** Angels are messengers. In the NT they are usually the created beings that act as God's messengers. Principalities are rulers. JB Philips translated this phrase, "neither messengers of heaven or monarchs of earth." Both are powerful. The demons are wicked angels who wield a lot of spiritual power. And we all know what kings, dictators and governments are capable of.

**Nor things present, nor things to come [38d]:** The only thing to worry about more than the present is the future. This is almost exclusively how they sell Gold and Silver now. They sell stocks and other investments by trying to get you NOT to worry about the future. You can play these games if you want....I recommend you don't, but if you do God's point is still valid. The things going on now and the things that might go on in the

future, will not separate you from the love of God in Christ. Because....Christ is Sovereign over both of these and He has proven His love for you at the Cross.

**Nor powers [38e]:** Usually displays of power or authority. We don't know for sure what it entails, but again, the main point is this....it can't separate you from God's love for you.

**Nor height, nor depth [39a]:** Height and depth are probably astrological terms. Not when the star is at its zenith or not seen at all it can have no negative affect on the love of God that has bound us to Himself.

**Any other created thing [39b]:** This is God's way of sweeping up everything else in the universe that you might wake up worrying about in the middle of the night.

**Will be able to separate us from the love of God [39c]:** "Will be able" means "has the power to" AND... This is not your love for God. There are all sorts of things that can kill that. Self-righteousness, religion, moralism, anger, bitterness, un-forgiveness...This is a long list. God says that nothing in creation can separate you from God's Love for you.

**which is in Christ Jesus our Lord [39e]:** This love is entirely revealed and explained in the person and work of Jesus Christ in the world. No one ever knew how God loved them until Jesus Christ left heaven's glory and took on human flesh for all eternity.

**John 1:14-18** <sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. <sup>15</sup> John testified about Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.'" <sup>16</sup> For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup> For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*.

**CONCLUSION:** Now let's cut to the chase here this morning. Why do we doubt our security in Christ? Because we believe we are responsible for it and not God. Even believers who believe they are saved by faith and not works often fail to enter into the joy of being secure in Christ. Again...why is this?

Because we have reduced the gospel to something it absolutely is not. It is not a confession or even a sinners prayer. Either of those can be and are an expression of our saving faith, but they DO NOT constitute saving faith. Getting someone to pray that prayer and then telling them they are now a Christian is tragic. I have met hundreds of men and women in my life time that were converted this way and despair of ever knowing God.

The Gospel is not about what you or any sinner ever does. It is entirely about what Jesus Christ...God the Son did. From beginning to end it is about Christ. God does not trade

grace for faith. It is not....”if you will just have faith then God will give you Grace.” That makes it about us. Is our faith ever strong enough? Were we sincere enough when we prayed in faith? And...let me help you with these answers. NO and NO! Your faith was not strong enough and your heart and faith were not sincere enough. Can you see that we are bringing about our own salvation when we think this way?

BUT....Gospel salvation flows from God through Christ. Let me ask you the correct questions now. Is Jesus Christ pure and sinless enough to take all of your sins and die for them? Is Jesus pure and sinless enough to be eternally loved and accepted by God in heaven?

### **FAITH IS NOT ABOUT WHAT WE DO FOR GOD IT IS ABOUT WHAT CHRIST DOES FOR US.!**

**Jude 1:1** Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and **kept** for Jesus Christ:

Saving faith entrusts our eternal and even our temporal destiny to this man Jesus Christ. Not because it is our religion or doctrine, but because He is the spotless lamb of God who has taken away our sin.

Scripture calls us to bask in that knowledge like a loved child having no fear that his parents will turn on him, hate him or ever....ever disown him. We were given new birth into God’s family and we are kept by that same loving mercy.

Our response is not complicated. Enjoy your salvation. It was bought by Christ for you at the Cross and given as an unmerited gift. If you think you deserve it then you don’t really have it at all. If you know that God has loved you without qualification and given you “all the things” that He receives then you have saving faith.

How should we live going forward....based on this compelling reality of our eternal standing in Christ. Jude says this...

**Jude 1:21-25** <sup>21</sup> keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. <sup>22</sup> And have mercy on some, who are doubting; <sup>23</sup> save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh. <sup>24</sup> Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, <sup>25</sup> to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *be* glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.