Romans 8:31-39

Verse 31:

--***What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?***

--Paul has arrived at the place where the process God has begun finds its inevitable and glorious end. Those who were once silent before God in guilt and condemnation are now justified by faith, filled with the Holy Spirit, adopted sons and daughters soon to be glorified.

--He says ***If God is for us*** and the ***If*** means *and He certainly is!*

--God, this great God, God our Father, who has enveloped our world, our bodies, and our souls in His gracious and good purposes, must be known as ***for us!*** The links of **28-30** are true—so how can He be anything but ***for us?*** *How we are made to doubt this! Do not allow the enemy to make you think *hard thoughts* of God.*

--That being true, ***who can be against us?*** Now, Paul does not say that no one *will be against us*. His point is that the enemies that are against us cannot achieve anything in confounding God's purposes in our lives. *Joseph, Daniel, Disciples, etc.*

--Paul and these Roman Christians no doubt had plenty against them that they could name—as do we in our day—but ***God is for us*** was Paul's emphasis. What is ours?

Verse 32:

--***He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?***

--How do we know without a shadow of a doubt that God is for us? Paul tells us.

--God did not ***spare His own Son but delivered—***the Greek word for ***delivered*** is the same as in **4:25: *who was delivered up because of our offenses***.

--If there was one cost that would have been too high, if there was a line that was too far, if there was one thing He would spare for Himself, would it not have been ***His own Son***?

*Hendrickson (Romans): *"If this does not mean that, in a sense, giving up his only-begotten and fathomlessly loved Son was for the Father a genuine sacrifice, words no longer have meaning."**

--The words of unbelief are: *How shall He?* The words of faith are: ***How shall He not!***

--This tells us something wonderful about our Father and Elder Brother: That both are more willing to give than we are to receive. More willing to give anything I need in heaven and earth: forgiveness, holiness, righteousness, life, inheritance, glory, and even Himself!

--You see, what comes with Jesus?—***All things!*** That seems so big for us that it is almost an exaggeration. But for Paul, this seemed to be a thought that he often meditated on.

--See: **Rom. 8:28, 32; 11:36; 1 Cor. 3:21-23; 15:27-28; Eph. 1:22; Phil. 3:21; Col. 1:16, 20; (**Probably **Heb. 2:8-9)**.

--You see, ***all things*** were in Christ before creation, all things were brought into being by Him in creation, all things are being held together by Him through history, and all things will be recreated and made pure in the new creation, then all things will be to His glory forever and ever. Amen and Amen! The Father gives all things to His Son and then gives His Son to us.

Revelation 21:7:** ***He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.*

--To have Him is to have all things in Christ. God is a substitute for everything, but nothing in all of creation is a substitute for God.

--Again, this may seem so cosmic and huge, like a distant fairy tale that we heard once long long ago when we were kids and still believed in unicorns and dragons. But remember, God is perfect and holy, He cannot lie and only speaks the truth. God doesn't comfort us with fairy tales. He comforts us with realities.

Verses 33-36:

--Now, Paul brings forward three challenges to all those who would dare to speak against the reality of God as for us.

--**(33)** ***Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.***

--Who can lay anything to our charge as His elect? These Roman Christians, as the church, were the elect of God as Israel was in the OT.

--Paul doesn't elaborate; he simply states that God has already paid all the debts and has justified them.

--**(34)** ***Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.***

--Who can bring an accusation against them for which they should be condemned? Paul had already shown that there is no condemnation in Christ Jesus.

--Christ has already received the execution that we deserve, and He is now risen and enthroned at the right hand of God, constantly making intercession for us.

--The Scriptures tell us numerous times that Christ is in heaven at the right hand of the Father: **Acts 7:55; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2.** There we are encouraged to look, hope, be dependant, rest, etc. *We do still have a Priest and Mediator, but He is in heaven!*

--This truth was and still is important when accusations come against us. Think of all the false accusations against Christians through the ages: Rome's fires; Political insurrection; Cannibalism; Blasphemy; Bigotry; Hate; etc.

--We are all heading toward the Judge of all the earth. Accept condemnation anywhere as long as it is not when you stand before the final judgment seat of the Lord Jesus Christ!

--**(35-36)** Who can separate us from Christ's loving purposes?

--***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 your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."***

--Paul brings out seven things hounding the pilgrim path of Christians in this life. Certainly, he experienced his own fair share of these challenges in his own life.

*If you are tempted to think, *Why don't I get this or that blessing which you see in another believer's life?* You should think instead, *Why don't I get this or that persecution most believers have walked through and many still are?**
--Yes, Christians endure trials and tribulations of all types, but Paul emphatically challenges anyone to prove that trials separate us from the loving purposes of God. And he had tested the path farther than most!
--He then quotes from **Psalm 44,** which was a plea for God's people to trust in Him and His purposes as they were powerless before an oppressive enemy, and ignoring God's love for them as His people. ***All this has come upon us; but we have not forgotten You! (17)***

Verse 37:
--***Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.***
--In reality, our main issue with the dark mysteries of suffering in this life is not our inability to find an explanation. What we really want to know is how to find victory. How do we overcome suffering? Because trials cannot be escaped by anyone, even the Son of God!
--What do we find in Jesus? A Man who knows suffering as The Suffering Servant of God. His cross is His answer to all evil and suffering. He took our sin—all of it—and overcame, and is risen, and is at the right hand of God, and is ready to set everything right and bring it all to its expected end as the Glorious Servant of God.
--And we are precious to Him.
--So, how do we become ***more than conquerors*** in this life? Through religious rites, befriending the world, the ballot box, the betterment of society, by inclusive love, by hard work? No! None of these. ***Through Him who loved us***.
--Through Christ and Christ alone, I find the power, grace, and love to overcome my own sin, the sin of those around me, and the sin in the world around me.
*Josef Ton (Suffering, Martyrdom, and Rewards in Heaven): *"Jesus Christ, as King of kings and Lord of lords, calls people to Himself and demands from them total allegiance to Himself. Nothing of this world, not father or mother, husband or wife, son or daughter, or material goods, ought to stand between Him and His children. Jesus expects them to learn from him and to become like Him. Then Jesus sends them into the world as His Father sent Him into the world, to spread His message and to be His witnesses. He knows that the world will hate His witnesses and will turn against them with merciless violence. Nonetheless, He expects them to meet that hatred with love, and to face that violence with glad acceptance, following His example by suffering and dying for the lost world. Their suffering and martyrdom are prompted by their allegiance to His own Person and are endured for the purpose of spreading His gospel. Christ's disciples do not seek these things for their own sake, and they do not inflict these on themselves. Their goal is not to suffer and to die; on the contrary, their goal is Christ's Person and Christ's cause in the world, the spreading of His gospel. . .*

*"Martyrdom is the function God gives to some of His elect to literally die for the sake of Christ and His gospel. From what the Scriptures intimate, it is apparent that there is a fixed number of God's children who have been predestined by God for this supreme sacrifice. . . God entered into history by sending His Incarnate Son as a suffering slave who would end His own earthly life enduring torture and martyrdom. In this event, God revealed to us that suffering and self-sacrifice are His specific methods for tackling the problems of rebellion, of evil, and of the sin of mankind. Self-sacrifice is the only method consistent with His own nature. For instance, God cannot respond to hate with hate, because if He did, he would borrow not only the method but also the nature of the one who is the originator of hate, the evil one. God can only respond with love, because He is love, and by suffering and sacrificing Himself for the ones who hate Him, He expresses the essence of His own nature."**

--In facing the trials and sufferings of this life in faith, love, and hope, we actualize the triumph of God and His truth. We prove it as witnesses, even to the point of martyrdom, if God so wills. In doing so, we become more than conquerors, and even sufferings help carry us to our desired end.

Verses 38-39:

--***For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor power, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

--Again, it is not that the effects of sin do not exist. It is the very opposite. In their existence, they will never separate us from Him and His love! They did not separate Jesus Christ from His Father's love, and they will not separate us from the love of God.

--Paul begins with ***death,*** which is the fiercest enemy to life, but even in death, He is with us! We die, but not alone. We die unseparated.

--Are you ***persuaded*** of this? Paul was.

2 Timothy 4:16-18:** ***At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them. But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and that all the Gentiles might hear. Also I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen!*

--Maybe it isn't death that causes you fear but ***life!*** Everywhere we look, statistics on suicide are rising, and who knows how many drug and alcohol related deaths are really just another form of suicide? Some have made mistakes, are living in mistakes, and they reach the point where they are so afraid of life that death begins to look like an escape.

--Maybe there is a mistake in a hidden part of your life that you cannot escape, and it tortures you. Even there, you are not separated from the love of God! Turn and give your life to Him. Surrender your life, stop trying to hold onto it, find it, or control it.

--If it is fear of supernatural powers, demonic activity, present news and world events, future fears and imaginations, something from above or below (He alone has the keys of death and Hades!), or anything in the created order, you will not be alone and unloved in Christ.
--None of these things will knock you out of the golden links of His loving purposes. If we are persuaded, this becomes such a relief. Peace, peace like a river!
--Are you persuaded of Christ's love? My security is as settled and sure as God Himself. Nothing ***shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.***
--Maybe you just feel so far from what Paul is describing. Maybe you feel like confidence in the love of God might be true for someone else, but not you. Well, remember, He is more willing to give than we are to receive. In faith, humble childlike faith, ask Him for your portion of this truth.
--Because it is the truth—the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord.