

ROMANS – LIVING BY FAITH
THE CHILDREN OF GOD & THE SPIRIT OF GOD – Chapter 8

LESSON 29 – FIVE UNSHAKABLE PROMISES – Romans 8:31-36

This lesson will remind us that nothing can separate us from the love of God.

Some people worry about losing their salvation and others worry about losing a sense of God's presence in their lives. Both kinds of worry are unfounded. Nothing can ever cause a Christian to fall outside the bounds of God's protective love in Christ.

Some things are so wonderful that the only correct response is silence. When Paul asks, "What, then, shall we say in response to these things?" it is like he is asking a question that can't be answered.

One commentator wrote this about verses 31-36, "In this whole passage Paul is talking about all of the blessings that are ours in Christ. His question might be translated, 'What is there left to say?'"

In answering the five questions found in this section of Romans 8, Paul shares with us five unshakable promises that give us courage and hope in the midst of our fallen world.

If God is for us, who can be against us?

The way Paul asks this question, he is assuming a positive response. We could easily ask the question this way, "Because God is for us, who can be against us?"

If Paul had simply asked, "Who can be against us?" there could be many answers but that isn't the question. The question is, "IF God is for us, who can be against us?" What a huge difference the little word IF makes.

In other words, if anyone is able to take away our salvation, they would have to be greater than God Himself.

"When Paul goes on to ask, 'Who can be against us?' he does not mean that the Christian has no opponents. He means that with God 'for us' it makes not the slightest difference who is against us. No foe can prevail against people who are supported by a God like that. The Christian's confidence is in God, not in anything he himself does, and for all eternity he can rely on God's gift." - Leon Morris

How will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Many Christians have read verse 32 many times. It's easy for us to take for granted the truth contained in this verse but stop and really think about it for a moment. God did not spare His own Son, but rather gave Him up for all of us. God had a Son...His only Son...who was very precious to Him. The Son never sinned...in fact, John 8:29 tells us that He always did what pleased the Father. In spite of all that, the Father placed on His Son the penalty that should have been ours. The Son took our place so that we could be saved.

So Paul's argument is this...if God's love for us compelled Him to give up His own Son, is there anything that He will fail to do to keep us?

Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen?

In the book of Revelation, Satan is called “the accuser of our brothers and sisters.” Even though the world and Satan are always bringing charges against God’s people, those charges can’t stick because the One who justifies us is also the One who judges us.

Many Christians will listen to the words of their accusers and become enslaved by them. Paul reminds us that we have been freed by the death of Christ so there can never again be a valid accusation against us.

Who then is the one who condemns?

The answer here of course, is no one. As believers, we have total protection in Christ.

We Are Protected By Christ’s Crucifixion – Jesus died on the cross and took the condemnation that we deserved. We can’t be condemned because He has already been condemned for us.

We Are Protected By Christ’s Resurrection – When He rose from the grave, Jesus proved His victory over sin and over death. It’s not just the fact that He rose from the dead, but that He was raised from the dead by the Father. This tells us that the Father was satisfied with the sacrifice of His Son as the only basis for our salvation. His resurrection is proof of our justification.

We Are Protected By Christ’s Exaltation – The exaltation of Jesus to the right hand of the Father symbolizes the honor, power and authority given to Him as a reward for the finished work of Calvary. In the Old Testament temple there were never any seats because the work of the priests was never done. Here we are told that when Jesus was exalted, He sat down. The work is done. There will never again need to be a sacrifice for sin.

We Are Protected By Christ’s Intercession – The power of Christ’s endless life saves us to the uttermost. His very presence at the Father’s right hand is evidence of His completed work and His intercession means that He continues to secure the benefits of His death for all of us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

When Paul talks about the love of Christ, he is not talking about our love for Him but about His love for us. He points to Christ’s love for us as a safeguard against the difficulties of life.

What kind of circumstances did Paul have in mind when he was talking about being separated from Christ? He lists seven things that could easily threaten a believer and though there could easily have been more, he points out that none of them can separate us from Jesus.

Trouble – Or tribulation...is used thirty-seven times in the New Testament to describe the troubles that believers face.

Hardship – The idea of being confined to a small space...being hemmed in...having pressure from all sides.

Persecution – Is used ten times in the New Testament and always in reference to the Gospel.

Famine – Is used twelve times in the New Testament but only twice when associated with believers. Famine is usually the result of persecution.

Nakedness – This is not a reference to complete nudity but to the poverty that keeps a person from being able to provide for themselves.

Danger – To be constantly in harm's way. This is a reference to danger and mistreatment in general.

Sword – This is a reference specifically about being killed for the cause of Christ.

In his lifetime, Paul experienced all of these and wanted us to know that none of these things can cause separation between us and God.

In closing this section of Scripture, Paul quotes Psalm 44:22, "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."

Paul uses these words to share the truth that for God's people there is real risk and a need for real devotion. It's time for all of us to examine ourselves and get serious about our relationship with Him...get serious about serving Him.