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More Than Conquerors

Studies in Romans 8
Study 7 – If God is For Us...
(Romans 8:26-30)

We are often reminded of the importance of the committee process to the passing of good legislation in the West Virginia capitol. Nearly every session there are at least one or two discharge petitions meant to bypass this process. Much of the work on bills in committees is done through asking questions either of legislators or experts in the areas being considered. There are also many questions asked regarding the bills on the floor. For good legislation to be passed, it is vital that right answers are provided to these important questions.

As Paul wraps up his message of assurance in Romans chapter 8, he does so powerfully by asking a series of questions that drive home the truth he has been presenting. As we consider the answers to these important questions, we find the source of great assurance, peace, and joy, even in the face of our greatest trials and challenges.

In Paul's letter to the Romans he clearly presents the Good News of the gospel. We are all sinners, every one of us condemned and under God's righteous judgment. Christ came to earth, lived a perfect life, suffered a terrible death, and endured the judgment of God in our place. When we put our faith in Him alone for salvation, our sins are forgiven and His goodness (righteousness) is credited to us. In Romans 8 he writes of the assurance, joy, and peace we have because all this is true. **"Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus"** (8:1). Paul then teaches us that our great assurance of this truth comes from the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. He then goes on to enumerate all that the Holy Spirit does in our lives.

Now in these last verse Paul powerfully applies these truths in a way that should bring us great assurance, joy and peace, even during our greatest trials and challenges:

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? 33 Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; 34 who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. 35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 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."

Paul wraps up this chapter by asking and answering some important questions. As he answers these questions he powerfully drives home the reality of the truth he has presented. Consider the questions Paul asks:

- What then shall we say to these things?
- If God is for us, who is against us?
- Who will bring a charge against God's elect?
- Who is the one who condemns?
- Who will separate us from the love of Christ?

Paul begins his summary encouraging us to think carefully upon what he has written; **"What then shall we say to these things?"** "These things" certainly refers to the wondrous truth that God works all things together for good to those who love Him (8:28). It also reminds us how God will help us through suffering and the Holy Spirit will help us in our prayers. But Paul is also reminding us of his entire presentation in Romans – his entire description of the gospel; the glorious truth of our union with Christ; and the wonderful presence and work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. When we consider all that Paul has shared, no wonder he exclaims, "what then shall we say to these things?"

Consider now Paul's first question.

The Question – "If God is for us, who is against us?"

The "if" is not one of questioning or doubt. It is rather one of assurance as we could read it "Since God is for us" or "In view of the fact that God is for us". What an amazing truth that if we have repented and trusted Christ that God is for us! At one time, God was against us. We were His enemies (Rom. 5:10) and under His

wrath (Eph. 2:3). But through His grace and mercy we are adopted into His family so now God is for us! The almighty, Holy God is for us. This is a simple statement that can bring us great peace and assurance in the middle of the greatest of trials and sorrows. "God is for us"! He has given us the Holy Spirit to help us. He is working out all things for our good.

If God is for us, who is against us? This does not mean that there is no one or anything opposing us or bringing trials and challenges. It does mean that in light of the fact that God is for us, what is any person, or any trial or circumstance compared to that?

The Answer – "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?" (8:32)

Paul answers the first question with what must be one of the most encouraging statements found anywhere in the Bible. Paul argues from the greater thing to the lesser thing. If God did not spare His own Son (the greater thing), how will He not freely give us all things (the lesser thing).

This is a powerful description of what actually took place on Calvary when Jesus died. God did not spare His own son all the suffering and indignities of His life here on earth. God did not spare His Son the anguish in the Garden as Jesus struggled with the anticipation of taking our sin upon Himself. God did spare His own Son the terrible physical suffering of the Roman crucifixion. Most of all, God did not spare His own Son the guilt and shame of our sin and the judgment His own Father poured out upon Him. ***God the Father did not spare His own Son but delivered Him over for us all.*** Certainly, it was the religious leaders and the Roman soldiers who put Jesus to death. But it was the Father who delivered Him over to be the sacrifice for our sin. (Isaiah 53:4-6).

Paul's argument is that if God did not spare His own Son but delivered Him over for us, how will He not give us all the things he has written about in Romans 8. Of course, the resounding answer to Paul's rhetorical question is **HE WILL!** And in that answer we find great assurance and peace no matter what people, circumstances, or trials might be against us.

The Question – Who will bring a charge against God's elect? Who is the one who condemns?

We can treat the next two questions as one: "Who will bring a charge against God's elect?" and "Who is the one who condemns?". Both these questions bring up one important issue – if we have placed our faith in Christ is there anyone or anything that can now bring us into condemnation?

Satan is called "the accuser of the brethren". He may throw our past, present, and future sin into our faces

causing us much doubt and anguish. Other people may accuse us either rightfully or falsely, causing us much grief as well. Even our own consciences may accuse and condemn us. But Paul gives us reassuring answers to these questions.

The Answer – God is the one who justifies.

God is the only one who can truly condemn us, and He is the one who has justified us! "Justified" is a legal term. God has declared the believer righteous because of our faith in what Christ has done for us.

The Answer - Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

When we fear condemnation for our sin, we can remember that Jesus lived, suffered, died, and rose again for us. And now He always lives to make intercession for us before the Father. (see also Hebrews 7:25). Jesus is at the right hand of the Father, pleading our case that any charges against us have already been dealt with. We cannot be condemned because He has already been condemned in our place. Paul's resounding answer to these questions is **NO ONE!**

In Romans 8 Paul has shared with us the great assurance of believers because of all the God has done for them through Christ. Christ has given us the Holy Spirit to assure us, to work in our lives, and to ultimately bring us to glory in the presence of Christ. The fact that God the Father did not spare His own Son gives us the assurance that He will indeed do these "lesser" things. We may face the accusations of Satan, other people, or even our own consciences, but if we have indeed repented and trusted Christ, we have the assurance that God has justified us, and we have Jesus Himself interceding before the Father on our behalf.

As we deal with struggles and challenges, whether in the statehouse or in our daily lives, let us remember as believers these great truths: God is for us, and these is nothing or no one who can condemn us because we have been made right with God through faith in Christ!

In our final regular study next week, we will look at the greatest question and its glorious answer, "Who will separate us from the love of Christ?"

CAPITOL BIBLE STUDIES

Thursday, March 1

8:00 AM Gov. Org. Conference Room (East Wing)

12:00 Noon Senate President's Conference Room