

If God is For Us, Who Can Be Against Us?

Romans 8:31-39

Romans 8:31-39 - *“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 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? ³³ Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. 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. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: “For Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”*

³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ 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.”

Background Notes

The Epistle to the Romans is God’s great treatise on the gospel – the good news of salvation for man. In Romans, the gospel is not only proclaimed, it is thoroughly taught. In Romans we learn how a holy and a righteous God can save unholy and unrighteous people. In Romans we learn how God can save sinners.

In the first three chapters of Romans, the whole world is shown to be guilty before God; it doesn’t matter whether a person is an uncultured pagan, or a cultured gentile, or a religious Jew, or a do-good neighbor -- **everyone** is guilty before God. Romans 3:23 says, *“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...”* But the good news is that there is a way of salvation for sinners. Romans 6:23, *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* God Himself, in the person of the Son, became Man. The Lord Jesus lived a sinless life and then went to the cross and died for our sins – He died as our substitute. In His grace, God did all this for us, so that all we have to do is accept this gift of salvation by faith. And when we receive Christ in this way, as our personal Savior, we are saved -- we are born again into God’s family, we become true Christians.

In Romans 4, we see that **by grace through faith** has always been God’s way of salvation - even in the Old Testament. Romans 4:3, *“For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”*

In Romans 5 through 8 we learn about all the benefits that are ours as Christians. We not only have salvation, but we have much more! Romans 5 through 8 could be called our “salvation benefits package.” When we come to verses 29-30 of Romans 8, we have that great **unbreakable chain of redemption** that God has formed for every believer. Let’s read Romans 8:29-30 again, *“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He*

might be the firstborn among many brethren.³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.” Praise the Lord for this unbreakable chain of redemption!

Now we come to verse 31: “*What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?*” What are the answers to these two rhetorical questions here? “What then shall we say to these things?” What answer does the apostle Paul expect? Our answer is, “Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!” And the second question: “If God is for us, who can be against us?” What’s the expected answer here? No one! **No one** could **successfully** be against us! We know that Satan and his forces and the world system are against us, but they can’t prevail and triumph over us.

And now, 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?*” If God didn’t spare His own Son to give us salvation, will He not also give us the rest? If we really believe this verse, we would never doubt the Lord’s goodness or question His ways in our lives.

Doctrinal Points

1. No one can bring a charge against the Christian.

“*Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect?*” What’s the answer? **No one!** Why? Look at verse 33: “*Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies.*” If God is a Judge and He declares that we are justified, that settles it! No one can appeal the decision, because there’s no higher court. **God** is the ultimate Supreme Court.

We know that Satan tries to bring charges against us. Revelation 12:10 says, “*Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, ‘Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.’*” Satan’s accusations are valid because we still sin, even as believers, but the charges are thrown out of court because God has declared us righteous. God is the one who justifies.

Verse 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.*” What a lot of wonderful truth that we have here in this verse. “*Who is he who condemns?*” What’s the answer here? **No one!** Why? Because it is **Christ** who died for us. The penalty has been paid. The payment is sufficient – that was guaranteed by Christ’s victory over death – by His resurrection and ascension.

And now our Lord is at the right hand of God, making intercession for us. How far do you think any charge against us would make it in the heavenly courts? Not too far! Aren’t you glad? No one can bring a charge against the Christian.

2. Nothing can separate the Christian from the love of God.

Verse 35: *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?”* What’s the expected answer here? Nothing! **Nothing** can separate us from the love of our Lord. Tribulation can’t separate us! Distress! Persecution! Famine and nakedness! Peril! Sword! Nothing can separate us from the love of God.

Most of us haven’t faced any of the conditions mentioned here – at least not to any significant degree. And yet why is it that we somehow jump to the conclusion that when any of difficult situation comes into our lives – maybe even just a little bit of difficulty -- we jump to the conclusion, “Does God really love me? Can I be sure God loves me?” Well, when that’s the case, we’re doubting God’s promises! We really don’t believe black and white Scripture, God’s Word.

Think of the early Christians and what they went through, and they accepted it as a way of life, as you can see here in verse 36: *“For Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”* That’s a verse quoted from the Psalms and applied to Christians. The early Christians didn’t doubt the love of Christ, even though they faced many hardships. The trials mentioned here in verse 35 should drive us closer to the Lord.

Trials will draw us closer to the Lord if we believe what verse 37 means: *“Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.”* We will not only weather the storm of tribulation, and not capitulate under persecution, but we will **more** than conquer -- we will bring glory to God! We’ll be drawn closer to Him, and we’ll experience many other blessings.

And we will keep on conquering! 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, ³⁹ 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.”* Is there anything that you could possibly think of that doesn’t fit into one of these categories? **Nothing** can separate the Christian from the love of God!

These are great verses of assurance, and they certainly teach the eternal security of the believer. Death can’t separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Nothing that happens to us in this life can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. We don’t have to worry about angels or demons. There’s **nothing** now or coming in the future – no matter what scenario your imagination comes up with -- nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Nothing from above and nothing from below – neither height nor depth can sever you from that love relationship which is yours in Christ. And just in case anything got left out, we have the added phrase here – *“nor any other created thing”!* There’s not one thing that doesn’t come under that category, because God made everything and is in control of everything! **Nothing** can separate the Christian from the love of God.

Practical Application

Don't worry about life on other planets!

Every year as I teach and travel around to preach, at least a few people ask me the question: "Dr. Dave, what happens if they find life on other planets?" It seems that these people are worried that if life is found on other planets that somehow the Bible will be discredited or their salvation will be negatively affected. Well, my answer always is, "It doesn't matter if they find life on other planets. Don't worry about life on other planets!" Personally, I don't believe there's life on other planets. We know that there's extraterrestrial intelligent life in the universe because the Bible teaches that God created angels -- they're even mentioned here in verse 38! But I don't think that there's biological life in the rest of the universe. I think the Lord would have given us some hints in the Bible if that were the case. In any case, Scripture is sufficient for all we need to know.

But here's the point: even it were found tomorrow that life exists on other planets, so what? It doesn't discredit the Bible or in any way separate you as a believer from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord! Verse 39 again, "*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.*" So don't worry about life on other planets!