

Nothing can Separate Us from God's Love

Romans 8:31-39

31 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 gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? 33 Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? 36 As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The assurance, hope, and comfort from the grace of God revealed through Jesus Christ is nowhere stated with greater confidence and exuberance than in this passage.

“God for us” is a three-word summary of redemptive history, that history of God’s free, elective love that culminated in the sending of His Servant and Son, called “Emmanuel, God with us” (Matt 1:23). Since we have God on our side, no one can hinder our salvation.

God is not neutral. He is either for us or against us. Paul stipulates under what terms he is for us: Christ was given up for us, and is now risen and intercedes for us on the basis of his atonement. This is the basis for Christian assurance. No danger or trouble can make the believer forget the love of Christ and his consequent actions on their behalf.

Using legal language, Paul asks what prosecutor can bring any charges against the elect. The answer: none; the case is closed. God has declared the defendant not guilty! (TLSB)

The worst enemy of our salvation is sin, which still clings to us. It gives our adversaries occasion for accusation and condemnation. Yet, this proof of guilt is invalidated through Christ’s death, atonement and intercession.

Paul posts two lists which are the challenges that Christians may have to endure. The list of seven trials were faced by Christians through the ages. Some believe the list of seven represents an actual inventory of challenges endured by first-century Christians, Paul among them.

The tenfold list is all-embracing inventory of superhuman realities that threaten, in vain, to break the grip of Christ’s love. (See FC SD XI 48–49.) (TLSB)

Each suffering undergone has made our hope more sure. It is like building up an immunity to a illness.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, though You are exalted at the Father’s right hand, You still hold us. Keep us in Your love to the end. Amen. (TLSB)