

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 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.

Romans 8:31-32

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?

Paul is bringing this discussion to a close with these questions. Let us remember that he has spent time in Chapter 8 explaining what we have in Christ Jesus in the prior verses: how we are not condemned for our sins when we accept Jesus as Lord and Savior and walk after the Spirit placed inside us; how we are children of God confirmed by Holy Spirit; how there is a future glory that awaits all His children and while we wait, Holy Spirit prays for us according to God's will; and how even though we are in this world with death and pain and hurt, that God redeems all these things for good for His chosen children, using it all for transformation into the image of His Son Jesus.

After showing us all the action that God has taken on our behalf, Paul then asks, “*If God is for us, who can be against us?*” There are several aspects of this question: The first is that God is all powerful, all knowing, all seeing and many other attributes that any lesser gods do not possess let alone man. If HE is for us, who truly can be against us? The second is that God in His sovereign position has fully secured us in Jesus. We were not involved in our removal of sin; we did earn the right to become God's children. Creator, sovereign God took care of everything that was a barrier to us and Him being joined together by sending His own son to the cross. Ephesians 2:8 reminds us that it by grace that we have been saved through faith; there is nothing we have done that could lead us to boast. It is a gift from God.

How much is God for us? Paul's measurement is given, “*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?*” God's action was a level of sacrifice we cannot even truly understand. Paul tried to help us wrap our minds around what God did for us, as he states in Romans 5:7-8, “*For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*” He gave us His only Son when we did not deserve it, when we were still sinners. And now we are redeemed, now we are His children. If He did that when we were clothed in filthy rags of sin why do we not think He would do even more for us now that we are clothed in white robes of righteousness?

Romans 8:33-36

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.”

Who is Paul talking about? There are two aspects here. We have the natural world where Christians are being persecuted around the world for choosing to follow Jesus. In Matthew 10:28, Jesus sending out His disciples told them, *“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.”* We have an enemy that sits in the courts of heaven constantly trying to point out our shortcomings and our sins to God. But since it is God who has justified us and there is no one with greater authority than Him, we do not need to fear the natural or supernatural enemies. Jesus’ death and resurrection took care of it all, and in the courts of heaven, stands as our intercessor. Now if HE is standing as our intercessor, we really have nothing to worry about!

Paul now asks this question - *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?*

And then he quotes from Psalm 44:22 - *As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”*

Why does he say all this? The Roman Christians were experiencing persecution under Emperor Nero. One of the most significant events of Nero’s reign was the Great Fire of Rome in AD 64. Historical accounts, particularly from the Roman historian Tacitus, suggest that the fire devastated much of the city. Tacitus records that suspicion fell on Nero for starting the fire to clear land for his ambitious building projects, including the construction of his Golden House (Domus Aurea). To divert blame, Nero accused Christians of starting the fire. This marked the beginning of one of the earliest and most brutal persecutions of the church. Tacitus details the horrific punishments meted out to Christians during this time:

- Torture and Execution: Christians were arrested, tortured, and executed in public spectacles.
- Crucifixion: Many were crucified, reflecting the manner in which Jesus Christ was put to death.
- Burning as Torches: Some Christians were covered in flammable materials and set on fire to illuminate Nero’s gardens at night.
- Wild Beasts: Others were thrown into arenas to be mauled by wild animals for the entertainment of the Roman populace.¹

Paul quotes Psalm 44:22 showing that was the situation for the faithful Jews who were constantly being persecuted in one way or another, and that was not any different for those Christians in Rome. It is also not any different now. The world run by the prince of the power of the air, satan, hates Christ, and

¹ <https://bibleask.org/who-was-nero-in-relation-to-christians/>

therefore hates Christians. There will always be attacks on us in the natural and spiritual world but Paul is saying that despite that, nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. Clearly the Roman Christians were experiencing a level of persecution we can barely imagine.

How does this speak to us? Paul is reminding us that we experience this world just the same as everyone else. We lose those we love to death, we get serious illnesses, we struggle to feed our families, we get emotionally hurt from others – we are not exempt from any of the pain that this world has. BUT WE have a sovereign God who is our Abba Father and through faith in His Son, we cannot be pulled away from His Hand.

Romans 8:37-39

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.

Paul answers the question – NO, none of this can or will impact us since God has already ordained, predestined and chosen us. We are more than conquerors because through Christ, we have not only overcome the natural world but the spiritual world. There is NOTHING that can touch us in Christ.

To make sure that we fully understand, Paul gives every possible situation he can think of - nothing in this life can take us away from Christ, no death can take us away from Christ, none of satan's angels or his rulers can take us away from Christ, nothing that is happening in the world in the present or in the future can take us away from Christ, NOTHING THAT IS IN CREATION can separate us through Christ from our Creator Father. He has the final say and He says YES forever.