

GOD IS FOR US
December 17, 2017 Morning Service
Romans 8:31-39

So we come to Romans chapter 8 and we begin in verse 31 and Paul begins to ask a bunch of questions. It's just question after question after question after question that he asks as he comes to the conclusion of this great old chapter. We're in chapter 8 of Romans, verse 31. You listen now as I read because this is the word of God.

What then shall we say to these things? [What things? To all of the election and all of His choosing and all of His faithfulness and everything we've seen through these first 30 verses. What shall we say to these things?] If God is for us, who is against us? 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? Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; 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. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 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." But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.¹

Look in verse 31 at that first question. What shall we say to these things? If God is for us, if God is for us, if God is for you, who can be against us? I mean if you've got God on your team, what difference does it make who the opponent is? If God is for us who's against us?

I want to say one thing about 30 times today. God is for us. God is for us. Across this ground floor. Just on this ground floor I want everybody to say those four words with me. God is for us. Across the balcony, all the way around the balcony, everybody that's in that balcony, that horseshoe, say it with me. God is for us. Now all of us, all together one last time. God is for us. One time with gusto. Here we go. God is for us.

Now I want you to understand. When you walk out of here today, if you miss the crux of this message it's because you are deaf, blind, asleep, or maybe dead. God is for you. God's for us. I'm telling you, God wants good things for you. It says it right here in

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this text. If God is for us, who's against us? He who did not spare His own Son but delivered Him over for us, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? You say, "Preacher, He gives me anything?" No, I didn't say He gives you anything. He gives you all things. He gives you all things that you need in your life. What you need to walk in victory, He'll give. What you need to walk through difficulty, He'll give. What you need to be sustained He'll give. If God is for us and He is, who can be against us? God is for us and He did not spare His own Son. How do we know God is for us? Because He gave His Son. He didn't spare Jesus. He gave the most precious thing He had, His only Son.

When Abraham went to Mount Moriah he had Isaac and God said, "Sacrifice your son." He bound him and put him on the altar, drew back the knife, and you know the story, how the Spirit of God, the angel of God stayed his hand. God spared Isaac but He didn't spare His own Son. Isaac got up. They found the ram in the bushes and they slayed the offering. Thousands of years later when they came to that same mountain range, Calvary was there and God took His own Son and they strapped Him to a cross and nailed Him to a cross with His wrist and His feet and put a spear in His side and thorns in His head and He died. God did not spare His own Son. Why? He is for you. It's the greatest gift that could ever be given and along with Christ He doth give us freely all things.

Listen to the word of God in Deuteronomy 33:26. *There is none like the God of Jeshurun* [Jeshurun is another word for Israel. There's none like the God of Israel] *who rides the heavens to your help*, [He's coming on the clouds] *and through the skies in His majesty*. I'm telling you, God's coming to help you. Why? He's for you.

Then in the book of Psalms, chapter 84 and verse number 11 we read these words. *For the Lord God is a sun and a shield; the Lord gives grace and glory; no good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly*. You walk with God and I'm telling you, what you need, the good things you need, God will not keep them from you. He will give them to you. God is for you. Have I said it yet? God is for you. He is for us. If God is for us, who is against us? Oh there are some enemies and those enemies are crouching in these questions in chapter 8.

Let me just point out these three enemies that come against us. Even though God's for us who's against us? I want to show you these three enemies. I want to lift them up and let the scriptures tear them down. We'll lift up anything and God'll bring him to his knees.

First we find the accusers are against us. The accusers. If you're following after Christ, you've been saved, you're God's child, you're walking with Him, you're in middle school, you're in a college classroom, you're new at a job, you're walking into retirement, and you're living for God. Let me tell you, the accusers come after you. In

verse 33, who will bring a charge against God's elect? You're the elect. We saw that last week. Who will bring a charge? Who will accuse the elect of God? Revelation 12:10 says the devil and his crowd accused the brethren. They seek to sift you. I Peter says he seeks to devour you. The old accuser of the brethren wants to kill you. The accuser comes but we are justified, says verse 33. God is the one who justifies. The wicked one and the others accuse you of not being worthy but God says, "I justify you."

What does it mean to be justified? We find that word in scripture so many times. The verdict of the Supreme Court of heaven says that those that are in Christ, the sinner that is in Christ, the Supreme Court of heaven says the sinner in Christ has been acquitted. The decision is rendered once and for all. It's inextinguishable and it's irreversible. It is registered in the book of life. You're justified. God's deemed it so. It's a legal term.

Listen to the word of God. Romans 3 and verse 24. *being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.* Hear it in Romans chapter 5 and verse number 1: *Therefore, having been [what?] justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Romans chapter 5 and verse number 9: *Much more then, having now been [there it is again] justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.*

It is a gift of grace. It is by faith. It is through His blood that we are justified. Amen. He counts you. When they accuse you, God says He's justified. It's a legal term. You come to the Supreme Court and the judge of all the universe has said justified. It doesn't mean you're just. You are wicked. You're a sinner. We know that but God says that, "I took your place and died in your place and you've been justified."

My son is taking finals this week in law school. He'll be here next Sunday if all goes well. Bennett is doing some work and they asked him to serve on Moot Court. I didn't even know what that was. I'd never heard of it. I'd heard of Debate Club in college. I never did do that but Moot Court you have to go and try cases and he told me. He said, "Our team, we went up to Pittsburgh and we finished second." He said, "The top two teams get to go to Chicago next year so we get to go to Chicago." I said, "Well that's good." He said, "That wasn't so good to me." I said, "Why?" He said, "Well, we should have won." He said, "They cheated us the way they judged it." I don't know, just competitive. He gets more like his mother every day. I don't understand it.

I said, "What do you do in Moot Court?" He said, "Well, you go in and the first hour you're the prosecutor on the case and so you prosecute. Then you take a break and you switch sides and those that were the defense come over and be the prosecutor and those that are the prosecutor come over and you're the defense." I said, "So you've got to argue both sides of the case." He said, "That's right." I said, "That's what Jesus does. He brings the charge against us and then He runs over to the other side and

says, 'I'll pay the debt in full. You're guilty as hell over here but I'm going to pay the sin for you.' Then He runs up the judge's bench, brings down the hammer, and says, 'Justified, forgiven by the grace of God.'" I said, "Try that on them sometimes when they put that on there."

It's a legal term. People bring all kinds of accusations against you. You're not worthy. You're not good enough. Justified. Hallelujah. He is our judge, jury, and He gives us the verdict and it is non-reversible. Justified by the blood, by faith, according to the grace. Don't you let the accuser come against you. You're God's child and God is for you.

Secondly we see not only the accusers come against us, we see the condemners come against us. They're found in verse 34. Look at it. *Who is the one who condemns?* First they bring a charge. Now they condemn us. Jesus Christ, *Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather was raised, who is at the right hand of God, also intercedes for us.* Dear friend, you won't have to look far as a Christian to find somebody to condemn you. They're on every corner. They're scribes and Pharisees, Baptists and Methodists that'll condemn you on every corner. What's the answer to that condemnation? Charles Haddon Spurgeon says that verse 34 gives to us the four pillars of the super structure that supports God's supernatural salvation. What are they? Look at them right here in verse 34.

Jesus died. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Yes, rather He was raised. Number two. The second pillar is His resurrection. They put Him in the ground and He got up. Thirdly, He's at the right hand of the Father. He sits at the throne. He is there. The right hand, the beloved is King Jesus and number four, He intercedes for us. He died, He rose, He sits, and He prays. We are secure in Christ.

Hebrews 7, verse 25 tells us, "Therefore, He is able also to save forever." I love the King James of Hebrews 7:25. It says, "He's able to save to the uttermost." To the uttermost, forever those who draw near to God through Him since He always lives to do what? He makes intercession for us. He's praying for us. He sits at the right hand of the Father and He prays and those that condemn us, I want you to know Jesus is praying for us. He's also praying for those that condemn us. What a glorious God that He is. You're His child. You've been justified and yet people condemn you.

In John's gospel chapter 8 we find Jesus up on the Mount of Olives. He's praying early one morning. He comes down off the Mount of Olives and walks down into the city of Jerusalem. The Bible says in John chapter 8 that He entered the temple and people came to Him there and He began to teach them. As he was teaching the scribes and Pharisees burst through the door, dragging a woman. They said, "Rabbi, this woman is an adulterer. She has been caught in the very act of adultery. What do

you say we should do? Moses' law says we should stone her. What say you we should do?"

I don't know about you. I've always scratched my head at that text. I've wondered. How did they know she was in the very act of adultery? Were they peeking in the window? Were they one that was the adulterer with her? We're not told. That's just my curiosity. "We caught her in the very act."

The Bible says that Jesus knelt down and He scribbled with His finger. The Bible says in a moment He straightened up. Two times in John 8 he used the words, "He straightened up." He stood up straight. He said, "Let the one without sin cast the first stone." He wrote with his finger again. What was he writing? Nobody knows. The Bible says starting with the oldest of the scribes and Pharisees they left one by one by one by one and the woman stood alone. In verse 10, straightening up again, straightening up Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?" She said, "No one, Lord." Jesus said, "I do not condemn you either. Go. From now on, sin no more."

Friend, you won't have to go far to find somebody to condemn you and you've got enough sin to be condemned. Jesus is not making light of sin because He tells her not to sin anymore. That means to go and repent, to turn from your sin. Let me tell you, the church is not in the condemning business. We are in the change of life business. We've got enough scribes and Pharisees, Baptists, and Methodists that'll crush you and condemn you. I'm not saying we don't call sin, sin. As Leo said, if you say you don't sin, you sin. I'm not saying that we don't call sin, sin. We do but, dear friend, our job is to lift high the grace of God and point out the fallacies but ours is not the ministry of condemnation. Ours is the ministry of reconciliation and transformation. That's what Jesus was doing in her life.

If you'll come to Christ today, He'll change you. When you follow Him, there'll be those that will condemn you. When that condemnation comes you run to these four pillars of the super structure of God's supernatural salvation that Jesus died. He was raised. He sits at the right hand of the throne of God and He prays for you. God is for us. He's for you. He's not against you. There are others that are against you but He is for you.

There'll be accusers. There'll be condemners. Thirdly, there are many doubters and I want you to be careful you don't become a doubter. Don't become a doubter. Notice it right here in verse 35. *Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? "For Your sake we are being put to death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered."*

Can God really keep me? Once I get saved, does God really keep me or can I lose? I'm telling you, friend, God didn't promise you it wouldn't be hard because there are times of tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword. The church has known all of that through history and yet she is kept in the hand of God. In John's gospel chapter 10 Jesus said these words. *My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to [what's that word?] snatch them out of the Father's hand.* Nobody can snatch them.

If you've got preschoolers then you know about snatching. We don't have preschoolers at our house but we have grandchildren and they know about snatching. Lord, they'll snatch stuff away. I was standing down here in the preschool area early this morning. There's a little nativity there for kids. It's so cute. Fuzzy animals and there was a family that came in. Two or three little girls were with them and one of the girls came walking over. She said, "Preacher?" I said, "Yes." She said, "Why is this backwards?" I looked in there and she was right. The wise man and the shepherd were looking the wrong way. They were supposed to be like this so they're looking at Jesus. They were both looking away from Jesus. I said, "Well, darlin', I don't know. You know, somebody else did that." It won't be that way tonight when you get here, I guarantee you. We'll switch it around.

Then she walked over to one of the little animals and she grabbed it up in her arms and started rubbing on it and kind of dancing with it. I noticed out of the corner of my eye her sister. She came a running. She snatched it out of her hand. They're just about the same size. She looked at her and she didn't run and cry to momma. She didn't need any help. She reached over and snatched it back. We had mutiny in the manger this morning right out here. Let me tell you, friend, when you come into the hands of God, Jesus holds you and the Father holds you and no man can snatch you out. Not tribulation, not famine, not sword, not peril. You are His and He is for you. Hallelujah. He's for you and no man can pull you out.

Leo teaches at Southwestern. I want to quote one of the old presidents of Southwestern, B. H. Carroll, writing about this verse in Romans 8. Dr. Carroll said about no one being able to pluck or snatch them out of His hand. He said and I quote: "If hell should open her yawning mouth and all of the demons of the pit should issue forth like huge vampires darkening water and land." It looks kind of like the Jedi in the Star Wars coming out of there like termites swarming.

"Could they break the seal of God? Could they soar to the heights of heaven? Could they scale its battlements? Could they beat back the angels that guard its walls? Could they penetrate into the presence of the Holy One on His eternal throne, and reach out their demon-claws and snatch our life from the bosom of God where it is hid with Christ in God?" Could they? Could they? No, says B.H. Carroll.

“The pages of religious persecution are very bloody; rack, thumbscrews and fire have been employed. Confiscation of property, expatriation from country, hounding pursuit of the exile in foreign lands exposedness to famine and nakedness and sword and other perils, and yet never has this persecution been able to effect a separation of the believer from his Lord. Roman emperors tried it, Julian the apostate tried it, Ferdinand and Isabella tried it. Charles V, their son, and Philip II and his son all tried it in their lifetime. The inquisition held its secret court; war, conflagration, and famine wrought their ruin, but the truth prevailed. All this illustrates the truth that the blood of the martyrs is merely the seed of the church.”

Before you got up this morning and the sun came up halfway around the world saying Sunday morning, 400 Pakistani Christians gathered for worship in Pakistan and two terrorist bombers walked in that church. One was shot and killed in the street before he could get in. The other got in and blew himself up and killed five Pakistani Christians. I saw pictures of it early this morning. The little church house was there and pews were blown over and the only thing that was standing was a little Christmas tree with tinsel hanging crooked off of it.

I'm telling you, if you walk with Christ it does not mean it's going to be easy but it does mean God is for you. No matter what you walk through, He will not give up on you and no man will snatch you out of His hand. This morning an Islamic terrorist walked in a Christian church and sent five people straight to the arms of Jesus. He blew them straight into glory. Others are worse off because they're maimed and mangled. Will they make it? I'm telling you, they will because God's for us and no man, no sword, no peril will separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

In Sanford, Florida this morning a church is meeting for the first time without their old retired pastor/prophet, R.C. Sproule. R.C. died this week. I listen to him about three or four days while I'm walking in the morning. I'll listen to him more regular now. I listen to dead preachers, not live. Dead preachers don't mess up. R.C. taught the word of God. I heard him last week. He said these words. I was listening to him and R.C. Sproule said there was no eraser handy when God wrote your name in the book of life. Amen. No eraser found. Your name is there forever and ever and ever. Why? Because God is for us. He welcomes us. He justifies us. He calls us. He saves us. He redeems us and He keeps us.

Last night I finished the last four pages of Jonathan Jeremiah's book, *Unimaginable*. In that book Jeremiah writes what the world would be like if there had never been Christianity. It's a remarkable little book. He closes with one of the most powerful illustrations that fits our text today. He tells of a family that had been to church just like you're in church today. When that family, a momma and a daddy and a little boy and a little girl left church that day, they were going home and unbeknownst to them

barreling down a side road came a woman high on drugs and drunk with alcohol and plowed into that vehicle.

The two children died. The mother and father were unconscious and placed in ICU. When the mother came to, the first question she asked, "Are they in the arms of Jesus?" They said, "Yes." It was another day and a half before father would come out of his unconsciousness. He asked about his family and he wept as they told him his children had died.

They worked through physically and got better and with counselors to work through the grief. The girl that was in the car was tried and found guilty and sentenced to a long prison term but after seven years she was released, behavior good, and the couple asked to see her. They walked into the room as the girl was brought in. They met her, put their arms around her, and said, "In Jesus' name, we forgive you." The father then took a New Testament and led that girl to faith in Christ. This story has gone through now to that couple being old and that girl that was drunk and high that took the life of the children now is the caretaker for that aged couple.

It's as beautiful story of grace as I've ever read in all my life. Oh as long as I don't have to walk in it. But there's somebody you have to forgive. Oh yes indeed, Amen. They may be your accuser. They may condemn you. They may doubt you. But we are not here to get even. We are here to see life change. It's called grace. God did not spare His Son but gave His Son. This is Christmas. This is the greatest gift ever given. God gave it to you because He's for you. But you, you, you, me, you must receive and unwrap that gift.

As many of you know, my birthday was last week and I received gifts. One came from my daughter. Rachel is a thoughtful girl and funny. I got a bag. It was a Christmas sack with a tissue paper. It was heavy. I pulled out the first item. A Firestarter. I pulled out the next item. It was two of those little trigger gizmos that you push it and it's like you light a fire with. I laid them over there. Then I reached down and heard something rattling and the two cans said, "Red Hot Shot." It's to put in a high powered pellet gun to keep squirrels out of your bird feeder, in the compassionate name of the Lord Jesus, by the way. I sent her a text. I said, "I love my hot birthday present." You can set the hind end of a squirrel on fire with that. Her husband and I like to burn stuff. We'd make a fire in a New York minute. I've got one waiting at the house just getting dead and too green right now

You know, I would have never known the smile on my face if I'd have left the present unopened. The fact is God is for you and He calls you but, friend, you must believe, receive to become His child. Have you ever done it? Has He ever called you and you said yes? This means yes. This means no. Has He ever called you? Have you ever received Him?

Listen to me. In a minute, Jon's going to come and he's going to play. When he starts playing I'm going to walk out these doors and I'm going to stand yonder at the Christmas tree. Yonder is a good King James word. I'm going to stand there and some of you out of that balcony around are going to come out the stairwell. Come right there and take my hand and say, "Pastor, I'm ready to believe on Jesus." Some of you across this ground floor, you say, "I came ready to join this church." I'm going to be standing right there. Some of our people are going to be out there in the foyer. They're going to pray with you. You'll trust Jesus as your Lord and as your Savior. You'll join this church today. You'll be ready to be baptized like that one that baptized in this service today.

It's not enough just to come in here. You've got to unwrap, receive. You say, "Oh, preacher, if I do it..." Yeah, if you do it there'll be some people that are going to doubt you. They're going to condemn you. They're going to accuse you but if God is for us, what difference does it make who's against us? Friend, when God is on your side, and you are with Him, it matters not who comes against you because nothing high or low can separate you from the love of God that's in Christ Jesus our Lord.