

Book Study #15 ROMANS

Rom. 8:28-39 - More than Conquerors

Before We Begin...

*28*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him,^a who have been called according to his purpose. *29*For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. *30*And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. *31*What, then, shall we say in response to this? 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, along with him, graciously give us all things? *33*Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. *34*Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. *35*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? *36*As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."^b *37*No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. *38*For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,^c neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, *39*neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.



^a28 Some manuscripts And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God. ^b36 Psalm 44:22 ^c38 Or "nor heavenly riches"

As a child, what object or place gave you a sense of security?

Exploration... Discovery... Revelation...

1. What is the believer's "good" that God is working for? (v.28-30)



2. In verse 28, Paul refers to "those who love him" and those "who have been called according to his purpose" as one and the same group. What does this tell us about the nature of the "calling" he is speaking of? (see John 6:37, 44)

3. In verses 28-29, Paul represents salvation as an unbroken chain, such that those who experience its beginning also experience its completion. In the space below, trace out the chain of events:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| For those God _____ he also _____ | And those he _____ he also _____ |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| those he _____ he also _____ | those he _____ he also _____ |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|

4. What do you think Paul meant when he said that God “foreknew” those whom he called?
(see Ephesians 1:4; 1 Peter 1:1-2)

5. Verses 31-36 are composed of a series of rhetorical questions, in which Paul identifies and rejects possible obstacles to God accomplishing his purpose in us. In the space below, identify these questions, and the answer (or implied answer) for each.

| Question | Answer |
|----------|--------|
| v. 31 | |
| v. 32 | |
| v. 33 | |
| v. 34 | |
| v. 35 | |

6. In what sense are we “more than conquerors?” (v. 37)

7. In order to emphasized our security in Christ, Paul lists several pairs of things which are unable to separate us from Him. List these below:

| | |
|------------|-----|
| Neither... | Nor |
|------------|-----|

As we end this part of the Journey...

Pray for each other during this Christmas season. Pray that we would each live out the “Holy Life.” A life filled with the desire to do the Will of God and follow Christ and the Holy Spirit without fear or reservation. “No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that (absolutely nothing in all creation), will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (The Apostle Paul in Romans 8:37-39)

Commentary

In the previous section, Paul deals with the fact of suffering by focusing on the future, emphasizing that our future glory is far greater than our present suffering. Here Paul continues to deal with suffering by emphasizing that God is sovereign in our lives, and that nothing can separate us from Him.

v. 28 ***In all things God works for the good of those who love him . . .*** Note that Paul does not say that all things are good in themselves, but that God is sovereignly working through all things for the final blessedness of his people. Note also that Paul is not merely saying that everything will somehow work out for the best, but that God is actively working to bring about the best. Not everyone, however, can trust that God is working in all things for their good, but only those who have been ***called according to his purpose***. This call is not the general invitation that God issues to all men through the preaching of the gospel. It is a specific call, a summons by which God speaks to the hearts of the elect and draws them to himself.

vv. 29-30 ***those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son . . .*** Predestination is a difficult idea for many. Some attempt to evade the difficulty by saying that God predestines to salvation those whom he knows would, of their own free will, choose Him. But this makes God’s choice dependent on ours and implies that we have the capacity, apart from God’s enabling grace, to choose Him. This is false (**see John 6:44, 65**). God’s foreknowledge doesn’t mean that he know something about us, i.e., that we would respond to the gospel if offered, but that he chose us and knew us as His children before we were created (Eph. 1:4). Further, the emphasis of Romans 8:28-39 is on God’s work, not man’s receptiveness. God predestined, he called, he justified, and he glorified. God is author of our salvation from beginning to end. This emphasis is essential to Paul’s purpose in this passage: he is demonstrating the absolute security of our salvation by showing that it depends on God’s initiative and power, not ours.

that he might be the firstborn among many brothers . . . It was God’s plan from the beginning to create many sons through Christ (1 Pet. 1:20).

those he justified, he also glorified . . . Paul has just spoken of our glory as future (v. 18); it is unlikely that he would contradict himself here. Instead, he is emphasizing the absolute certainty of our glorification by putting it in the past tense, as if it had already happened.

v. 31 ***If God is for us, who can be against us?*** Paul is not saying that Christians will never be opposed. Rather, he saying that since God is on our side, it doesn’t matter who opposes us. Nothing that they do can threaten our salvation or separate us from God’s love.

v. 32 Paul reasons from the greater to the lesser. If God was willing to sacrifice his own Son for us, doesn’t it stand to reason that he will give us every other good thing as well? He has already given us the one thing which was most precious--the life of His own Son.

v. 33 Paul now begins a series of rhetorical questions, each emphasizing an aspect of our security in Christ. Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? (literally, "God's elect"). Paul is not saying that no one will ever accuse a believer, but that no accusation will stand, because God has justified us. Satan is called "the accuser of the brothers" (Rev. 12:10), but his accusations against us fall on deaf ears, because Christ intercedes on our behalf (vs. 34; Heb. 7:25). We need to remember this when the "flaming arrows of the evil one" come our way (Eph. 6:16).

v. 34 ***Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus...is also interceding for us . . .*** What effect could any word of condemnation have when the judge (2 Tim. 4:1; 2 Cor. 5:10) is also our defense attorney?

vv. 35-39 ***Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? . . .*** Paul now launches into a long list of things which cannot separate us from Christ’s love. The most striking thing about the list is its exhaustiveness. Paul uses all the extremes he can think of--life and death, present and future, height and depth—to indicate the scope of powers that are inadequate to separate us from Christ, and then finishes with "nor anything else in all creation". The meaning is absolutely clear: nothing, ***absolutely nothing***, can separate us from Christ. Rather, we are "more than conquerors," in spite of whatever opposition and suffering we face.