

The Victory of Sonship

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[0 : 00] Let us pray. Unto you, our God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we offer honor and praise. By your great mercy, we have been born anew into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Through him we have been brought into an inheritance which is pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay. You alone are worthy of worship. Heavenly Father, we thank you for family and friends, the blessing of fellowship, and we pray for comfort for those who are lonely at this time.

We thank you for the measure of health that we enjoy, and we pray for strength for those in ill health. We especially pray for Michelle Dixon, who has tested positive for COVID. May she have a quick recovery.

We thank you for the free gift of salvation, and we pray for our friends and loved ones who do not know Jesus Christ. Speak to them by your Holy Spirit and draw them to yourself. May we be witness of the joy that Jesus Christ brings to our life.

We thank you for the peace, security, and prosperity that we enjoy in this country, and we pray for those undergoing persecution, turmoil, and deprivation. May the Prince of Peace work in the thoughts and minds of world leaders that fairness, justice, and peace might reign throughout the world.

[1 : 21] Today, we especially pray for the United States at their time of political turmoil. May you guide those in leadership there. These things we pray in the mighty name of Jesus.

Amen. Continuing our series on sonship on Romans chapter 3. Romans chapter 8, the third sermon. And we talked about the victory of sonship.

Now, today, first we talked about the freedom of sonship, and then the promise of sonship, and now we go into the victory of sonship. Throughout the New Testament, the Christian life is often described as a struggle.

Paul, towards the end of his life, wrote to his beloved disciple, Timothy. In 2 Timothy 4.7, he said, I've fought the good fight. I've finished the race.

I've kept the faith. In Ephesians 6.12, he warned us that our struggle is not against human opponents. Where he says, for our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

[2 : 37] We're against in a battle. And unfortunately, we don't always see the enemy. He's quite clear on hiding himself. Hebrews, the author of Hebrews, also talks about a battle.

In Hebrews 12.4, he says, In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted the point of shedding your blood. And then Paul, in Philippians 1.27, talks about contending for the faith. There he says, Whatever happens, conduct yourself in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I know that you stand firm in one spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel.

I'd love to tell you that the Christian life is easy. I'd love to tell you that. But it'd be a lie. Because the Christian life is a struggle.

And it was never meant to be anything else but a struggle. Because that's the way that God works within us. But we know that we can overcome all these things because we can win the victory through Jesus Christ.

[3 : 49] And in this passage in Romans, I'll read to you right now in Romans 8.28-39, talks about the victory that we can win.

I remember the pastor that used to time his sermons by popping a lozenge into his mouth. When the lozenge was done, he'd know it was time to quit preaching. One Sunday, he popped a button in his mouth.

I assure you, that is a lozenge. Romans 8.28-39, And we know that in all things, God works for the good of those who love him, who've been called according to his purpose.

For those God foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called. Those he called, he also justified. Those he justified, he also glorified. What then shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

[4 : 49] He did not spare his own Son, but give him up for us all, how we will not also, along with him, graciously give us all things. Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen?

It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died, more than that, who was raised to life. It's at the right hand of God, and it's also interceding for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble? Or hardship? Or persecution? Or famine? Or nakedness? Or danger? Or sword?

Lord, as it is written, for your sake we face death all day long. We are considered a sheep to be slaughtered. No. In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 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.

[6 : 01] Nothing can separate us. So, in this passage we can learn some of the things that we can overcome because God has at work within us.

Because we are the children of God. Because God has adopted us as his sons. We are his. And because of that, we have his resources.

Romans 8, 28 is a verse that I'm sure many of you have memorized and many of you have taken to heart. It's a beautiful verse. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, and been called according to his purpose.

I want to stress, it doesn't say all things are good. They're not. They're not. That would be ridiculous. We know that a lot of things happen that in themselves are not good.

And the classic example of that in the Bible is Joseph. His brother sold him into slavery. And then he was in prison. And yet, he says to his brothers later on in Genesis 50, verse 20, You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.

[7 : 19] God is quite capable of taking what normally would be disaster and turning it out for good. Of course, the ultimate is the cross.

The Messiah? The Son of God? Crucified as a common criminal? No? Innocent one? Found guilty? And crucified with others? That didn't sound good at all. But that's what God did to accomplish our salvation. That's the way that God works.

Turning evil into good. And that's the way he works in our lives. Because it's through difficulties that we grow. Romans 5, 3-4 says, Not only so, but we glory in our sufferings.

Because then you know that suffering produces perseverance. Perseverance, character. And character, hope. Remember a cute little song that goes, Lord, teach me the lessons that little flowers know.

[8 : 23] If it never ever rained, I'd never ever grow. We need the difficulties to grow. You observe a proverb, All sunshine makes the desert.

And that's true in our life. If everything worked out the way we wanted it to, we'd never ever grow. We'd never ever grow in life. We need hardship, persecution, and stuff to grow.

Because suffering produces perseverance. Perseverance, character. And character, hope. We can overcome hardship and disaster because God is at work within us.

We can overcome hardship because we know that God is for us. And he will provide for us. You know, 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.

Because we know we don't have a... We got the resources of the Almighty God. He created the universe. And he's on our side. And we can overcome distress because we know we can be comforted that no matter what's happening, God can work it out for our own good.

[9 : 39] We can overcome hardship and distress because God is for us, because we are the children of God. We can overcome sin and temptation.

Verse 33 says, Who bring any charge that means those whom God has chosen? You know, often in a Christian life, Satan brings back sins that we committed ages ago.

And brings up... Interesting enough, the title, Satan comes from the term the accuser. That's what he does. He accuses us that, No, didn't you say this bad thing last week?

Didn't you do this thing? And that's the way Satan works in us. He keeps bringing up charges, but God has forgiven those. Cast them as far as the east as from the west.

Many years ago, before the days of socialized medicine, a Scottish physician had many poor patients. And they would pile up their debts because they couldn't afford to pay them.

[10 : 45] And when he realized they couldn't afford it, he took and wrote across each bill, forgiven, too poor to pay. When that physician passed away, his wife looked at all these invoices and said, I should collect all these debts.

So she went to a lawyer and her lawyer said, Is that your husband's handwriting across these bills? He says, Well, yes it is. Then he says, There's not a court in the land that could make you pay, cover these debts when your husband is clearly written, forgiven, too poor to pay.

And that's the way it is with us. There's not a court in the entire universe that can justify, that can condemn us because God has justified us.

And what greater court can there be? In Acts 17.31, judgment is committed to Jesus. It says there, For he has said a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed.

He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead. Judgment is committed to Jesus. So how does Jesus respond? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen as God who justifies?

[12 : 04] Who then is he? The one who condemns? No one. Jesus Christ who died, more than that, who was raised to life, is at the right hand of God and is interceding for us.

Instead of just judging us, he's interceding for us. And you've got God who is pronounced as innocent and then Jesus right there with the Father interceding for us.

What more can we ask for? God is for us. Verse 31, If God is for us, who can be against us? What have we got to lose? No one can defeat us if God is for us.

So we don't have to worry about the sin because Christ has paid that prayer for us. And we can overcome temptation by the power that is within us as children of God.

1 Corinthians 10, 13 says, No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful. He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you're tempted, provide a way out so that you can endure it.

[13 : 14] We can overcome sin and temptation because God is at work within us. And we can overcome persecution and tribulation.

In verse 35, it talks about some of the things that might trouble us. Trouble, hardship, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, sorrow. Those are things that might make us think, well, maybe God isn't on our side.

How many times have you thought, well, it seems like God has abandoned me because all these things are happening. But that's not the case. None of those things can separate us.

All those obstacles we can overcome. It says in verse 37, knowing all these things, we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. More than conquerors.

We don't have to worry about those things because God is on our side. And then in verse 38 and 39, we have this wonderful passage.

[14 : 22] For I'm convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, nor their 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.

There is no power that can separate us from the love of God. Nothing. No one. And heaven on earth anywhere, we have nothing.

Nothing can separate us from God. Absolutely nothing. The Romans regarded Christians as cheap and common victims. The Emperor Nero decided it was convenient to blame the burning of Rome on Christians and that led to persecution.

And there are other waves of persecution that happened. But Paul said to these Romans, Christians, don't worry about it.

Persecution is not the end. Tribulation is not the end. You can overcome all of those things because God is at work within you, because you are the children of God.

[15:31] Interesting thing in life, you look at stuff, you look at stuff, and you see where the church is persecuted, and in many places, the church undergoes a lot of tribulation. And interesting enough, often that's when the church grows most.

See, people look at Christians who are undergoing this persecution and they still refuse to give up. And many turn to faith because they see the difference that Christ makes in the lives of people. From what we know, all the apostles except for John died at an early age, martyred for their faith. And yet, they were quite willing to do so because they knew that beyond death was Jesus Christ. Paul himself, for me to live as Christ and to die as gain. Death is not going to separate me from God. It's going to make me closer. Angels can't overcome God.

Neither can the forces of evil. Demons. Nothing to worry about. Nothing. With God on our side, we have nothing to lose. Victory is ours despite whatever opposition we may encounter because we have access to God's infinite resources.

[17:00] We can overcome hardship and distress, sin and temptation, persecution and tribulation, anything if we depend upon God.

Martin Luther's great hymn says, did we earn our own strength confide, our striving would be losing. We're not the right man on our side, the man on God's own choosing.

Yeah, if we rely on our own resources, we're going to fail. But we rely on the infinite resources of God Almighty, we got nothing to lose.

Jim Elliott, who was martyred for the faith in the Indians, said he is no fool that gives up what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.

He got nothing to lose. Everything's before us as children of God. Let's go forward in that kind of victory. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for the privilege of making us your sons, receiving the full inheritance, male, female, slave, free.

[18:16] We're all sons. You've given us everything. You gave up your own son, Jesus Christ, for us. And there's nothing that can separate us from your love.

Help us to trust in that love that go forward in Jesus' name. It is in his name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.