

Total victory through him who loved us

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[0 : 00] We're reading Romans 8 verses 28 to 39. He also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give all things?

Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is it to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died. More than that, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who is indeed interceding for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

As it's written, For your sake we are being killed all the day long. We are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered. No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

[1 : 33] For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 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.

For your sake we are, Can I ask by, With a question, Can you confidently say at the moment, God is for me?

I'm hearing some water, Yeah, good. Well maybe you can. Maybe you're on track to getting what you want. Maybe you've got a new job. Maybe a new relationship, Moving house, Holidays for some, Not all of us, But holidays have arrived.

Maybe you can say, God is for me. Maybe you can't. Right now. Or maybe you, Life isn't terribly exciting or hard, It's just, You weigh everything up in the balance and go, Yeah, Yeah, okay. God has blessed me with a lot. I've been reading Joshua recently, And after Israel finally stepped foot in the promised land, After 40 years of discipline in the wilderness, And they've got to face Jericho, The fortified city, The biggest and first challenge.

[2 : 59] So they're in the land, And Joshua, The commander of Israel, Now that Moses has died, He's confronted by this heavenly man. And this man has a drawn sword.

And Joshua asks a question, Are you for us? Or are you for our adversaries? And the man replies, No.

No. I am the commander of the army of the Lord. In other words, Wrong question. It's not about whether God is for you, In your plans, To bless your agenda.

The all important question is, Are you for the Lord? And Joshua falls on his face, In the dust, Acknowledging he is but dust himself, And he worships, And he says in effect, Command me. So our picture of what it would look like for God to be for us, It's the wrong question. We've got to put our agenda, Put our face in the dust, And worship, And say instead, Lord, Command me.

[4 : 27] So, When you start asking the question, Am I living my whole life in this posture? Then your confidence that God is for you, Because you are for him, That becomes very shaky ground, Doesn't it?

But today, We reach the crescendo of the symphony, Of assurance of God's love, That Paul began in chapter 5. We're finishing on a note of total victory, In verses 35 to 39, But I'd like, I'd like to start there, On the note of total victory, And then I want to come back to verses 31 to 34, And ask, What produces that kind of confidence?

That you can, You can say, More than conqueror, Through him who loved us. So what is this total victory?

Verses 35 to 39, The victory spoken here is, Is not about the power of positive thinking, That our day and age is big on. Lincoln and Leah, And the students in Myanmar, They're in the midst of a civil war, There's bullets firing, There's brutality, There's lack of compassion everywhere, Positive thinking is powerless, To keep those children safe.

This isn't about positive thinking. Being arrested, And questioned in parts of the world, Quite literally, Some believers might be facing the sword.

[6 : 06] Beheading. Positive thinking cannot set you free, From those captors. This is not positive thinking, If I can say that enough. The power of positive thinking.

It's very positive. It's a celebration of total victory. But it's not saying, Your attitude is the power, If you're hearing me right. Like verse 35, These situations are extremes, Aren't they?

Many of us haven't faced them. I can't, I can't claim I've faced, Not in a, Not a total or, At its worst sense.

But, Many of our brothers and sisters across the world, Are in them right now. And throughout history, The church has faced these kinds of things. As we send people out for the gospel, In different parts of the world, We might be sending them, Into situations where these things, Are a very, Very real risk.

Like, Like, This is no theory. This isn't theory. It might be theory for us, Because of our experience. But it's no theory for Paul. He lists his afflictions, As an apostle in 2 Corinthians 11.

[7 : 20] If you remember, Those verses, I'm not going to read it out. You can go look later. But, It's precisely because, Paul was devoted, To the spread of the gospel, That he faced, A lot of these things.

Danger here. Danger there. Danger there. Persecution in every city. It's because, Of that, That he entered these things. So, Why else would you go?

Why would we send people into this, If we weren't absolutely sure, That nothing and no one, Can separate us from the love of God? We better be sure.

And we better be sure, These are the extremes, And so, It captures all affliction. Whatever affliction, We're going through, Or whatever's coming up, We, We, We need to have this assurance.

And Paul quotes Psalm 44, To show that this has been true, Of God's people all the time. What's, What's amazing in that psalm, Which, Which Bo, Started the morning off with, Is that, They claim, They're not suffering, Because they've disobeyed God.

[8 : 32] And that we haven't, Departed from you God. Look at those words, At the start of the quote, For your sake. It's not because, It's because we're staying loyal to you, That we're experiencing this.

Incredible prayer of faith, Isn't it? I'm experiencing this, Rejection from my family, Not because, I've disobeyed you, But for your sake.

The battle scars, Of being loyal to God, In a world at war with God, Is actually evidence, Of being close to God. That's basically, Paul's entire defense, That's what 2 Corinthians is about.

That the, Corinthians have lost faith, In Paul's apostleship, And he's saying, Look, I am weak. I am, I am crushed, I am defeated.

Look, I look like Christ. That's my defense. That's 2 Corinthians. It's the weakness, That God is using him, Through his weakness, To save people.

[9 : 38] So, It's amazing confidence, It's for your sake, I'm enduring this. So, Who shall separate us, From the love of Christ?

We get verses 28, 38 and 39, Which encompass, Any reality we can picture. Whether, Whether you're alive, Or you're dead.

Either way. Nothing can separate, You from the love of Christ. Whatever cosmic powers, Are at work, Behind the scenes, That we can't see, That are causing, These afflictions, They can't, They can't, They can't, Can't separate us.

They can't win. Whatever, Present, Situation, Or future fears, And uncertainties, Can't separate us. Nor anything else, In all creation.

Paul's making sure, There are no, Loopholes here. And, If you think, You, A created thing, Can remove yourself, From the love of God, Yeah, We'll say it, I'll just, I'll just get in trouble later.

[10 : 58] I think that's adding, To the text. Paul's trying to say, There's no, Loopholes. In all creation, There's nothing in all creation, That can separate us.

We are part of that creation. I'm confident of that, Because, To say, I can remove myself, Is going, Totally against, Paul's point. It's total victory, Total assurance.

I think it's adding, To the text. If we put ourselves, That we can separate. There's nothing, You can imagine, That can take you, Out of God's love.

Nothing. So what does, More than conquerors mean? I've heard that phrase, And, I've wondered what that means, And, What does that mean?

Is it just exaggeration? Like, We definitely win? It could be, But it could be saying, A lot more than that. It's being, Sure of victory, No matter the obstacle.

[12:03] It's not just saying, We escape, By the skin of our teeth. We just make it in, To heaven at the end. It's, It's not saying, We just make it. It's saying that, Because Jesus is sovereign, We can be sure, Like in verse 28, The wonderful promise, We looked at last week, All things are working, For our good.

It's not that we just, Make it through, But all things are working, For our good. We can be sure, That like the apostle Paul, God loves, To use weakness, To, To, Bring about his gospel power.

Death is at work in us, So that the life of Jesus, Might also be at work through us. It's, It's total victory. In, Many of you would have read, The Hiding Place, Corrie Ten Boom.

Her story in, Nazi concentration camps, And her and her sister, Betsy, They sneak a Bible, Into the, Into the prison, And then the camps.

Even how they sneak the Bible in, Was through Betsy's illness. So God used weakness, To get past the guards. But anyway, That's another story. But, They were in this dormitory, Overcrowded, The sick, With the less sick.

[13:30] It's, Awful place to be. And on top of that, There were fleas. This dorm, Out of other dorms, Had fleas. Like, In such a dark place, You've got to put up with fleas as well.

And, They would have these, Times in the evening of, Reading the word, And praying together. And the women would gather around, Because, They had to be quiet. So the guards wouldn't hear them.

They came across a verse, Give thanks in all circumstances. And, And Betsy, Said we should give thanks for the fleas.

And, And, And, And, Corey's just like, Okay, Nah, Too far. I can, I can give thanks. We're together. We're alive. We know God.

We know Jesus. But, There's lots of things I can give thanks for. Fleas, That's too much. And then a couple of weeks pass, And Betsy comes, Smiling up to Corey. It's the fleas. The soldiers, Don't come near the dorm, Because they don't want to go near the fleas.

[14:39] In that, In that providence, Fleas. God was using it, To teach Corey, To trust his providence, In all, In all situations. To learn to give thanks. That's victory.

Conforming her, To be like Christ. Because of those fleas, Because of those fleas, God was using that to keep them safe, So that they could have those times of worship, So that those women, Reading God's word, Could be a light, Of hope, In that, Utter dark place.

Victory. Total victory, In all these things. Not after, In. And the victory wasn't there, These ladies, To claim.

It was through him, Who loved us. It's not our victory, It's through him, Who loves us, Who loved us. John Patton, Was a, Missionary to Venuatu, In the 1800s, And, Just about 19 years, Before he went to Venuatu, Some missionaries, John Williams, And James Harris, Just minutes after arriving, They were clubbed to death, And then cooked, And eaten.

And so, When John Patton, Told his congregation, I feel called, To Venuatu. Apparently, An elder in the church, Mr. Dixon, Came to him, Said, They'll eat you.

[16:15] You'll be eaten, By cannibals. Mr. Dixon, You're advanced, In years now, And, Your own prospect, Is soon to be laid, In the grave, And there to be eaten, By worms.

I confess to you, That, If I can but live, And die, Serving, And honouring the Lord Jesus, It will make no difference to me, Whether I'm eaten by cannibals, Or by worms.

And on that great day, My resurrection body, Will rise as fair as yours, In the likeness, Of our risen Redeemer. Where does that come from? Where does that perspective, Come from?

Where does that confidence, Come from? Don't you envy Christians, Like that? This isn't, This perspective is not, Just for super Christians, There's no such thing, This is for all of us, Because, We've all got to go deeper, In this confidence, Because it comes, From Romans 5 through 8, It

comes from believing, Romans 5 through 8, So in verse 31, Back to verse 31, We've looked at the total victory, Now where does this come from?

Verses 31 to 34, What shall we say to these things, What are these things, Is it the verses just prior, That we looked at last week, That our salvation originated in God, His choosing us, Before we chose Him, We chose Him because He chose us, And so we can't mess it up, Verse 28, That all things work for good, Verse 30, That your final glorification, It's already past tense, Because it's as good as done, Because of His sovereign love, Is it these things, Yes, Yes it is, Is it from verse 18, Of chapter 8, Our certain hope, That we will inherit the new creation, And that we will have resurrected bodies, With the Lord Jesus, That the Spirit is interceding in our weakness, To make sure we make it, Yeah,

[18 : 35] I think it is, Is it all of Romans 8, God's verdict over your life, If you're a believer, He is innocent, No condemnation, He has satisfied His law, Through His Son, The Spirit testifies to us, We are children, Abba, Father, Yeah, I think it's these things as well, Is it Romans 7, God's law no longer condemns us, Even though our war with sin, Is daily struggle, It is a battle, But we're not under law, We have a new covenant, A new husband, The Lord Jesus, Yes, We are not under the condemnation, Of the law, Is it Romans 6, That the power of sin, Will not have the final say, It's present, But its rule over us, It's been defeated, Because we've died with Christ, We've been raised new,

We want to please God now, We struggle to do that, In our flesh, But we've been raised new, We want to walk, In newness of life, It's Romans 6, Is it Romans 5, That our salvation in the end, Boils down to who you belong to, Do you belong to Adam, And his disobedience, And the condemnation there, Or do you belong to Christ, Whose obedience, Trumps his disobedience, Where sin increased, Grace super abounds, Our salvation is because, We belong to him, And the rest of Romans 5, That we're justified by faith, As a free gift, And so we know, We are at peace with God, His love is poured into our hearts, He showed his love for us, Even while we were sinners, He died for us, How much more will he give us all things, And so we can even rejoice, In our sufferings, In the hope of glory, I think it's all these things, Because the start of Romans 5, And the end of Romans 8, Have such similar themes, They're very similar, So I think it's encapsulating all these things, And chapters 5 through 8, What's it all about? In what shall we say to these things?

It's about assurance, That God loves us, That you and I have all the benefits, We have all the benefits, Of belonging to Jesus, So brothers and sisters, These are all yours, Through him who loved us, I started this term asking, What God sees, And relates to us through, Is it through his law, Is he constantly looking at your performance?

No, Romans 5 through 8 says, He only, And always, And fully, Relates to us through his son, Only, Always, And fully, Through his son, Through his son, God's love is like, A fresh spring in the mountains, And, We are thirsty, And, The river, Is what brings that spring, To us to drink, Christ is that river, All you receive from God, Any blessing, Is through Christ, And in Jesus, We receive all the father's love, For his son, His son, All of it, So confidence of total victory, Willing to suffer for Jesus' sake, Is,

[22 : 29] Is when it comes from knowing, How safe we are, How loved we are, So what, What after all that, Could Paul possibly add, In verses 31 to 34, To deepen that, Like, I'm not sure, What can he add to that, I'm not, I'm not sure he adds too much, I think he's more drawing our attention to who, I'm not sure he's adding too much to what, God has done, More about who, God is, I think he's drawing our attention to, He gives a string of questions in 31 to 34, And, This might be ironic, Because, It's legal question, Who's going to bring a charge, Who's going to condemn, This is a courtroom picture, And it's just question after question,

Which, Kind of feels like a prosecutor, Is just asking you question after question, And, And you've got no leg to stand on, By the end of it, So maybe it's a bit ironic, After all these questions, We don't feel exposed, We feel, Assured, God is holding us up, So maybe it's ironic, Maybe Paul's just getting excited, I'm not sure, I'm going to read the verses again, If God is for us, Who can be against us?

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? Who shall bring any charge, Against God's elect?

It is God who justifies, 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, Verse 31, No one

can successfully be against you, Wow, What a promise, Verse 32, He will give you everything you need, Okay, Verse 33, No one can make any charge against you, Stick in heaven, Even when it's true, Verse 34, No one will condemn you, Can condemn you, But notice here, The answer to the question, Who will bring a charge against God's elect?

The answer isn't, I'm justified, That's not the focus, The emphasis is, Look who it is, Who justifies you, The wording is, It is God, It is God, Who justifies you, He is the supreme court, If he declares something, What's anyone else going to do?

[25 : 30] The answer to these questions, Is silence, If God is for us, Who can be against us?

Silence, Silence, Silence, Who shall bring any charge, Against God's elect?

There's silence in heaven, Because it's God who justifies, Who is to condemn? It's not saying Christ Jesus will, It's saying, Who is to condemn?

Silence, God said to Abraham, Now I know you love me, You did not spare Isaac, Your only son, And we can say to God, Now I know you love me, You did not spare your own son, How could such a God, Who did not spare his own son, How could he not also, Give us all we need?

Of course he will, That's the kind of God he is, And look who it is, Who's taken your condemnation, Again the focus is on the who, It isn't animals, It isn't a good man, Or just a man, It isn't an angel, Look who it is, It was the one who willingly, Jumped in front, Of the bullet of God's wrath, Such a one died for you, Will such a one, Allow anyone, Even your own conscience, To condemn you, And when the father looked at his son, In the tomb, Absorbing, Having absorbed his wrath,

[27 : 47] So that we the church, Can be at peace, Delighting in the fact that, His son trusted him, Even through death, That he had honoured, God's justice, That sin didn't go unpunished, He is just, The father satisfied in the son, Come home, Get up, Well done, And he raised him, Publicly vindicating him, This is who, How could we be condemned, If the father is totally for the son, That the son was raised, And then he seated him, At God's right hand, Quoting Psalm 110, Verse 1, Which is the most quoted, Of the Old Testament, The Lord says to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, Until I make your enemies, Your footstool, It's a metaphor, It's a, Yes Christ is in heaven,

But it's a metaphor, Like Joseph, Right hand of Pharaoh, In Egypt, All God's authority, Has been entrusted to him, All heaven, All authority in heaven, On earth, Is given to me, The one, Who willingly died for us, The one who the father, Is totally for, Because he resurrected him, The one, Who has all authority, What is that one doing, He's interceding for us, Right now, In heaven, He lives to intercede for us, Such a one is, Representing us, Now that doesn't mean, Interceding doesn't mean, He's adding to his work of salvation, It is, It is a priestly, Picture here, He is our high priest, But he's not adding to our salvation, Like the salvation's done,

It's, It's that him, In his resurrected, Glorified bodily presence in heaven, Is representing all he has achieved, So Satan might harass you, Pointing out, Look how, Look how she's failing you, But look who's interceding for you, Such a one who died, And was raised, And was at the right hand of God, Other people might condemn you, Look how incomplete, Your doctrine is, Look how inconsistent, Your life is, Look who is interceding for you, Look who is interceding for you, Your own conscience, Might condemn you, Your sufferings, Might feel like God is, Pouring out his wrath on you, But we've got to remember, Who's interceding for us, Our high priest, Is totally for us, You might be thinking at this point, Yes, This is all wonderful, But if only it was for me, Now, I've had my personal doubts, But, I'm going to let you listen, To someone who, Deeply, Over a long period of time, Struggled with this, Who was sure, Absolutely sure, He wasn't elect, Sure he was going to go to hell, So John Bunyan, Who wrote, Pilgrim's Progress, He also wrote, Grace abounding to the chief of sinners, I saw, With the eyes of my soul, Jesus Christ, At God's right hand, There, I say, Is my righteousness, So that wherever I was,

Or whatever I was doing, It was not my good frame of heart, That made my righteousness better, Nor my bad frame, That made my righteousness worse, For my righteousness, Was Jesus Christ himself, The same yesterday, And today, And forever, God graciously, Brought him to a point, Of seeing, It's not even your own conscience, It's not even your own thoughts, That tell you, Whether you're elect, And secure or not, Your righteousness is up there, It's, He's outside of you, In that sense, And so it's absolutely sure, He's greater than our conscience, Always living to intercede, Hebrews 7, 25, He is able to save, To the uttermost, Those who draw near to God, Through him, Since he always lives, To make intercession for them, What wonderful assurance,

[33 : 03] So is God for me, Wrong question, Is God for me, I think we should, Come away from, Our time in Romans, Going, We shouldn't even be, Ask the question, It's not even a question, We

should be living as if, Since, God is for us, It's not a question, It's since, God is for us, Through him, Who loved us, The father loves us, He gave his son, How will he not give us all things, The son loves us, He gave himself, And he's using all his power now, To intercede for us, The spirit loves us, He's testifying to the love of God, In our hearts, That we are adopted, That we, We have all of God's love,

Through Christ, It is being full, Of the love of God, That we can approach, Any situation, Confident of total victory, Not victory, That things will work out, How we, Want them to work out, But victory, That no one can take us, Out of his love, Victory, That all things work, For our good, He's preparing us, For an eternal, Eternal, Experience of delight, He's working for our good, And it's victory, Knowing that he will use our weakness, To bring this, This life to others, If he's fully for us, Since he's fully for us, We can know we can have total victory, Even in the darkest, Darkest situation, So what's the purpose of giving us such, Massive, Assurance, Like why, Why does, Why does God want us to know this, Why does he want us to live, Going since you are for us, Through him who loved us, Why does he want that, It is not, So that we, In our commitment, To the Australian comfortable life, Can just add a few spiritual pillows, We're given this, So that it sets us free, From that worldly agenda, So that, We will face, Any hardship, Not doubting his love, We will even move into hardship, For his sake, It sets us free, Because, Because we're so assured, Of his love, It sets us free, From that, What the world chases, So that we live a life, That counts, We're given this deep assurance, So that, We give all of ourselves, To him, Who's given all of himself, To us, That's why we're given it, Since God is for us, In Jesus, Romans 12 verse 1, I appeal to you, Therefore, Brothers and sisters, By the mercies of God, To present, Your bodies, As a living sacrifice, Holy, And acceptable to God, Which is your spiritual worship, Since God is for us, We can gladly, Give all of ourselves to him, Will you pray with me, Let's pray, Lord, I know, My own, My own sense of hypocrisy, Even preaching this, How, Still in love, With the things of this world, And so, I pray for me, And I pray for all of us, That your love, Would conquer all that, And that you would increasingly, Show us what kind of God you are, That you freely give us all of yourself, And that you've promised an eternity, Of delight, Lord, I pray for each one of us, Whatever we're going through, Whether we're, In love with this world, Or we are barely coping, I pray that, Your spirit might, Bring the truths of Romans, More deeply into, Into our hearts, Lord, I pray for us as a church, That we might respond, To what we've been learning, Not by, Just feeling good, And going about, Living for the things of this world,

[38 : 10] But I pray that you would help us to, As a church together, Live lives that are pleasing to you, That reflect the sun, In choosing suffering, So that others might come in, To the life of knowing you, And I pray all this in Jesus' name, Amen.