

# Security Guaranteed

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     The Bible reading is from Romans chapter 8, verses 28 to 39. And we know that for those who love God, all things work together for good.

For those who are called according to his purpose, for those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

And those whom he predestined, he also called. And those whom he called, 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 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.

[ 1 : 0 4 ]     Who is at the right hand of God. Who indeed is 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 is 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.

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.

Okay, well we are going to look at Romans chapter 8 verse 28 to 39 now. The last in this series and assurance. And just an old colloquialism to start with.

Diamonds are forever. That's what we are told. And Toyota Hiluxes are apparently indestructible. Now the problem with those sort of statements are that we all know there's no reality to them.

[ 2 : 1 4 ]     I've seen many a Toyota Hilux, the worst for wear after a four wheel drive trip. So here's the question out of that. Can we as Christians say we are forever?

Christians are forever. May I say as a Christian with absolute total confidence that nothing will keep me as a believer from getting home to heaven.

Now the problem again with that is that we know ourselves. When I say something like that I immediately feel a fear beginning to rise within me. And perhaps the thing I fear most is myself.

I saw a guy wearing a t-shirt once which I thought was just me. The t-shirt said determination. The thing I get just before doing something really stupid.

And I actually thought that is me. My determination is just to do that which pleases the Lord. And honors him. But so often followed by the very opposite.

- [ 3 : 33 ] By sin. Saying or doing something stupid. Which dishonors God. Or at the other extreme. Thinking that some religious action I can do.
- Will actually make me more acceptable to God. And so I think with some justification I fear myself in that respect. If it's down to me.
- To guarantee I'm going to get to heaven. But I also fear what others might do to me. Now of course most of what I have to experience from others is just on the minor end of the scale.
- Ridicule. People seem to think that because I'm a Christian. Then I'm either admitting to being totally stupid. Or emotionally deficient. But then there's the more passive aggressive hostility.
- Being marginalized by neighbors. The wider family. And that hurts. And then there's the more extreme stuff that I've never had to experience.
- [ 4 : 33 ] And hopefully never will have to experience. But people. Christians around the world are experiencing right now as we sit here in the comfort of this room. Torture. And execution. Simply for the sake of being Christians.
- Last week we looked at verses 17 and 18. And 17 and 18 promise us future glory. Suffering now.
- But glory in the future. That is to be in home in heaven. With Christ and like Christ. Complete renewal.
- But again you see it all seems a bit too good to be true. When the reality so often for each one of us is. That we already almost feel defeated.
- Just looking into the challenges of living this coming week. Let alone considering the challenges of a lifetime ahead of us. Of struggling to serve the Lord.
- [ 5 : 38 ] So. Could I be safe in the kingdom of God today. And yet be lost.
- Or rejected. Tomorrow. Or next week. Or next month. Or next year. Can I truly say with absolute confidence.
- That I will persevere. As a Christian. Well my friends. I'm delighted to be able to tell you this morning. And to share with you the fifth point of reference.
- We've been talking about reference points for assurance. Is the answer is yes. Because God guarantees. My security.
- Your security. As a Christian. I can be absolutely sure. I will persevere. Because.
- [ 6 : 37 ] God promises to preserve me. Those two words go really inseparably together. I will persevere. Because God will preserve.
- That's our fifth reference point for assurance. Now. When I say that God guarantees our security. Then that raises another problem. Because we're pretty wary of security.
- Of guarantees these days. Aren't we? We've all come across guarantees. Where in the fine print. We suddenly find. The very time we need to use the guarantee.
- There's an exclusion clause. There's a circumstance. That isn't covered by the guarantee. So the question again becomes.
- Can we trust God's guarantee? Or are there hidden exclusion clauses? Are there some circumstances. That God anticipates. Where he says.
- [ 7 : 30 ] Well no. The guarantee doesn't work in that situation. Well let's have a look at the terms of God's guarantee. This morning. And this is the guarantee.
- That God is working for your good. And his purpose. In every circumstance of life. Now again. See how those two dovetail together.

Your good. His purpose. In every circumstance of life. Picking up at verse 28 to 30. I had a brief run through these last week.

So. They sort of form a link. Between these two sections of scripture. Verses 28 to 30. Just listen to how it reads. Verse 28. And we know.

We know. That for those who love God. All things work together for good. For those who are called according to his purpose. And those who love God. Are those called according to his purpose.

[ 8 : 31 ] For those whom he foreknew. He also predestined to be conformed. To the image of his son. In order that he might be the first fruits. Among many brothers. And those whom he predestined.

He also called. And those whom he called. He also justified. And those he justified. He also glorified. God guarantees.

We will preserve. Persevere. Because he will preserve us. God's project. Salvation. Is the ultimate. Start to finish.

Package deal. That's what I'm calling it this morning. If you're a visitor. You can be following the outline. On the back of your bulletin. It's God's ultimate. Start to finish. Package deal.

[ 9 : 29 ] At every step. Of the way. In every circumstance. Of life. We're told here. That the Lord. Is working. For the good of his children. And according to his own purpose. God will not. Be satisfied.

Nor will he rest. Until he brings us home. A start to finish. Package deal. That we call salvation. Picture salvation.

As a. A chain. With five. Massive. Inseparable links. So strong. They can never be broken. That join us.

Inseparably. To God. Forever. Truly indestructible. Truly. Forever. Let's look at these links. Link one. It says here.

God foreknew. Knew his people. Now there's lots. That could be said about that. There's lots of arguments to and fro. But. At the very least. It's the language. Of marriage commitment. Where God declares.

[ 10 : 27 ] That in turn. That in eternity past. Even before our physical universe. Even before our physical universe existed. God. For his own sake. Set his love upon his people.

Determined. To enjoy intimate. Unbroken relationship with him. That's God's purpose. From before time began. Amen. Now go to the other end of the chain.

Link number five. Where it says there. End of verse 30. That God also glorified. These same people. God's purpose.

Was to have a people. That would honor him. And. Be an intimate relationship with him. End of the link. God does it. Amen. Amen. And that end link there.

The glorified. That's the language. Of a royal coronation. Ceremony. Declares that in eternity future. His people will actually experience. And enjoy. In full.

[ 11 : 28 ] The perfection. Of the glory of Jesus Christ. Being united with him. Perfectly like him. Enjoying all the things. That he currently enjoys. But notice that God does everything else.

In between. As well. Link to. For those whom he foreknew. He also. Predestined. To be conformed. To the image of his son. God plans.

Specifically. To save his sinful people. Now God doesn't just say. I love you. I'll listen over. Armageddon. Kept repeating to me. Don't just say you love me.

Show you love me. Demonstrate you love me. Well this is exactly. What God does. Not just saying. He's set his love on us. But he demonstrates that love. By actually having a plan. A specific plan.

And pathway. To bring his people home. He does everything. He plans to do everything necessary. To become father to his people.

[ 12 : 33 ] Rather than judge of his people. Link three. The language of creation. So it conformed to the image of his son.

In order that he might be the first fruits. Among the brothers. And those he predestined. He also called. God's spirit intervenes.

Breathing new life into people. People who are dead because of sin. Quite literally calling us. And bringing us to Christ. In real time.

Having created both the ability. And the desire to relate to God. As he wishes to relate to them. His people. And link four.

Those he called. He also justified. Is his courtroom language. In that word. Declaring that God has done. Everything legally necessary.

[ 13 : 35 ] In the death of Christ. To provide for the resumption. Of unrestricted relationship. So that scans eternity. That chain of salvation.

Start to finish. Salvation package. Now friends. We just need to pause for a moment. And feel the security.

God is offering us. In these. In this verse. In these five links. God's plan. Is thorough. It starts in eternity past.

And is completed in eternity future. There is nothing left to chance. He moves towards his people. He foreknows them.

He loves them. Sets his love on them. He makes the pathway. He does everything necessary. Legally. To bring us into relationship with them. And he brings us home. To be like Christ.

[ 14 : 33 ] Finally. As we were created to be. There is nothing. Left to chance. There is nothing. In this. Start to finish.

Salvation. Package deal. That is left to you and me. Our salvation. Is God's plan. From eternity past. To eternity future.

And God finishes. What he starts. But there is more. If we look back. Now to verse 28.

A bit Irish. Doing the verses back to front. But it works better that way. I think. Verse. God's promise in verse 28. In every circumstance of life. God is working.

To his plan. Now. What is his plan? Well his plan. Let's say again. As I said earlier. You're good. And ultimately. You're glory.

[ 15 : 31 ] For his own name's sake. We know that.

For those who love God. All things work together for good. For those who are called. According to his purpose. Last week. I tacked those on. At the end of the last passage. Because it was talking about suffering.

Incredible suffering. Will befall us as Christians. We're locked into this life. This world. That's tearing itself apart. But one day. We'll be renewed. And in that context.

All things. Work together. For your good. For our good. For my good. God's purpose. Your good. And ultimately. Our glory.

Our glory. God's purpose. Now our problem. Of course. Is that we can't see. The big plan. Of God. We can't see the whole plan.

- [ 16 : 30 ] All we can see. And feel. Are the things. That knock us around. On a daily basis. And there are plenty. Of those things. On a weekly basis. On a daily basis. So our focus. Is sort of stuck here. In the detail. On a week. Week by week. Day by day basis. Because God's big plan. Is eternal. And so we sometimes fear. As we.
- We just get stuck. In the trials. And tribulations. Of any given day. Or week. We fear. That we're abandoned. We fear. That we're alone. In the struggle of life. But not so.
- In fact. God is at work. We're told here. In every single circumstance. Of your life. And mine. For your good. And for mine.
- Now what is that good? Well it's making us. A little bit more like Christ. Like Jesus. Every single. In every single circumstance.
- [ 17 : 30 ] Of life. In other words. God's actually working now. As he promised. To prepare us for glory. And what we get.
- What we trip up on. As the. The difficulties. And challenges. Of living through. A given day. Is actually God. Working for good. In our lives. His big plan.
- If we could have seen it. And we're. We've been told it here. Is for our good. And that's the life experience.
- Detail. That we looked at. Last week. In verses 17 and 18. Suffering. And glory together. Suffering now. Glory then. Now we need to.
- Again pause. And let this settle into your mind. Because. There's a mood across. Christian circles. These days. It just robs us. Of this truth. It says here.
- [ 18 : 30 ] That in all things. In all circumstances. God is working. For our good. God. For our good. For our good. For our good. And for his purpose. And yet we hear so many Christians today.
- Saying well God's in the good things of life. But not in the bad things of life. I'm not sure which particular part of the Bible they're reading when they say that.
- But that's. That's a really strong view. Held by lots of people. Who would call themselves Christians. Some Christians. Some Christians would say that. Some Christians would teach that God is in my recovery and health.
- But not in my sickness and pain. And where does that leave you? If you're. If you're. Struggling with a.
- A chronic illness. God is in my doing well. But not in my failures and sin.
- [ 19 : 36 ] God heard my prayer when I get what I want. But clearly hasn't heard me when I don't get what I want. I really couldn't live in a world like that.
- Friends. God. Friends. The reality for you and me. Is that we learn best.
- Through failures. We learn best. As the Lord in various circumstances. Forces us. To confront our sin.
- Exposes ourselves to our own sin. We learn best then. Far better than when we do. When life is chugging along really smoothly. I'm learning this personally.
- Been learning it. Severely over the last five years. As repeatedly. The Lord has taken me into places. I would never choose to be. I would never choose to go.
- [ 20 : 39 ] In a million years. I wouldn't have chosen to go there. But the Lord has repeatedly taken me into places. Of incredible pain. Incredible insecurity.
- That I might find my security in him. That I might have exposed myself.
- My self-reliance. My rotten concern for my own reputation. Even as I would appear to be concerned for God's reputation. God's church.

That I'm setting my heart to. In a sense. Build my own kingdom. Rather than setting my heart to honor the Lord. And the Lord takes us into circumstances. Has taken me into circumstances.

To expose that. Now what do I say about that? Well. Painful as it is. I say.

[ 21 : 37 ] That. All things. Work together for good. To those who love the Lord. I couldn't say that on any given day.

But I can say that overall. Continues to be a really hard lesson to learn. But I'm more able to remember now.

That not only is God with me. In the mess of life. But that he has taken me. Into the mess of life. As the pathway. To glory.

Slow. But sure. But sure. Renovation of me personally. From the inside out. Into that one day. Beautiful structure. That has. Designed and built.

By Jesus. Stamped on my forehead. As opposed to the current. Loser. Might appear to some. Sin. But notice.

[ 22 : 40 ] What it doesn't say. It doesn't say here. That all the things we experience. Will be good. Or pleasant. Or welcome. Sin is never good.

Sickness. Disease. Strained relationships. Broken relationships. Accidents. Natural disasters. Those things are never good. They're always painful.

But God's promise is this. That even these things. Will be used for the good. Of those who love him. Friends. Friends.

This is why we can relax. In every circumstance of life. I don't mean by relax. Being complacent. I mean relax. In every circumstance of life.

Not because it's good. Or pleasant in itself. But because it is purposeful. Under God's hand.

[ 23 : 55 ] And in fact. If I flip that around. I would say again to you. I couldn't survive. I really couldn't survive. In this world. If there was.

A single moment. In a single day. Of my life. That I thought. God wasn't in. Life would just be too cruel. Too pointless.

If that was where I was. God will use. Sin. Failures. Sickness.

Collapse. Business ventures. Accidents. And even conflict. In our own church family. Yes. Even conflict. In our own church family. God will use. Every one of those things. And all those things. To work for our good.

And his purpose. In making us like Christ. I guess the question then is. Will we.

[ 24 : 52 ] Will we welcome that? Are we prepared to go down that pathway. And learn? Or do we just want to cut and run? Well I can tell you.

There's been many days. When I just wanted to cut and run. I can tell you. I can tell you. I can tell you. I can tell you. I can tell you. I can tell you. I can tell you. I can tell you. But even then. I believe the Lord has pulled me back in. By various agencies.

And the council of various people. He's pulled me back in. Say no. This is where I want you to be. This is where your good is being perfected in you.

For my good is being perfected in you. Well let's press ahead now into verses 31 to 39. Where Paul lists four practical implications.

In the light of what I've just said in those verses 28 to 30. And he poses just four questions. I just want to run through them as quickly as I can now.

- [ 25 : 49 ] First question. Verse 31. Who is there to be afraid of? Given that God's power is for us. What then shall we say to these things?
- If God is for us. Who can be against us? Now one of the things I've seen through Romans 7 and 8.
- And I'm not too surprised. But it does always surprise me still. Is that Father, Son and Spirit. Are so completely. And individually. And collectively. Involved in salvation.
- And so the question here. Is really saying. If the Trinity. If Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Have my back. If Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Have my perimeter defense covered. By day and by night.
- Then. I don't need to fear. I don't need to fear the loneliest part of night. Which for me is often when my fears are at their strongest.
- [ 26 : 58 ] I don't need to fear. I don't need to fear the scariest confrontation. With my own sins. Seeing it face to face.
- And realizing what it is. I don't need to fear the intentions of family. Or in your case. Work colleagues. Or others that you rub shoulders with in this world. I don't need to fear their ability to hurt me as a Christian. Verse 32.
- What will be denied. Given what has already been supplied in Christ. 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. A father who presents. A \$900,000 Ferrari as a gift to his child.
- [ 28 : 03 ] Is hardly going to jump up and down. And rant and rave. Over \$100 worth of petrol. Is he? And yet that's so often. What we think and feel as Christians.
- Here's what the Lord has given us already in Christ. And then somehow or other we think. That he won't just supply the extra few bits and pieces.
- That's required. To make us feel the love of Jesus. And to keep us on the track. And bring us home. God's not going to hold back.
- The things we need to be his children. Having already invested so much. To make us his children. And yet.
- How often and how regularly. Do we convince ourselves. That God is neither caring. Nor generous towards us. That somehow or other God's blind.
- [ 29 : 04 ] To the things I need on a day by day basis. Or worse still. We actually convince ourselves. That in serving Jesus. Somehow or other I'm missing out. On the good things of life. And that's the same old story.
- That got Adam and Eve to start with. Isn't it? That God's not being up front with us. He's got something better over there. He's trying to hide from us. And keep us here in misery. Oh my friends.
- How do we get to think those things? We need to take God. We need to take God at his word. Like a great parent. We can trust.
- That if something is good for us. Then it will be given to us. And that also includes hard times.
- Disappointments. Disappointments. Challenges. Why are they good for us? Because they strip us bare of our own abilities and resources and self-confidence.
- [ 30 : 03 ] And they put our focus back on Christ. Third question. Who will bring a legitimate charge against us? Verses 33 and 4.
- Especially given that Jesus has already wiped clean our slate. And dealt with all charges against us. Verses 33 and 34.

Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. See the Lord did not cut any corners.

Or engage in any cover up. When it come to our salvation. When it come to doing everything legally required. To turn us from enemies into friends. There will be nothing that will come back in the future.

To embarrass the Lord. And say well actually. No. You forgot this. You overlooked that. There will be no new evidence uncovered.

[ 31 : 12 ] That means we will have to face a retrial. In the future. We hear it all the time in our society. But not so with God. There is nothing that can be used there for to blackmail us.

And Satan will try and do that. But there is nothing. Not our own sin. Not our conscience. Not our family and work colleagues. Satan has nothing real on us.

He will try and convince us that he has got heaps on us. But he has got nothing on us really. Because Christ has dealt with it all. The demands of justice have been fully satisfied.

In the death of Christ. And this fact. Is constantly made known in heaven. As Jesus constantly reminds God the Father.

And the whole of the heavenly assembly. By the looks of his hands. I've done it all. It is finished. And finally then.

[ 32 : 12 ] Who can separate us from God? 35 onwards. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

Shall tribulation? Distress? Persecution? Famine? Nakedness? Danger? Sword?

Lord. As it was written. For your sake we have been 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. 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 of creation. Nor. Nor. Nor will be able to separate us from the love of God.

[ 33 : 10 ] In Christ Jesus our Lord. There will be many times in life when we face tough situations as Christians. Some of those through no fault of our own.

Even in those situations. We do not need to fear that we will not persevere.

Because God will be preserving us. In the midst of those very situations. Think of the worst torture that a Christian has ever endured. Think of the most powerful spiritual forces of evil in the universe.

None of those things will be able to overpower or erode God's love from us and commitment to us. Yes they might take our life and hasten us into heaven. But they will never erode God's love or commitment to us.

Now we know only too well that most marriages come to grief over a slowly, over a long period of time. As the initial love and commitment just gets eroded.

[ 34 : 16 ] One hurt, one disappointment at a time. Until abandonment is the outcome. Could the same happen with God's love for us?

After all, I mean he's experienced so many hurts, so many disappointments from us. He has put us back on our feet so many times. He lives with the mess that we create all the time.

But God's love is totaled. God's love is unconditional. God's love will never ever waver. Let alone fail. So there we have it my friends.



God's reference points to ensure we can navigate the truth of assurance. Assurance of salvation and be totally confident in being saved. Romans 8 starts in the context of Paul's desperate question in chapter 7.

Who will rescue me from that terrible, relentless battle against sin as a Christian? Who will rescue me from it? We've pointed to the objective work of Christ on our behalf as a rescue.

[ 35 : 28 ] We're pointed to the defining and renewing work of God's spirit within us. Confirming we are God's children. We're pointed to God's ongoing activity in our lives.

Having adopted into his family as beloved children, he is now working for our good and the achievement of his purpose in salvation. Father, Son, and Spirit.

And this is the essence of assurance. If we're looking at the battle with sin within us from the perspective of our own resources, from the perspective that I could do well enough in this battle to earn acceptance before God, then the response must be, wretched creature that I am.

But, if that same battle is seen from the perspective of God's plan and purpose, and God's grace, then the conclusion must be, I am convinced that nothing can separate me from the love of God in Christ.

Now, I'll address mainly those here this morning who are Christians. Let me have two sentences now, if you're not yet a Christian here this morning. Our life, our world, is so fragile.

[ 37 : 06 ] It really is. Every one of us, deep down, is looking for some sort of security, some sort of reference point, by which we can navigate life with confidence.

Knowing that we are ready for the life after this life. I present to you this morning the challenge to think about the Lord Jesus Christ being that pathway you are in your heart looking for.

I can only tell you from my experience that I get out of bed in the morning only because of the confidence that whatever happens on that day is actually for my good and under the umbrella of God's care and love for me.

I don't know whether I'll see the end of the day at the start. Life is so fragile. But what I do know is whatever happens at the end of that day and if it means my death, I will see the Lord Jesus and be with him forever.

And that's the security that I think every person is looking for in this world and I beg you to consider it this morning. Let me pray. Lord, we thank you that you're so kind to us in giving us absolute confidence and assurance in what you're doing for us, what you have done for us and what you're continuing to do in us.

[ 38 : 39 ] Help us, Lord, to luxuriate in that assurance. Not to be self-centered, Lord, but then to be so confident in the loving nature of your Father that we want to respond to you in a way that's pleasing and honoring to you as we seek to live and serve you day by day.

Amen. Amen.