

If God Is For Us

Week 32: Aug 6-12 – *Romans 5:12-8:39*

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Helpful Resources

Map of Paul's Missionary Journeys (p.59)

Making Sense of It All

- The Big Picture

We are in the middle of Paul's explanation of the gospel in *Romans*. While Paul will answer a few questions pertaining to the Jews in the next few chapters (9-11), he reached a climax in *Romans 8*. Paul described our depravity and removed excuses we might use to avoid judgment for our sin. He explained the futility of works to save us and elevated Christ as the only means for salvation. Paul explained that only faith leads to justification from sin, and he outlined many of the benefits that God has granted us through His Spirit. So then, how should we respond to such good news? "What shall we say to these things?" (*Rom. 8:31*). Paul answered, "If God is for us, who is against us?" (*v.31*). While this verse is often used to encourage Christians regarding trials, tribulations, or other obstacles, in its context, this verse pertains to our salvation. If God has done all these things for us (when we couldn't do them ourselves), then who is left to condemn us? Let's consider the answer in this review.

- Who or What Is Against Us?

1. **One Man** (*Rom. 5:12-21*): Adam, who was the first man and representative of all humanity, failed God and wrought destruction on both creation and his descendants.

But God sent a second Adam, Jesus, who through His sinless life and substitutionary death has reversed the curse of Adam and provided a means of salvation and eternal life.

2. **Presence of Sin** (*Rom. 3:9-18, 23*): Because of the sin of Adam, all his descendants (including us) have inherited a sinful nature (our flesh). Because of our sinful nature, we naturally sin. Therefore, "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (*3:23*)

But God through Christ has forgiven our sin by His death on the cross. We are justified in His sight by faith in Jesus, as if we had not sinned (*3:21-4:25; 5:8; 7:14-8:11*).

3. **The Law** (*Rom. 2:12-29; 3:19, 20*): God's law is good and perfect. He gave it to us to show us our sin, that we are unable to meet His holy standard. Therefore, we are all condemned by the Law, even Gentiles who have God's laws written on their hearts.

But God through Christ fulfilled the Law perfectly. He has imputed His righteousness to us since we could not achieve righteousness on our own (*2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 7:7-13*).

4. **Death** (*Rom. 5:12-21*): The consequence or curse of sin is death. Because all people sin, death has spread to all people. Death, then is our greatest enemy.

But God through Christ defeated death. He promised His followers eternal life. By His resurrection, He proved that He could fulfill His promise to grant us life forever (*8:1, 2*).

5. **The Wrath of God** (*Rom. 1:18; 2:1-5*): God, who is holy and righteous, has been offended by the rejection and rebelliousness of humanity. His righteous anger burns against mankind, and only He can determine how His wrath can be abated (*5:9, 10*).

But God through Christ offered a sacrifice on the cross and became our propitiation, to satisfy the wrath of God. Therefore, because of Christ, we have peace with God (*5:1*).

6. **The Judgment of God** (*Rom. 2:5-11*): Because of our sin and ungodliness, we will all stand before God for judgment. All sinners are condemned to eternity apart from God.

But God through Christ freed us from His judgment of sin. "There is therefore now no condemnation... for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death" (*8:1, 2*).

7. **The Power of Sin** (*Rom. 6:1-22*): As descendants of Adam, conceived in sin, we are enslaved to sin, always susceptible to its power, never able to escape temptation.

But God through Christ has defeated the power of sin. We are no longer enslaved to sin but enslaved to God, and with His indwelling Holy Spirit, we can escape temptation. By following the Spirit, we no longer must satisfy our sinful lusts (*7:14-8:11*).

- What Shall We Say to These Things?

Because of Christ, we are no longer estranged from God. Rather we are now adopted into His family as sons and fellow heirs of Jesus (*8:14-25*). He is conforming us into the image of His Son (sanctification), and He even helps us to pray as we should (*8:26-29*). If God has done all these things for us, then who or what is left to condemn us? Nothing (*v.34*). Who or what will separate us from His love and salvation? Nothing (*v.35-39*).

- The Golden Chain, *Romans 8:28-30*

For centuries, theologians have referred to Paul's five links — foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification — as "the Golden Chain" of salvation. The most "troublesome" link is predestination, that people are saved by God's sovereign choice, and His choice was not based on any conditions or human merit, but by His own will (*Rom. 3, 9*). Those whom He foreknew (set His love upon from the beginning), He predetermined that they would be saved. Jesus said, "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me..." (*Jn. 6:37*). If God did not predestine people, no one would be saved (*Gen. 6:5*). But those whom He chose will respond to His call and be justified by the faith He provides. By His grace alone, those whom He justifies will be glorified and secured forever with Him.

The Bottom Line

If God is for us, then who can be against us? No one. God has removed all charges through Christ.

Questions to Consider

1. What part of Paul's salvation explanation is the most encouraging or challenging? Why?
2. Since God has done such amazing things for us, then how now should we live?
3. Explain a man-centered view of the Golden Chain. How does it devalue God's work?