

WALKING THROUGH ROMANS - PART 16

ROMANS CHAPTER 8 - NOTHING CAN SEPARATE US: CONFIDENCE IN GOD'S UNBREAKABLE LOVE

We're walking through Romans. This is Lesson Sixteen, and we are concluding Romans chapter eight. This lesson focuses on the confidence believers can possess because nothing can separate them from God's unbreakable love.

The driving question that carries the entire book remains: Has God remained faithful in a fractured world? Paul continues answering that question by showing that the world's brokenness cannot break God's faithfulness.

In the previous lesson, Paul explained that suffering has not interrupted God's purpose. Creation groans, believers groan, and the Holy Spirit helps believers in their weakness while they wait for God to complete what He has promised.

That discussion leads to another important question: If God is carrying believers through suffering, can anything stop God?

Romans 8:31-39 answers through a series of direct questions. Paul does not ask these questions because he is uncertain. Each question is designed to strengthen the believer's confidence.

That confidence is not based on how tightly believers can hold onto God. It is based on the strength of God's hold on them. The believer's security rests in God's commitment, Christ's completed work, and a love that opposition, accusation, suffering, and created powers cannot destroy.

BUCKET ONE - ROMANS 8:31-32

Paul begins by looking back at everything he has already explained. God has called believers, placed them in right standing, and promised to raise and transform them so they will become fully like Christ and live in His presence.

Paul asks, "What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?"

The phrase God is for us means that God is committed to completing what He has begun in believers. Their relationship with God is a spiritual journey, and God remains actively involved in bringing that journey toward its promised completion.

Believers are called to tend to that spiritual journey while Christ continues His saving and transforming work within them. The final completion of that work reaches beyond the present life, when believers will be raised, transformed, and brought into full life with Christ.

God being for believers does not mean they will never face opposition. Paul is not promising a life without resistance, hardship, evil forces, or antagonistic circumstances.

The promise is that opposition cannot overturn God's purpose. Opposition may challenge believers, pressure them, and complicate their journey, but it does not possess the authority to cancel what God has determined to accomplish.

Believers must therefore learn how to depend upon God's power while facing forces that work against God's will. The deciding factor is not the existence of opposition. The deciding factor is whether believers will continue trusting the God who is able to carry them through it.

Paul then gives his greatest evidence that God is for believers: God did not withhold His own Son but gave Christ for them.

Christ is God incarnate - God taking on human flesh. Through the gospel, Jesus suffered, died on the cross, was buried, was raised from the dead, ascended, and now reigns as Lord and Savior.

If God has already given Christ, believers can trust that God will also provide everything necessary to bring them into the future He has promised.

In this lesson, providential describes God's willingness and ability to provide. God remains a providing God even when believers are confused about why opposition is still present.

Paul's message is not that life will always cooperate. Life will have moments that appear to work for us, against us, and around us. Evil can operate through people, situations, circumstances, and atmospheres.

The practical instruction is clear: when life comes against you, keep moving. Do not allow opposition to produce stagnation. The greatest danger is not merely that opposition exists; it is that believers may stop trusting and stop moving with the One who has the power to carry them through it.

Despite everything believers face, they still have a God who is for them.

BUCKET TWO - ROMANS 8:33-34

Paul now moves from the language of opposition to the language of a courtroom. The question is no longer only, "Who is against us?" The question becomes, "Who can successfully accuse us?"

Paul asks, "Who will bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn?"

In this lesson, God's elect refers to those who are chosen and called to belong to Christ. Relationship with God involves a willing response. God does not force relationship, but those who choose relationship with God are called to live with relational loyalty and continually cultivate that relationship.

Believers can face charges from several directions. Accusations may come from other people. They may rise from the believer's past. They may also come from a troubled conscience that continually rehearses previous failures.

Some accusations may be false, and some may point to things that actually happened. Paul does not argue that believers have never failed. He argues that no accusation can overturn God's verdict when God has placed them in right standing through Christ.

This brings Paul back to justification. To be justified means to be placed in right standing with God. That standing is not earned through perfect performance. It is received through the faithful work of Christ.

Because Christ was faithful to the gospel assignment, believers do not have to remain controlled by the accusations and charges brought against them. God has declared a verdict of freedom and right standing through Christ.

Paul provides four grounds for the believer's confidence.

Christ died.

Christ was raised.

Christ is at God's right hand.

Christ intercedes for believers.

Christ's death means the cross dealt with sin. Before the work of Christ, humanity had no ability to pay the full debt created by sin. At the cross, Christ addressed the penalty and power of sin for those who place their trust in Him.

Christ's resurrection confirms His victory over death. Human authorities believed the crucifixion had ended His work, but the resurrection demonstrated that death and earthly power could not defeat God's purpose.

Christ being at God's right hand is not merely a statement about location. It is a statement about authority. Christ shares in divine authority and reigns with power.

Christ's intercession means that He represents believers before God. Believers are not left to defend themselves alone. Christ stands for them and continues to act on their behalf.

This means believers must stop living under charges that God and Christ have already answered. When people bring up the past, former failures, or current struggles, believers do not have to waste their lives fighting every voice.

Their time is better invested in developing a closer and more intimate relationship with God than in continually defending themselves against accusations that Christ has already stripped of their final authority.

BUCKET THREE - ROMANS 8:35-37

Paul now returns directly to the subject of suffering. He asks whether hardship, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, or the sword can separate believers from the love of Christ.

These were not random examples. They reflected real dangers and sufferings faced by early believers. Following Christ did not protect them from every painful experience.

Paul then draws from Psalm 44 to show that suffering is not always evidence that God has abandoned faithful people. A person can belong to God and still encounter hardship.

Suffering does not equal divine abandonment.

Paul declares that in all these things believers are more than conquerors through Christ who loved them.

The phrase more than conquerors comes from the Greek word *hypernikao*, meaning to overcome completely or to prevail decisively.

Paul does not mean believers will avoid suffering or receive instant victory in every earthly conflict. Being more than a conqueror does not mean trouble never reaches the believer.

It means believers possess overcoming power because suffering cannot separate them from Christ's love and cannot prevent God from completing what He has promised.

Victory does not mean there will be no pain. Victory means pain will not have the final word.

Believers can mature to the point where they understand that every unpleasant experience is not evidence that God dislikes or has rejected them. Christ's love remains present even while they are hurting.

The journey toward God's promise may include pain. To endure that pain without abandoning the mission, believers must return to the unchanging reality of Christ's love.

Pain can press believers, but it cannot pull them out of Christ's love.

If believers stand in that love, they can move through pain on the way to promise without assuming that God has abandoned them.

Christ did not suffer and die for believers only to abandon them later. The greater danger is often not that God has abandoned believers, but that suffering causes believers to withdraw from God.

The call is to acknowledge the suffering while maintaining confidence: despite the suffering, believers still overcome; despite the suffering, they still possess power; despite the suffering, trouble does not define their final destination.

Victory has the final word, not suffering.

BUCKET FOUR - ROMANS 8:38-39

Paul concludes Romans chapter eight with a personal declaration of confidence. After considering every possible threat, he announces that nothing can separate believers from God's love.

He names death, life, angels, rulers, present realities, future realities, powers, height, depth, and everything else in creation.

Paul's list covers every power, every time, every place, and every created thing. Nothing in the present can separate believers from God's love. Nothing waiting in the future can separate them. No spiritual power, human authority, painful experience, or created reality possesses that ability.

The Greek word translated separate is *chorizo*. It means to divide, part, or create distance between.

Paul's conclusion is that no created thing can remove believers from the love of God that is revealed and secured in Christ Jesus.

This is an important interpretive distinction. Paul is not primarily discussing the believer's love for God. Human love can fluctuate. Believers may feel strong one day and weak the next. Their emotions, focus, and performance can change.

Paul is discussing God's love for the believer.

God's love is not secured by the believer's emotions, circumstances, consistency, or performance. God's love for believers is secured in Christ and demonstrated through Christ's faithful work.

Everything around believers may change, but the steadiness of God's love in Christ does not change. When circumstances shift, believers must stand on what cannot shift.

They can continue through good days and painful days by remaining grounded in the reality that God wants relationship with them, God loves them, and that love has been demonstrated through Christ's sacrifice, loyalty, resurrection, authority, and intercession.

FINAL TAKEAWAY

Romans 8:31-39 establishes the believer's confidence in God's unbreakable love.

God is for believers. This does not mean they will never face opposition. It means opposition cannot overturn God's purpose or prevent Him from completing what He has begun.

God justifies believers. Accusations may come from people, the past, or the conscience, but no charge can overturn the verdict God has established through Christ.

Christ died, was raised, reigns with authority, and intercedes. Believers are not facing opposition or accusation alone.

Suffering is real, but suffering is not abandonment. Believers are more than conquerors because hardship cannot separate them from Christ's love or stop God's transforming work.

Nothing in the present, nothing in the future, no spiritual power, no human authority, no painful experience, and nothing else in creation can separate believers from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

The believer's confidence is not found in the strength of their grip on God. It is found in the strength of God's hold on them.

Has God remained faithful in a fractured world? Paul's answer is yes. God is for the believer. Christ is interceding. Nothing can separate the believer from God's love.

The world may be fractured, but God's faithfulness is not.