

Sermon Notes

INSEPARABLE:

REVELING IN THE INSEPARABLE, UNAVOIDABLE, INDESTRUCTIBLE, UNDYING, INESCAPABLE, UNBENDING, IRRESISTIBLE,
UNCOMPROMISING, INFLEXIBLE, UNYIELDING, INEXORABLE, UNINTERRUPTED LOVE
THAT GOD HAS FOR US IN
CHRIST JESUS

1. GOD IS FOR US (ROMANS 8:31-32)

I. Introduction

- A. The fear of death is the great neurosis of the human race.
Hebrews 2:15: “and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.”
- B. The fear of death is the guise for fear of the avenging wrath of God.
- C. If God is against us, then it really doesn't matter how much we try to improve ourselves. How can we possibly enjoy God if we know that he will most likely destroy us anyway? Why bother glorifying God if, at the end of the day, we won't make it anyway?
- D. God himself goes in search of his lost creatures. God came in his Son to reconcile us to him (2 Cor 5:19).
- E. Because God is for us, there is no more need to hide from God or fashion our own identities out of our own shabby good works.
- F. We can all return to God because Jesus has revealed what exactly God's heart is for his people: *In Jesus Christ, God is for us.*

II. Irresistible Goodness, Inevitable Glory, All-Consuming Life

- A. Romans 8 was written to assure God's frightened children.
- B. It begins with a stunning declaration: “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”
- C. Why isn't there anymore condemnation? “For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.” (Rom 8:2)
 1. Through Christ, God has set us free from “the law of sin and death.”
 2. The law of sin and death is not the Ten Commandments. Rather, it is the *consequence* of breaking the Ten Commandments. The law of sin and death is the inescapable, unavoidable power of God's judgment on sinners.
 3. But through Christ and by the Spirit of Christ, God has taken us out from under the law of sin and death, and placed us under a new law, “the law of the Spirit of life.”
 4. “The law of the Spirit of life” is not the moral Law/Ten Commandments, but the irresistible, inescapable eternal life that is bestowed upon the Christian through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the opposite of the law of sin and death.
 5. If the law of sin and death is what weighs the whole world down in condemnation and suffering, the law of the Spirit of life is gravitational pull in

the opposite direction—the pull toward eternal life and the guarantee of the fullness of salvation.

- D. Verses 3-4 tell us how God was able to accomplish this for sinners, how he is able to free us from the law of sin and death: “For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”
1. God has done what his moral Law/Torah could not do for us, which is to eradicate sin and create a righteous people.
 2. God eradicated our sins completely in the body of his Son Jesus Christ.
 3. When we walk according to the Spirit (i.e., when we walk out of faith in Christ, live in dependence upon the Spirit of Christ), God’s righteous requirements will be fulfilled in us—even if we ourselves don’t actually do everything that God’s Law requires us to do and remain sinful in our bodies (cf. Rom 7:19).
 4. By the Spirit of Christ, God clothes us in the righteousness of Christ and gives us a new delight in his holy Law.
- E. Paul comforts believers: “But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness” (v 10).
1. In this world-age, our bodies continue to sin and experience earthly consequences for our sins.
 2. But the Spirit of Christ in us—the Spirit who binds us to Christ and applies the perfect righteousness of Christ to us—is now our life.
- F. Since Christ’s Spirit is our life, neither death, condemnation, nor sin will have the final word over us. Instead, God’s final word over us will be *glorification*.
Rom 8:28-30: “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ 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. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.”
- G. That is the Father’s way of saying that he will finish what he has started in our lives.
1. If we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation;
 2. and having received the assurance of your salvation, we have begun to love God (albeit poorly still)—
 3. that love is the evidence that the Spirit of Christ dwells in you.
- H. Through this Spirit of Christ, whom we received not by doing works of the Law but through faith in Christ alone, God will make all things new.
- I. Believers don’t have to be afraid of death, because in Christ we are not coming under God’s condemnation ever again.

III. What Shall We Say to These Things?

- A. Having assured us that—
- there is no more condemnation for us who are in Christ (by faith) (8:1),
 - God has placed us under the law of the Spirit of Christ (8:2),
 - God has destroyed our sins in Christ (8:3),
 - the Spirit of Christ is now our life (8:10),
 - glorification is what God has in store for us (8:30),
- the Scripture now guides us to apply these truths into our own life situations:
“What then shall we say to these things?” (v 31)
- B. The “these things” are tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, and violence (v 35)—every conceivable trouble that comes with life in this world.

IV. God Is For Us

- A. Now that there is no more condemnation for us, how shall we respond to all these troubles? We say: “If God is for us, who can be against us?”
- Since God is behind us, who can oppose us to the very end?
 - Because God likes us very much, why should we care what the rest of the world thinks about us?
 - Since God has already promised to glorify us in his glory, does it really matter what happens to us in this world anymore?
- B. The Gospel frees us from the fear of ultimate death. In doing that, the Gospel frees us from the fear of human opinion to live lives that glorify and enjoy God.

V. God Gave His Own Son

- A. In case we still need some assurance that God loves us, read on. How do we know that God is for us?
- Rom 8:32: “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?”
- B. Verse 32 contains the heart of the Gospel.
1. The Gospel is not “generic” good news that God is good, or that God loves us, or that God is merciful, or even that God is King.
 2. While those truths are very good, they are not necessarily good news for sinners just yet.
 3. What makes all those facts Gospel comes down to this one fact: God “did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all...”
 4. God’s self-sacrificial giving of his own Son (his very best) as a propitiating sacrifice is the essence of the Gospel and the evidence for how much God loves us.
- C. While “all” here refers to the elect, those who repent and believe in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins and for their fulfilment of the Law, its usage is meant to impress on us the sheer sufficiency of Christ’s death.

1. Christ's death is "good enough" to compensate God for *all* the sins of *all* of God's people (and potentially for *all* the world).
2. That's how far and wide God's love is for us.
3. If you turn to God and ask him to forgive your sins, it doesn't matter how destructive or grave your sin is—God will do it right there and then. And God will forgive you because the life of his own Son has already been offered for your sins.

VI. God Will Give Us All Things

- A. Since God "did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all," Paul draws a further conclusion: "how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?"
- B. Paul is reasoning from the greater to the lesser: If God can do the most difficult thing (which is to give his own same-substance Son to die for us), why wouldn't he do much easier things for us? Why wouldn't he graciously give us all other good things that bring us closer to his love and to his joy?
- C. The "all things" that Paul had in mind here are all those good things we read about in verses 28-30:
 - God working all things together for our good (v 28);
 - God conforming us "to the image of his Son" (v 29);
 - God justifying us, sanctifying us, and finally, glorifying us (v 30).
- D. If God has done the hardest thing, which is to give his own Son, his own Self, as a sacrifice for sinners, everything else is easy for him to do.

VII. God Is for *You*.

The main lesson of Romans 8:31-32 is the Gospel. The Gospel is not what we do for God. It is who God has chosen to be to us and do for us. God has chosen to be *for* us. And because God is for us, God gave up his own Son so that we might have eternal life and all other good things associated with that life.

- A. We may have this impression that God is for us only because Jesus died for us and satisfied his wrath.
- B. While God will not accept us unless our sins have been washed away by the blood of his Son, it is precisely because God is for us that he sent his Son to die for us to begin with.
- C. Jesus' death didn't make God love us. God loved us, which is why he sent Jesus to make it possible for us to come to him. It was God who "did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all." It wasn't anything we did that coerced God into doing that for us.
- D. Believe that this promise is for you. *In Jesus Christ, God is for you.*

Questions for Reflection

1. Was there anything in particular about today's sermon that blessed and encouraged you?
2. Was there anything with which you disagree or found difficult to accept?
3. How does the fear of death/punishment (Heb 2:15) manifest itself in your life?
4. "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom 8:1). Based on this verse, how does God view his children? How does God view you?
5. According to 8:2, why isn't there anymore condemnation for God's children?
6. What are (1) "the law of sin and death" and (2) "the law of the Spirit of life"?
7. What has God done for us through Jesus that his Law could not do (vv 3-4)?
8. According to v 10, what does the Spirit of Christ do in us?
9. If the Spirit of Christ is now our life, what consequences would this have for us? (See Rom 8:28-30)
10. Having assured us that we have been placed in Christ and under Christ's Spirit, "What then shall we say to these things?" (v 31)
11. The Gospel frees us from the fear of ultimate death. In doing that, the Gospel frees us from the fear of human opinion to live lives that glorify and enjoy God. Ponder this.
12. According to Rom 8:32, how do we know that God is for us?
13. If God gave up Christ for us, what else would he give us? (v 32)
14. What are the other good things that God will give us? (v 32)