

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

3. CHRIST FOR US

(ROMANS 8:34)

I. Introduction

II. God Answers Our Haters

- A. Up this point, Paul has been showing us how to respond to the accusations and charges that are thrown at us by the world and even by our own consciences.
 - Rom 8:31: “What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?”
 - Rom 8:33: “Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies.”
- B. Now, “Who is to condemn?” Paul helps us answer this question by instructing us to look to Christ.
- C. He draws our attention to four episodes in Christ’s own life that are specifically given to us by God to enable us to stand against all those who would attempt to accuse us:
 - 1. The fact that Christ died for us.
 - 2. The fact that Christ was raised for us.
 - 3. The fact that Christ reigns for us.
 - 4. The fact that Christ intercedes for us even as we speak.

III. Answer 1: Christ Jesus Dead for Us

- A. How is God able to justify sinners like us in the face of all the charges and accusations that are thrown at us, many of which are true?
—God is able to justify us because “Christ Jesus is the one who died...”
- B. Christ’s death is the full, all-sufficient payment for whatever bad things believers have done and will ever do in their lives.
- C. Since Christ is the Son of God, his life has infinite value. It can fully compensate God for anything that was done against him.
- D. The Scripture teaches us to answer our accusers by appealing to the fact that it is Christ Jesus who died.
- E. When God chooses to justify us and forgive our sins, it’s not because he has simply chosen to ignore our sins. Instead, God can forgive us because God has already punished our sins once and for all in Jesus Christ.

- J.I. Packer: “Our sins *have been* punished; the wheel of retribution *has* turned; judgment *has* been inflicted for our ungodliness—but on Jesus, the lamb of God, standing in our place.” (*Knowing God*, 212)
- F. Since Christ died in the place of each and every believer, there is no more need to condemn.
- G. Justice has already been served by the execution of the Son of God on behalf of believing sinners.

IV. Answer 2: Christ Jesus Raised for Us

- A. Paul raises yet another fact about Christ. This time, he directs us to the resurrection: “—more than that, who was raised...”
- B. What is it about the resurrection of Christ helps us respond to our accusers and critics?
 1. The resurrection of Christ was Christ’s own justification.
 - 1 Tim 3:16 : “Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He [Christ] was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.”
 2. When we believe, receive, and rest on Jesus alone for our salvation, we are joined to Jesus Christ. His justification becomes *our* justification as well.
 - Rom 4:25 : Our Lord Jesus Christ “was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.”
- C. How does the resurrection of Jesus answer our accusers?

—The resurrection of Jesus = the justification of Jesus + all who are joined to him in faith.
- D. In Jesus’ justification, you and I have received our justification from God. That being the case, no one can ultimately condemn us.
- E. Jesus himself is the resurrection and justification of the believer.
- F. When the haters speak against us, the correct response is neither to deny our faults nor return insults. Rather, we direct all eyes—our accusers’ and our own—toward Jesus. Who is to condemn? Jesus was the One who died in our place. And Jesus was the One who was raised—and we in him.

V. Answer 3: Christ Jesus Enthroned for us

- A. Paul goes even further. He draws our attention to the exaltation of Christ, the heavenly enthronement of the Lord Jesus, “who is at the right hand of God...”
- B. When Scripture talks about Jesus being at the right hand of God, it’s speaking about Jesus’ enthronement at God’s right hand. Jesus now occupies, alongside God, the highest seat of power and authority in the entire universe.

- C. Jesus' enthronement is a key part of the Gospel message.
- Acts 2:32-33: "This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. ³³ Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing."
 - Acts 5:31: "God exalted him [Jesus] at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins."
 - Acts 7:55-56: "But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ And he said, 'Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.'" —The enthronement of Jesus Christ is part of the Gospel we are called to proclaim.
- D. Why is the enthronement of Jesus good news for sinners?
1. If you understand union with Christ, you can see why it's good news.
 2. If we are united to Jesus through faith, then the enthronement of Jesus is our enthronement as well.
 3. The enthronement of Jesus is what guarantees our victory over sin, evil, violence, illness, and every ugly thing that this world can throw at us.
- E. Paul draws out this implication for us in several passages.
- Eph 2:6: God "raised us up with [Christ] and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus [.]"
 - Col 3:1: "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God."
- F. Why is the enthronement of Jesus at God's right hand Gospel for us? Because the enthronement of Jesus means that we who believe in Jesus are forever in God's favor and affections.
1. If God favors us, then God is no longer interested in entertaining any further accusations, criticisms, malicious gossip, hate speech, conspiracy theories, or whatever that may be levelled against his children.
 2. The world and the devil can accuse Christians all they want. But God will not listen. The case is closed. Jesus Messiah, the Representative-King of his people, "is at the right hand of God..."
 3. "JESUS CHRIST IS LORD" is very good news for us. It means we win.

VI. Answer 4: Christ Jesus Interceding for Us

- A. Finally, Paul draws us to the intercession of Christ for us: "...who indeed is interceding for us" (v 34).
- B. Christ's kingship is not an aloof or abusive kingship. It is a priestly, mediatorial kingship for the sake of his people.
1. Consider the following passages in addition to Rom 8:34:

- Heb 7:26: “For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.”
 - Heb 4:15: “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.”
2. John Calvin comments on Rom 8:34: “Although, therefore, Christ holds all things in subjection under His feet from His lofty throne, Paul represents Him as a Mediator, whose presence it would be absurd for us to dread, since He not only invites us to Himself in a kindly manner, but also appears for us before the Father as Intercessor.” (*The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Romans and to the Thessalonians*, 186).
- C. Jesus is our biggest supporter in heaven! But not only that. He sustains us by his intercession through our journey in this world.
- D. How does Christ intercede for us?
- Westminster Larger Catechism *Q 55. How doeth Christ make intercession? Ans.* Christ maketh intercession, by his appearing in our nature continually before the Father in heaven (Heb 9:12, 24), in the merit of his obedience and sacrifice on earth (Heb 1:3), declaring his will to have it applied to all believers (Jn 3:16; Jn 17:9, 20, 24); answering all accusations against them (Rom 8:33-34), and procuring for them quiet of conscience, notwithstanding daily failings (Rom 5:1-2; 1 Jn 2:1-2), access with boldness to the throne of grace (Heb 4:16), and acceptance of their persons (Eph 1:6) and services (1 Pet 2:5).
- E. The rule that Jesus exercises is a rule of *love*. King Jesus absolutely loves his people.
- F. Because Jesus loves each of us so much, he will not allow any of us to fall under the condemnation of our sins.
- G. Will King Jesus rebuke his people for their sins? Certainly. Will he exhort us to change? Of course. But you see, he does all of that only *within* the justifying verdict of God. He does this *inside* his everlasting and unbreakable love for us—and not outside that love.

VII. Jesus Is Your Answer

Jesus is the Answer God places on our lips to respond to our accusers.

Jesus was the One who died for our sins, and his death has satisfied all justice.

Jesus was the One who was raised for our justification.

Jesus was the One who was enthroned to ensure our final victory.

And from his favored, privileged place at the right hand of God, *Jesus* intercedes for us, enabling us to have peace with God in spite of our daily sins and keeping us from falling into the shadows (Ps 94:18).

If there is anything we have learned from Romans 8:34, it's this: We are not our own answer, *Jesus* is. We are not our own defense, *Jesus* is. And because *Jesus* is enough, we don't need any further defense.

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. What are the four episodes in Christ's own life that are specifically given to us by God to enable us to stand against all those who would attempt to accuse us?
4. How is the death of Christ a response to our accusers?
5. How is the resurrection of Christ a response to our accusers (1 Tim 3:16; Rom 4:25)?
6. How is the exaltation of Christ a response to our accusers (Eph 2:6; Col 3:1)?
7. How is the intercession of Christ a response to our accusers?
8. Christ reigns as a *priestly* or *mediatorial* king (Heb 4:15; 7:26). What does this teach us about Christ's attitude toward his own people?
9. Memorize Rom 8:34. Bring it to mind often. Pray through it often.