

**In the name of our Triune God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

<sup>31</sup> What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? <sup>33</sup> Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. <sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

<sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, <sup>39</sup> neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. **This is God’s Word**

**Dear Recipients of God’s love,**

**<sup>31</sup> What, then, shall we say in response to [these things]? If God is for us, who can be against us?** Paul has been talking about “these things” for almost eight chapters. The “things” are the fact that “There is no condemnation for those who are believers” and “God’s people do suffer but they are comforted by the Spirit’s help and with God’s assurances.” These things don’t lead us to despair but rather help us to go forward with confidence. Part of the confidence comes from knowing that, **“God is for Us!”** Paul supports that fact by reminding us that, **“God gave us his Son,” “God declares us righteous,”** and **“God loves us to eternity.”**

**I. “He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all”** Have you ever taken a moment to think about what it means that God gave us his Son? It’s so easy for us to take that for granted, but Jesus is God’s only beloved Son – the last one he would want to see suffer and die.

When Jesus was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane and facing the cross and suffering he prayed, **“My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet, not as I will, but as you will.”** (Matthew 26:39). But there wasn’t any other way to bring salvation to mankind and so God gave up his Son. He didn’t spare him, because God’s love for us did not allow him to go easy on his Son. That would have meant eternal death and damnation for us. God gave up his Son so that we can have life – and not only life but so much more.

**“How will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?”** Earlier in chapter eight Paul listed some of the spiritual blessings that God graciously gives us. He will raise our bodies from the dead on the last day (Romans 8:11). The Holy Spirit brings us faith in Jesus which makes us joyful children and heirs of God (Romans 8:15-17). We have the sure hope of everlasting life in heaven which will free our bodies from the sufferings of this world (Romans 8:23). The Holy Spirit prays on our behalf even when we don’t know what to pray (Romans 8:26). And God works all things out for our eternal good (Romans 8:28). What a treasure chest of blessings God gives us spiritually as well as making sure we have everything we need physically.

All because God gave us his greatest treasure – his Son – so that we might have the forgiveness of sins and the sure hope of eternal life. I hope you never get tired of hearing how God has given us the very best and yet there are times when we take our salvation for granted.

We don't even think about what it cost God to bring us spiritual life. It's so easy for our attitude to slip into thinking Jesus loves me and forgives me so I'll do what I want. At those times we treat God's gift of his Son like dirt. We go our own way and don't give a second thought to breaking his commandments. Thank God that he is patient and loving with us and that Jesus paid for all those times when we don't treasure his gift of salvation like we should. Remember that God loves us even when we don't show our love for him. God is for us – he gave his Son for us and thus he has declared us righteous.

**II. “Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.”** Have you ever had to go to court to answer charges against you? It usually isn't a pleasant experience driven by the fear that you will be declared guilty of your crime and have to pay the penalty. When it comes to our spiritual life, we have plenty accusers bringing charges against us because of our sins. But the charges don't stick – not because we haven't committed the crime but because Jesus has stepped in and pled guilty in our place and then paid the penalty for our sin. Therefore God declares us justified – a fancy word meaning that our verdict is “not guilty.” This doesn't happen just once in our lifetime but is an ongoing process because we sin daily and need that “not guilty” verdict every day – that forgiveness that is only possible because of the saving work of Christ – because he was our substitute and took the punishment we deserve.

But our enemies don't care about the verdict. They go right from accusation to condemnation – or at least they try. But Paul points to the one who defends us – Jesus Christ who died for our sins, but even more than that – Jesus Christ who was raised to life. Without Christ's resurrection, we would be defending ourselves and we would be guilty and lost. But because Christ rose from the dead we can rest easy knowing that the payment for our sins has been made in full. You might say that the resurrection is just as necessary for our salvation as the suffering and death of our Savior. Jesus work on this earth is now complete but his work is not done.

**“[Jesus Christ is now] at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.”** John wrote, **“My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. <sup>2</sup> He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.”** (1 John 2:1-2)

There are no sweeter words than to be declared righteous – right with God. Not because of what we have done but because Christ has made us “at one” with God. Sometimes it is hard to let go of our guilt – we insist on carrying that load of guilt around with us, letting it make our lives miserable and maybe the lives of those around us miserable too. Did you realize that when you insist on carrying your guilt around you are rejecting the work of your Savior. In essence, you are saying, “I don't want to be forgiven – God, I don't want your love – I'd rather be miserable.” Let go of your sins. Christ has paid for them. Forgiveness is yours. The accusations of Satan

have no power over you. Receive the peace and joy of forgiveness that God wants you to have. For he loves you – he loves you to eternity.

**III.** Satan wants to drive a wedge between us and God, but God's love for us never stops. There are many hardships in this world that could easily separate us from the love of Christ if we let them. Whenever we have problems, Satan is there to whisper in our ear that God doesn't care and to try and make us doubt God's love. But Paul reminds us that in all these things, no matter what our problems might be, **we are conquerors** because we share in Christ's victory. He has defeated Satan and thus he has defeated every spiritual power that might assail us.

That's why Paul could boldly state, **“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,<sup>39</sup> neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”** Whether we live or die, we are the Lords. Angels and demons can't overcome us because we have the power of God giving us strength to resist them. Nothing can rob me of the hope that I have in Jesus whether in the present or the future because my God is always with me – standing beside me through his Word. Paul mentions that neither height nor depth can separate me from the love of Christ for wherever I am, I am never out of God's reach.

The love of God is always with us. We see it in his Son, who died that we might have forgiveness. We hear it in the Word that declares us right with God and we look forward to the eternity reserved for us in heaven. Nothing can separate you from the love of God. You are his own child through faith in Christ Jesus. May that always bring you peace and comfort – today and every day. Amen.