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Risen and Reigning: An Easter Series / Grace; Victory; Resurrection; Eternal Security / Romans 8:31–39

This sermon celebrates the resurrection of Christ as the foundation of the believer's assurance and security in salvation. Drawing from Romans 8:31–39, it proclaims that nothing can separate God's people from His love in Christ—not suffering, sin, or spiritual forces. Through Christ's death, resurrection, ascension, and ongoing intercession, believers are eternally secure. This assurance is not based on our love for God, but on His unchanging love for us. The message challenges hearers to respond in faith, live boldly for Christ, and rest in the victory and eternal hope secured by the risen and reigning Savior.

Introduction

As the dawn broke that morning the women made their way to the tomb with the intention of properly preparing His body for its final resting place. The hurried preparations that had been done on Friday were simply inadequate for this Man. As they approached the site that unfolded before their eyes was a wonder to behold. Matthew recorded in Matthew 28:1–2 “Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it.” to which Mark adds in Mark 16:6 “And he said to them, “Do not be amazed; you are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who has been crucified. He has risen; He is not here; behold, the place where they laid Him.”

Those three English words “He Is Risen” translate a single Greek word, but one that would absolutely alter the course of human history. Stunned by what they heard and saw, unaware of full and staggering implications of what they had been told they raced back to the rest of the disciples. Over the next forty days there would be multiple appearances of Christ, both privately to the Eleven and publically to larger groups of those who followed Him until the day that He was taken up, ascended to take His rightful place at the Father's right hand. Hebrews 1:2–3 “in these last days

spoke to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds, who is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power; who, having accomplished cleansing for sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high," It is from here that He serves as our Great High Priest Hebrews 8:1–2 "Now the main point in what is being said is this: we have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister in the holy places and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man." and were He intercedes on our behalf Hebrews 7:25 "Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."

Over the last several weeks we have spent much time in Paul's letter to the church at Rome in preparation for this day, for the time when we come together to celebrate the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. During this time of preparation we have been seeking to grasp a fuller and richer understanding of just what has been accomplished, and we say has been accomplished because we know from the truth of scripture that we were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. That all of those whom the Father has given the Son will come to Him and that they will be lifted up on the last day. In our efforts we went all the way back to the crucial understanding and truth that the very nature of humanity is sinful, from there we saw that the righteousness of God that was obtained only by faith in Christ. We witnessed the power of the resurrection as we by sharing in the Christ's death have been put to death to sin and made alive to Christ and finally, last week we saw the assurance that comes with being adopted as a child of God.

This week we find our selves once again turning to the 8th chapter of Paul's letter to the church at Rome. In between last week's text and this week's text Paul spoke about the present sufferings that the church was feeling under the mounting persecution that it was facing in both Rome and in reality everywhere that it was present. He contrasted the present sufferings with the future glory and culminated this truth in demonstrating the surety that God would bring about the complete salvation of all of His people. He writes in Romans 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. Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to

become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brothers; and those whom He predestined, He also called; and those whom He called, He also justified; and those whom He justified, He also glorified."

We know that these verses in and of themselves contain great truths that are magnificent to behold, but the truth is, that even with the certainty of the language in these verses, God knew that there would be people with questions. The "what if's of life" that are never ceasing and never ending. In the verses to follow, completing the remainder of chapter 8 Paul, through the Holy Spirit, gives us what John MacArthur labeled as a "Hymn of Security". This is where our focus for this morning takes us, so please turn with me in your bible to Romans 8 and we will be reading from verses 31-39:

Text

Please rise of the reading of God's Holy, Inerrant, Infallible, Authoritative, Complete and Sufficient Word:

Romans 8:31–39 LSB

What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *is* against us?

He who indeed did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things?

Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies;

who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction, or turmoil, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Just as it is written,

"FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG;

WE WERE COUNTED AS SHEEP FOR *the* SLAUGHTER."

But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,

nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Almighty God,

We marvel that You should become incarnate, be crucified, die and be buried. The sepulchre calls forth our adoring wonder, for it is now empty and You are Risen! It has been proclaimed in the Gospel accounts, living witnesses have verified it, and our heart's experience knows it. Grant us to die with You that we might be raised to new life, for we wish to be as dead and buried to sin, to selfishness and to the world, that we may not hear the voice of the charmer, the cunning one, and that we might be delivered from his desires. Oh Lord there is much ill about us - crucify it, there is much flesh within us - mortify it. Purge us of our selfishness, our fear of man, our love of worldly approval, the shame of being thought old fashioned, and the desire to be well received by this world. Let us, by Your Spirit, reckon our old lives dead because of crucifixion, and that we never feed that old life as a living thing. Grant us to stand with our dying Savior, to be content to be rejected, to be willing to take up the unpopular truths, and to hold fast these teachings that the world despises until death. Help us to be resolute and Christ-contained. Let us not wander from the path of obedience to Thy will. Strengthen us for the battles ahead. Give us courage for all the trials, and grace for all the joys. Help us to be holy, happy people, free from wrong desires, and everything contrary to Your mind. Grant us more and more of the resurrection life; may it rule us, may it strengthen us to walk in its power and by its influence. These things we ask in the blessed name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

Romans 8

Earlier this week I ran across a statement made by Pastor Josh Buice, Founder and President of G3 Ministries, regarding the 8th chapter of the

book of Romans. He wrote, "If I were imprisoned and could only have one page out of the Bible, I would request the eighth chapter of Romans. If a person memorizes it, no matter where a person finds himself - the treasure chest of truth will be hidden in his heart and can be employed to overcome despair and fear."

I would imagine that in the intervening hours between the death of the Lord Jesus and His glorious resurrection were hours filled with despair and fear for the disciples of Christ. However, after agonizing hours of sorrow and mourning, they received the news, Christ had RISEN! Over the remaining years of their lives they would continue to share the truth of the gospel, proclaim the news of His resurrection and just what that meant for all those who would believe.

As the gospel message spread, however, the resistance to the truth also spread. One of the greatest forms of resistance to this truth can be found right within the minds of believers. It is here that the questions form, it is here that the flesh clings desperately to life. The mind could truly be considered the greatest battlefield that you and I will ever fight on.

What If?

Is it any wonder that Romans 12 opens up with these words: Romans 12:1–2

Romans 12:1–2 LSB

Therefore I exhort you, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a sacrifice—living, holy, *and* pleasing to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship.

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may approve what the will of God is, that which is good and pleasing and perfect.

As I stated earlier, Paul brings us to the glorious truth proclaimed in verses 28-30. A truth, a reality, so certain that God has recorded it in His word as an event that is already completed in His eyes. Yet, our minds would continue to be used as a weapon in the arsenal of the enemy by causing us to question to doubt. Knowing this shortcoming, God not only records these truths as completed acts, but also anticipates the wandering of the

human thought process and gives us the tools and the weaponry with which to combat this effort.

Paul opens with the section with the question, "What then shall we say to these things?". It is important for us to understand what this question does, as we have seen in the past this is a conclusive conjunctive, joining the previous text with this text in such a way as to draw us into a conclusion based on the previously presented truths. What Paul is asking here is this, based on the realities that have been presented to you; that you have been adopted into the family, that you are co-heirs with Christ, that you have received the Spirit as the down-payment the seal, that your prayers are presented before the Father by the Holy Spirit, that even though we are sinners by nature we are acquitted based on faith alone and that our future (for us) glorification is so certain, so real, so true, that it again has been recorded as a COMPLETED PAST ACTION; what does this force you to acknowledge...

Adding to that question, Paul says, now that you have drawn a conclusion, based on those same realities, armed with the knowledge that God is for us; which is why having a right understanding of verse 28 is SO important; then who could possibly be against us?

God, who loved His people enough, that for all of human history has provided for their righteousness through faith, who gave His only begotten son so that whosoever believes would not perish, who in the words of our text, "did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all". If He did that, Paul asks, will He not also graciously give us all things?" Let us be careful with this text lest we be tempted to define "all things" according to the very sin nature that has been crucified. Note that the giving of "all things" occurs with Him, being Christ, and that it is done graciously, according to the unmerited favor of God. We also need to note, that we are taken from a position of greater to lesser here; all things pale in comparison to what He has already given, His Son. These all things are not the all things of the flesh, they are not the desires of this world, they are the promises that have already been demonstrated so far in chapter 8, the list of things that we just went through. In light of the delivering over of Christ for our sake, to bring us into a right standing before God, to declare us, by faith, righteous, how can we not understand that He will definitely and certainly give us all of these other promises, adoption, assurance, co-heirs,

the Spirit, intercession, justification, glorification...

In case, however, we still do not get the point, in case, our minds continue, and they will, to play the what if game, Paul continues... Who can bring a charge against God's elect? Remember we began this chapter in our reading last week with the words... "Therefore there is now NO CONDEMNATION for those who are in Christ Jesus" an emphatic statement that DECLARES our status in regards to condemnation or accusations, or charges being leveled at us as believers. We have come full circle, we started with the statement that there is no condemnation and now Paul asks almost the same thing "who can bring a charge?" His response, first of all it is God who justifies, it is God himself who has declared that you and I, through faith alone in Christ alone are just, we have been granted the righteousness of Christ, His perfection, the ENTIRE reason why the grave could not hold Him. Why is there no condemnation, why is it that God who justifies will not bring a charge, why is it that Christ who was crucified does not bring a charge? I'm so glad you asked

Look with me at verse 34; right here in verse 34 is the entirety of the truth of how you can be and rest assured that if you have faith in the Lord Jesus, you will be saved. It begins with the payment, the mention here of Christ's death is not just so that we remember that He died but so that we understand what that death meant. The death of Christ is the full, complete, total payment for the sins of His people. Not some of the sin, not a partial credit, not just the past sins of His people, but all of the sins, for all of His people, for all of time, past, present, future. That's the first measure of assurance, Romans 10:9 "that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;" This is faith, true saving faith, defined for us in the pages of Holy Writ

The second measure of assurance, not only was Christ put to death, but He defeated death, He defeated the grave, He has defeated hell, He has, as Christians have proclaimed for years on resurrection Sunday mornings just like this one "He Has RISEN!" God's full measure of wrath against the sins of His people was poured out on Christ on the cross, but because of the unblemished, perfect nature of this single sacrifice, death, the grave, even hell itself was powerless to hold Him and at the appointed time, He rose, the penalty paid, the slate cleansed, the wrath satisfied. Our assurance is

upheld by the REALITY of the resurrection, the bodily, real resurrection of Christ. Anything less, and our faith is false, consider these words from scripture 1 Corinthians 15:12–14 “Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.” but... Hallelujah He Has Risen!!

If these two are not enough, Paul continues, not only has He died and been raised, but He has also been exalted. Historically the church has done a magnificent job of recognizing the birth of Christ and the death and resurrection of Christ but has, unfortunately, so often ignored the ascension of Christ. I believe that part of the reason that this is avoided is because there are many who do not grasp the truth of that the ascension is, or who do not wish to proclaim what the ascension is because they do not wish to truly acknowledge the Lordship of Christ in their life. The truth is, acknowledgement or not, Christ is Lord, of all. The whole of earth has been made His foot stool, Christ Himself proclaimed just before His ascension that Matthew 28:18 “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.” independent of what any person believes, Christ is Lord. If He has died, raised and exalted so that He now sits at the right hand of the Father, the place of divine honor, where He according to Hebrews 10:11–13 “And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God”. He stands/sits at the right hand for the purpose of serving as our Great High Priest, which is our third measure of assurance.

We also see here, as our fourth measure of assurance, that He continues to intercedes for us. John MacArthur writes:

Romans: The MacArthur New Testament Commentary **Persons Who Might Seem to Threaten Our Security**

Although His work of atonement was finished, His continuing ministry of intercession for those saved through His sacrifice will continue without interruption until every redeemed soul is safe in heaven. Just as Isaiah had prophesied, “He poured out Himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet He Himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors” (Isa. 53:12). Jesus Christ “is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession

for them" (Heb. 7:25).

If we understand what Christ did on the cross to save us from sin, we understand what it means to be secure in His salvation. If we believe that God loved us so much when we were wretched and ungodly that He sent His Son to die on the cross to bring us to Himself, how could we believe that, after we are saved, His love is not strong enough to keep us saved? If Christ had power to redeem us out of bondage to sin, how could He lack power to keep us redeemed?

Separated?

You would think that these assurances alone would be enough for us, that we would recognize in these words just how securely we are held, however, as we know the human mind is often a dangerous place and it is certainly a place where the enemy loves to attack. Again, although this may catch us unaware, God is fully prepared. Even as we read these words and acknowledge these truths our brain begins to play other games.

Verse 35 begins with another set of questions. The opening word here can be translated who or what and in light of the list of things that follow what certainly seems more appropriate here, however, at the end of the day, the concern here is earthly troubles that can create, at least in our eyes, separation between us and God. This list of items or conditions display for us some of the deepest fears of our hearts.

As we enter this, the question itself sets the tone, who or what can separate us from the love of Christ... this is not our love for Christ but rather His love for us. Although we read that and should grasp that through basic understanding, it is imperative that we internalize and understand this. Our love is fickle, increasingly so, we love everything from puppies, to games, to tv shows, to activities...our love shifts depending on the direction of the wind. As such, we already inherently know that we cannot trust our love to keep us secure, which is why His love for us, not our love for Him is the base, it is the anchor that holds us firm. Once we grasp that simple, yet profound truth, that all of this depends, not on us, but on Him, then we realize why taking on His yoke is easy and His burden is light...He is doing all of the work, we are just responding to what He has done and is doing. This means that this list, although indicative of our greatest and deepest fears, carries no true weight, contains no true threat, and simply cannot in

anyway change His love for us.

In regards to this Mounce writes:

Romans 3. Living in the Spirit (8:1–39)

Far from weakening the bonds of love, trouble and hardship strengthen them. Persecution drives the true believer to the arms of the one who knows from experience the full range of suffering. Famine and nakedness (perhaps a metaphor for destitution) are powerless to affect the love of Christ. Danger and the sword (possibly that of the executioner) lose their terror in view of the presence of the one in whom we find ultimate safety.

Paul knew the cost was high, in fact the cost of true faith has always been high and it would continue and will continue to be high, but even in the face of all of this, up to and including being put to death for the sake of the gospel, Paul could declare, just as you and I can declare here today that Romans 8:37 "But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us."

This is yet another verse that is taken out of context and used to prove that God will grant to us our sinful heart's desires, when in reality this promises one thing and one thing only... true victory, true triumph, over any and everything that the foe will throw at us. When it is all said and done, at the end of this life, you may not have two nickels to rub together for warmth, but what you do have is assurance that you will, through Him (Lord Jesus) who love us, be victorious and will enter, as Bunyan describes it in his great allegory "The Pilgrims Progress" as the Celestial City.

The Ultimate Conviction

In the final two verses this morning Paul demonstrates what this line of question and answers should have on the mind of the believer, pure, absolute, and ultimate conviction that there is nothing in heaven or earth, regardless of who or what that can remove us from the Love of God in Christ.

Once again, MacArthur is helpful:

Romans: The MacArthur New Testament Commentary The Conclusion

This chapter closes with a beautiful summary of what has just been said. The apostle assures his readers that he was not teaching them anything

about which he himself was not fully convinced. He was convinced first of all because of the nature of salvation, which God had revealed to him and which he presents so clearly in these first eight chapters. His counsel is also a personal testimony. He was convinced because he had experienced most of the things mentioned and they did not separate him from Christ. Both revelation and experience convinced him. Paul was saying to believers in Rome the same thing he would say some years later to Timothy: "For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day" (2 Tim. 1:12).

The demonstration, not only in the Word, but also in our very lives, as His Spirit testifies with ours, is that which convinces us fully. We gathered today to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord, it is the same certainty with which we know that He is Risen, that we find our ultimate assurance, His Love, His Power, His Strength.

Conclusion

Paul's declaration in Romans 8:38–39 stands like a granite pillar against the swirling winds of doubt, persecution, and fear. Having built his case upon the bedrock truths of divine election, sovereign grace, and the finished work of Christ, he ends this crescendo of assurance with a full-throated, unwavering affirmation: "For I am convinced..." That word "convinced" is not the language of sentiment or feeling—it is the language of settled, tested, experienced conviction. Paul has walked through the fire. He has borne the stripes. He has tasted the lash and the cold chains of imprisonment. He has been hunted, hated, and even stoned. And still, he says, "I am convinced." Why? Because through every trial and threat, Christ's love remained—not just present, but unshaken, unfailing, and victorious.

These final two verses are not a hope or a wish. They are the anthem of a soul that has beheld the risen Christ and lives by resurrection power. Paul stacks up every conceivable force in heaven and earth—death, life, angels, rulers, time, space, even every created thing—and he pronounces them impotent. None of them—individually or collectively—can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This is the ultimate security. This is the believer's anchor in every storm. In the dark night of the soul, when doubts creep in and Satan whispers lies into your ears, you must remember this: the love that holds you was not initiated by you, and it cannot be undone by you. It is the love of God in Christ—covenantal, eternal, and sealed by blood.

So we must ask, what do we do with such assurance? Do we treat it as license to live in the flesh? Paul has already answered that question with a resounding "By no means!" No, this assurance is not a call to complacency, but to courage. It is a summons to stand firm, to press on, to live boldly for Christ because nothing—absolutely nothing—can sever us from Him.

This chapter that began with no condemnation now ends with no separation. It is, as many have said, the Mount Everest of Christian assurance. If you are in Christ—if your hope is in the risen, reigning Son of God—then this chapter is your inheritance, your confidence, your identity. You are justified. You are adopted. You are sealed. You are interceded for. You are held fast in an unbreakable bond of love.

But we must end where Paul begins in this section: "What then shall we say to these things?" That question demands more than a nod of agreement—it demands a response of the soul. What will *you* say to these things? If God has so loved you, so secured you, so invested His Son to redeem you, how can you remain unmoved? How can you live as though this truth is anything less than your highest treasure?

Let me ask you directly: Are you convinced?

Are you convinced that His love is stronger than your failures?

Are you convinced that His grace is greater than your shame?

Are you convinced that nothing—absolutely nothing—can separate you from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus?

If you are not, then come to Him. Come to the risen Christ, who died, who was raised, who now intercedes. He is able to save *forever* those who come to God through Him. And if you *are* convinced, then go forward in joy, in peace, in faith. Cling to the truth, even when all around you shakes. Rejoice in the resurrection—not just as a past event, but as your present reality and your eternal hope.

He has risen—and because He has risen, nothing can separate us from His love. Hallelujah and Amen.

Thought-Provoking Question:

If you truly believe that nothing can separate you from the love of Christ, then what is keeping you from living fully and boldly for Him right now?

Closing Prayer

Gracious Father,

We come before You rejoicing in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the One who conquered death, shattered the grave, and now lives to intercede for us. We praise You for the unfailing love that holds us fast, the righteousness that clothes us, and the Spirit who seals us. Today, Your Word has reminded us of the unshakable truth that nothing—no pain, no sorrow, no persecution, not even death itself—can separate us from Your love in Christ Jesus.

Help us, O Lord, to walk in this assurance. Let it embolden our witness, strengthen our resolve, and deepen our worship. When doubts rise and fears assail, remind us of the One who died, was raised, is exalted, and even now intercedes on our behalf. Let the glorious truth of the resurrection not only fill our minds, but transform our hearts and lives.

Grant us the grace to live as those who are more than conquerors—not in our strength, but through Him who loved us. And may the assurance of Your eternal love be the anthem of our lives until we see You face to face.

In the strong and risen name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.