

Predestinated and Persuaded

Exposition of Romans 8:28-39

Introduction:

1. We have recently carefully studied Romans 8:1-15 (October 21, 2007) and 8:17-25 (May 20, 2007).
2. This is the favorite Bible chapter for some, and the last section contains the favorite verses of some.
3. Romans can be divided at 11:36 and 8:39. These are the last words dealing with salvation directly, before Paul began a three-chapter section on the situation of Israel relative to Christ and the gospel.
4. Because it is hard to believe the great Creator God with eternal power chose to save rebel men, God gives assurances to His children in passages like this to confirm and reassure them (Heb 6:13-20).
5. This is one of the great passages of scripture where the inspired apostle became a holy orator for God, which is indicated by the seven rhetorical questions and the lofty language reaching a grand finale!
6. Without severe persecution and tribulations, we cannot fully appreciate these verses, but let us try.
7. We need a martyr's mind, for these brethren suffered, something we hardly know (8:17-18,26,35-36).
8. Hebrews describes such calamities on saints during the intertestamental period (Heb 11:35-38), and Daniel and Revelation prophesy such calamities on later saints (Dan 7:21,25; Rev 13:7; 17:6).
9. What is the nicest thing anyone has ever said or promised to you? These words are infinitely better.
10. Several of these verses could deserve their own sermons, but we might miss the overall picture.
11. These are not mere sound bites to memorize; these are the words of the living God full of meaning.
12. These verses are the glorious promises and guarantees of our security in Christ for time and eternity.
13. We absolutely do believe in eternal security ... for the elect only; we totally reject "once saved, always saved," based on decisional regeneration, for two lies or heresies do not result in truth!
14. By appreciation and affection for these verses, you can be faithful and fearless in any circumstances.

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

- A. This verse is a transitional verse, in that it takes us from dealing with suffering to salvation.
- B. *And* is an important conjunction here that ties this verse to the earlier content of the chapter.
 1. Paul had clearly established the justified righteousness of obedient elect earlier (8:1-16).
 2. He then explained the future glory of the elect as an antidote to their sufferings (8:17-25).
 3. He then added to these two comforts the Spirit's prayers for our infirmities (8:26-27).
- C. *We* limit the subject of this verse to Paul and the elect saints to which he wrote (8:1-7).
 1. Paul wrote to those saints beloved of God (8:7), which he will use here shortly (8:38-39).
 2. If we love Him, as this text states (8:28), it is by God's prior love for us (I John 4:19).
 3. The wicked never think of God, until God changes them (Ps 10:4; John 6:44; Act 16:14).
- D. The children of God can *know* certain things that are essential for their spiritual health.
 1. They should be fully and finally set in God's love for them and sovereign care of them.
 2. The fearful and unbelieving talk about having a weak and unsure hope is not scriptural.
 3. Paul was persuaded God would keep his soul he had committed to Him (II Tim 1:12).
 4. Are you solidly established with knowledge to keep from slipping (Psalm 26:1; 62:2,6).
- E. God's children can rest in the fact that *all things* in their lives are under His government.
 1. The context before emphasizes negative *things* of suffering (8:17) and infirmities (8:26).
 2. The context after emphasizes very negative *things* of suffering and martyrdom (8:35-36).
 3. The context after also emphasizes positive *things* of God's gracious salvation (8:29-31).
 4. Here is fabulous comfort for the children of God while suffering in this present world.
 5. While God can and does work our folly and sins for our good, this is not the context; yet this does not give us the liberty or presumption of doing evil that good may come (3:8).

6. Do you ask about David's heinous sin? It was the source of Solomon (II Sam 12:24-25)!
7. Did Paul's past as Christ's enemy help or hurt his ministry (Gal 1:23-24; I Tim 1:12-16)?
8. Many sinners know their sins help them love Christ and mercy (Luke 7:47; Matt 18:28).
- F. The events of life, natural and spiritual and eternal, all *work together*, coordinated by God.
 1. Only one mind could coordinate all the aspects of your life for His glory and your profit.
 2. We should learn to take the bad with the good, for they work together profitably.
 3. We may be overwhelmed by all the circumstances and events in life, but God is not.
- G. But not only do all things work together for God's children, they work together *for good!*
 1. Can you see good from evil in Joseph's life and believe God can and will do so for you?
 2. Daniel and Esther are two more such examples of God turning great pain into great gain.
 3. Consider David's attitude toward affliction and chastening in his life (Ps 119:67,71,75).
- H. The wonderful words and comforting promise of this verse only apply *to them that love God!*
 1. There is no value in these words simply used as a mantra by those who do not love God.
 2. Those who love God are the righteous, and God blesses them (Psalm 34:12-22; 128:1-6).
 3. Loving God is not some mental assent about love, but a heart filled with love for Him.
- I. Those who love God with this promise are also identified as *them who are the called* of God.
 1. If any man loves God, it is because God has already called him to this love (I John 4:19).
 2. What does it mean to be called of God? It means God chose and appointed you His child!
 3. Your calling is your chosen or appointed role or vocation (I Cor 7:17-24; Eph 4:1; 5:1).
 4. God's call can be appointment, or regeneration as a son, or the gospel call to act like one.
 5. The call here is different and more than an invitation, offer, or request for us to choose.
 6. It is God's charge, command, order, and ordination that result in us being sons of God.
 7. The Romans were called of God (Rom 1:6-7), or elect of God (I Cor 1:24-29; I Pet 1:2).
 8. The gospel call to be sons is nothing compared to God's authoritative call, appointment, ordination, and regeneration to be His sons (Matt 22:14; Rom 9:11; Ep 1:3-12; I Pet 2:9).
 9. The point here is that the declared facts of 8:28 are only for those called of God to be His.
 10. God's purpose to work all things in their lives together for good is only true of His sons.
- J. The calling or vocation we receive from God is *according to his purpose*, not at all our own.
 1. Salvation and calling are by God's eternal purpose in Christ, not our works (II Tim 1:9).
 2. If God has been merciful to you, it is according to His own good will (Matt 11:25-26).

29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

- A. The coordinating conjunction *for* shows this verse explains *his purpose* for the called (8:28).
- B. God's purpose begins in *foreknowledge*, which is beyond omniscience; it is love beforehand!
 1. The Spirit's carefully chosen words say it is *whom* He foreknew, not what He foreknew.
 2. *What* God foreknew about us was sinful rebellion, without exception (Ps 14:1-3; 53:1-3).
 3. He shall deny He ever knew the wicked – He never loved them (Matt 7:23; Ps 5:5; 11:5).
 4. He loved His elect from everlasting, and always shall (Jer 31:3; Eph 1:4; 5:25; Rev 13:8).
 5. God's choice and love of the elect also predestinated them to adoption (see Eph 1:3-6).
- C. *Predestination*, though hated and unpopular today, is a Bible doctrine we should and do love.
 1. This Bible doctrine, which makes us predestinarian Baptists, is here and in Eph 1:5,11.
 2. What does it mean? It means God determined and guaranteed our destination beforehand.
 3. There is no logical way to believe the God of the Bible and reject predestination of men.
 4. If God knows all that will happen on certain conditions, why did He bring them to pass?
 5. Arminians have God predestinating men to hell just as much as any doctrine of salvation.

6. Predestination precedes, rather than follows, conforming, for it is unconditional election!
- D. God's purpose in creating the world and saving sinners is to build His family through Christ.
 1. God will do all that is necessary, which is considerable, to make sinners look like Jesus!
 2. Among the children of God, which He gave to Christ to save, Jesus will be preeminent!
 3. The drama of the whole universe is God's display of saving grace in perfecting sinners!
 4. This references glorification rather than conversion, as scripture and experience prove, for we reject any doctrine of perseverance that guarantees practical sanctification.
 5. We shall be joint-heirs with Jesus as brothers, but He shall be the Firstborn (Col 1:15-18).
 6. We shall enjoy the fullest joy possible, as we will be glorified sons of God (I John 3:1-3).
 7. A day is coming, described here (8:17-25), when Jesus will own us as family (Heb 2:13).
 8. The basis and ground of the liberty of the sons of God is God's predestination (8:29-30).

30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

- A. God's purpose extends beyond foreknowledge and predestination to other spiritual blessings.
 1. It is our wisdom to see there are no additions or subtractions throughout the golden chain!
 2. For each man that ends up glorified in heaven, it is because God predestinated him to it.
 3. God's operations are five – not mutually exclusive, exhaustive, or in order. For various orders, see John 1:12-13; II Tim 1:9; I Pet 1:2; II Pet 1:10; Jude 1:1; Rev 17:14.
 4. Remember that all O.T. saints were called before legal justification, no matter what it is.
 5. Foreknowledge is electing love; predestination determining purpose; calling appointment and regeneration; justification legal satisfaction; and glorification final condition.
 6. God can use the past tense for all operations, since He is God (Rom 4:17; Acts 15:18).
- B. All those God *predestinated*, He will also *call*, for there is no interruption to His final goal.
 1. God's call is His appointment, ordination, and regeneration of sinners to be His sons.
 2. When God chooses a man's vocation, He appoints him to it and enables him for it, which is the same as our vocation as sons of God (I Cor 7:17-24; Ex 31:1-5; Eph 4:1; 5:1).
 3. When we see a man able and skilled at a profession, we know he has found his calling!
 4. This is not a phone call, a minister's call, an invitation, an offer, a request, or such thing.
 5. This is not a gospel call, for that is not guaranteed between predestination to glorification; and all these operations of grace in this list are God being for us, not us being for us!
 6. We reject an "effectual call," for we do not believe the gospel is used in our eternal, legal, vital, or final calling, only in the practical call of conversion to know and act as sons.
 7. Calling in this context refers to our high and holy vocation as God's sons, and it includes the unconditional enabling of being regenerated and made sons (compare Rom 9:11).
 8. Our calling is our appointment to be sons for an inheritance (Eph 1:3-12 cp 1:18).
 9. This saving call was according to God's eternal purpose and grace in Christ (II Tim 1:9).
 10. Paul was called to be an apostle, or appointed and ordained to it, if we compare the verbs the Spirit used (Rom 1:1; II Tim 1:11; I Tim 2:7; Gal 1:15-16; Acts 13:1-3).
 11. The gospel is believed by those who are called beforehand, or the chosen ones ordained to eternal life and born again (I Cor 1:18,24-29; Acts 13:48; Jn 1:13; 3:3; 5:24; 8:43,47).
 12. The gospel call goes to many, but only the chosen are His (Matt 22:14; John 8:31,44).
 13. Jesus Christ calls sinners to life by His voice, as He will resurrect bodies (John 5:25-29).
- C. All those God calls, He will also *justify*, for there is no interruption to their final destination.
 1. Justification includes removing all guilt and the imputing of Jesus Christ's righteousness.
 2. Any reader of Romans already understood free justification through Christ (3:19-28).

3. Justification is the legal term used to describe our guiltless righteousness (II Cor 5:21).
 4. The love and kindness of God justified us by His grace through Christ Jesus (Titus 3:4-7).
- D. All those God justifies, He will also glorify, for there is no hindering their final destination.
1. Paul had already indicated the hope of glory to these suffering brethren (8:17-18,21).
 2. Final glorification will include the adoption and redemption of our bodies (8:23).
 3. Paul elsewhere wrote of our incorruptible bodies (I Cor 15:35-57; II Cor 4:17 – 5:8).

31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

- A. What are *these things* we should understand in this place? They may include a great deal.
1. There is no condemnation for those in Christ, in spite of sinful members (7:17; 8:1-16).
 2. God will soon manifest us to the universe as His dear and glorious children (8:17-25).
 3. The Holy Spirit of God prays for us in our infirmities in ways above our ability (8:26-27).
 4. All things in life and in time work together by God's sovereign will for our good (8:28).
 5. All God's eternal purposes and operations work toward our final glorification (8:29-30).
- B. What conclusion *then* can we draw from 8:28-30 about suffering (8:18) or infirmities (8:26)?
1. What should our hearts, minds, and throats say in response to such glorious words?
 2. What an overwhelming declaration has been made about our present and our future!
 3. He works all things of this life for our good and all spiritual things for our eternal glory!
 4. We should shout, "Hallelujah!" We should sing, "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty!"
 5. Why would the great and terrible God do such things for us? For His own good pleasure!
 6. We should never be discouraged or fearful of anything in life or death, present or future!
- C. Paul raised a question from what he had written, and then he gave the inspired answer to it!
1. If God is on our side and working all these things in our favor, no enemy can oppose us!
 2. If God is on our side? This is no doubtful matter at all! The previous 30 verses prove it!
 3. We are invincible in life or in death, in pain or in prosperity, because of God's great gifts!
 4. All the operations of grace are certain and sure to those elect called by God's purpose.
 5. What doubts can possibly be raised when such certain operations have been given us?
 6. What kind of doubts, fears, or anxiety is appropriate in light of these precious promises?
 7. If we are glorified in the sure and ultimate purpose of God, who can hinder His purpose?
- D. This confident and triumphant spirit of the righteous over their enemies is for all His saints.
1. God told Abram after his great victory that He was his shield and great reward (Ge 15:1).
 2. Moses exhorted the Israelites their superiority to all foes through their God (Deut 33:29).
 3. David rejoiced that by His God he had run through a troop and leaped a wall (Ps 18:29).
 4. Isaiah encouraged himself and others in the defense that God would make (Isaiah 54:17).
 5. Jeremiah encouraged himself of the good outcome by having God on his side (Jer 20:11).
 6. Paul exhorted the Hebrew saints to boldly declare their total trust in God (Heb 13:5-6)!
 7. John declared that true believers have a greater ally in them than in the world (I Jn 4:4).

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

- A. To confirm what he wrote of God being for them (8:31), he appealed to God giving His Son.
1. The great proof of God's love for His own is the gift of His Son (John 3:16; I Jn 4:9-10).
 2. There is in these words the inspired implication that God gave the dearest gift He could.
 3. He did not spare, delivering Him to bruising and death for enemies (Is 53:10; Ro 5:8-10).
 4. Abraham spared not his own son for God, but God spared not His own son for enemies!

5. Compare Eli sparing his wicked sons and David sparing Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah.
 6. Fathers spare their sons wherever they can by whatever means, but God spared not His!
- B. The sending of Jesus Christ, God's own Son, argues powerfully from the greater to the lesser.
1. The Bible argues from the lesser to the greater (Matthew 6:28-30; 7:9-11; 10:29-31).
 2. The Bible argues from the greater to the lesser (Matthew 10:24-25; I Corinthians 6:3).
 3. If God sent Jesus to die for you, which is the costliest gift He could give, you shall surely receive all the other benefits as well, which are less costly than sending His own Son.
 4. How could God send His greatest gift for His sons and not also give everything else?
 5. There is nothing else in heaven worth more than His Son, so all heaven shall be yours!
 6. If you do not receive all the benefits, either God is a liar or Jesus did not die for you.
- C. The objects of Christ's death are *us all*, which limits it to Paul, the elect Romans, and saints.
1. We are not confused by this "all," for it is an "all" limited by its modifier and context.
 2. Paul, the Romans, and saints like the Romans were the objects of these words (1:1,7,15).
 3. Justification and glorification are for the predestinated (8:29-30) and elect (8:33), only!
 4. Compassion, mercy, and future glory are only for those chosen by God (Rom 9:15-24)!
 5. This verse is not for a tract that was to be passed out with hotdogs at Rome's Coliseum!
 6. This verse is not for a placard that was to be held up in the end zone at Christian killings!
 7. This is a loving guarantee of eternal life from the Holy Spirit for the elect chosen by God.
 8. No one for whom Jesus died will face hell, for they will surely, freely obtain all things.
 9. But Arminian heretics loudly claim Jesus died for all men in a vain attempt to save all.
 10. If God delivered up Jesus for all men, then all men shall receive all spiritual blessings; but since this is certainly not the case, then God did not deliver Jesus up for all men.
 11. If Jesus died for all men, and all men do not receive all the spiritual blessings attached to Him, then the "all things" must be dependent on what men do for Christ, which is false!
 12. If Jesus died for all men, and many do not receive "all things," then God failed Christ, or Christ was not worth enough to justify all things, or God is a liar! Which will you have?
 13. If Jesus died for all men, then He died for more than the foreknown and predestinated!
 14. If Jesus died for all men, then He died for those who shall be separated from His love!
 15. If Jesus died for all men, then He died for the vessels of dishonour and wrath (9:21-22).
 16. Since Jesus died only for His elect church, the text stands in its clear sense and full glory.
 17. John Owen, in his work, "The Death of Death in the Death of Christ," used the text well.
- D. Jesus Christ and all spiritual blessings in Him are gifts freely given (Romans 3:24; 5:16,18).
1. It is not an offer, as many portray, in which you must do something to make it yours.
 2. Jesus offered himself to God, by the Spirit, and was accepted for the elect (Heb 9:14).
 3. God gave the elect to Jesus; He gave Jesus for the elect, and Jesus gives them eternal life.
- E. Did Jesus Christ die for you, thus guaranteeing all other benefits? Can you be persuaded?
1. If you believe the gospel of Christ, then He died for you (Rom 10:9-11; II Thess 1:10).
 2. If you have believed, add to faith the things that please God (I Thess 1:2-4; II Pet 1:5-11).
- F. We should ask ourselves, "How shall we not in return give Him all things?" (II Cor 5:14-15).

33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

- A. To confirm his words about no one being against them (8:31), Paul appeals to justification.
1. If God is for us from foreknowledge to glorification, no one can by any means charge us.
 2. Though we do sin and might fear charges of sin from devils or men, God justified us!
 3. No man of any religion can lay charges against God's elect. They are perfectly righteous!
 4. The devil might afflict them with fiery darts of doubt about salvation, but God justifies!

5. Judaizing enemies of the gospel could visit from Jerusalem and charge, but God justifies!
 6. Pagan Nero could charge with capital sedition or treason against Rome, but God justifies!
 7. Pope Innocent III could charge with heresy and eternal damnation, but God justifies!
 8. No man can charge the elect with sin ... nor charge them with conditions to be justified!
- B. *Elect* here refers back to God's foreknowledge and predestination (Eph 1:3-6 cp I Peter 1:2).
1. God made the choice and predestinated those chosen to be accepted in Christ (Eph 1:3-6).
 2. Justification is by Christ's obedience and blood sprinkling, based on election (I Pet 1:2).
- C. God is the justifier, for He is Judge, and He accounts His Son's righteousness to and for us.
1. Paul stated them free from condemnation when opening the chapter (8:1-4 cp 3:24-26)!
 2. Justification is based fully in the love, kindness, and grace of God in Christ (Titus 3:4-7).
 3. Here is justification defined: freedom from any charges that would make a person guilty.
 4. There is also another side, and a superior one at that, which states we are made righteous!

34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

- A. To confirm what he wrote of justification, Paul appealed to Christ's death and intercession.
- B. *Who is he that condemneth?* God's sons struggle against conscience, enemies, and the devil.
1. Paul stated them free from condemnation when opening the chapter (8:1-4 cp 3:24-26)!
 2. The elect know by conscience they are sinners and under God's condemnation (7:24).
 3. Enemies, like the Jews, condemned such believers that justification was by Moses' Law.
 4. The devil, which cannot accuse us to God due to Christ, accuses us instead (Rev 12:10).
 5. Enemies, like the Romans, condemned these poor saints to death with false charges.
 6. They were despised as the offscouring of the world, but Jesus died and lived for them.
 7. Let all men, devils, or angels, conscience, reason, or fear condemn ... it cannot be done!
 8. Neither caesar or pope of Rome, or any civil or religious ruler, can condemn the elect.
- C. The situation of the elect before God is absolutely safe due to Christ's past and present work.
1. Can you see all *four aspects*? His death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession? Glory!
 2. Each of the four answers the question, but all four combine for the greatest assurance!
- D. *First*, no one can condemn the elect, because Jesus Christ the Son of God died for them.
1. Our Lord's death was a legal transaction – for our sins; therefore, no one can condemn!
 2. If any condemn us for sin, Christ died for our sins, and He is the Son of God and Judge!
 3. Only Christ could condemn us, but He will never do so, for He lives with God to save us!
 4. There is one perfect Mediator between God and men, and He died for us (I Timothy 2:5).
- E. *Second*, no one can condemn the elect, because Jesus Christ the Son of God lives for them.
1. Jesus died for us, and lest we forget or others accuse, He is alive after His resurrection!
 2. Not only is He alive for us, but He has the keys (authority) of hell and death (Rev 1:18).
 3. We remember His death at the Lord's Table, but it is a joyful occasion, because He lives!
 4. If He had not risen from the dead, then sin, death, or the devil defeated Him (I Co 15:17).
 5. He rose victoriously over all enemies, so we can mock with impunity (I Cor 15:55-57).
- F. *Third*, no one can condemn the elect, because Jesus Christ the Son of God reigns for them.
1. He is crowned with glory and honor at God's right hand as evidence of His total success!
 2. His work completely and God's approval secured, He was given a seat by God's throne.
 3. He is Lord of the universe and there is no devil, angel, or man that can move against us!
 4. Who can speak against this Prince or those He loves, for His two-edged sword is ready!
- G. *Fourth*, no one can condemn the elect, because Jesus the Son of God intercedes for them.
1. He is at the right hand of God, where He lives forever to intercede (Rom 5:10; Heb 7:25)!

2. This present and continual intercession at God's right hand is exalted above His death!
 3. He is the Surety of His people, and He lives to guarantee the full completion of His work.
 4. He is Advocate, High Priest, Mediator, and Propitiation of our faith (Heb 3:1; I Jn 2:1-2).
- H. We reject versions like the NSRB turning the verse into a question of Christ condemning us!

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

- A. The issue here is not the certainty of our love for God, as some (Barnes), but His love for us!
- B. Jesus Christ died for us and intercedes for us, but how certain and sure is His love for us?
1. Though it should not have to be said, this is Christ's love for His own, not theirs for Him.
 2. The use of the personal pronoun *who* reminds us that most of our troubles are by persons.
 3. There are seven terrible troubles of believers listed here, but persons usually cause them.
 4. His legal work to justify us is certain (8:33-34), and so is His affectionate desire for us!
 5. If you have doubts about the constancy and eternity of Christ's love, what is the cause?
 6. Nothing in heaven, earth, or hell could possibly alter the love of Christ for His brethren!
 7. You may be separated or forgotten by all other lovers, but never by the Lover of Sinners!
- C. For Christians in others times, facing persecution and martyrdom, these words were precious!
1. Without suffering persecution and tribulation in a pagan capital, we may miss the sense.
 2. By considering saints at other times, these are very practical worries (Hebrews 11:35-40).
 3. Daniel and Revelation prophesy such calamities on saints (Dan 7:21,25; Rev 13:7; 17:6).
 4. But who could give better testimony to this fact than our brother Paul (II Cor 11:22-33).
 5. *Tribulation* will not separate us, Paul and most saints suffered tribulation (Matt 5:10-12; 10:28-31; John 16:33; Acts 14:22; Phil 1:28-30; Heb 12:3; I Pet 4:12-14; Rev 7:9-17).
 6. *Distress* will not separate us from Christ's love, for hard circumstances pressing our minds will not alter His work or affection (II Cor 4:8-10; 6:5; 7:5; 12:10; II Tim 2:13).
 7. *Persecution* will not separate us, for Christ was persecuted, and it is a token of salvation (Matt 5:10-12; II Thess 1:3-5; John 15:18-21; II Cor 4:8-10; II Tim 3:12).
 8. *Famine* will not separate us, though God's providence or His enemies starve us, for He is preparing the marriage Supper of the Lamb (II Cor 4:11-12; 11:27; Rev 7:9-17; 19:9).
 9. *Nakedness* will not separate us, though saints have been destitute of clothes, for He will clothe us with Christ's righteousness (II Cor 11:27; Heb 11:35-38; Rev 7:9-17; 19:8).
 10. *Peril* cannot separate from Christ, which are all the dangers of trials, torture, banishment, imprisonment, family separation, and such like (II Cor 11:26; Heb 11:35-40; Rev 1:9-10).
 11. *Sword* cannot separate from Christ, which is metonymy for death by the sword, or capital punishment, like James and others (Acts 7:55-60; 12:1-2; Rev 2:10; 6:9-11; 12:11).
- D. There can never be the same sound assurance of Jesus Christ's love for those who think that His love and the benefits of it depend on fulfilling conditions with Him by whatever means.

36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

- A. To confirm a backdrop of martyrdom, Paul drew from a psalm about afflictions and death.
1. Roman suffering contributes to the background and context of this chapter (8:17-18,26).
 2. And it is this suffering and possibility of death that prompts the terminology (8:35,38).
 3. Daniel and Revelation prophesy such calamities on saints (Dan 7:21,25; Rev 13:7; 17:6).
- B. The quotation is from Psalm 44:22, where discouraging troubles of O.T. saints is described.
1. The psalmist described the people of God being devoured by their enemies (Ps 44:9-22).

2. Twice, including Paul's verse, the psalmist suggests sheep for slaughter (Ps 44:11,22).
3. It sometimes appears from a natural view that God's people are but slaughtered sheep.
- C. The persecution, suffering, and infirmities of the Romans were not new. Take consolation.
 1. The wicked always hate the righteous and will persecute when convenient (Pr 29:10,27).
 2. Persecution (and death) began with Abel and would continue to the end (Re 2:10; 12:11).
- D. What is the cause of this slaughter? For Christ's sake, for they will give worship to no other!
 1. The martyrs would not bow to trials before the Romans or inquisitions by the Catholics!
 2. It did not matter what pain they would endure, they would not accept Catholic heresy.
- E. Has God forgotten His own? Never! Every tear is in His bottle, and every drop of blood shall be revenged (Ps 56:8; Rev 6:9-11; II Thess 1:8; Rev 6:9-11; 7:9-17; 16:5-7; 18:20,24; 19:2)!

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

- A. Paul here answered the question he had asked in 8:35 about separation from Christ's love.
 1. *Nay* is no way! There is no way the seven things above separate us from Christ's love!
 2. Listen to our apostle by the Spirit's inspiration ... *all these things ... more than!* Glory!
 3. Let us say again with our dear brother, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Glory!
- B. Rather than vanquish these things, God makes them work together for our good (8:28)!
 1. We may more than conquer these things ... we abuse them, use them, and profit by them!
 2. So far from keeping us from God, He uses them to perfect, comfort, and reward us!
 3. Rather than feel defeated by afflictions or trouble, we are more than conquerors of them!
 4. God uses the tribulations enemies throw at us for our perfection (Rom 5:3-5; Jas 1:2-4)!
- C. In the light of the horrific retribution that is coming, the little bruises we get here are nothing!
 1. Rather than feel like losers before great enemies, the martyrs went victoriously to heaven.
 2. The Prince of the kings of the earth will never forsake or ever lose one of us (Jn 6:38-39)!
- D. Our ability and certainty to conquer and overcome all enemies is by our loving Conqueror!
- E. There is no redundant repetition ... of Christ's love (8:35) or God's love in Christ (8:38-39).
- F. Hebrews records the calamities of the saints in the inter-testamental period (Heb 11:35-38).
- G. Daniel and Revelation prophesy great calamities on saints (Daniel 7:21,25; Rev 13:7; 17:6).

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

- E. The issue here is not the certainty of our love for God, as some (Barnes), but His love for us!
- F. Paul was *persuaded*, which is to be fully convinced of a thing; and we should be as well.
 1. **Persuaded.** To arrive at a certain or assured belief; convinced, assured, certain, sure.
 2. The sense is certain convincing (Matt 28:14; Rom 4:21; 14:14; II Cor 5:11; Heb 11:13).
 3. Paul was fully persuaded that God could and would keep his soul in safety (II Tim 1:12).
 4. God has given us the same spirit of faith to believe and be persuaded (II Cor 4:13-14).
- G. *Death* cannot separate us from God's love for us, of which all the elect should be persuaded.
 1. Death is the great disrupter, interrupter, and separator of earthly love and relationships, which is why wedding ceremonies often include the final words, "till death do us part."
 2. Death is the coldest, cruelest, and most certain enemy we have to all other love we know.
 3. But death takes us to the Lord as a doorway or ticket to heaven (II Cor 5:8; Phil 1:23)!
 4. But death is simply our bodies sleeping in Jesus until the resurrection (I Thess 4:14)!
 5. Because Jesus Christ defeated death by His own death (I Cor 15:54-57; Heb 2:14-15)!

- H. *Life* cannot separate us from God's love for us, of which all the elect should be persuaded.
 1. Our minds, especially melancholies, fret and worry about what troubles life will bring.
 2. Life is filled with changes, disappointments, disasters, diseases, failures, losses, etc., etc.
 3. Our lives are so uncertain that we cannot even boast of tomorrow (Pr 27:1; James 4:14).
 4. Though the devil may disrupt a life from within or without, God's love is fully certain.
- I. *Angels* cannot separate us from God's love for us, of which all the elect should be persuaded.
 1. Good angels cannot and will not, for they are the servants of God's children (Heb 1:14).
 2. Good angels cannot and will not; they desire to look into God's love for us (I Pet 1:12).
 3. Evil angels cannot separate us, though they would if they could, for they all under the rule of Christ (Mark 1:25; 9:25; Luke 4:8; I Pet 3:22; Jude 1:9; Rev 12:9-17).
- J. *Principalities* cannot separate us from God's love, of which all the elect should be persuaded.
 1. **Principality.** A principal ruler. The position, dignity, or dominion of a prince.
 2. Angelic principalities, or good and bad angels, will not (Eph 3:10; 6:12; Col 1:16; 2:15).
 3. Human principalities cannot separate us, only spirits and bodies (Luke 12:4-5; Titus 3:1).
 4. No matter the cruel and vicious persecution of martyrs, God still loved them and has a special place in heaven for them (Acts 7:56-60; Rev 6:9-11).
- K. *Powers* cannot separate us from God's love for us, of which the elect should be persuaded.
 1. **Power.** The governmental authorities or rulers in heaven or in earth are called powers.
 2. Jesus Christ openly triumphed over all spiritual principalities and powers (Col 2:13-15).
- L. *Things present* cannot separate us from God's love, of which the elect should be persuaded.
 1. If you worry about the present, there is nothing among things now that can separate you.
 2. Are there failings, fears, or foes that you are facing now? They cannot alter God's love!
- M. *Things to come* cannot separate us from God's love, of which the elect should be persuaded.
 2. Since we do not know the future, you may worry about it, but nothing can separate you.
 3. Though we doubt or dread the unknown years ahead of us, they cannot alter God's love!

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- A. The issue here is not the certainty of our love for God, as some (Barnes), but His love for us!
- B. *Height* cannot separate us from God's love for us, of which the elect should be persuaded.
 1. God is high above, but it does not affect His love (Ec 5:2; Job 22:12; Ps 102:19; 113:5-6).
 2. Heaven is high above us, but there is no one or thing there to come between God and us.
 3. There may be spiritual wickedness in high places, but it is no threat to His love (Ep 6:12).
 4. The difference between heaven and earth, God's place and ours, is very great (Is 55:9).
 5. If we are lifted up in honor, a risk to our souls, it does not affect His love (II Sam 23:1).
 6. Though we might be lifted up in favor and joy, neither does this effect any change at all.
- C. *Depth* cannot separate us from God's love for us, of which all elect should be persuaded.
 1. We are on earth below God, but it does not affect His love (Ecc 5:2; Ps 113:5-6; Pr 25:3).
 2. Conceived in the lowest place on earth like asses, but He loves us (Ps 139:15; Job 11:12).
 3. No matter how low we are debased or disgraced, He yet loves us (I Cor 1:26-29; Jas 2:5).
 4. The depths of Satan himself are nothing to fear for the child of God in His love (Re 2:24).
 5. Earth is very deep and far from God our Father, but there is no one or thing here to hurt.
- D. *Any other creature* cannot separate from God's love, of which all elect should be persuaded.
 1. In case your imagination creates some other risk to losing salvation, the Spirit covers all!
 2. There is no being in heaven, earth, or hell that can disrupt or interrupt God's love of you!
 3. There is no thing in heaven, earth, or hell that can dilute or divert God's love for you!

4. Though not listed, our sins cannot separate either (Ps 89:30-37; I Cor 11:32; I Jn 2:1-2)!
- E. *The love of God* for us is in the Beloved, and He shall always love us in Christ (Eph 1:3-6).
 1. We are in the hand of Jesus Christ and God; we cannot be plucked out (John 10:28-29).
 2. We are dead to this world, and our lives are hid in Christ in God for glory (Col 3:1-4).
 3. Jesus will not lose one of us; He will present all of us to God (John 6:38-39; Heb 2:13).
 4. The glorious love of God and Christ for us is able to fill us like nothing else (Ep 3:14-19).
 5. He that spared not His own Son for us shall surely love us forever and ever (8:31-35).
- F. There is no redundant duplication of Christ's love (8:35) and God's love in Christ (8:38-39).

Conclusion:

1. Believe thou this, hearer or reader? Upon this foundation you can build a solid and successful life.
2. Because it is hard to believe the great Creator God with eternal power chose to save rebel men, God gives assurances to His children in passages like this to confirm and reassure them (Heb 6:13-20).
3. This is one of the great passages of scripture where the inspired apostle became a holy orator for God!
4. These are not mere sound bites to memorize; these are the words of the living God full of meaning.
5. These verses are the glorious promises and guarantees of our security in Christ for time and eternity.
6. What is the nicest thing anyone has ever said or promised to you? These words are infinitely better.
7. Do you wonder if you are one of God's elect? Run to Christ in humble faith and serve Him forever.
8. To help meditate on these words in their fullest sense of comfort, read Foxe's Book of Martyrs.
9. If the blessed God did these things for us through His Son Jesus, what should we be doing for Him?
10. If the martyrs could die for the word of God and Jesus Christ, can we live for Him by the same word?

For Further Study:

1. The sermon, "The Creation Groaneth" ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/sermons/pdf/whole-creation-groaneth.pdf>.
2. The sermon, "No Condemnation," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/sermon/pdf/no-condemnation-in-christ.pdf>.
3. The sermon, "Salvation By Works," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/sermons/pdf/salvation-by-works.pdf>.
4. A sermon, "Once Saved, Always Saved," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/sermons/pdf/once-saved-always-saved.pdf>.
5. The sermon outline, "No Fine Line," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/sermons/pdf/no-fine-line.pdf>.
6. The sermon outline, "The Dominion of God," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/sermons/pdf/dominion-of-god.pdf>.
7. The sermon outline, "Eternal Life Is a Gift," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/sermons/pdf/eternal-life-is-a-gift.pdf>.
8. The sermon outline, "Book of Life," ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/sermons/pdf/book-of-life.pdf>.
9. The book by John Foxe, "Book of Martyrs," ... <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/foxe/martyrs/files/martyrs.html>
10. The MP3 book by unknown author, "Martyrs of the Catacombs," ... <http://www.ccel.org/a/anonymous/catacombs/>.