

In this latter half of Romans 8, the Apostle Paul shows us that the security of our salvation is one of the purposes of God. He demonstrates that God will not change His mind concerning our salvation because our eternal future with Him was planned long ago. No circumstance or created thing can convince God to stop loving us and not complete our redemption. Praise God!

**Verses 14-27:** After contrasting the results of walking “after the flesh” with walking “after the Spirit” (v. 5-8, 12-13), Paul begins listing a series of benefits that come from walking “after the Spirit.” He mentions being led by the Spirit as an evidence of being a child of God (v. 14) and that we have received the spirit of adoption (v. 15). He then mentions that the Spirit of God bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, a fact which makes us not only heirs of God but joint-heirs with Christ (vs. 16-18). We also groan within ourselves (joining with the creation) under the earthly consequences of sin as we await the redemption of our bodies (vs. 19-23). A wonderful benefit of salvation is that the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness when we do not know how to properly pray according to the will of God. The Spirit accomplishes this through “groanings which cannot be uttered” to bring our needs to God in accordance with God’s will, something that we can’t always do.

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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.

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**“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God”** – In verses 18-25, Paul describes how that anything we suffer in this world cannot begin to compare to the glory that God will reveal in us. Not only are we yearning for that time to arrive, but the creation is yearning for it as well and we are patiently waiting in hope for it to happen. He then describes how the Spirit helps us in our weakness when we are unable to pray according to God’s will, due to our sin nature or simply because we don’t know what God’s will is in a certain situation (vs. 26-27). God has brought good to those that love Him in these circumstances and now Paul points out that God uses all the circumstances that He allows in our lives to bring good to His people. **1 Cor. 10:13** “*There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*” A circumstance’s immediate effect may be bad, but the eventual will be good as God uses it to shape us into the image of Christ (v. 29).

**“to them who are the called according to his purpose”** – Those who love God are those who belong to Him. Paul adds the additional description of God’s people as being “the called according to His purpose.” Those who have been saved have been called and that calling is part of His purpose. Paul explains in the next verses what this purpose is that we can be certain God will accomplish it.

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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.

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**“For whom he did foreknow [to know beforehand]”** – Paul expresses this purpose of God as a progression. The first step is that God foreknew His people. The root of the Greek word translated “foreknow” is where we get our English word “prognosticate.” It is a compound word (*proginōskō*), combining the prefix *pro* (meaning “before”) and *ginosko* (meaning “to know”). However, the word can be used to mean more than simply knowing the facts; it can also refer to a more intimate knowledge or familiarity. This word has been used to refer to sexual intercourse in the case of a man knowing his wife. Jesus used the Greek word *ginosko* when speaking about future judgment in **Matt. 7:23**: “*And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*” Did Jesus truly have no knowledge about these that He is about to send to hell? Of course not. He did not know them in the sense of salvation. They did not belong to Him. It is likely in this sense that Paul is using the word “foreknow” here. God knew these people as belonging to Him.

**“he also did predestinate [foreordained] to be conformed [to have the same form] to the image of his Son”** – Having foreknown these these as being His, God’s foreordained plan was that they would look like Jesus Christ, His Son. God wants us to be like Jesus, walking obediently and righteously before Him as Jesus did.

**“that he might be the firstborn among many brethren”** – Paul called us children and heirs of God in vs. 16, 17, and being children of God makes us “brothers” of Christ and joint-heirs with Him. Since Christ is the firstborn of many brethren, He is our “elder brother” and God’s plan is for us to be like our elder brother.

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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.

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**“Moreover whom he did predestinate [foreordain], them he also called [invited; to call by name]”** – Paul moves from God’s purpose that was decided in eternity past to the execution of that plan. This calling refers to the time when the Holy Spirit begins speaking to the heart of an unbeliever with the eventual result of their salvation. The Spirit calls the person to faith in Christ, resulting in salvation when the person yields.

**“and whom he called, them he also justified [to declare righteous]”** – Paul treats God’s calling as inevitably resulting in salvation, for those whom God calls will also be justified (**Rom. 11:29** “*For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance*”). This justification occurs at the moment of salvation when the person believes on Christ.

**“and whom he justified, them he also glorified [to show honor; to praise]”** – There is a future glory for those who belong to Christ (**Col. 3:4** “*When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory*”) as we will be with Him forever (**Eph. 2:6** “*And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*”). However, here Paul seems to be saying that those who are justified are already glorified, and in a sense we have been. What greater honor can there be than being a child of God and the recipient of His love? **1 John 3:1** “*Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.*”

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

**“What shall we then say to these things?”** – Paul has described how that salvation is a work of God that He sovereignly controls from start to finish, from planning it in eternity past to seeing it in full completion in our glorification as His children. Paul now asks: what can be said in response to these truths?

**“If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?”** – Paul has showed us that salvation is God’s idea, God’s plan and God is the one who is executing the plan. If God is the One orchestrating salvation for us, who could possibly interfere and prevent God from completing it?

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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?

Paul points out God’s determination to complete our salvation. If God willingly gave His most precious possession, His Son, sending Him to die on the cross in order to redeem us, why would He not also, in addition to His Son, provide anything else needed to complete our salvation?

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

**“Who shall lay any thing to the charge [bring an accusation] of God's elect [chosen]?”** – None of us are perfect and there are many people who could point out our flaws and sins. However, no one has the authority to bring about an accusation that would hold up in God’s court room. All our sins are an offense against Him and He has the supreme right to judge and condemn us.

**“It is God that justifieth”** – No accusations against us will stick because the only One with the authority to judge us is also the very One Who is justifying us. All accusations against us will fall on deaf ears because the price has already been paid on the cross.

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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.

**“Who is he that condemneth [to declare guilty and pronounce sentence]?”** – Who could possibly have God’s ear and be able to change His mind about us? What about Christ, God’s own Son?

**“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”** – Christ is not going to condemn us because He declared His intentions to save us when He died and rose again for us. Not only that, but Christ is at the right hand of God (a place of honor and power) making intercession with God on our behalf. Paul is telling us that neither God nor His Son have any intention of canceling our salvation and sending us to hell.

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35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

**“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?”** – The Greek word translated “separate” is sometimes used to refer the separation when a man divorces his wife. Paul has already eliminated God and His Son Jesus from the list of those who could cause Christ to love us less. Who else is left, since these are the two that count? Obviously the answer to this rhetorical question is “no one.”

**“shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?”** – These things are the things that Paul had experienced as a result of preaching the gospel. Since he (and we) experience these things as a result of being faithful to God, would they separate us from God’s love? Or are these things evidence that God no longer loves us and thus has allowed us to suffer?

**“As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter”** – The answer to that question (is suffering for Christ evidence that God has ceased to love us?) is “No!” Paul quotes from Psalm 44:22 to illustrate that it is not unusual for servants of God to be killed because of their faithfulness to God.

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

Paul now answers the question directly: No, the things we suffer do not mean that we have been separated from the love of Christ. In fact, it is evidence that Christ does indeed love us. The Greek word translated “more than conquerors” is a compound word meaning “to over-conquer” or to go beyond being a conqueror. To be a conqueror means that you have complete victory over the enemy, but Paul says that we are “more than conquerors.” We think suffering means that we are the ones being conquered but in actuality suffering for Christ means that we belong to Him and therefore are able to take part in His victory over the world. Through “Him that loved us” we have the same victory that Christ has.

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

**“For I am persuaded”** – Paul is totally convinced.

**“that neither death, nor life”** – Nothing that can happen in this life and not even death itself can separate us from God’s love.

**“nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers”** – No angel in heaven, nor fallen angels (“principalities”) nor any human authority (“powers”) can separate us from God’s love.

**“nor things present, nor things to come”** – Nothing that exists today or will exist in the future can separate us from God’s love.

**“Nor height, nor depth”** – “Height” could refer to astrological signs seen in the heavens, or to God’s heaven. Nothing in the heights of heaven or in the depths of hell can separate us from God’s love.

**“nor any other creature [created thing]”** – In case we can think of anything else that Paul has left out.

**“shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord”** – God’s love for us comes through Jesus Christ and Paul has shown that it is impossible for us to be separated from it.