

Romans 8:31-33 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

[Romans 8:1](#)
[Romans 8:2](#)
[Romans 8:3](#)
[Romans 8:4](#)
[Romans 8:5](#)
[Romans 8:6](#)
[Romans 8:7](#)
[Romans 8:8](#)
[Romans 8:9](#)
[Romans 8:10](#)
[Romans 8:11](#)
[Romans 8:12](#)
[Romans 8:13](#)
[Romans 8:14](#)
[Romans 8:15](#)
[Romans 8:16](#)
[Romans 8:17](#)
[Romans 8:18](#)
[Romans 8:19](#)
[Romans 8:20](#)
[Romans 8:21](#)
[Romans 8:22](#)
[Romans 8:23](#)
[Romans 8:24](#)
[Romans 8:25](#)
[Romans 8:26](#)
[Romans 8:27](#)
[Romans 8:28](#)
[Romans 8:29](#)
[Romans 8:30](#)
[Romans 8:31](#)
[Romans 8:32](#)
[Romans 8:33](#)
[Romans 8:34](#)
[Romans 8:35](#)
[Romans 8:36](#)
[Romans 8:37](#)
[Romans 8:38](#)
[Romans 8:39](#)

Click chart to enlarge

Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission
[Romans Overview Chart](#) - Charles Swindoll

ROMANS ROAD to RIGHTEOUSNESS

Romans 1:18-3:20	Romans 3:21-5:21	Romans 6:1-8:39	Romans 9:1-11:36	Romans 12:1-16:27
SIN	SALVATION	SANCTIFICATION	SOVEREIGNTY	SERVICE
NEED FOR SALVATION	WAY OF SALVATION	LIFE OF SALVATION	SCOPE OF SALVATION	SERVICE OF SALVATION
God's Holiness In Condemning Sin	God's Grace In Justifying Sinners	God's Power In Sanctifying Believers	God's Sovereignty In Saving Jew and Gentile	Gods Glory The Object of Service
Deadliness of Sin	Design of Grace	Demonstration of Salvation		
		Power Given	Promises Fulfilled	Paths Pursued
Righteousness Needed	Righteousness Credited	Righteousness Demonstrated	Righteousness Restored to Israel	Righteousness Applied
God's Righteousness IN LAW	God's Righteousness IMPUTED	God's Righteousness OBEYED	God's Righteousness IN ELECTION	God's Righteousness DISPLAYED
Slaves to Sin	Slaves to God			Slaves Serving God
Doctrine				Duty
Life by Faith				Service by Faith
Modified from Irving L. Jensen's chart above				

- R **Ruin** (Romans 1:17 – 3:20) – The utter sinfulness of humanity
O **Offer** (Romans 3:21-31) – God's offer of justification by grace
M **Model** (Romans 4:1-25) – Abraham as a model for saving faith
A **Access** (Romans 5:1-11) – The benefits of justification
N **New Adam** (Romans 5:12-21) – We are children of two "Adams"
S **Struggle w/ Sin** (Romans 6:1-8:39) Struggle, sanctification, and victory

Romans 8:31 **What then shall we say to these things ? If God is for us, who is against us?** (**NASB: Lockman**)

Greek: [Ti oun eroumen \(1PFAI\) pros tauta? ei o theos huper hemon, tis kath' hemon?](#)

Amplified: What then shall we say to [all] this? If God is for us, who [can be] against us? [Who can be our foe, if God is on our side?] [Ps 118:6.] ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: What can we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: In face of all this, what is there left to say? If God is for us, who can be against us? ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: What then shall we say to these things? In view of the fact that God is on our behalf, who could be against us? ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used [by permission](#))

Young's Literal: What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

WHAT THEN SHALL WE SAY TO THESE THINGS: Ti oun eroumen (1PFAI) pros tauta:

- Ro 4:1 What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found?
- Romans 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

JOHN CALVIN'S LIFE VERSE

Romans 8:31 was **John Calvin's** life verse.

If we are interested in a life crowned with confidence, this could be our foundational text.

The logic of our text, seriously applied, pushes us to the heights of confidence. This verse means more than the fact that God is graciously disposed toward believers but that He is for us in all that He does. Beloved, as you read this note, you may feel "defeated", but Paul's encouraging truth is that evil will never prevail. Believers will always be led to victory in Christ because **God is for us**. Write your name in the verse and believe it is true..

"God is for _____"

William Newell explains that "Our weak hearts, prone to legalism and unbelief, receive these words with great difficulty: God is for us ... They have failed Him; but He is for them. They are ignorant; but He is for them. They have not yet brought forth much fruit; but He is for them. ([Romans 8: Expository Notes Verse by Verse](#))

Ray Stedman commenting on this section **Romans 8:31-39** writes "Now, that is a wonderful statement, and, in times of doubt, I suggest that you try to answer these questions... Now, what is the effect of this realization? It is clear from this passage that it is the removal of fear. If God is for us, who can be against us? All fear of successful opposition is removed. It is not that there is no opposition. The Law is still there, the **Sin** nature is still there, the **flesh** nature is still there -- there is still going to be opposition (1Pe 2:11-note Gal 5:16-note; Gal 5:17-note; Gal 5:18-note). But Paul is saying, "If God is for us, what difference does it make?" A few weeks ago at our elders' meeting, Barney Brogan was telling us about his grandson. His daughter has moved to Missouri with the boys. As some of you know, their father is Chicano, and the children look like their dad. Their 13-year-old ran into a tremendous nest of White Supremacy at school. Because of the prejudice against blacks and Chicanos, that little innocent lad began to suffer very unjust torment and persecution. He didn't understand it; he came home weeping, beaten up because of his looks. His mother didn't know what to do, and so she wrote and asked us to pray for this situation, and we did. A week or so later a letter came back and described how one night the biggest kid in school appeared at their door and said that he was a Christian, that he knew they were Christians, and that he had come to tell them that he had gone to every kid in school who had beat up on the boy and told them that if they ever did anything like that again, they would answer to him. I don't know what that boy's name was, but let's call him Mike. I can imagine this little boy going back to school, walking in the shadow of Mike, with all his tormentors looking at him. He probably would be saying to himself, "If Mike is for me, who can be against me?" That is what God is saying here." ([If God be For Us](#))

In regard to **these things** **Denney** says "The idea underlying all that precedes is that of the suffering to be endured by those who would share Christ's glory (Ro 8:17-note). The apostle has disparaged the suffering in comparison with the glory (Ro 8:18-note); he has interpreted it (Ro 8:19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 -see notes Ro 8:19ff thru 8:27) as in a manner prophetic of the glory; he has in these last verses asserted the presence through all the Christian's life of an eternal victorious purpose of love: all this is included in 'these things.' (Nicoll, W Robertson, Editor: Expositors Greek Testament: 5 Volumes. Out of print. Search Google)

Concerning **these things** **Nelson Study Bible** says "The words these things refer to God's purpose (Ro 8:28-30). If God has done everything from foreknowledge to glorification for us, all adversaries are powerless." ([Radmacher, E. D., Allen, R. B., & House, H. W. The Nelson Study Bible: NKJV. Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#))

IF (Because) GOD... FOR US, WHO... AGAINST US : ei o theos huper hemon, tis kath hemon :

- Ge 15:1; Nu 14:9; Dt 33:29; Josh 10:42; 1Sa 14:6; 17:45, 46, 47; Ps 27:1-3; Ps 46:1-3,7,11; Ps 56:4,11; Ps 84:11-12; 118:6; Isa 50:7-9; Isa 54:17; Jer 1:19; 20:11; Jn 10:28, 29, 30; 1Jn 4:4
- Romans 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Genesis 15:1 After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not fear, Abram, **I am a shield to you**; Your reward shall be very great."

Numbers 14:9 "Only do not rebel against the LORD; and do not fear the people of the land, for they will be our prey. Their protection has been removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them."

Deuteronomy 33:29 "Blessed are you, O Israel; Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD, Who is the

shield of your help And the sword of your majesty! So your enemies will cringe before you, And you will tread upon their high places.”

Joshua 10:42 Joshua captured all these kings and their lands at one time, because the LORD, the God of Israel, fought for Israel.

Psalms 46:1-3 For the choir director. A Psalm of the sons of Korah, >set to Alamoth. A Song. God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. 2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change And though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea; 3 Though its waters roar and foam, Though the mountains quake at its swelling pride. Selah.

Psalms 56:4 In God, whose word I praise, In God I have put my trust; I shall not be afraid. What can mere man do to me?

Psalms 84:11-12 For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly. 12 O LORD of hosts, How blessed is the man who trusts in You!

Isaiah 54:17 “No weapon that is formed against you will prosper; And every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, And their vindication is from Me,” declares the LORD.

Jeremiah 1:19 “They will fight against you, but they will not overcome you, for I am with you to deliver you,” declares the LORD.

Jeremiah 20:11 But the LORD is with me like a dread champion; Therefore my persecutors will stumble and not prevail. They will be utterly ashamed, because they have failed, With an everlasting disgrace that will not be forgotten.

1 John 4:4 You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.

Literally **If God for us, who against us?**

The word **if** translates the Greek first class conditional particle **ei**, signifying a fulfilled condition, not a mere possibility. The meaning of the first clause then is not really a question but an unchanging maxim we can live on --

In view of the fact that or because God is for us nothing can be against us.

The obvious implication is that if anyone were able to rob us of salvation they would have to be greater than God Himself, because He is both the Giver and the Sustainer of salvation. To Christians Paul is asking, in effect, “Who could conceivably take away our no-condemnation status?” (Ro 8:1-note). Is there anyone stronger than God, the Creator of everything and everyone who exists?

That is, “What difference does it make who is against us?” If God is for us, is there anything that can be against us that is greater than he?

The thought of Paul is not in the form of a hypothetical condition, as if it were a question whether God was for us or not. His thought is, “In view of the fact that God is for us, who is or could be against us, so as to do us harm? That is, since God is for the saints, on their side, who can harm them?”

Spurgeon - If God is that great working One who does all this, who can be against us? “Why, a great many,” says one. But they are nothing, nor are all put together anything at all, as compared with him who is on our side.

Two great men stood side by side in the early Reformation movement. One was, of course, [Martin Luther](#), the activist. The other was [Philip Melancthon](#), the scholar. **Luther** once said of their relationship:

I am rough, boisterous, stormy, and altogether warlike, fighting against innumerable monsters and devils. I am born for the removing of stumps and stones, cutting away thistles and thorns, and clearing the wild forests; but master Philippus comes along softly and gently, sowing and watering with joy, according to the gifts which God has abundantly bestowed upon him.

Where did Melancthon get his strength? What made this gentle, retiring man stand with Luther against the world? The heart of the text, Romans 8:31, gives the answer: **If God is for us, who can be against us?** In his lectures and correspondence that verse is quoted more than any other Scripture. It still hangs on his study wall in Wittenberg where visitors can see it. As the record has it, when Melancthon sensed he was dying he asked to be placed on the traveling bed in his study because that is where he was happiest. When the pastor read Ro 8:31, Melancthon exclaimed, “Read those words again!” The pastor read, “If God is for us, who

can be against us?" Melancthon murmured in a kind of ecstasy, "That's it! That's it!" This text had always been the greatest comfort to him. In the darkest hours of his life when death's cold stare threatened, he comforted himself again by reciting, "If God is for us, who can be against us?"

In Ro 8:31-39 Paul developed the fact that God will not lose one whom He has foreknown in this climactic section, and he gloried in this great truth.

Mounce - "Nowhere in the annals of sacred literature do we find anything to match the power and beauty of this remarkable paean of praise."

Jamieson & Fausset - "This whole passage strikes all thoughtful interpreters and readers, as transcending almost everything in language"

When **Chrysostom** was brought before the Roman Emperor, the Emperor threatened him with banishment if he remained a Christian. Chrysostom replied,

"Thou canst not banish me for this world is my father's house."

"But I will slay thee," said the Emperor.

"Nay, thou canst not," said the noble champion of the faith, "for my life is hid with Christ in God."

"I will take away thy treasures."

"Nay, but thou canst not for my treasure is in heaven and my heart is there."

"But I will drive thee away from man and thou shalt have no friend left."

"Nay, thou canst not, for I have a friend in heaven from whom thou canst not separate me. I defy thee; for there is nothing that thou canst do to hurt me."

Only he who can say "The Lord is the strength of my life" can say, "Of whom shall I be afraid?"

[And if our God is for us](#)

Then who could ever stop us

And if our God is with us

Then what could stand against

Tom Carter in [Spurgeon at His Best](#): - Even when he preached to the saved, Spurgeon couldn't close without addressing the lost. He once spoke on Romans 8:31, "If God is for us, who is against us?" in which he proved from several points of view that God was the believer's advocate. But at the end of that sermon he posed the question to the nonbeliever, "If God is against you, who can be for you?" It's typical of the way Spurgeon wouldn't allow himself to conclude a sermon without a loving yet solemn warning to the nonbeliever.

Spurgeon on Romans 8:31 - There is an opposite to this, and it belongs to some who are here: If God be against you, who can be for you? If you are an enemy to God, your very blessings are curses to you. Your pleasures are only the prelude to your pains. Whether you have adversity or prosperity, so long as God is against you, you can never truly prosper. Take half an hour this afternoon to think this over: If God be against me, what then? What will become of me in time and eternity? How shall I die? How shall I face him in the day of judgment? It is not an impossible "if" but an "if" which amounts to a certainty, I fear, in the case of many who are sitting in this house today.

C H Spurgeon writes the following thoughts on Romans 8:31

And so it was, for, as he could not travel quickly, the journey was prolonged, and he arrived at London some days later than had been expected. When they reached Highgate, they heard the bells ringing merrily in the city down below. They asked the meaning and were told, "Queen Mary is dead, and there will be no more burning of Protestants!"

"Ah," said Gilpin, "you see, it is all for the best." It is a blessing to break a leg if thereby a life is saved. How often our calamities are our preservatives!

><> ><> ><>

There is an opposite to this, and it belongs to some who are here: If God be against you, who can be for you?

If you are an enemy to God, your very blessings are curses to you. Your pleasures are only the prelude to your pains. Whether you have adversity or prosperity, so long as God is against you, you can never truly prosper. Take half an hour this afternoon to think this over: If God be against me, what then? What will become of me in time and eternity? How shall I die? How shall I face him in the day of judgment? It is not an impossible "if" but an "if" which amounts to a certainty, I fear, in the case of many who are sitting in this house today.

><> ><> ><>

You may assume that those of us who are always before the public speaking of the blessed promises of God are never downcast or heartbroken. You are mistaken. We have been there, and perhaps we know how to say a word in season to any who are now going through similar experiences. With many enterprises on my hands, far too great for my own unaided strength, I am often driven to fall flat on this promise of my God, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (see note Hebrews 13:5).

If I feel that any plan has been of my devising, or that I sought my own honor, then I know that the plan must rightly fail. But when I can prove that God has thrust it on me, that I am moved by a divine impulse and not my own feelings and wishes, then how can my God forsake me? How can He lie, however weak I may be? How is it possible for Him to send His servant to battle and not comfort him with reinforcements when the battle goes hard? God is not David when he put Uriah in the front lines and left him to die (2 Sa 11:15). God will never desert any of His servants.

Dear brothers and sisters, if the Lord calls you to things you cannot do, He will give you the strength to do them. If He should push you still further, until your difficulties increase and your burdens become heavy, "as your days, so shall your strength be" (Deut. 33:25). You shall march with the indomitable spirit of those who have tried and trusted the naked arm of the Eternal God.

"I will never leave you nor forsake you." Then what is the trouble? Though all the world were against you, you could shake all the world as Samson shook the lion (see notes Judges 14:6). "If God is for us, who can be against us?" Though earth, hell, and all their crew come against you, if the God of Jacob stands at your back, you will thresh them as though they were wheat and drive them as though they were chaff. Roll this promise under your tongue. It is a sweet food.

After having given us his own Son, what is there that he can withhold from us if it is for our real good? Nay, he has already virtually given us all things in giving him to us.

Spurgeon on Ro 8:31-34 - It is pleasant to look back to Calvary's hill, and to behold that bleeding form expiring on the tree; it is sweet, amazingly sweet, to pry with eyes of love between those thick olives, and hear the groanings of the Man who sweat great drops of blood. Sinner, if you ask me how Christ can save you, I tell you this—he can save you, because he did not save himself; he can save you, because he took your guilt and endured your punishment. There is no way of salvation apart from the satisfaction of divine justice. Either the sinner must die, or else someone must die for him. Sinner, Christ can save you, because, if you come to God by him, then he died for you. God has a debt against us, and he never remits that debt; he will have it paid. Christ pays it, and then the poor sinner goes free. And we are told another reason why he is able to save: not only because he died, but because he lives to make intercession for us. That Man who once died on the cross is alive; that Jesus who was buried in the tomb is alive. If you ask me what he is doing, I bid you listen. Listen, if you have ears! Did you not hear him, poor penitent sinner? Did you not hear his voice, sweeter than harpers playing on their harps? Did you not hear a charming voice? Listen! What did it say? "O my Father! Forgive!" Why, he mentioned your own name! "O my Father, forgive him; he knew not what he did. It is true he sinned against light, and knowledge, and warnings; sinned willfully and woefully; but, Father, forgive him!" Penitent, if you can listen, you will hear him praying for you. And that is why he is able to save.

Always For Us

If God is for us, who can be against us? —Romans 8:31

Today's Scripture: Ruth 1

Naomi, her husband, and their two sons left Israel and moved to Moab because of a famine (Ruth 1:1-2). One son married Ruth, the other married Orpah. Eventually Naomi's husband and sons died (vv.3,5), so she decided to return to Israel. But she felt that her daughters-in-law would be better off staying in Moab (vv.6-13). She tried to dissuade them from going with her by saying, "No, my daughters; for it grieves me very much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord has gone out against me!" (v.13).

Was Naomi right in her thinking about God? Perhaps the family had displayed a lack of faith by moving to pagan Moab, but God

certainly was not against her. He proved this by wonderfully providing for her and Ruth after they returned to Israel. (Read the rest of the book—it's short.)

You may be unemployed, terminally ill, have a disabled child, or care for a loved one with Alzheimer's. God hasn't promised to keep us from such problems. But He has proven that He is always "for us" as Christians by what He did through Jesus (Romans 5:8-9). Nothing, not even death, can separate us from His love (8:35-39).

The Lord is never "against us," not even when He chastens us (Hebrews 12:5-6). He is always for us! By: Herbert Vander Lugt [Our Daily Bread](#). Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Our God is always there for us—
Receiving every prayer,
Delighting in our words of praise,
Responding with His care.
—Sper

The One who died to save you will never be against you.

On Our Side

If God is for us, who can be against us? —Romans 8:31

Today's Scripture: Romans 8:31-39

A young Christian was working at his first job, the night shift at a refrigerator assembly plant, trying to earn money for Bible college. The people he worked with were pretty rough, and he was laughed at for being a Christian. The harassment occurred at every break and gradually became more and more vulgar.

One night was worse than the others. They were laughing at him, swearing, and mocking Jesus. He was about ready to quit. Then an older man sitting at the back of the room said, "That's enough! Find someone else to pick on." They immediately backed off. Later the older fellow said to the young man, "I saw that you were having a difficult time, and I wanted to let you know I'm on your side."

Maybe you're a Christian and are standing alone against others who do not know God. It seems as if Satan is winning. The Lord may send a fellow believer to stand with you. But even if He doesn't, you can be confident that He is on your side. He demonstrated that by sending His Son Jesus to die in your place on the cross. You can never be separated from His love and care (Romans 8:38-39).

With assurance you can now say, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Ro 8:31). By: David C. Egnor [Our Daily Bread](#). Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

I stand alone, dear Lord—stay by my side,
In all my daily needs please be my guide;
O grant to me Your grace, for this I pray,
To carry on my work from day to day.
—Anon.

With God on our side we are never outnumbered.

God, Donkeys, And Us

If God is for us, who can be against us? —Romans 8:31

Today's Scripture: Numbers 22:21-35+

Pastor Gumerindo rides a donkey as he travels from village to village in Brazil and preaches the gospel. According to author Don Hare, the traveling evangelist fell asleep in the saddle on his return home after a tiring day. A couple of hours later he was rudely awakened by the roughness of the ride. His donkey had left the trail and was walking through a rocky field. At first the pastor was angry, but he calmed down when he saw that they were almost back to his village.

When he arrived at his church, he learned that friends had gathered to pray for his safety. A rancher who hated the gospel had sent some men to attack him at a bend in the trail. They thanked God for causing the donkey to take a shortcut home.

Centuries ago, God used another donkey. This one miraculously spoke and saved the life of Balaam, a disobedient, money-hungry

prophet (Num. 22:21-35). God got his attention, and Balaam took the Lord's message to Moab.

God cares for us and He will carry out His good plans for us, even if He has to use animals and rebellious people to do so. How has God spoken to you or cared for you through unusual circumstances? What reasons do you have to praise Him for His protection and leading? By: Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

My times are in my Father's hand;
How could I wish or ask for more?
For He who has my pathway planned
Will guide me till my journey's o'er.
—Fraser

Because God is with us, we need not fear what is ahead of us.

Is There Hope?

If God is for us, who can be against us? Romans 8:31

Today's Scripture & Insight: Romans 8:31–39

Edward Payson (1783–1827) led an extremely difficult life. The death of his younger brother shook him to the core. He struggled with bipolar disorder, and he was affected by extreme migraine headaches for days. If this wasn't enough, a fall from a horse led to paralysis of his arm, and he almost died from tuberculosis! Surprisingly, his response wasn't one of despair and hopelessness. His friends said that before Edward passed away, his joy was intense. How could that be?

In his letter to the believers in Rome, the apostle Paul expressed his complete confidence in the reality of God's love regardless of circumstances. He asked with boldness, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31). If God gave His very own Son, Jesus, to save us, then He will provide everything we need to finish this life well. Paul listed seven seemingly unbearable situations that he himself faced: trouble, hardship, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, and the sword (v. 35). He didn't imply that Christ's love would stop bad things from happening. But Paul said that "in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (v. 37).

Through the uncertainty of this world, God can be trusted completely, knowing that nothing, absolutely nothing, "will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (v. 39). By: Estera Piroasca Escobar ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

When you face seemingly hopeless situations, how do you typically respond? What promise of God can you cling to, knowing He is faithful?

Faithful Father, thank You for Your Son's sacrifice so that I can have eternal life. Thank You that, no matter how gray life may seem, I can trust in Your promises.

Great Things!

What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Romans 8:31

Today's Scripture & Insight: Psalm 126

On November 9, 1989, the world was astonished by the news of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The wall that had divided Berlin, Germany, was coming down and the city that had been divided for twenty-eight years would be united again. Though the epicenter of joy was Germany, an onlooking world shared in the excitement. Something great had taken place!

When Israel returned to her homeland in 538 bc after being exiled for almost seventy years, it was also momentous. Psalm 126 begins with an over-the-shoulder look at that joy-filled time in the history of Israel. The experience was marked by laughter, joyful singing, and international recognition that God had done great things for His people (v. 2). And what was the response of the recipients of His rescuing mercy? Great things from God prompted great gladness (v. 3). Furthermore, His works in the past became the basis for fresh prayers for the present and bright hope for the future (vv. 4–6).

You and I need not look far in our own experiences for examples of great things from God, especially if we believe in God through His Son, Jesus. Nineteenth-century hymn writer Fanny Crosby captured this sentiment when she wrote, "Great things He hath taught us, great things He hath done, and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son." Yes, to God be the glory, great things He has

done! By: Arthur Jackson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

What great things have you experienced from the hand of God? How does reflecting on these increase your trust and hope?

Great things in the past can inspire great joy, great prayer, and great hope.

Spurgeon on Ro 8:31 - IF GOD IS FOR US.

You may assume that those of us who are always before the public speaking of the blessed promises of God are never downcast or heartbroken. You are mistaken. We have been there, and perhaps we know how to say a word in season to any who are now going through similar experiences. With many enterprises on my hands, far too great for my own unaided strength, I am often driven to fall flat on this promise of my God, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb. 13:5).

If I feel that any plan has been of my devising, or that I sought my own honor, then I know that the plan must rightly fail. But when I can prove that God has thrust it on me, that I am moved by a divine impulse and not my own feelings and wishes, then how can my God forsake me? How can He lie, however weak I may be? How is it possible for Him to send His servant to battle and not comfort him with reinforcements when the battle goes hard? God is not David when he put Uriah in the front lines and left him to die (2 Sam. 11:15). God will never desert any of His servants.

Dear brothers and sisters, if the Lord calls you to things you cannot do, He will give you the strength to do them. If He should push you still further, until your difficulties increase and your burdens become heavy, "as your days, so shall your strength be" (Deut. 33:25). You shall march with the indomitable spirit of those who have tried and trusted the naked arm of the Eternal God.

"I will never leave you nor forsake you." Then what is the trouble? Though all the world were against you, you could shake all the world as Samson shook the lion (Jdg. 14:6). "If God is for us, who can be against us?" Though earth, hell, and all their crew come against you, if the God of Jacob stands at your back, you will thresh them as though they were wheat and drive them as though they were chaff. Roll this promise under your tongue. It is a sweet food.

Spurgeon - God is for us. But, O my brethren, though this brings in the context, it is impossible for any human speech to bring out the depth of the meaning of how God is for us. He was for us before the worlds were made: he was for us, or else he never would have given his Son; he was for us even when he smote the only-begotten, and laid the full weight of his wrath upon him—he was for us, though he was against him; he was for us when we were ruined in the fall—he loved us notwithstanding all; he was for us when we were against him, and with a high hand were bidding him defiance: he was for us, or else he never would have brought us humbly to seek his face. He has been for us in many struggles; we have had to fight through multitudes of difficulties; we have had temptations from without and within—how could we have held on until now if he had not been with us? He is for us, let me say, with all the infinity of his heart, with all the omnipotence of his love; for us with all his boundless wisdom; arrayed in all the attributes which make him God he is for us—eternally and immutably for us; for us when the blue skies shall be rolled up like a worn out vesture; for us throughout eternity. Here, child of God, is matter enough for thought, even though you had ages to meditate upon it: God is for you; and if God be for you, who can be against you?

Robert J Morgan ([My All in All: Daily Assurance of God's Grace](#)) - Devotional for December 16 - When I was a boy, my Aunt Louise came to our house on Christmas Eve with a car full of presents. I don't remember what she gave me that evening, but I remember very well what she gave my sister, who was, as I recall, about five years old. It was a huge walking doll. It was really too tall for my sister to handle, but she and I spent many wonderful days playing in the large box that contained the present. As we approach the Christmas season, we're prone to forget the Baby and focus on the wrappings and trappings of the season. The onslaught of preparation is well-nigh overwhelming. But in Romans 8, the Bible reminds us that God gave His Son to us all at Christmas and at Calvary. If He gave us this ultimate blessing, will He not also give us all other things needed for daily happiness and everlasting joy? Yes, yes, He will freely give us all things.

How shall He not?
Can it be imagined that He should do the greater
and not do the less? That He should give so great a gift
for us when we were enemies, and should deny us any
good thing now that through Him we are friends and children?
—Matthew Henry

Spurgeon from sermon [God is With Us \(584\)](#) - THE truth here asserted is indisputable. Even heathens have taken this for their

motto, and emblazoned it upon their standards of war. "God is for us!" has been the war-cry of many a warrior as he has dashed to the fight; however out of place it was in such association its force was clearly perceived. Our text, however, protects itself from ill-usage, for you observe that the text is guarded with the little word "If," as a sentinel. No man, therefore, has any right to the treasures of this text, unless he can give the pass-word, and answer the question. It is not every man who can say that God is on his side; on the contrary, the most of men are fighting against the Lord. By nature we are the friends of sin, and then God is against us; with all the powers of justice he is against us for our destruction unless we turn and repent. Is God for us? Remember he is so if we have been reconciled to him by the death of his Son; but an absolute God must be in arms against us, for even our God is a consuming fire. It is only when we behold the Lord Jehovah in the person of Jesus Christ that our hope and joy can begin; when we see Deity incarnate, when we see God surrendering the glories of his throne to become man, and then stooping to the shameful death of the cross—it is then that we perceive Emmanuel, "God with us," and perceiving him, we feel that he is on our side. Question thyself then, soul, whether thou art in Christ. He who is not with Christ is not with God. If thou art without Christ, thou art without God, and a stranger from the commonwealth of Israel; but if through the sprinkled blood thou canst say that thou art reconciled unto God, then take the full meaning of this text, and feast upon it, and be thou blessed, for "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Spurgeon in Daily Help - "God is for me" (Ps. 56:9). He was "for us," or He would not have given His well-beloved Son. And because He is "for us," the voice of prayer will always ensure His help. "When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back" (Ps. 56:9). This is no uncertain hope but a well-grounded assurance—"this I know" (Ps. 56:9). I will direct my prayer to You and will look up for the answer, assured that it will come, for "God is for me." Oh, believer, how happy are you with the King of Kings on your side. How safe with such a protector! How sure your cause, pleaded by such an advocate! If God is for you, who can be against you? (See Romans 8:31.)

Romans 8:32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [os ge tou idiou huiou ouk epheisato](#). ([3SAMI](#)) [alla huper hemon panton paredoken](#) ([3SAAL](#)) [auton. pos ouchi kai sun auto ta panta hemin charisetai?](#) ([3SFMI](#))

Amplified: He who did not withhold or spare [even] His own Son but gave Him up for us all, will He not also with Him freely and graciously give us all [other] things? ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: Since God did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't God, who gave us Christ, also give us everything else? ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: He that did not hesitate to spare his own Son but gave him up for us all - can we not trust such a God to give us, with him, everything else that we can need? ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: Indeed, He who His own Son did not spare, but on behalf of us all delivered Him up, how is it possible that He shall not with Him in grace give us all things? ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used [by permission](#))

Young's Literal: He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

HE WHO DID NOT SPARE HIS OWN SON: os ge tou idiou huiou ouk epheisato (3SAMI):

- Romans 5:6, 7, 8, 9, 10; 11:21; Ge 22:12; Isaiah 53:10; Matthew 3:17; John 3:16; 2Cor 5:21; 2Pe 2:4,5; 1Jn 4:10
- Romans 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

He - God the Father.

This presents the chief point in the proof that God is for us, the greatest exhibition of the love of God toward us. The reference to Abraham's offering of Isaac is evident.

Spare ([5339](#)) (**pheidomai**) means to save from loss or discomfort. In some contexts it means to refrain from doing something (cf 2Cor 12:6)

Pheidomai - 10x in 9v - Acts 20:29; Rom 8:32; 11:21; 1 Cor 7:28; 2 Cor 1:23; 12:6; 13:2; 2 Pet 2:4f

The word rendered **spared** is the same as in the Septuagint (LXX) of Genesis 22

Genesis 22:12 And he said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not **withheld** (Hebrew = chasak = withhold, keep back, spare; Lxx = pheidomai) your son, your only son, from Me."

Genesis 22:16 and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not **withheld** your son, your only son

In providing His only Son as the Substitute for sacrifice, God was showing His ultimate provision for our needs, even as foreshadowed in Genesis 22 where Abraham experienced the reality that He is Jehovah Who Provides the ram in the thicket and the Lamb on the Cross. God sees our needs and provides for those needs and is fittingly known as **Jehovah Jireh**.

Abraham called the name of the place, The-Lord-Will-Provide Genesis 22:14. GOD'S GUIDANCE, PROVISION

A number of times in the Old Testament, the name "Jehovah" is joined to other names that reveal some of God's distinct characteristics. Abraham said that the place where God supplied a ram should be called "The-Lord-Will-Provide." This name, which is sometimes rendered "Jehovah-Jireh," indicates that God sees beforehand what our needs are, and He provides for them.

A young newlywed planned to entertain some friends. Lacking some necessary items, she went to a neighbor to borrow them. After giving the items to her, the friend asked, "Is that all you want?" "Yes, I think so," the young bride answered. Then her neighbor, an experienced hostess, handed her some other items, explaining that she would need them as well. Later the young woman remarked, "I was so thankful I went to someone who knew exactly what I needed and was willing to supply it."

How well that describes God. Through the sacrifice of His Son, He has given us salvation. But that's not all. He also provides power through the Holy Spirit so that we can do His will. "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32). Jehovah-Jireh. The Lord will provide. —P.R.V. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Where God guides, He provides.

He who so freely gave the choicest thing that he had to give when we were **yethelpless, ungodly, sinners** and **enemies** of God -- now that we are His friends -- will He not complete the process (Php 1:6-note)?

- Romans 5:6+ For while we were still **helpless**, at the right time Christ died for the **ungodly**.
 - Romans 5:8+ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet **sinners**, Christ died for us.
 - Romans 5:10+ For if while we were **enemies** we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.
-

David Jeremiah - RECEIVED INTO HIS PRESENCE

ROMANS 8:32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things?

If there was ever a person who had room to complain of injustice, it was Jesus. He was the only innocent man to be punished by God. If we stagger at the wrath of God, let us stagger at the cross. The cross was at once the most horrible and the most beautiful example of the wrath of God. God loves us with an everlasting love and wants to bring us to be with Him forever. But God is absolutely holy, and in order for us to be with Him, He had to deal with the issue of holiness. So He sent His holy Son and let Him suffer the penalty of sin for everyone. And then He gave those who trusted in His Son the full benefits of righteousness. He gave us the holiness of His Son.

When we stand before God in His holiness, He looks at us and sees the righteous clothing of His flawless Son. He is able to receive us into His presence. God is so holy that He would not even spare His own Son in order that we might have fellowship with Him. ([Sanctuary: Finding Moments of Refuge in the Presence of God](#))

Jon Courson - The word 'spared' is used only one other place in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament. When Abraham took his 33-year-old son, Isaac, to Mount Moriah (today called Golgotha or Calvary), God said, 'Abraham, lay not your hand upon the lad. Neither do anything unto him for now I know that thou fearest God seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me' (see Genesis 22:12). The word 'withheld' is the same word translated 'spared' here in Romans.

I suggest to you the reason God could pour out so many blessings on Abraham in so many ways was because Abraham was ready to sacrifice the one thing in his life that mattered most. In so doing, Abraham said, 'I'll plunge a knife into my son's chest because I love You, Father, more than I trust my ability to figure out what's going on.'

So too, if the thing that means the most to you—be it your wife, kids, house, car, job, future—doesn't matter at all to you in comparison to your relationship with your Father, God can pour out all kinds of blessings on you because they won't be a distraction to you.

God is saying here, 'If I gave you My Son, I'm going to do what's good for you from this point on. You can be sure of that.' That is why Paul says, when God gave His Son, He proved His magnanimity, His generosity, and His charity. Why, then, question what's going on presently? Anything He shares with us or withholds from us cannot begin to compare with what He's already given us in Christ. ([A Day's Journey](#))

J C Philpot - I have thought sometimes of the sweet figure of Solomon, as a type of Christ, in His royal munificence to the queen of Sheba. We read of him that he "gave unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty." So our Royal Benefactor gives more to the sons of men than is in their heart to ask for. And what He gives, He gives freely, out of His royal bounty. As freely as the rain drops from the sky; as freely as the sun casts forth his glorious beams and ripens the fruits of the earth; as freely as the wind courses over earth; as freely as the dew drops upon the morning grass; so free are gifts of God to His Church and people. Indeed, in giving Christ, God gave everything. The Apostle declares, He "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." We must never look upon spiritual blessings as broken fragments of the love of God, mere shreds and patches, scattered crumbs, waifs and strays, like floating pieces of some shipwrecked vessel; but we must look on the blessings of the Gospel as all stored up in Christ our covenant Head. Whatever is given, is given out of Christ, in whom it hath pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell; and it is by virtue of union to Him, and out of His fulness, that all these blessings are received. How can we lift up our thoughts—how raise up our hearts—adequately to conceive of the gift of God's only-begotten Son, His eternal Son—the Son of the Father in truth and love—given out of the bosom of God that He might become incarnate, suffer, bleed, and die; and by a suffering life and meritorious death offer a sacrifice acceptable to God, a sacrifice whereby the sins of God's people were for ever put away? The grand source of all the admiration and adoration and the eternal blessedness of the saints, will be the holy enjoyment of the mystery of an incarnate God. The incarnation of the second Person in the glorious Trinity—the eternal Son of the eternal Father—His taking the human nature into union with His own divine Person—will be the mystery that will ravish the hearts and fill the lips of God saints with an endless theme of adoration and joy through the countless ages of eternity.

While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

During the American Civil War, a farmer in New York was drafted for the Union army. His wife had died and he was the sole support of his young children. But then an unmarried man in the town who had no dependents came to his home and offered to go to war in his place. For the sake of his children, the farmer accepted the offer. The generous friend marched off to battle, and in the first engagement he was shot and killed. When the farmer heard what had happened, he went to the scene of the battle and brought back the body. He buried his friend in the village churchyard, and had these words engraved on the headstone: He Died for Me. The truth of the gospel is that Jesus gave His life for us while we were His enemies (Rom. 5:8—10). The implications are staggering. If Christ died for us while we were enemies, how much more will the living Christ do for us now that He has made us His friends! We can be sure that not only will He preserve us from God's wrath against sin (v. 9), but He will give us everything we need (Romans 8:32)—in this life and the next. —H. W Robinson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

JESUS TOOK OUR PLACE AND GAVE US His PEACE.

BUT DELIVERED HIM UP FOR US ALL: alla huper hemon panton paredoken (3SAAI) auton :

- Romans 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

But - Pause to ponder this strategic, gracious **term of contrast**.

Delivered Him up - This repeats what Paul stated at the end Romans 4...

He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification (Ro 4:25-note)

Delivered (3860)(**paradidomi** [word study] from **para** = alongside, beside, to the side of, over to + **didomi** = to give) conveys the basic meaning of to give over from one's hand to someone or something, especially to give over to the power of another.

Paradidomi - 119x in 117v - betray(17), betrayed(10), betraying(9), betrays(3), commended(1), committed(3), deliver(6), delivered(21), delivered over(1), delivering(3), entrusted(3), entrusting(1), gave(4), gave... over(3), given... over(1), hand(6), handed(9), handed... over(1), handed down(4), handed over(4), hands(1), permits(1), put(1), putting(1), risked(1), surrender(1), taken into custody(2), turn... over(1).

Matt 4:12; 5:25; 10:4, 17, 19, 21; 11:27; 17:22; 18:34; 20:18f; 24:9f; 25:14, 20, 22; 26:2, 15f, 21, 23ff, 45f, 48; 27:2ff, 18, 26; Mark 1:14; 3:19; 4:29; 7:13; 9:31; 10:33; 13:9, 11f; 14:10f, 18, 21, 41f, 44; 15:1, 10, 15; Luke 1:2; 4:6; 9:44; 10:22; 12:58; 18:32; 20:20; 21:12, 16; 22:4, 6, 21f, 48; 23:25; 24:7, 20; John 6:64, 71; 12:4; 13:2, 11, 21; 18:2, 5, 30, 35f; 19:11, 16, 30; 21:20; Acts 3:13; 6:14; 7:42; 8:3; 12:4; 14:26; 15:26, 40; 16:4; 21:11; 22:4; 27:1; 28:17; Rom 1:24, 26, 28; 4:25; 6:17; 8:32; 1 Cor 5:5; 11:2, 23; 13:3; 15:3, 24; 2 Cor 4:11; Gal 2:20; Eph 4:19; 5:2, 25; 1 Tim 1:20; 1 Pet 2:23; 2 Pet 2:4, 21; Jude 1:3.

Paradidomi is used in legal parlance to describe handing someone into the custody of the police, authorities, etc. To deliver up one to custody, to be judged, condemned, punished, scourged, tormented, put to death.

Matthew 10:17 "But beware of men; for **they will deliver you up to** the courts, and scourge you in their synagogues... **10:19** "But when **they deliver you up**, do not become anxious about how or what you will speak; for it shall be given you in that hour what you are to speak... **10:21** "And brother **will deliver up** brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death.

Mark 15:1 And early in the morning the chief priests with the elders and scribes, and the whole Council, immediately held a consultation; and binding Jesus, they led Him away, and **delivered Him up to** Pilate.

2Peter 2:4 (note) For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and **committed** (**paradidomi**) them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment;

For (5228) (**huper**) is a Greek preposition which in the context expresses the idea of **substitution** (Click here for study of this use of **huper** in the NT). Instead of **for** one can render it as **Christ died...** "*in place of, for the benefit of, on behalf of, or instead of.*" This act of love can never be fully appreciated until we understand exactly who the objects of that love were (unlovable, unlovely, ungodly, helpless to help themselves, sinners constantly rebelling against God's will for their lives, God's mortal enemies!)

If accusations are brought against us, we need not fear, for the charges are silenced by the upraised, pierced hands of our Intercessor. If we are to be condemned, it will have to be over Christ's resurrected body, which is the basis of our salvation! How is that for confidence?

S Lewis Johnson - Romans 5:8-10 and Romans 8:32 appear to me to be unanswerable texts for those who deny the scriptural teaching of Christ's **substitutionary atonement**. These passages state plainly that, if Jesus gave Himself for us in atonement, everything else must follow because, having done the most that He could do in dying as our substitute, the lesser things—such as conviction of sin, repentance, effectual grace, faith— must inevitably follow. God's great eternal purpose, expressed so beautifully in 8:28-30, must reach its fruition in glorification for all those for whom He died."

Spurgeon - If Isaac had died, he could not have died for us. He might have died for us as an example of how we should resign life, but that would have been a small boon; it would have been no greater blessing than the Unitarian gospel offers when it sets forth Christ as dying for our exemption. But, beloved, the death of Christ stands altogether alone and apart, because it is a death altogether for others, endured solely and only from selfless affection to the fallen. There is not a pang that rends the Saviour's heart that needed to have been there if not for love to us, not a drop of blood that trickled from that thorn-crowned head or from those pierced hands that needed to be spilled if it were not for affection to such undeserving ones as us. And see what he has done for us! He has procured our pardon; we who have believed in him are forgiven. He has procured our adoption; we are sons of God in Christ Jesus. He has shut the gates of hell for us; we cannot perish, nor can any pluck us out of his hands. He has opened the gates of heaven for us; we shall be with him where he is. Our very bodies shall feel the power of his death, for they shall rise again at the sound of the trumpet at the last day. He was delivered for us his people, 'for us all'; he endured all for all his people, for all who trust him, for every son of Adam that casts himself upon him, for every son and daughter of man that will rely upon him alone for salvation. Was he delivered for you, dear friend? Have you a part in his death? ([The Gospel in Abraham's Sacrifice](#))

HOW WILL HE NOT ALSO WITH HIM FREELY GIVE US ALL THINGS: pos ouchi kai sun auto ta panta hemin charisetai (3SFMI):

- Ro 8:28; 6:23; Ps 84:11; 1Co 2:12; 3:21, 22, 23; 2Co 4:15; Rev 21:7
- Romans 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

How will He not - Strong negative. In other words He will freely give us all things. The HCJB translates it "He who did not spare even his own Son, but gave him up on behalf of us all- is it possible that, having given us his Son, he would not give us everything else too?" It is not possible! Since He gave the greatest gift in His Son, He will give us all things.

Freely give (5483) (**charizomai** from **charis** = grace, undeserved merit or favor) has the basic meaning of to give. To grant as a favor. To give gratuitously, generously, graciously and in kindness. It means to bestow as a gift of grace or out of grace. To give out of grace. To give help to those who don't deserve it. To show grace by providing undeserved help to someone unworthy (see Eph 4:32)

See 10 page discussion in [New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology](#) - Topics covered include χάρις (**charis**), grace, gracefulness, graciousness, favour, thanks, gratitude; χάρισμα (**charisma**), gift given out of goodwill; χαρίζομαι (**charizomai**), show favour or kindness, give as a favour, to be gracious to someone, to pardon; χαριτόω (**charitoō**), endue with grace.

Vine adds **charizomai** means "to bestow a favor unconditionally... then to remit a debt, and hence to forgive... Charizomai primarily denotes to show a favor (**charis**)... In each case the idea of a free, unconditioned act is involved, and in all save one or two cases this is the dominant thought, cp. Acts 27:24; Philemon 22 ([Collected writings of W. E. Vine](#))

The specific meaning of **charizomai** depends on the context of what is given accounting for the following renderings in the NAS...

bestowed(1), forgave(2), forgive(3), forgiven(4), forgiving(2), freely give(1), given(1), graciously forgave(1), granted(5), hand(2), things freely given(1).

Half of the NT uses of **charizomai** (12/23) convey the sense of granting forgiveness, both Divine and human. To forgive out of grace, doing it freely and graciously. In Luke 7:42 this meaning overlaps with the forgiving or canceling of a debt, which in a sense is what one does when they forgive another individual.

In Acts 25:11, 16 **charizomai** is used as a legal technical term of putting Paul under the control of another and so to hand him over.

Charizomai was a common term ancient Greece in honorific documents lauding officials and civic-minded persons for their beneficence.

Here are the 23 NT uses of this great verb **charizomai**...

Luke 7:21+ At that very time He cured many people of diseases and afflictions and evil spirits; and He **granted** sight to many who were blind.

Luke 7:42+ "When they were unable to repay, he **graciously forgave** them both. Which of them therefore will love him more?" **43** Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he **forgave** more." And He said to him, "You have judged correctly."

Acts 3:14+ "But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be **granted** to you. (**Comment:** Here **charizomai** speaks of the release of a prisoner under sentence, as an act of clemency).

Acts 25:11+ "If then I am a wrongdoer, and have committed anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die; but if none of those things is true of which these men accuse me, no one can **hand me over** to them. I appeal to Caesar." (**Comment:** In the legal context the idea is to release.)

Acts 25:16+ "And I answered them that it is not the custom of the Roman to **hand over** any man before the accused meets his accusers face to face, and has an opportunity to make his defense against the charges. (**Comment:** Although **charizomai** usually has a good meaning "give freely or graciously" as God gives to us His favor, here it is a matter of giving a prisoner over to his enemies)

Acts 27:24 saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and behold, God has **granted** you all those who are sailing with you.'

Romans 8:32 (note) He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him **freely give** us all things?

1 Corinthians 2:12+ Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things **freely given** to us by God,

2 Corinthians 2:7+ so that on the contrary you should rather **forgive** and comfort him, lest somehow such a one be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.

2 Corinthians 2:10+ But whom you **forgive** anything, I forgive also; for indeed what I have **forgiven**, if I have **forgiven** anything, I did it for your sakes in the presence of Christ,

2 Corinthians 12:13+ For in what respect were you treated as inferior to the rest of the churches, except that I myself did not become a burden to you? **Forgive** me this wrong!

Galatians 3:18+ For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has **granted** it to Abraham by means of a promise.

Comment: Wuest writes that **charizomai** "is a specialized word. It denotes not merely a gift, but a gift which is given out of the spontaneous generosity of the giver's heart, with no strings tied to it. The Greek word grace [**charis**] has the same root and the same meaning. Thus the word refers, not to an undertaking based upon terms of mutual agreement, but upon the free act of one who gives something, expecting no pay for it. This at once shows the difference between law and grace [**Ed note:** Especially in context of Galatians]. If salvation were by obedience to the law, that would mean that it would be based upon a mutual agreement between God and the sinner whereby God would obligate Himself to give salvation to any sinner who would earn it by obedience to the law. But the very genius of the word **charizomai** militates against the teaching of the Judaizers, namely, that salvation is by works. There is a Greek word huposchesis which is used of an offer based upon the terms of a mutual agreement. But it is not used here. ([Wuest Word Studies - Eerdmann Publishing Company Volume 1](#), [Volume 2](#), [Volume 3](#) - used [by permission](#))

Ephesians 4:32 (note) And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, **forgiving** each other, just as God in Christ also has **forgiven** you.

Comment: Means "forgive freely"—graciously, not grudgingly. To forgive in the sense of treating the offending party graciously." The same word is used of God here forgiving us in Christ. That is the way God has forgiven us, so that is, the way we [enabled by His Spirit] should forgive others. The idea of **freeness** lies in the word forgive, which is forth-give.).

Philippians 1:29 (note) For to you it has been **granted** for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake

Comment: Lightfoot writes that "God has granted you the high privilege of suffering for Christ; this is the surest sign that He looks upon you with favor." Freely bestowed, even as Jesus freely offered Himself to humiliation.)

Philippians 2:9 (note) Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and **bestowed** on Him the name which is above every name,

Comment: Here charizomai means to give freely, confer, here signifies that God the Father bestowed the Name upon Him as a gift of supreme love and approval)

Colossians 2:13 (note) And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having **forgiven** us all our transgressions,

Comment: Note that the more common word for forgive is **aphiemi** which literally means to leave off or send away. The verb **charizomai** for **forgive** carries a deeper sense of wholehearted forgiveness.)

Colossians 3:13 (note) bearing with one another, and **forgiving** each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord **forgave** you, so also should you.

Philemon 1:22 And at the same time also prepare me a lodging; for I hope that through your prayers **I shall be given** to you.

The **Psalmist** extols the gracious Giver of every good gift...

For the LORD God is a sun and shield;
The LORD gives grace and glory;
No good thing does He withhold
From those who walk uprightly. (Psalm 84:11)

Spurgeon's Note = Grace makes us walk uprightly and this secures every covenant blessing to us. What

a wide promise! Some apparent good may be withheld, but no real good, no, not one. "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." God has all good, there is no good apart from him, and there is no good which he either needs to keep back or will on any account refuse us, if we are but ready to receive it. We must be upright and neither lean to this or that form of evil: and this uprightness must be practical, -- we must walk in truth and holiness, then shall we be heirs of all things, and as we come of age all things shall be in our actual possession; and meanwhile, according to our capacity for receiving shall be the measure of the divine bestowal. This is true, not of a favoured few, but of all the saints for evermore.

MacArthur has a slightly different interpretation based on the meanings of **charizomai** (see above) - It therefore seems reasonable to interpret Paul's use of **charizomai** in Romans 8:32 as including the idea of God's gracious forgiveness as well as His gracious giving. If so, the apostle is also saying that God **freely forgives us all things** (cf. 1John 1:9). God's unlimited forgiveness makes it impossible for a believer to sin himself out of God's grace. ([MacArthur, J: Romans 1-8. Chicago: Moody Press](#))

Denny on the other hand says that **freely give us all things** "is usually taken to mean the whole of what furthers the Christian's life, the whole of what contributes to the perfecting of his salvation; all this will be freely give to him by God. But why should it not mean **all things** without any such qualification? When God gives us His Son He gives us the world. There is nothing which does not work together for our good. All things are ours. cf 1Cor 3:22ff.

Considering the nuances of the verb **charizomai** it is reasonable to interpret passage as freely gives and freely forgives all things. Is that indeed not what we have experienced in our Christian life so far?

Spurgeon on Romans 8:32 - What? Will He deny you bread for your body—after He has given you Christ, the Bread of Heaven, for your soul? Will He deny you clothes for your body—after He has clothed your soul with the robe of Christ's perfect righteousness? Will He deny you a sufficient store of earthly goods that you may get through this world—when He has already given you a mansion in the skies and an unfading crown of life?

How can we be so certain of this promise? Because the greatest gift ensures all the rest, whether one interprets it as giving or forgiving. The logic that flows from this is irresistible. If God has already given us the greatest gift of His Son as our Savior and Redeemer, is there any lesser gift that He will not give? If He has already paid the highest price, will He hesitate to pay any lower price? If He has gone to such lengths to procure our salvation, will He ever let us go? In short, if the Father has already given His ultimate Gift, how can we think that He will fail to give us the smaller gifts?

Mackintosh comments on the way Paul phrases this question writing that...

The language of unbelief "is **'How shall He?'** The language of faith is **'How shall He not?'**

Stedman - He who has already given us the best, the greatest, the dearest, the most precious thing He has, and Who did so while we were sinners -- while we were enemies, while we were helpless -- will He not also give us some of these trivial, piddling little things that we need? If someone thinks enough of you to give you a costly, brilliant, beautiful, flawless diamond, do you think he will object when you ask him for the box that goes with it? If a mother will give up a baby, do you think she will object if they ask to take his clothes too? And if God has given us his own Son already, do you really think God is going to withhold anything else that we need? Paul's argument is unanswerable: Of course he won't. We can say with David in the 23rd Psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," {Ps 23:1 - }. ([If God be For Us](#))

Our Father freely gives as illustrated by the story of a poor European family who saved for years to buy tickets to sail to America. Once at sea, they carefully rationed the cheese and bread they had brought for the journey. After 3 days, the boy complained to his father,

"I hate cheese sandwiches. If I don't eat anything else before we get to America, I'm going to die."

Giving the boy his last nickel, the father told him to go to the ship's galley and buy an ice-cream cone. When the boy returned a long time later with a wide smile, his worried dad asked,

"Where were you?"

"In the galley, eating three ice-cream cones and a steak dinner!"

"All that for a nickel?"

"Oh, no, the food is free," the boy replied. "It comes with the ticket."

Cheese Sandwiches - Author Peter Kreeft tells the story of a poor European family who saved for years to buy tickets to sail to

America. Once at sea, they carefully rationed the cheese and bread they had brought for the journey.

After 3 days, the boy complained to his father, "I hate cheese sandwiches. If I don't eat anything else before we get to America, I'm going to die." Giving the boy his last nickel, the father told him to go to the ship's galley and buy an ice-cream cone.

When the boy returned a long time later with a wide smile, his worried dad asked, "Where were you?"

"In the galley, eating three ice-cream cones and a steak dinner!"

"All that for a nickel?"

"Oh, no, the food is free," the boy replied. "It comes with the ticket." ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Vance Havner - Included in the Ticket

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? Romans 8:32.

It is an old story of the ship passenger who lived on crackers and cheese all the way across the ocean only to learn that his meals were included in his ticket.

Our salvation includes more than pardon from sin, deliverance from hell and a ticket to heaven. It includes all that we shall need on our journey. Sin has been dealt with in the Son, but Jesus is not only our Saviour, He is our Sustenance and Supply. We are not to subsist on our own crackers and cheese. "All things are yours." Indeed, the supreme thing is that God spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all. That is the message of Calvary. But God has also freely given us all things in the gift of His Son. Our assurance, sanctification, peace, joy, wisdom, all that we need for body, mind and spirit to do God's will, a new body at the resurrection, eternal life in heaven, all this is "included in the ticket." What a "ticket," bought at the purchase price of God's own Son! Throw away your crackers and cheese! You have a right to eat in the Main Dining Room!

Vance Havner - "With Him—All Things"

He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things? Romans 8:32.

How blessed to move from our nothingness to "everything in Jesus"! "By him all things consist." The Father has given him all things (Jn. 3:35; 13:3; 16:15). All things were made by him (Jn. 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6). Jesus has said, "All things are mine... Come" (Mt. 11:27, 28); "All things are mine... Believe" (Jn. 3:35, 36); "All things are mine... Go" (Mt. 28:18-20).

Your part is to bring Him all your need. His part is to supply all your need (Phil. 4:19). If the first step is to realize the nothingness of yourself, the second is to turn to the Allness of Christ.

"All that I need is Jesus," because all that I need is in Jesus. If God spared not His own Son but freely delivered Him up for our redemption, He will not give me the greater and fail to give me the lesser, but with Him He has given all else that I need, whether great or small.

And if everything is in Jesus, surely Jesus ought to be everything to us!

Vance Havner - "With Him Also... All Things"

"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?" Rom. 8:32

If God loved us enough to give his Son to die for us will he not also give us all lesser blessings? If he provided the greater, surely he will include the less! What a strange experience this is that we have received God's salvation from the guilt and penalty of sin, yet we wallow along in fear and doubt and care and daily sins! What sort of redemption is that which provides security against the past and future but leaves us stranded in the here-and-now?

It not only shows weakness and lack of faith to plug along in daily defeat hoping only to get to heaven; it casts reproach on the care of our heavenly Father to imply by our tawdry living that he has stingily meted out a scanty allowance for us in this present world.

And how much goes along with the gift of his Son? "All things!" And how is this given? Grudgingly, so that we must coax and persuade a parsimonious God? "Freely!" If being saved from condemnation makes us as happy as it does, why do we not take all the rest that goes along with it! Are you missing the things that are included "with him also"?

... According to your faith be it unto you (Matthew 9:29)

Some time ago, while checking my concordance on the word "all," I was impressed with what might be called the "allness" of our sinfulness: "... all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23); "... the scripture hath concluded all under sin..." (Galatians 3:22); "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all (James 2:10); "... Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3).

We are all sinners. We do not have to break all the commandments to be involved; and unless we repent we shall all perish. This does not mean that one man is as vile morally as another, or that one is as great a menace to society as another; but it does mean that all of us are sinners. Nicodemus was as truly a sinner as Barabbas, though not to the same degree.

I was impressed, however, with something more: the "allness" of our Saviour: "... Christ is all, and in all" (Colossians 3:11); He "fillethe all in all" (Ephesians 1:23); He "is before all things, and by him all things consist"; "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily"; in Him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 1:17; 2:9; 2:3). The answer to the allness of my sin is the "allness" of my Saviour. The way from the one to the other is by faith.

Someone has said that the letters in the word "faith" may be spelled out to mean "For all, I take Him." True faith in Christ means, first, that for all He is and all He claimed to be—Son of God, Saviour of the world—I take Him. God has taken care of everything in Jesus Christ; He is the answer to every question in time and eternity. "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?" (Romans 8:32).

We may also spell "faith" to mean "Forsaking all, I take Him." I must forsake my sins (Proverbs 28:13); forsaking my sins, I take Him as Saviour; then I must forsake all that I have (Matthew 19:27-29; Luke 14:33). This does not mean I am to walk out of my home, leaving family and friends; it means that He must come first. Better still, my love and loyalty to Him includes and glorifies all other loves and loyalties. Forsaking all I have, I take Him as my Lord.

We may also spell "faith" to mean "For all, I trust Him." I trust Him for all my need: "... my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19). He is able to make all grace abound toward us, that we always, having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work (II Corinthians 9:8). We are to cast all our care upon Him, and we can do all things through Him (I Peter 5:7; Philippians 4:13). My past, my present, my future—for everything I need, I trust Him.

Finally, we may spell "faith" to mean "For all, I thank Him": for what He has done, is doing, will do. "In every thing give thanks..." (I Thessalonians 5:18). For everything? Yes, because all things work together for our good if we love God and are called according to His purpose. We are to make our requests known with thanksgiving, and God's peace will garrison our hearts and minds (Philippians 4:6).

For all, I take Him; for all, I trust Him; for all, I thank Him—here is a formula that never fails. I have indicated only a few of the Scriptures that mark out this blessed path to peace and power. Accept it, affirm it, act upon it—not as a magic "open sesame," but as God's Word—and you will find that through appropriating faith the allness of His grace is the answer to the allness of your need.

Jerry Bridges in Holiness Day by Day - GENEROSITY BEYOND COMPARE

How will he not also with him graciously give us all things? (ROMANS 8:32)

The fact that God deals with His children on the basis of grace without regard to merit or demerit is a staggering concept. It's opposed to almost everything we've been taught about life. We've been generally conditioned to think that if we work hard and "pay our dues," we'll be rewarded in proportion to our work: "You do so much, you deserve so much."

But God's grace doesn't operate on a reward-for-works basis. It's much better than that. God is generous beyond all measure or comparison. The Scripture says, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son"; and Paul spoke of this as God's "inexpressible gift" (John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 9:15). God's inexpressible generosity, however, does not stop at saving us; it provides for all our needs and blessings throughout our entire lives. As Paul said in Romans 8:32, "He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?" Paul used the argument of the greater to the lesser to teach us God's generosity. No blessing we'll ever receive can possibly compare with the gift of God's Son dying for us. God demonstrated His gracious generosity to the ultimate at the cross. And Paul based the assurance that we can expect God to meet all our other needs throughout life on the fact that God has already met our greatest need.

Note that Paul said God will "graciously" or freely give us all things. Just as salvation is given freely to all who trust in Christ, so all blessings are given freely to us, also through faith in Christ.

Jerry Bridges - The Generous Landowner

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?
ROMANS 8:32

The fact that God deals with His children on the basis of grace without regard to merit or demerit is a staggering concept. It is opposed to almost everything we have been taught about life. We have been generally conditioned to think that if we work hard and “pay our dues” in life, we will be rewarded in proportion to our work. “You do so much, you deserve so much” is a commonly accepted principle in life.

But God’s grace does not operate on a reward for works basis. It is much better than that. God is generous beyond all measure or comparison. The Scripture says, “God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son”; and Paul spoke of this as God’s “inexpressible gift” (John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 9:15, emphasis added). God’s inexpressible generosity, however, does not stop at saving us; it provides for all our needs and blessings throughout our entire lives. As Paul said in Romans 8:32,

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?

Paul used the argument of the greater to the lesser to teach us God’s generosity. He said if God gave His Son for our salvation (the greater), will He not also give us all blessings (the lesser)? No blessing we will ever receive can possibly compare with the gift of God’s Son to die for us. God demonstrated His gracious generosity to the ultimate at the cross. And Paul based the assurance that we can expect God to meet all our other needs throughout life on the fact that God has already met our greatest need. Note that Paul said God will graciously or freely give us all things. Just as salvation is given freely to all who trust in Christ, so all blessings are given freely to us, also through faith in Christ. Just as you cannot earn your salvation but must receive it as a gift, so you cannot earn the blessings of God but must receive them also as gifts given through Christ. ([Transforming Grace: Living Confidently in God's Unfailing Love](#))

Jerry Bridges on Romans 8:31-34 (from [The Great Exchange: My Sin for His Righteousness](#)) - Paul fires off questions to get us to think about the certainty of our justification in Christ: who can oppose us, or accuse us, or condemn us? In between the questions, Paul provides several hints to the triumphant answers:

He did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all.

It is God who justifies.

Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised.

Christ Jesus is interceding for us at the right hand of God.

In this passage, Paul proclaims the privileges granted to those who are united with Christ, and who are thereby completely freed from condemnation. The atonement, where God gave up the Son on our behalf, was a real transaction—it purchased something monumental—the fullest security for us all. Paul confidently defies the enemies and opposition surrounding Christians on the basis of the fact that God is for us. He thus establishes a direct connection between Christ’s atonement and the blood-bought blessings bestowed on us. What have we to fear if we are covered by this great atonement?

God did not withhold his Son. Jesus was not spared from assuming a human body as a prerequisite for his work, an act that in itself was an immeasurable humiliation compared to Christ’s sharing the fullness of God. Jesus, “who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped . . . made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men” (Phil. 2:6–7). As well, he was not spared from subjection to the full force and fury of God’s holy and just wrath against our sin. In spite of the infinite and eternal love with which God regarded his Son, a love that never could be lowered or withdrawn from Christ personally, God did not spare him. As the sinless Son of God and as man’s sin substitute, Christ was simultaneously loved and yet not spared.

This prompts a few questions: (1) Why? Why would God subject Jesus to the full force of his wrath? The answer is amazing: God did not spare his own Son so that he might instead spare us. He did not remove the cup of wrath from him so that it would never be presented to us. From this wonderful truth, additional questions naturally follow: (2) How well protected from God’s wrath are those under Christ’s shield? Are we still to fear some of God’s mighty fury? The answer is that there is not a drop of wrath that Christ did not drink on our behalf. If we are in him, our punishment has already been endured in full, our rescue is assured, and we are infinitely and eternally safe.

The words “his own Son” (Rom. 8:32) convey the idea of a true son, an actual son of divine relationship. There is no aspect of adoption here; Jesus Christ is the genuine, authentic Son of God from eternity past through eternity future. Two underlying

inferences flow from this: (1) there is an infinitely zealous love-relationship between God the Father and God the Son, and (2) the Son has infinite dignity and value by virtue of his sonship. It staggers the imagination to embrace the thought that this is the Son that was given up for us. What price tag can be put on the Son? He is a sacrifice of infinite price. This is the extraordinary measure of the Father's love for us.

God gave up the Son. In other words, it was God himself who delivered Christ into the hands of men to be treated as if he really was the blasphemous offender they accused him of being. Although Judas, the high priest, the council, Pilate, and the Roman cohort were involved, there was a hand above theirs; God was the ultimate cause of Christ's suffering and death. God was the invisible but actual conspirator, righteous judge, and executioner (Acts 2:23).

At this point, Paul gives a logical argument from the greater to the lesser: "He who did not spare his own Son . . . how will he not also . . ." (Rom. 8:32). If God was willing and able to do the most difficult thing and to pay the most infinite price, certainly he is willing and able to "graciously give us all things" (v. 32), a far less costly task than giving his Son. He whose love overcomes the greatest difficulties, and he who by his own miraculous and magnificent plan replaces our condemnation with justification based on his own Son's blood, this great and gracious God will not be thwarted by what is comparatively much less demanding. God's love for us caused him to deliver the Son he loves to spitting, blindfolding, taunting, beating, and scourging, as well as to allow him to be nailed to a cross, speared in the side, and taken to the grave—all for our benefit. Can he not, will he not, then, provide for us in every other way with every other blessing we could possibly need? Having refused to withhold his Son, will he withhold the lesser blessings and mercies bought by the same blood? If he did not spare the Son while we were enemies, will he treat us less lovingly now that we are friends?

God did not deliver up Christ simply to provide us with a good example to live by or a demonstration of superlative, inspiring unselfishness. No, it was much more than that. He delivered his Son to provide a substitutionary death, a death we should have died. He did it to provide a punishment in the place of those who deserved his wrath. He did it to supply redeemed sinners with an inexhaustible basis of confidence and an unquenchable hope.

God would have spared his Son had he not purposed to bestow on us all good things conceivable as demonstrated by Paul when he declares, "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28). What an amazingly good and gracious God!

An important question is raised when Paul declares that God did this "for us all." Who is included in the word all? Does it refer to all mankind? Does it refer to every sinner? The answer to both questions is an emphatic no. The all refers to the Roman believers to whom Paul was writing, believers who joined Paul in forming a mutual body of believers. We see this as well in the beginning of this epistle where Paul addresses his audience as "you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, to all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints" (Rom. 1:6–7a).

While this is true, the more explicit answer, however, is that us all refers to those depicted and qualified in the context of Romans 8:28–30 where Paul says:

Those who love God . . . those who are called according to his purpose. . . . Those whom he foreknew [and] predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son . . . those whom he called . . . justified . . . glorified.

In this context, us all signifies the true church—the redeemed, reconciled sinners that constitute the body of Christ as a whole by virtue of their participation under his representative headship whereby they have died with him and have been raised with him. These, and only these, are the ones for whom God gave up Jesus. The promise of "all things" applies only to them.

Those who will not have Christ as their ransom, redeemer, righteousness, and propitiation, including all those who perceive themselves as relatively moral and expect to present their own righteousness as if it were good enough to stand before a holy God, should not expect to receive God's blessings. They have spurned the love of God, the plan of God, and the provision of God. They are not united to Christ and his great atonement, and thus they are not free from the condemnation, wrath, and death penalty due from the hand of the God of justice for each and every single sin.

May we never spurn the great and proven love of the awesome holy God and the Son he did not spare. Let us pray for enablement to turn to Christ and trust in his atonement and cling to him in a union that can never be undone. Then we will proclaim alongside Paul, "For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38–39).

Faith's Checkbook - Spurgeon - He Freely Gives

"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?"—Romans

IF this is not a promise in form, it is in fact. Indeed, it is more than one promise, it is a conglomerate of promises. It is a mass of rubies and emeralds and diamonds, with a nugget of gold for their setting. It is a question which can never be answered so as to cause us any anxiety of heart. What can the Lord deny us after giving us Jesus? If we need all things in heaven and earth, He will grant them to us: for if there had been a limit anywhere, He would have kept back His own Son.

What do I want today? I have only to ask for it. I may seek earnestly, but not as if I had to use pressure and extort an unwilling gift from the Lord's hand; for He will give freely. Of His own will, He gave us His own Son. Certainly no one would have proposed such a gift to Him. No one would have ventured to ask for it. It would have been too presumptuous. He freely gave His Only Begotten; and, O my soul, canst thou not trust thy heavenly Father to give thee anything, to give thee everything? Thy poor prayer would have no force with Omnipotence if force were needed; but His love, like a spring, rises of itself and overflows for the supply of all thy needs. (The Chequebook of the Bank of Faith)

THE INCLUSIVE GIFT

Romans 8:32 -

Great Texts of the Bible - James Hastings

He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. how shall he not also with him freely give us all things?—Rom. 8:32.

1. THE chapter from which these words are taken is full of encouragement and comfort. The Apostle's object, at least in the latter part of it, is to point out the peculiar privileges of believers, and the certainty of the foundation on which their hopes and prospects rest.

2. St. Paul seems to have in mind especially the outward condition of believers, as if the meanness of their external condition, and the peculiar trials and afflictions to which they are often exposed, might be looked upon as an objection to the truth and reality of those spiritual privileges of which he has shown that they were possessed, and as inconsistent with the special love and favour which God has been said to bear to them. In opposition to this notion, the Apostle shows, with conclusive reasoning and impressive eloquence, that everything connected with even their outward condition is the result of God's sovereign and gracious appointment. The whole of their history, and everything connected with them, composes a great scheme, originating in infinite love, arranged from eternity by infinite wisdom and executed in time by infinite power; and their various trials and afflictions, however numerous and remarkable, instead of being inconsistent with God's special love to them in Christ, are just proofs or expressions of it. For they are the means which infinite wisdom had selected as the best fitted, and which infinite power would certainly overrule, to promote the great object which God has in view in all His dealings with them, the bringing of them to that incorruptible and unfading inheritance which He has prepared for them that love Him.

I THE GIFT OF HIS OWN SON

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all."

1. "Spared not."—In this word we have an allusion to, if not a distinct quotation from, the narrative in Genesis, of Abraham's offering up of Isaac. The same word which is employed in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, to translate the Hebrew word rendered in our Bible as "withheld," is employed here by the Apostle and rendered "spared not." And there is evidently floating before his mind the thought that, in some profound and real sense, there is an analogy between that wondrous and faithful act of giving up, and the transcendent and stupendous gift to the world, from God, of His Son.

The analogy seems to suggest to us, strange as it may be, and remote from the cold and abstract ideas of the Divine nature which it is thought to be philosophical to cherish, that something corresponding to the pain and loss that shadowed the patriarch's heart passed across the Divine mind when the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Not merely to give, but to give up, is the highest crown and glory of love, as we know it. And who shall venture to say that we so fully apprehend the Divine nature as to be warranted in declaring that some analogy to that is impossible for Him? Our language is, "I will not offer unto God that which doth cost me nothing." Let us bow in silence before the dim intimation that seems to flicker out of the words of the text, that so He says to us, "I will not offer unto you that which doth cost me nothing." "He spared not his own Son"—withheld Him not from us.

¶ While we must be careful to exclude from the idea conveyed by the language of the text anything like a struggle or conflict between opposite principles and feelings existing in the Divine mind, we are entitled, and even expected, to view the act of God in giving up His own Son with feelings substantially the same in kind as

those with which we would contemplate an act of heroic self-denial, or of generous sacrifice, performed by one of our fellow-men for the advancement of our happiness.

¶ There is a story of a poor family in Germany who were ready to perish in a time of famine. The husband proposed to the wife to sell one of their children for bread. At length she consented. But the difficulty arose—which of them should it be? The eldest was named. This was their first-born, and the beginning of their strength. The second was named. He was the living image of the father. The third was named. In him the features of the mother breathed. The last was named. He was their youngest, the child of their old age. They agreed to starve together rather than sacrifice one.

2. “His own Son.”—The reality of the surrender is emphasized by the closeness of the bond which, in the mysterious eternity, knits together the Father and the Son. As with Abraham, so in this lofty example of which Abraham and Isaac were but as dim wavering reflections in water, the Son is His own Son. The force of the analogy and the emphasis of that word, which is even more emphatic in the Greek than in the English, “his own Son,” point to a community of nature, to a uniqueness and singleness of relation, to a closeness of intimacy, to which no other is a parallel. And so we have to estimate the measure of the surrender by the tenderness and awfulness of the bond. “Having yet therefore one Son, his well-beloved, he sent him.”

3. “Delivered him up.”—The greatness of the surrender is made more emphatic by the contemplation of it in its negative and positive aspect, in the two successive clauses. “He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up,” an absolute, positive giving of Him over to the humiliation of the life and to the mystery of the death.

(1) He delivered Him up to Suffering.—If it behoved Christ to become man, He might have been spared the trials that are generally the lot of men, trials which they very rightly deserve because of their sins. Let the one sinless Man be spared the sufferings that sinners meet with as their due. But no! Very few, if any, are the sufferings incident to human life that Jesus was exempted from. He was not spared the endurance of poverty. Into poverty He was born, in poverty He lived, and in poverty He died. Poorer than the foxes that had holes, and the birds of the air that had nests, He often had not where to lay His head.

(2) He delivered Him up to Temptation.—He was in all points tempted like as we are. Tempted to distrust God, tempted to presumption, tempted to worldliness. And very bitter enmity was His portion. Perhaps few have been more utterly detested than He was while in the world. It is true that for a time He was popular with the multitude, but, it would seem, only so long as they thought He would provide them with loaves and fishes. But the hatred that assailed Him was intense: it expressed itself in many vile and abusive epithets, in many false accusations, in many attempts, public and private, to take away His life.

(3) He delivered Him up to Ingratitude.—“Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?” That was only one instance out of multitudes in which those whom He benefited showed their utter unthankfulness. His own brethren did not believe in Him, but said that He was mad, and would have kept Him under restraint like a lunatic.

(4) He delivered Him up to Death.—He was spared nothing that could make His sufferings terrible: the treachery of Judas; the cowardice of the other Apostles; the barbarous, brutal treatment to which He was subjected by Herod, and by the soldiers under Pontius Pilate. Of all the deaths that man could die, there was none more torturing than the death of the cross, and there was none so degrading; He was not spared that. And to make it all the worse, to add to the contempt and shame, He was crucified between two thieves. Amply true are the Apostle’s words, “God spared not his own Son.”

Enough, my muse, of earthly things,
And inspirations but of wind;
Take up thy lute, and to it bind
Loud and everlasting strings,
And on them play, and to them sing,
The happy mournful stories,
The lamentable glories
Of the great crucified King!
Mountainous heap of wonders! which dost rise
Till earth thou joinest with the skies!
Too large at bottom, and at top too high,
To be half seen by mortal eye;
How shall I grasp this boundless thing?
What shall I play? What shall I sing?
I'll sing the mighty riddle of mysterious love,
Which neither wretched man below, nor blessed spirits above
With all their comments can explain,
How all the whole world's life to die did not disdain!

I'll sing the searchless depths of the compassion divine,
The depths unfathomed yet
By reason's plummet, and the line of wit;
Too light the plummet, and too short the line;
How the eternal Father did bestow
His own eternal Son as ransom for His foe;
I'll sing aloud that all the world may hear
The triumph of the buried Conqueror;
How hell was by its prisoner captive led,
And the great slayer, Death, slain by the dead.

Methinks I hear of murdered men the voice
Mixed with the murderers' confused noise,
Sound from the top of Calvary;
My greedy eyes fly up the hill, and see
Who 'tis hangs there, the midmost of the three;
O! how unlike the others He;
Look! how He bends His gentle head with blessings from the tree,
His gracious hands, ne'er stretched but to do good,
Are nailed to the infamous wood!
And sinful man does fondly bind
The arms which He extends to embrace all human kind.

4. "For us all."—He delivered Him up for us all. There was a national election of the Jew in which the Gentile had no part; but the drift of the Apostle's argument is that the highest blessing and the fulness of that blessing are for Jew and Gentile alike. The Gospel is catholic; it knows nothing of national predestination and privilege. If God gave His Son for us all, He will not distribute unequally the blessings which flow from that unspeakable gift. Whatever were the national and temporal blessings of the Jew, the Greek and barbarian shall equally share with him in the sovereign gifts of grace. And so the gifts of grace are not given unequally among the various classes of society. "The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him." It is for the Christian Church to do its utmost to put all nations in possession of their spiritual inheritance.

Soul, which to hell wast thrall,
He, He for thine offence
Did suffer death, who could not die at all.
O sovereign excellence!
O life of all that lives!
Eternal bounty, which all goodness gives!
How could Death mount so high?
No wit this point can reach;
Faith only doth us teach,
For us He died, at all who could not die.

II WITH HIM ALL THINGS

"How shall he not also with him freely give us all things?"

After the gift of Jesus Christ, every other gift is comparatively a small matter. Abraham did not spare his son Isaac, but delivered him up to God. In his mind, in his heart, he surrendered him as truly as if he had slain him and burned him on the altar. And after that proof of love to God, do you suppose Abraham possessed anything that he would have been unwilling to give? If God had asked his flocks and his herds, his silver and his gold, we may well suppose that Abraham would have given all without a murmur. And God having given us Christ, we cannot imagine Him unwilling to bestow any favour that would really be a favour.

He will give all things for these reasons—

(1) The greater gift implies the less. We do not expect that a man who hands over a million pounds to another, to help him, will stick at a farthing afterwards. If you give a diamond you may well give a box to keep it in. In God's gift the lesser will follow the lead of the greater; and whatsoever a man can want, it is a smaller thing for Him to bestow, than was the gift of His Son.

¶ Southey told an anecdote of Sir Massey Lopes, which is a good story of a miser. A man came to him and told him he was in great distress, and £200 would save him. He gave him a draft for the money. "Now," says he, "what will you do with this?" "Go to the bankers and get it cashed." "Stop," said he, "I will cash it." So he

gave him the money, but first calculated and deducted the discount.

¶ There is a beautiful contrast between the manners of giving the two sets of gifts implied in the words of the original, perhaps scarcely capable of being reproduced in any translation. The expression that is rendered, “freely give,” implies that there is a grace and a pleasantness in the act of bestowal. God gave in Christ what we may reverently say it was something like pain to give. Will He not give the lesser gifts, whatever they may be, which it is the joy of His heart to communicate? The greater implies the less.

(2) This one great gift draws all other gifts after it, because the purpose of the greater gift cannot be attained without the bestowment of the lesser. He does not begin to build and then find Himself unable to finish; He does not miscalculate His resources, or stultify Himself by commencing upon a large scale and then have to stop short before the purpose with which He began is accomplished. Men build great palaces and are bankrupt before the roof is put on. God lays His plans with the knowledge of His powers, and having first of all bestowed this large gift, is not going to have it bestowed in vain for want of some smaller ones to follow it up.

¶ Men are fond of distinguishing between general and particular providences. They are willing to acknowledge the finger of God in some striking event, or in the swift flashing out of God’s sword of justice. They do not hesitate to admit that life as a whole is under God’s direction; but they hesitate to say that He is concerned with its ordinary commonplaces, valueless as the sparrow’s fall, slight as the hair of the head. Miles if you like; but not steps. But love refuses to believe this teaching. It looks on it as practical atheism. It feels that God cannot afford to let the thread of its life pass from His hands for a single moment.

(3) This great blessing draws after it, by necessary consequence, all other lesser and secondary gifts, inasmuch as, in a very real sense, everything is included and possessed in Christ when we receive Him. “With him,” says St. Paul, as if that gift laid in a man’s heart actually enclosed within it, and had for its indispensable accompaniment, the possession of every smaller thing that a man can need. Jesus Christ is, as it were a great Cornucopia, a horn of abundance, out of which will pour, with magic affluence, all manner of supplies according as we require.

O world, great world, now thou art all my own,
In the deep silence of my soul I stay
The current of thy life, though the wild day
Surges around me, I am all alone;—
Millions of voices rise, yet my weak tone
Is heard by Him who is the Light, the Way,
All Life, all Truth, the centre of Love’s ray;
Clamour, O Earth, the Great God hears my moan!
Prayer is the talisman that gives us all,
We conquer God by force of His own love,
He gives us all; when prostrate we implore—
The Saints must listen; prayers pierce Heaven’s wall;
The humblest soul on earth, when mindful of
Christ’s promise, is the greatest conqueror.

1. All things.—All things are ours in Christ. All things necessary to our salvation from sin, to the purification of our nature, to the safety of our spirit amid infinite besetments, to the fulness of our joy, to our present and everlasting triumph, all are guaranteed in our Divine Redeemer. All other gifts are assured in the accomplished gift of Calvary. He who spared not His own Son will not withhold anything that is necessary for the completion of the gracious design. He who has laid the foundation at such amazing cost will not spare to complete the edifice.

(1) Whatever is necessary for our justification will be given. How vain are all our misgivings in the presence of the infinite sacrifice! Our sins are crimson in colour, colossal in magnitude, countless in number; yet let us once appreciate the merit and mercy of Calvary, and we know the peace of God which passeth understanding. Our city rivers are foul enough; but the Atlantic Ocean receives them into her emerald depths, purifies them from pollution, and imparts to them a strange splendour and song. Our city smoke belches forth by day and night, threatening to darken and defile the very heavens; but the ampler air refines the base vapours, they leave no shadow or spot, and lose themselves in the lights and colours and mysteries of the firmament. So are our sins swallowed up in the redeeming love, to be remembered against us no more. “It is God that justifieth; who is he that shall condemn? It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”

(2) Whatever is necessary for our sanctification is sure. Great as is the task of perfecting a nature that has gone so utterly to the bad as ours, it is nevertheless gloriously possible in the infinite affluence of our ascended Lord. He now exerts the fulness of the

Spirit, and saves to the uttermost all who come to Him. The doctrine of the perfectibility of human nature, apart from evangelical grace, is a dream of dreams, the most hopeless of ideals, the wildest of fictions, a mocking and cruel apocalypse of the bible of philosophy. But the perfectibility of man in the power of Him who has received the Spirit without measure is a doctrine we may welcome without doubt or fear.

(3) Whatever is necessary for our eternal life and glory is also freely given. Christ has obtained eternal redemption for us. Everything for the life that now is, everything for the life that is to come, is richly ours in our crucified and ascended Lord. The greatest possible act of God's love is the giving up of His Son; in that whatever else can be wished for lies enclosed.

¶ This is a democratic age—the people everywhere claim a full share in everything. After ages of slavery and feudalism, of monopoly and exclusion, the multitude are awaking to a sense of larger right and privilege. They claim their full share in the authority of the sceptre, in the distribution of wealth, in the spoils of knowledge, in the flowers of pleasure. Our day may in some wise remind us of the apostolic age, when narrow privilege gave way to cosmopolitan rights and gifts. But is the claim for right and privilege to go no farther than material things and political influence? Alas, if it stops there! The best things of all, the heavenly things, belong equally to all, and they must not be forgotten. In the faith of Christ we find peace of mind, purity of heart, strength to live nobly, victory over all things mean and base, patience, charity, humility, kindness, peace, and abounding hope; these are the gifts most earnestly to be coveted, the gifts without which other blessings are vain. What a glorious day will dawn when the democracy awake to their rights and privileges in the Kingdom of God—when they clamour for the sceptre of self-government, when they solicit the wisdom that is more precious than rubies, when they array themselves in white raiment, when they agitate for the inner riches of love and light, of pureness and strength, which are the true riches! The rarest prizes are still largely unclaimed. The city of God awaits the democracy; its liberties and riches, its glories and joys, are theirs.

2. Freely.—He will give all things freely. He gave us His dear Son freely. He did not even wait to be asked to deliver Him up for us all. The gift of Christ was no answer to prayer. It was the purely spontaneous bounty of God. Nowhere in Scripture can we discern the slightest reluctance or hesitation on God's part as to the bestowment of that gift, great as was the suffering which it cost the Giver as well as the Gift. It was not to a world all penitent and in tears, prostrate at His throne in anguish and despair, that God gave His well-beloved Son; but to a world still at enmity against Him, still disobedient, impenitent, hard-hearted. And yet He gave Him freely. And therefore we surely may not, must not, think of any unwillingness on God's part to give these other gifts. Freely? Yes, of course. Whatever God gives, He gives freely. He loveth a cheerful giver, for He is Himself a cheerful giver. And there is not a gift of grace, there is not a gift that concerns us, whether for time or for eternity, that He will not freely give with Christ to all who ask Him.

There are some hearts like wells, green-mossed and deep

As ever summer saw,
And cool their water is, yea, cool and sweet;
But you must come to draw.
They hoard not, yet they rest in calm content,
And not unsought will give;
They can be quiet with their wealth unspent,
So self-contained they live.

And there are some like springs, that bubbling burst

To follow dusty ways,
And run with offered cup to quench his thirst
Where the tired traveller strays;
That never ask the meadows if they want
What is their joy to give;
Unasked, their lives to other life they grant,
So self-bestowed they live.

And One is like the ocean, deep and wide,
Wherein all waters fall;

That girdles the broad earth, and draws the tide,
Feeding and bearing all.
That breeds the mists, that sends the clouds abroad,
That takes again to give;—
Even the great and loving heart of God,
Whereby all love doth live.

The vital things of nature, the manifold riches of sea and shore, of earth and sky, are free gifts. We often reason as if we had paid handsomely for all things, and then grumble as if we had got short measure; but it is the greatest possible blunder. If we reject free gifts, we must send back every beam of the sun, every drop of rain and flake of snow, every green leaf, every spray of blossom, every purple cluster, every golden sheaf. Neither does God sell His glorious gifts of intellect. There was no king's ransom ready in the house where Shakespeare was born. All may see that Heaven does not dispense its most splendid talents where wealth is, or greatness; the immortal painter, singer, or inventor is born in attic, cellar, or cottage into which no other royalty ever looked. And God does not sell anything that belongs to the realm of the soul. The principle of barter has no place in the highest world. If we thought to purchase the noblest things with silver or gold, with gifts or sacrifices, we are sternly reproved: "Thy money," thy goods, thy goodness, "perish with thee." And as it is not God's way to sell His glorious things to pride and greatness, we certainly have no ability to buy them. All is, must be, free.

¶ When in the days of your youth the infinite passion, for the first time, lit up its glow in you, was there anything that you could do for the maiden of your heart that you would not do? Was there anything that you esteemed too precious for the creature to whom you had given your heart? In giving where you had given your heart, your whole nature was in force, and was one pleasure. That is the basis of the "freely."

3. With Him.—The expression "all things," unlimited as it is in the letter, must be limited in the spirit. Than the idea of God giving us all things that we might wish and ask for there could be nothing more perilous, more certain to prove destructive. What would become of us if God were in this unqualified manner to give us all things? There are in the text two words that are very important. They are the words "with him,"—"shall he not also with him freely give us all things?" The "all things" that He will give us are all things with Christ, and the expression suggests a certain relationship of congruity or fitness. Suppose a man makes his son a present of a microscope, the probability is that he will, with the instrument, give him all the apparatus necessary for making full use of the instrument. Or if he gave his son a house, he might, perhaps, with the house give him the furniture suitable for it, that so he might with comfort live in the house that was given him. And God will give us, and freely give us, all things with Christ, all things that are connected with the gift of Christ, all things that will make the gift of Christ of practical service to us. So all things with Christ are all things that stand related to Christ, and to the purpose which God in the gift of Christ has in view.

I would be quiet, Lord,
Nor tease, nor fret;
Not one small need of mine
Wilt Thou forget.

I am not wise to know
What most I need;
I dare not cry too loud,
Lest Thou shouldst heed;

Lest Thou at length shouldst say,
"Child, have thy will;
As thou hast chosen, lo!
Thy cup I fill!"

What I most crave, perchance
Thou wilt withhold;
As we from hands unmeet
Keep pearls, or gold;

As we, when childish hands
Would play with fire,
Withhold the burning coal
Of their desire.

Yet choose Thou for me—Thou
Who knowest best;
This one short prayer of mine
Holds all the rest!

"With Him," observe; not without Him. It may be that, without Christ, God will in His providence give us many things, and many good things too. He may give us health, He may give us riches, He may give us much worldly comfort and prosperity. But these His best gifts, really far the best, the gifts of His grace, in forgiveness, holiness, life eternal, He gives only with Christ, only to those who in

faith and thankfulness accept Christ.

¶ There is often a strange coldness and unbelief in men when precious things are pressed upon them. One of our later poets has noticed this blindness and insensibility:

A dog will take
The bone you throw to him; a mortal stares
In obstinate hostility if one,
Longing to swell the number of his joys,
From laden hand beseech him to be blest.
Teach men to suffer, and the slaves are apt;
Give them fresh hope, entreat them to delight,
They grow as stubbornly insensible
As miser to a beggar's eloquence,
Clutching their clownish imbecility
As the gods grudged them that.

¶ But surely this unwillingness to accept high blessing brought to our very doors finds its last and strangest expression in the insensibility of men to the gift of God in Christ! Let us thankfully, exultantly, promptly, open our heart to the full noon of spiritual blessing which shines upon us in the Son of God.

Earth gets its price for what Earth gives us;
The beggar is taxed for a corner to die in,
The priest hath his fee who comes and shrives us,
We bargain for the graves we lie in;
At the devil's booth are all things sold,
Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold;
For a cap and bells our lives we pay,
Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking;
'Tis heaven alone that is given away,
'Tis only God may be had for the asking.

Romans 8:33 [Who will bring a charge against God's elect?](#) [God](#) is the one who [justifies](#); ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [tis egkalesei](#) (3SFAI) [kata eklekton theou?](#) [theos o dikaion](#); ([PAPMSN](#))

Amplified: Who shall bring any charge against God's elect [when it is] God Who justifies [that is, Who puts us in right relation to Himself? Who shall come forward and accuse or impeach those whom God has chosen? Will God, Who acquits us?] ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? Will God? No! He is the one who has given us right standing with himself. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: Who would dare to accuse us, whom God has chosen? The judge himself has declared us free from sin. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: Who shall bring a charge against God's chosen-out ones? God, the One who justifies? ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used [by permission](#))

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

WHO WILL BRING A CHARGE AGAINST GOD'S ELECT?: [tis egkalesei](#) (3SFAI) [kata eklekton theou](#)

- **Charge** - Ro 8:1; Job 1:9-11; 2:4, 5, 6; 22:6-30; 34:8,9; 42:7, 8, 9; Ps 35:11; Isa 54:17; Zech 3:1, 2, 3, 4; Rev 12:10-11
- **God's elect** - Isaiah 42:1; Mt 24:24; Luke 18:6-7; 1Th 1:4; Titus 1:1; 1Pe 1:2
- Romans 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Romans 8:1+ Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus

Revelation 12:10-11⁺ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for **the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.** 11 "And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.

Matthew 24:24 "For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, **even the elect.**

Luke 18:6-7 And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge *said; 7 now, **will not God bring about justice for His elect** who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them?

1 Thessalonians 1:4 knowing, brethren beloved by God, His **choice** (ELECTION) of you;

1 Peter 1:1-2 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, **who are chosen** (ELECT), according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.

NO CONDEMNATION THEREFORE NO CHARGE

This is a rhetorical question and a glorious one at that, because the resounding cry from the throne room of Heaven is "NO ONE!"

Bring a charge (1458) (**egkaleo** from **en** = in, on, at + **kaleo** = call) literally means a call in and thus a summons and was the Greek legal term meaning to accuse, call into account or bring charges against.

Egkaleo - 7x in 7v - Acts 19:38, 40; 23:28f; 26:2, 7; Ro 8:33. NAS = accused(4), accusing(1), bring a charge(1), bring charges against(1).

And thus Paul still has us in a courtroom setting, but now a remarkable change has taken place. While the justified sinner stands before the bench, the call goes out for any accusers to step forward. But there is none! How could there be? If God has already justified His elect, who can bring a charge? If God, the Supreme Judge, justifies, then who is going to successfully bring a charge against us?

We are secure from all charges against us; if we have been declared "not guilty" by the highest Judge in the land, who can bring additional charges against us?

To be sure, Satan is identified as **the accuser** of God's people in both the Old and New Testaments (Rev 12:10^[note] cf. Zech 3:1, Job 1-2). He charges the chosen of God with sin. In a sense his accusations are valid, because they are based on the believer's sinfulness and defilement. However Satan gets nowhere with God because all sin is against God ultimately (Ps 51:4). Therefore God is the only One in the position to charge the believer with guilt. And so the Adversary's accusations against us will be dismissed, thrown out of court, because it is God Who justifies. The Judge Himself declares the accused righteous on the basis of their faith in Jesus Christ (Ro 3:24-note; Ro 5:1-note). In short, no one can bring an accusation against us that will stand. And God will not accuse us because we are safe in Christ and His righteousness.

Denny - the one thing Paul is concerned with is the security given by the eternal love of God that the work of salvation will be carried through, in spite of all impediments, from foreknowledge to final glory. The elect of God are those who ought to have such security: thy should have a faith and an assurance proportioned to the love of God. Paul is one of them, and because he is, he is sure, not that he is called to serve God, but that nothing can ever separate him from God's love in Christ. ([Romans 8 - The Expositor's Greek Testament](#))

Elect (1588) (**eklektos** from verb **eklego** which in middle voice [eklegomai] means select or pick out for one's self which is derived from **ek** =out + **lego** =call) (see sermon Chosen in Christ) means literally the "called out ones" or "chosen out ones". The idea of **eklektos** is the ones who have been chosen for one's self, selected out of a larger number.

In regard to election as related to salvation, **Wuest** comments that "This **election does not** imply the rejection of the rest (those not chosen out), but is the outcome of the love of God lavished upon those **chosen-out.**" ([Wuest Word Studies - Eerdmann Publishing Company Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3](#) - used [by permission](#))

Webster's definition of **elect** is not bad "to pick out; to select from among two or more, that which is preferred... in theology, to

designate, choose or select as an object of (divine) mercy or favor".

Someone else has written that "Election is God's eternal choice of persons unto everlasting life -- not because of foreseen merit in them, but of His mere mercy in Christ - in consequence of which choice they are called, justified, and glorified."

You may not realize it but you've sung about the "elect" if you've ever sung [The Church's One Foundation](#) for the second stanza begins "**Elect** from every nation..." Indeed, election is a doctrine worth singing about, worth studying and eminently worth preaching (have you encouraged your sheep with the glorious truth that they have been chosen "in Him (Christ) before the foundation of the world, that (they) should be holy and blameless before Him"? Ep 1:4-note)

The prince of preachers, **C H Spurgeon** was right when he said "There seems to be an inveterate prejudice in the human mind against this doctrine (of election) and although most other doctrines will be received by professing Christians, some with caution, others with pleasure, yet this one seems to be most frequently disregarded and discarded."

The doctrine of election is surely "solid food" and as such it is tempting as a pastor to avoid preaching this truth ,but remember that "solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil." (Heb 5:14-note)

Jeffrey writes that "Discussions of **divine election**, with its subheadings of predestination and divine foreknowledge, provide the millstones by which countless theological efforts in Western Christendom have been ground. Yet in its rudiments, **election** means simply the act of choice whereby God in love picks an individual or group out of a larger company for a purpose or destiny of his own appointment." (A Dictionary of Biblical Tradition in English literature. Grand Rapids, Mich. Eerdmans)

The **elect** of God is a privilege which conveys the responsibility to walk worthy of the calling to which we have been called. Thus Paul reminds the Colossians that "those who have been **chosen of God**, holy and beloved" should strive to "put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience..." (Col 3:12-note)

Paul clearly accepted the doctrine of election writing to Timothy that "for this reason (the preeminence of Christ and the power of God's word) I endure all things for the sake of those who are **chosen** (destined for salvation but not yet brought to it), that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory." (2Ti 2:10-note)

The doctrine of election did not discourage Paul from evangelizing the lost, but in fact had the opposite effect. Don't let the truth about election discourage you from proclaiming the gospel to all men.

In the last use of **eklektos** in the NT, we see that at the end of this age rebellious men led by the Antichrist "will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and **chosen** and faithful." (Rev 17:14-note)

The elect will have the incredible privilege of witnessing the overthrow of the final evil world ruler and all those who follow him.

Eklektos was used in secular Greek to describe anything that was specially chosen, such as specially chosen ("choice") fruit, articles specially chosen because they are so outstandingly well made or picked troops specially chosen for some great exploit.

Eklektos carries the accessory ideas of kindness, favor, love. Specifically in regard to salvation, God's **choice** is part of His predetermined plan, not based on any merit in those who are chosen, but solely on His grace and love. The verb form ([eklegomai](#)) is used in Eph 1:4+ where it is rendered "chose," referring to the act of God in sovereign grace choosing out certain ones from among mankind for Himself "before the foundation of the world" (see notes Ephesians 1:4).. The verb ([eklegomai](#)) is middle voice (reflexive... conveys the sense of "for Himself") which indicates that God as the subject was acting in His own interest.

Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary writes that **election** is "the gracious and free act of God by which He calls those who become part of His kingdom and special beneficiaries of His love and blessings. The Bible describes the concept of election in three distinct ways. (1) Election sometimes refers to the choice of Israel (see next paragraph) and the church as a people for special service and privileges. (2) Election may also refer to the choice of a specific individual to some office or to perform some special service. (3) Still other passages of the Bible refer to the election of individuals to be children of God and heirs of eternal life." ([Youngblood, R. F., Bruce, F. F., Harrison, R. K., & Thomas Nelson Publishers. Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary](#) (Numbers added)

The principle of God's sovereign good pleasure in election is illustrated In the OT Israel where God reminds Israel "I have chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth." (Dt 7:6).

The "election" of Israel differs from election of believers in the NT as the former election is national and does not necessarily imply salvation of those chosen, whereas **election in the NT** refers only to those who are granted salvation.

D L Moody has a pithy way of defining election stating that

"The elect are the whosoever wills, the non-elect are the whosoever won'ts."

Spurgeon Morning and Evening - Evening, July 27 "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Romans 8:33

Most blessed challenge! How unanswerable it is! Every sin of the elect was laid upon the great Champion of our salvation, and by the atonement carried away. There is no sin in God's book against his people: he seeth no sin in Jacob, neither iniquity in Israel; they are justified in Christ forever. When the guilt of sin was taken away, the punishment of sin was removed. For the Christian there is no stroke from God's angry hand—nay, not so much as a single frown of punitive justice. The believer may be chastised by his Father, but God the Judge has nothing to say to the Christian, except "I have absolved thee: thou art acquitted." For the Christian there is no penal death in this world, much less any second death. He is completely freed from all the punishment as well as the guilt of sin, and the power of sin is removed too. It may stand in our way, and agitate us with perpetual warfare; but sin is a conquered foe to every soul in union with Jesus. There is no sin which a Christian cannot overcome if he will only rely upon his God to do it. They who wear the white robe in heaven overcame through the blood of the Lamb, and we may do the same. No lust is too mighty, no besetting sin too strongly entrenched; we can overcome through the power of Christ. Do believe it, Christian, that thy sin is a condemned thing. It may kick and struggle, but it is doomed to die. God has written condemnation across its brow. Christ has crucified it, "nailing it to his cross." Go now and mortify it, and the Lord help you to live to his praise, for sin with all its guilt, shame, and fear, is gone.

Here's pardon for transgressions past,
It matters not how black their cast;
And, O my soul, with wonder view,
For sins to come here's pardon too.

QUESTION - [Who are the elect of God?](#)

ANSWER - Simply put, the "elect of God" are those whom God has predestined to salvation. They are called the "elect" because that word denotes the concept of choosing. Every four years in the U.S., we "elect" a President—i.e., we choose who will serve in that office. The same goes for God and those who will be saved; God chooses those who will be saved. These are the elect of God.

As it stands, the concept of God electing those who will be saved isn't controversial. What is controversial is how and in what manner God chooses those who will be saved. Throughout church history, there have been two main views on the [doctrine of election](#) (or predestination). One view, which we will call the prescient or foreknowledge view, teaches that God, through His omniscience, knows those who will in the course of time choose of their own free will to place their faith and trust in Jesus Christ for their salvation. On the basis of this divine foreknowledge, God elects these individuals "before the foundation of the world" (Ephesians 1:4). This view is held by the majority of American evangelicals.

The second main view is the Augustinian view, which essentially teaches that God not only divinely elects those who will have faith in Jesus Christ, but also divinely elects to grant to these individuals the faith to believe in Christ. In other words, God's election unto salvation is not based on a foreknowledge of an individual's faith, but is based on the free, sovereign grace of Almighty God. God elects people to salvation, and in time these people will come to faith in Christ because God has elected them.

The difference boils down to this: who has the ultimate choice in salvation—God or man? In the first view (the prescient view), man has control; his free will is sovereign and becomes the determining factor in God's election. God can provide the way of salvation through Jesus Christ, but man must choose Christ for himself in order to make salvation real. Ultimately, this view diminishes the biblical understanding of God's sovereignty. This view puts the Creator's provision of salvation at the mercy of the creature; if God wants people in heaven, He has to hope that man will freely choose His way of salvation. In reality, the prescient view of election is no view of election at all, because God is not really choosing—He is only confirming. It is man who is the ultimate chooser.

In the Augustinian view, God has control; He is the one who, of His own sovereign will, freely chooses those whom He will save. He not only elects those whom He will save, but He actually accomplishes their salvation. Rather than simply make salvation possible, God chooses those whom He will save and then saves them. This view puts God in His proper place as Creator and Sovereign.

The Augustinian view is not without problems of its own. Critics have claimed that this view robs man of his free will. If God chooses those who will be saved, then what difference does it make for man to believe? Why preach the gospel? Furthermore, if God elects according to His sovereign will, then how can we be responsible for our actions? These are all good and fair questions that need to be answered. A good passage to answer these questions is Romans 9, the most in-depth passage dealing with God's sovereignty in election.

The context of the passage flows from Romans 8, which ends with a great climax of praise: "For I am convinced that... [nothing] in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39). This leads Paul to

consider how a Jew might respond to that statement. While Jesus came to the lost children of Israel and while the early church was largely Jewish in makeup, the gospel was spreading among the Gentiles much faster than among the Jews. In fact, most Jews saw the gospel as a stumbling block (1 Corinthians 1:23) and rejected Jesus. This would lead the average Jew to wonder if God's plan of election has failed, since most Jews reject the message of the gospel.

Throughout Romans 9, Paul systematically shows that God's sovereign election has been in force from the very beginning. He begins with a crucial statement: "For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel" (Romans 9:6). This means that not all people of ethnic Israel (that is, those descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) belong to true Israel (the elect of God). Reviewing the history of Israel, Paul shows that God chose Isaac over Ishmael and Jacob over Esau. Just in case anyone thinks that God was choosing these individuals based on the faith or good works they would do in the future, he adds, "Though they [Jacob and Esau] were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad – in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls" (Romans 9:11).

At this point, one might be tempted to accuse God of acting unjustly. Paul anticipates this accusation in v. 14, stating plainly that God is not unjust in any way. "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion" (Romans 9:15). God is sovereign over His creation. He is free to choose those whom He will choose, and He is free to pass by those whom He will pass by. The creature has no right to accuse the Creator of being unjust. The very thought that the creature can stand in judgment of the Creator is absurd to Paul, and it should be so to every Christian, as well. The balance of Romans 9 substantiates this point.

As already mentioned, there are other passages that talk to a lesser extent on the topic of God's elect (John 6:37-45 and Ephesians 1:3-14, to name a couple). The point is that God has ordained to redeem a remnant of humanity to salvation. These elect individuals were chosen before the creation of the world, and their salvation is complete in Christ. As Paul says, "For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might 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" (Romans 8:29-30). GotQuestions.org

QUESTION - [What is the doctrine of election?](#)

ANSWER - An election is a time when people choose who they want to fill certain positions from President on down. An election is a choice. The biblical doctrine of election teaches that God chooses to save some, and, by necessity, if He does not choose everyone, then there are some who are passed over. Those whom He has chosen to save are referred to as "[the elect](#)" (see, e.g., Mark 13:20).

The Bible teaches that God chooses people based on His own purposes and His desire to show grace to underserving sinners. Ephesians 1:4–6 says, "For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves." He chose in love, in accordance with His pleasure and will, so that He would be glorified. God's election has nothing to do with what the elect would or would not do.

God did not choose everyone. If He had, then everyone would come to faith in Christ. He chose some, and He left others to their own desires. Left to ourselves, all of us would continue in our rebellion and reject Christ. God chose to pursue some, convict them of their need, and lead them to faith. It is because of God's choice that anyone comes to faith in Christ. Jesus said, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day" (John 6:44).

This is a tough truth to get our minds around. We are tempted to think that we are more just and gracious than God and that He should have chosen everyone. We need to reject that temptation. We are in no place to judge God! It is not as though some are desperately crying out to Him for salvation and He rejects them because He has not chosen them. Those whom God does not choose continue doing exactly what they want—they rebel against God and try to stay as far away from Him as possible. He simply allows them to continue on the path they have freely and willfully chosen. He has, however, chosen to intervene in the lives of some and win them over. He does this so that He might show His love and kindness to people who are undeserving.

Some people think that God "chooses" based on the choices that He knows that the elect will make: [He knows](#) who will and who will not receive Christ, and He makes His choice based on that. But that would make people the ultimate choosers, with God simply following our choice. Biblically, it is the other way around. God chooses some based on His own purposes, and then, in response to His work in their lives, they choose Him. His choice is first and foundational. Without God's election, no one would ever turn to Him.

Many Christians recoil at the doctrine of election the first time they hear it. But, upon further reflection, most believers will admit that God was at work in their lives, drawing them to Himself long before they were even aware of it. They will recognize that, if He had not intervened, they would have continued in unbelief. The hand of God, working in big ways and little ways, becomes more evident in hindsight.

Some object to the doctrine of election on the grounds that it stifles missionary and evangelistic activity. After all, if God has chosen to save some, then they will be saved whether or not anyone takes them the gospel—so why bother? This objection overlooks the truth that hearing and believing the gospel is the means that God uses to save those He has chosen to save. Paul believed and taught election (it is a New Testament doctrine), yet he was zealous like no other in his missionary endeavors. Because he knew that God had chosen to save people through the gospel, Paul proclaimed it boldly and was persecuted for it. He explains, “I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 2:10). Paul endured persecution so that *the elect* will be saved, because the elect cannot be saved without hearing and believing the gospel. Through evangelism, God allows people to participate in His great plan of drawing a people unto Himself from every nation and language on earth. The doctrine of election frees us to share the gospel without pressure or fear of failure. When we share the gospel clearly, we have been obedient, and that is a success. The results are left to God. GotQuestions.org

QUESTION - [Unconditional election - is it biblical?](#)

ANSWER - Unconditional election is a phrase that is used to summarize what the Bible teaches about the predestination—or the election—of people for salvation. It represents the second letter of the acronym TULIP, which is commonly used to enumerate the five points of Calvinism, also known as the Doctrines of Grace. Other terms for the same doctrine include “unmerited favor,” “sovereign election” or “adopted by God.” All these terms are good names for this doctrine because each reveals some aspect of the [doctrine of election](#). However, more important than the term we use to describe the doctrine is how accurately the doctrine summarizes what the Bible teaches about election and predestination.

The debate over unconditional election is not whether or not God elects or predestines people to salvation but upon what basis He elects them. Is that election based upon foreknowledge that those individuals will have faith in Christ, or is it based upon God’s sovereign choice to save them? As the word “unconditional” implies, this view believes that God’s election of people to salvation is done “with no conditions attached, either foreseen or otherwise.” God elects people to salvation by His own sovereign choice and not because of some future action they will perform or condition they will meet. Those who come to Christ become His children by His will, not by theirs. “They were not God’s children by nature or because of any human desires. God himself was the one who made them his children” (John 1:13 CEV).

God, before the foundation of the world, chose to make certain individuals the objects of His unmerited favor or special grace (Mark 13:20; Ephesians 1:4-5; Revelation 13:8; Revelation 17:8). These individuals from every tribe, tongue and nation were chosen by God for adoption, not because of anything they would do but because of His sovereign will (Romans 9:11-13; Romans 9:16; Romans 10:20; 1 Corinthians 1:27-29; 2 Timothy 1:9). God could have chosen to save all men (He certainly has the power and authority to do so), and He could have chosen to save no one (He is under no obligation to save anyone). He instead chose to save some and leave others to the consequences of their sin (Exodus 33:19; Deuteronomy 7:6-7; Romans 9:10-24; Acts 13:48; 1 Peter 2:8).

There are many verses in both the Old and New Testaments that speak of election, and, when one looks at all the Bible teaches about election and predestination, it becomes obvious that God’s choice was not based on any foreseen act or response, but was based solely on God’s own good pleasure and sovereign will. Properly understood, God’s unconditional election is one link in the unbreakable chain of salvation seen in Romans 8:28-29: “For 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 brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.” All those who are predestined will be saved (John 6:39; Romans 8:30) because they are the ones that God the Father gives to Jesus Christ (John 6:37) who will raise them up on the last day (John 6:39; John 17:2). They are Christ’s sheep (John 10:1-30) who hear His voice and for whom He died (John 10:15) in order to give them eternal life and make them secure forever in the hand of God (John 10:26-30).

There are several common misconceptions about unconditional election. First, it is important to understand that the doctrine does not teach that God’s choice is capricious or arbitrary. It is not random or made without reason. What it does teach is that God elects someone to salvation not because of something worthy God finds in that individual but because of His inscrutable, mysterious will. He makes the choice as to who will be saved for His own reasons, according to His own perfect will and for His own good pleasure (Ephesians 1:5). And while some object to the doctrine of election as being unfair, it is nevertheless based upon God’s will and it pleases God; therefore, it must be good and perfectly just.

Another misconception is that unconditional election precludes and stifles evangelism, but the reality is just the opposite—it empowers and confirms it. When one correctly understands that God has not only elected certain individuals to salvation but also has ordained the means of salvation—the preaching of the gospel (Romans 1:16; Romans 10:14-17)—it empowers the spreading of the gospel message and the call to evangelism. We see this very thing in Paul’s writing to Timothy in the midst of deep persecution. “I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ...” (2 Timothy

2:10). A proper understanding of the doctrine of election encourages evangelism and guarantees its success. It overcomes the fear of failure when sharing the gospel and empowers people to remain faithful to the message in times of great persecution. They know that the power lies in the gospel message and in God's sovereign election and not in their own feeble presentation. A biblical understanding of election helps one share the gospel freely with all people, knowing that any one of them could be Christ's sheep whom He is calling into His fold (John 10:16). It is not up to us to determine if someone is elect or non-elect, and there is always the promise of salvation for anyone who will repent and believe in Christ. The gospel message should be preached to all people in the knowledge that God will use it to draw His sheep to Himself.

Unconditional election also does not mean that there will be people in heaven who do not want to be there, nor will there be people in hell who wanted to be saved but could not be because they were not elect. Unconditional election properly recognizes that, apart from God's supernatural work in the life of a sinner, men will always choose to reject God and rebel against Him (see the article on Total Depravity for more information on this subject). What unconditional election does correctly recognize is that God intervenes in the lives of the elect and works in their lives through the Holy Spirit so that they willingly respond in faith to Him. Because they are "his sheep...they hear his voice and follow him" (John 10:1-30). As for the non-elect, God is still gracious to them, but because of their sin they are not thankful for that grace, nor do they acknowledge Him as God (Romans 1:18-20). Consequently, they receive the just punishment due them. Those whom God elects are beneficiaries of His sovereign grace and mercy, and those whom He does not elect receive the justice they have earned. While the elect receive God's perfect grace, the non-elect receive God's perfect justice.

Those who argue against unconditional election often use verses like 1 Timothy 2:4 and John 3:16. How can we reconcile election with a verse like 1 Timothy 2:4, that says that God "desires all men to be saved," or John 3:16, that says God "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life"? The answer lies in correctly understanding the will of God and the love of God. God's passive will needs to be understood in contrast to His decreed will (those things He foreordains to happen). The passive will of God includes the things He might desire in a sense but does not foreordain or bring to pass. Certainly, if God is sovereign and all-powerful, as the Bible declares Him to be, then He could bring about the salvation of all men, if that was His decreed or pre-determined will. Reconciling this verse and others with the many that teach election is an unconditional choice of God is no more difficult than recognizing that there are things God might desire but does not decree to happen. It could be said that God does not desire men to sin but as part of his predetermined plan He allows them to sin. So while there is a real sense in which God does not take pleasure in the destruction of the wicked and desires that all be saved, His pre-determined plan allows for the fact that some will go to hell.

In a similar way, concerning John 3:16 and God's love, the difference lies in God's general love for all creation and all humanity versus His specific love for His children, the elect. The difference is that God's love for His elect is an intensive love that has Him actually doing something about their lost condition instead of simply sitting by wishing that they would in turn love Him, a picture so often conjured up by those who believe themselves to be in control of their own eternal destiny. In a generic sense, God desires all to be saved and He loves all of humanity, but that is completely different from the specific love He has for His elect and His desire and provision for their salvation.

When one examines what the Bible teaches about election and predestination, it becomes clear that the doctrine of unconditional election does accurately represent what the Bible teaches on this important subject. While this—or any of the other Doctrines of Grace—can stand on their own merit, their importance becomes even clearer when they are considered together systematically with all the Bible teaches about salvation. They essentially serve as building blocks, with each one furnishing a necessary part of a biblical understanding of salvation. Total depravity defines man's need for salvation and reveals his hopelessness when left to his own resources. It leaves man with the question "Who can be saved?" The answer lies in an understanding of unconditional election—God's sovereign choice to save people despite their depravity and based solely on His redeeming for Himself people from every tribe, tongue and nation. This He accomplishes by predestinating them "to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will" (Ephesians 1:5). A proper understanding of this doctrine should not result in questioning the justice of God, but instead in marveling at His great mercy. The question we really should ask is not why God chooses only some to salvation, but why He would choose any at all. GotQuestions.org

GOD IS THE ONE WHO JUSTIFIES: theos o dikaios (PAPMSN):

- Ro 3:26; Isaiah 50:8,9; Galatians 3:8; Revelation 12:10,11
- Romans 4 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

The One Who justifies - earlier Paul written that God is **just and the Justifies of the one who has faith in Jesus** (Ro 3:26-note)

Justifies (acquits, vindicates, frees) ([1344](#)) (**dikaioo** from **dike** = right, expected behavior or conformity, not according to one's own standard, but according to an imposed standard with prescribed punishment for nonconformity) primarily means to deem to be right. Note dikaioo is in the **present tense** indicating this is what God always does -- He is the justifying God. His nature is to justify sinners creating saints. Even in the new heaven and new earth when there will no longer be need for justification for there will be no sin, God will still be eternally the justifying God and we will praise and worship Him for that glorious attribute which wrought so great a salvation as we possess forevermore.

Dikaioo describes the act by which a man is brought into a right state of relationship to God. **Dikaioo** is a legal term having to do with the law and the courtroom, where it represented the legally binding verdict of the judge. This is the sense in which Paul uses **dikaioo** in this section in Romans (Ro 3:21-5:11) in which he unfolds the doctrine of justification.

The meaning of dikaioo depends on the context and depending on which lexicon you consult you will come up with a variety of definitions so the following is an attempt at classifying most of the NT uses, but please be a Berean and do your own study of this word.

(1) To cause someone to be in a proper or right relation with someone else This use corresponds to the vitally important truth imputed righteousness and thus means to justify or to declare righteous, which is only accomplished by faith and not by works as explained in definition #2.

Romans 3:24 being justified (declared righteous and in proper or right relation to God) as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus

Titus 3:7 that being justified (declared righteous and in proper or right relation to God) by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

(2) To show to be right or righteous.

Matthew 11:19 "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax-gatherers and sinners!' Yet wisdom is **vindicated** (dikaioo - shown to be right, proved to be in the right and accepted by God) by her deeds."

Luke 7:35+ "Yet wisdom is vindicated (dikaioo - shown to be right) by all her children."

James uses **dikaioo** in this sense - to show to be righteous. And so we see that Abraham's works show that he was righteous. He had been declared righteous by faith in Genesis 15:6, but was shown to be righteous in Genesis 22, which is the point that James is making in the following passages.

James 2:21 Was not Abraham our father **justified** by works, when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? (**Note:** Do not misunderstand. James is not using dikaioo in this context to say a Abraham was **declared** righteous but that he was **shown to be** righteous by his work - his willingness to offer Isaac. This "work" was the visible manifestation to men of the fact that at some point in time in the past -- Genesis 15:6 -- Abraham had been justified by faith and declared righteous by God on the basis of his faith, not on the basis of his works. This verse illustrates why it one has to be very careful to observe the context when defining any Greek word. Many people read these three passages in James and are confused because they read them in light of definition #1 above which does not apply to this context. The New Living Translation does an excellent job of accurately paraphrasing this passage to give it the intended meaning...

James 2:21 Don't you remember that our ancestor Abraham was **shown to be right** with God by his actions when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? (NLT)

James 2:24 You see that a man is **justified** (shown to be righteous) by works, and not by faith alone.

James 2:25 And in the same way was not Rahab the harlot also **justified** (shown to be righteous) by works, when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?

In some cases **dikaioo** refers to Jesus or God Who are demonstrated to be morally right (Divine vindication)...

Romans 3:4 May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man be found a liar, as it is written, "That Thou **mightest be justified** (shown to be just) in Thy words, And

mightest prevail when Thou art judged." (quoting Ps 51:4)

1 Timothy 3:6 (This description refers to Jesus) And by common confession great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was **vindicated** (dikaioo - shown to be right) in the Spirit, Beheld by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.

(3) To make free, liberate, set free or release from the control of. This meaning is similar to another Greek verb **eleutheroo**. BDAG explains that the idea is "to cause someone to be released from personal or institutional claims that are no longer to be considered pertinent or valid"

Romans 6:7 For he who has died is **freed** (dikaioo in the passive voice = has been released) from sin (the power of **Sin** to which we were enslaved)

Acts 13:39 and through Him everyone who believes is **freed** (dikaioo - passive voice = has been set free) from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses.

(4) Acknowledging that someone is just or right.

Luke 7:29 And when all the people and the tax-gatherers heard this, they **acknowledged** God's **justice**, (they acknowledged that God's way was right) having been baptized with the baptism of John.

(5) Man declaring that he is just or right. This is something man does and based on his standard of righteousness (self righteousness) not God's standard.

Luke 10:29 But wishing to **justify** (declare himself righteous) himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" (**Comment:** Notice that this young lawyer is trying to limit the demand of the law by asking "Who is my neighbor?" and by limiting it he would then show that he had fulfilled it. In other words this man would judge himself by his own standard of righteousness -- not God's perfect standard -- but he would not be **justified** in the sense of definition #1)

Wiersbe - "Do not confuse justification and sanctification. Sanctification is the process whereby God makes the believer more and more like Christ. Sanctification may change from day to day. Justification never changes. When the sinner trusts Christ, God declares him righteous, and that declaration will never be repealed." ([Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary. 1989. Victor](#))

God is the One Who justifies - A more literal rendering is **God is the (One) justifying** i.e., the Justifier, with stress upon the word **God**. It greatly clarifies the argument of this verse and the following one if we supply the words **No one, because ...** " before each answer. Thus this verse would read,

Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? No one, because it is God Who justifies.

If we do not supply these words, it might sound as if God is going to bring a charge against His elect, the very thing that Paul is denying!

Stedman - Now, the devil is the accuser of the brethren. He will try to accuse us constantly. (Job 1:9, 10, 11 2:4, 5, 6 Zec3:1, 2, 3, 4 Rev 12:10, 11 1Pe 5:8) This verse tells us that we must not listen to his voice. We must not listen to these thoughts that condemn us, that put us down, that make us feel that there is no hope for us. These thoughts will come -- they cannot be stopped -- but we do not have to listen to them. We know God is not listening to these accusations. **Who can condemn us when God justifies us?** Therefore we refuse to be condemned. We don't do this by ignoring our sin or trying to cover it over, or pretending that it isn't there; we do it by admitting that we fully deserve to be condemned, but that God, through Christ, has already borne our guilt. That is the only way out. That is why Christians should not hesitate to admit their failure and their sin. You will never be justified until you admit it. But when you admit it, then you also can face the full glory of the fact that God justifies the ungodly, and therefore there is no condemnation. ([If God be For Us](#))

Spurgeon on Ro 8:33-34 - Well might the apostle ring out these confident challenges to heaven, and earth, and hell. As it is God that justifieth, who can bring any charge against his elect? Who can condemn those for whom Christ died, for whom he has risen, and for whom he is now making intercession at the right hand of God?

Spurgeon from his sermon [False Justification and True \(2932\)](#) - THE great question for the human race to answer has ever been this, "How can man be just with God?" It is clear to every conscience that is at all awake that the thrice-holy God demands obedience to his law, and that disobedience to the divine law will certainly entail punishment. Hence the grand essential for each one

of us is to be right towards God,—to be accounted just even at his judgment-bar. This is a most important matter at all times, but it appears to increase in importance as we advance in years, and get nearer to that great testing time when the Lord shall put everyone into his unerring balances, to weigh him, and so to prove what he really is. Woe unto the man who shall stand before the bar of God unjustified; but happy shall he be who, in that last dread day, shall be approved and accepted by the Judge of all the earth.

Our Daily Bread - Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies (Romans 8:33).

A cat burglar in Northville, Michigan, knows from experience what it is like to live above the law. The story began with a missing diamond ring. Although authorities located the robber, they made no arrest. With tongue-in-cheek, a state trooper described the thief as "small of stature, fleet of foot, and moving with a great deal of stealth." He also explained that because of the suspect's age and first-offender status, no charges could be filed. The real reason for letting the culprit go was that he was not subject to the law. The burglar was the complainant's 7-month-old kitten. The pet was implicated by a metal detector that beeped when waved over the animal. X-rays later confirmed their suspicions. The kitten, of course, was not booked; cats live above the law.

This amusing story reminds us of the Christian's position in relation to God's law. In Romans 8, Paul tells of those who will never be accused and tried by the court of heaven. And in Romans 4:8, the apostle said, "Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin." Of such a person he asks, "Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies." Believers live above the law because the cross of Christ protects them from eternal condemnation.

If we become careless about sin, we will suffer pain and loss and be disciplined. But, praise God, we will not be sentenced to hell. Christ has delivered us from the curse of the law. —M.R.D.II (**ED**: Believers are not sinless, but they should sin less, unless they are not saved sinners!)

When I'm justified through Christ's merits, God looks at me "Just as if I'd" never sinned. [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

Spurgeon in All of Grace - "IT IS GOD THAT JUSTIFIETH" Romans 8:33

A WONDERFUL THING it is, this being justified, or made just. If we had never broken the laws of God, we would not have needed it; for we would have been just in ourselves. He who has all his life done the things which he ought to have done and has never done anything which he ought not to have done is justified by the law. But you, dear reader, are not of that sort, I am quite sure. You have too much honesty to pretend to be without sin, and therefore you need to be justified.

Now, if you justify yourself, you will simply be a self-deceiver. Therefore do not attempt it. It is never worthwhile.

If you ask your fellow mortals to justify you, what can they do? You can make some of them speak well of you for small favors, and others will backbite you for less. Their judgment is not worth much.

Our text says, "It is God that justifieth," and this is a deal more to the point. It is an astonishing fact and one that we ought to consider with care. Come and see.

In the first place, nobody else but God would ever have thought of justifying those who are guilty. They have lived in open rebellion; they have done evil with both hands; they have gone from bad to worse; they have turned back to sin even after they have smarted for it and have therefore for a while been forced to leave it. They have broken the law and trampled on the gospel. They have refused proclamations of mercy and have persisted in ungodliness. How can they be forgiven and justified? Their fellowmen, despairing of them, say, "They are hopeless cases." Even Christians look on them with sorrow rather than with hope. But not so their God. He, in the splendor of his electing grace, having chosen some of them before the foundation of the world, will not rest till He has justified them and made them to be accepted in the Beloved. Is it not written, "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified"? Thus you see there are some whom the Lord resolves to justify. Why should not you and I be of the number?

None but God would ever have thought of justifying me. I am a wonder to myself. I do not doubt that grace is equally seen in others. Look at Saul of Tarsus, who foamed at the mouth against God's servants. Like a hungry wolf, he worried the lambs and the sheep right and left; and yet God struck him down on the road to Damascus and changed his heart and so fully justified him that, before long, this man became the greatest preacher of justification by faith who ever lived. He must often have marveled that he was justified by faith in Christ Jesus, for he was once a determined stickler for salvation by the works of the law. None but God would have ever thought of justifying such a man as Saul the persecutor, but the Lord God is glorious in grace.

But, even if anybody had thought of justifying the ungodly, none but God could have done it. It is quite impossible for any person to forgive offenses which have not been committed against himself. A person has greatly injured you; you can forgive him, and I hope you will; but no third person can forgive him apart from you. If the wrong is done to you, the pardon must come from you. If we have sinned against God, it is in God's power to forgive; for the sin is against Himself. That is why David says in the fifty-first Psalm: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight"; for then God, against whom the offense is committed, can put the offense away. That which we owe to God, our great Creator can remit if it so pleases Him; and if He remits it, it is remitted. None but the great God, against whom we have committed the sin, can blot out that sin; let us, therefore, see that we go to Him and seek mercy at His hands. Do not let us be led aside by those who would have us confess to them; they have no warrant in the Word of God for their pretensions. But even if they were ordained to pronounce absolution in God's name, it must still be better to go ourselves to the great Lord through Jesus Christ, the Mediator, and seek and find pardon at His hand, since we are sure that this is the right way. Proxy religion involves too great a risk. You had better see to your soul's matters yourself and leave them in no man's hands.

Only God can justify the ungodly; but He can do it to perfection. He casts our sins behind His back; He blots them out; He says that though they are sought for, they shall not be found. With no other reason for it but His own infinite goodness, He has prepared a glorious way by which He can make scarlet sins as white as snow and remove our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west. He says, "I will not remember your sins." He goes the length of making an end of sin. One of old called out in amazement, "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy" (Mic. 7:18).

We are not now speaking of justice nor of God's dealing with men according to their deserts. If you profess to deal with the righteous Lord on law terms, everlasting wrath threatens you; for that is what you deserve. Blessed be His name, He has not dealt with us after our sins; but now He deals with us on terms of free grace and infinite compassion, and He says, "I will receive you graciously, and love you freely." Believe it, for it is certainly true that the great God is able to treat the guilty with abundant mercy; yea, He is able to treat the ungodly as if they had always been godly. Read carefully the parable of the prodigal son and see how the forgiving father received the returning wanderer with as much love as if he had never gone away and had never defiled himself with harlots. So far did he carry this that the elder brother began to grumble at it, but the father never withdrew his love. Oh, my brother, however guilty you may be, if you will only come back to your God and Father, He will treat you as if you had never done wrong! He will regard you as just and deal with you accordingly. What do you say to this?

Do you not see—for I want to bring this out clearly, what a splendid thing it is—that as none but God would think of justifying the ungodly and none but God could do it, yet the Lord can do it? See how the apostle puts the challenge, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." If God has justified a man, it is well done, it is rightly done, it is justly done, it is everlastingly done. I read a statement in a magazine which is full of venom against the gospel and those who preach it, that we hold some kind of theory by which we imagine that sin can be removed from men. We hold no theory; we publish a fact. The grandest fact under heaven is this—that Christ by His precious blood does actually put away sin and that God, for Christ's sake, dealing with men on terms of divine mercy, forgives the guilty and justifies them, not according to anything that He sees in them or foresees will be in them, but according to the riches of His mercy which lie in His own heart. This we have preached, do preach, and will preach as long as we live. "It is God that justifieth"—that justifies the ungodly; He is not ashamed of doing it, nor are we of preaching it.

The justification which comes from God himself must be beyond question. If the Judge acquits me, who can condemn me? If the highest court in the universe has pronounced me just, who will lay anything to my charge? Justification from God is a sufficient answer to an awakened conscience. The Holy Spirit by its means breathes peace over our entire nature, and we are no longer afraid. With this justification we can answer all the roarings and railings of Satan and ungodly men. With this we shall be able to die; with this we shall boldly rise again and face the last great assize.

Bold shall I stand in that great day,
For who aught to my charge shall lay?
While by my Lord absolved I am
From sin's tremendous curse and blame.

Friend, the Lord can blot out all your sins. I make no shot in the dark when I say this. "All manner of sin and of blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men." Though you are steeped up to your throat in crime, He can with a word remove the defilement and say, "I will, be thou clean." The Lord is a great forgiver.

"I believe in the Forgiveness of Sins." Do you? He can even at this hour pronounce the sentence, "Thy sins be forgiven thee; go in peace"; and if He does this, no power in Heaven or earth or under the earth can put you under suspicion, much less under wrath. Do not doubt the power of Almighty love. You could not forgive your fellowman had he offended you as you have offended God, but you must not measure God's corn with your bushel; His thoughts and ways are as much above yours as the heavens are high above the

earth.

“Well,” you say, “it would be a great miracle if the Lord were to pardon me.” Just so. It would be a supreme miracle, and therefore He is likely to do it; for He does “great things and unsearchable” which we looked not for.

I was myself stricken down with a horrible sense of guilt, which made my life a misery to me; but when I heard the command, “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God and there is none else”—I looked, and in a moment the Lord justified me. Jesus Christ, made sin for me, was what I saw; and that sight gave me rest. When those who were bitten by the fiery serpents in the wilderness looked to the serpent of brass, they were healed at once; and so was I when I looked to the crucified Saviour. The Holy Spirit, who enabled me to believe gave me peace through believing. I felt as sure that I was forgiven as before I felt sure of condemnation. I had been certain of my condemnation because the Word of God declared it, and my conscience bore witness to it; but when the Lord justified me, I was made equally certain by the same witnesses. The word of the Lord in the Scripture says, “He that believeth on him is not condemned,” and my conscience bears witness that I believed and that God in pardoning me is just. Thus I have the witness of the Holy Spirit and my own conscience, and these two agree in one. Oh, how I wish that my reader would receive the testimony of God on this matter, and then full soon he would also have the witness in himself!

I venture to say that a sinner justified by God stands on even a surer footing than a righteous man justified by his works, if such there is. We could never be sure that we had done enough works; conscience would always be uneasy lest, after all, we should come short, and we could only have the trembling verdict of a fallible judgment to rely on; but when God himself justifies and the Holy Spirit bears witness thereto by giving us peace with God, why then we feel that the matter is sure and settled, and we enter into rest. No tongue can tell the depth of that calm which comes over the soul which has received the peace of God which passes all understanding.

God the Justifier
Romans 8:31–34
Donald G Barnhouse

WE are now brought to consider the stunning consequences of this eternal plan in our total safety and security in Christ. The answer to the question posed by our text classifies all men as saved or lost and spells the eternal destiny of the one who answers. Every member of the human race is affected by this question and its answer. In a certain way the question is parallel to those that were put by Christ concerning His own person and being. He asked questions of His enemies and of His friends. Of His friends He asked, “Whom say ye that I am? and Peter answered, thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matt. 16:15–16). To His enemies He said, “What think you of Christ? whose son is he?” (Matt. 22:42). And thus we question the unsaved world today: What will you say to these things? What do you think of Christ?

The unsaved man will turn away from “these things” and will call them foolishness. We must not be deterred in our preaching by the reactions of these listeners. I was once preaching in a certain city and friends brought to me a man who was active in an organization that was distributing literature against Christianity and the Bible. He had just heard me preach a sermon in which I had set forth the divisiveness of the gospel. I had called upon men to believe God’s Word that He had done all things for them in Christ, and that He was satisfied with the death of His Son instead of the death of the sinner. The skeptic said to me, “I cannot see it.” I replied, “Of course you cannot see it. God says that ‘if our gospel is hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this age has blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them’ (2 Cor. 4:3, 4). How can a blind man see it?” He answered, “Well, it is foolishness to me.” “Of course it is,” I said, and turned to another passage to make his eyes see the printed truth, “The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness ...” (1 Cor. 1:18). Again he fell into the trap and answered, “It just isn’t reasonable to me.” I pointed to the verses which followed, “For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to naught the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this world? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?”

I cannot end this story with a tale of triumphant conversion, for the man went away with his darkened mind unchanged. I had put to him the question, “What shall we then say to these things?” and he had given me the answer of the skeptic. He was blind and could not see these things. He trusted in his own wisdom so that these things were classified as folly.

PLAYING OSTRICH

Another class of unbelievers attempts to ignore our question. These are the ostriches of theology. I do not know how the legend grew up that an ostrich, when he sees trouble coming, hides his head in the sand as though his huge body could not be seen because he, himself, could not see the danger. We know that no ostrich ever does such a thing. But the legend remains and has

brought the phrase into our language so that anyone who “plays ostrich” is hiding from a danger which must inevitably come and destroy him. We sometimes say that such a person is “kidding himself.” It is strange that people should seek to do this with eternal things but the fact remains that they do.

“What shall we then say to these things?” Ask the question of the ostrich type of unbeliever and you will be met, in some cases, with a bland denial that these things exist. A different kind of folly is that of men who live as though there were no question to be answered. “What shall we then say to these things?” And when the question comes, there are those who pay no attention to the call. They give no heed whatsoever to the serious things of life. This touches perhaps the greatest segment of our population. Mass indifference characterizes the nation, and indeed the race of mankind. The fact that a large percentage of the population pays lip services to religion does not alter the fact. The man who gives sixty minutes to God on Sunday morning is not necessarily interested in God. It can often be said of a man who frequently sits in a church pew, what David said of the unregenerate, “God is not in all his thoughts” (Ps. 10:4). And yet Christ answered the Pharisees who asked Him what was the most important commandment, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment” (Matt. 22:37, 38).

PAUL’S ANSWERS

The apostle now sets forth seven answers that must be given to “those things” by a Christian. 1. God is for us, and “if God be for us, who can be against us?” (v. 31). 2. “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?” (v. 32). 3. God has justified us, so “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?” (v. 33). 4. Christ has died for us, so who will be able to condemn us? The Judge has become our Savior, our Father. Our risen Savior has become our advocate on the very throne of God (v. 34). 5. No condition or catastrophe can separate us from the love of God (v. 35). 6. “We are more than conquerors through him that loved us” (v. 37). 7. Nothing, positively nothing, can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus (vv. 38, 39). There are some believers who are afraid to launch out into these depths; others raise very peculiar objections to these promises of God. We know what should be said to these things. Here we declare our eternal oneness with Christ and announce that being in Him, we are as beloved of God as He is, and that our position is as secure as that of Christ.

GOD IS FOR US

In the latter part of v. 31 is the first sweeping, triumphant reply to the call for faith’s answer. God has done everything for us. He took us when we were in sin, redeemed us, saved us, effectually called us, justified us, and He announced that He looks upon us as being already glorified. What then shall we say to these things?

Faith trumpets the answer: “If God is for us, who can be against us?” This is not the if of questioning doubt, but the if of dominant faith. It could well be translated, “Because God is for us, who can be against us?” The strength of the answer has now been sufficiently demonstrated that God is for us by His eternal covenant, His incarnation in grace, and His death for ungodly sinners.

The moment that this truth is received and applied personally there can be no more frustrations in the mind, the heart, the life. God is for me. It is not merely that God loved the world but that God loved me! Any man or woman who lays hold of that truth is well on the way to being what the psychologists call an integrated personality. “He loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20).

GOD AND THE WORM

It would seem almost that Paul had been reading Isaiah when he penned the words of our text. Surely that verse tells us that God is for us. And the next one, just as surely, cries that no one can be against us. “Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish. Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought. For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee” (Isa. 41:11–13).

Then there follows one of the delicate ironies of Scripture which reveal so clearly the nothingness of man and the wonderful power of God on behalf of His people. “Fear not, thou worm Jacob ... I will help thee....” What a partnership! God and the worm! And how much we lose because we do not recognize what we really are. When men form a partnership one man puts up money and another man puts up experience, or some similar division of various assets. But when we form a partnership with God He demands that we do it on His terms. We put up weakness and He puts in His strength; we put up sin and He furnishes pardoning grace; we cast in our nothingness and He answers with His all-ness. God and the worm! Let not anyone dare attack that partnership. Yet how loath men are to accept their own bankruptcy to have His fullness.

A GOD TO US

The fact that God is for us brings us into the center of our relationship to Him. He is no longer the distant Creator of the universe, hiding Himself in eternity, far removed from our being in time. He has come down to us in order to be our God—a God to us. This is

beautifully expressed in David's prayer: "For thy people Israel didst thou make thine own people for ever; and thou, Lord, becamest their God ... Let it even be established, that thy name may be magnified forever, saying, The Lord of Hosts is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel" (1 Chron. 17:22, 24).

"The God of Israel is a God to Israel." We can readily understand the difference in the prepositions by an analogy. A man may beget a son, and he is always, in consequence of that act, the father of that son. But there have been men who have been fathers of their sons who have never been fathers to their sons. On the other hand here is a man who begets a child and gives himself to that child. He is with the mother in the training of the child. The boy is with him in his free moments. The father enters into the boy's studies. He participates in the boy's games. He makes the boy's hobbies his own hobbies. No question of the boy is beyond the patience of the father. He explains things to the child in great detail whenever the child shows interest in an answer. He trains the boy, leads him on, truly educates him. It can be said in the highest degree that he is not only the father of the boy but that he is a father to the boy. There's a wonderful passage in Jeremiah which says, "My father, thou art the guide of my youth" (Jer. 3:4).

How marvelous that we read, "The Lord of Hosts is the God of [his people], even a God to [his people]." This is the picture that our God wants us to have of Him. He is God to us. And this gives mighty force to our text, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" More than any earthly father could be a father to his son, so God is a God to us. Put the two words together as our text authorizes us to do: "God" and "us." There is a way the names of God the Father and those of God the Son and those of God the Spirit are linked together that prove the deity of all. In the way that we are linked to God in this verse there is to be found all our relationship and all our security.

PERFECT SALVATION

Our salvation is a divine work, absolutely perfect and absolutely complete. It began in the heart of God, issued in His eternal decree, and was brought to us by Christ. In Him we were effectually called, justified, and glorified, in order that we might be conformed to His image, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

What then shall we say to these things? The first was to answer by faith that since God is for us, nothing can be against us. The second reply is now set before us. "God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all." This brings a sure guarantee of the accompanying blessings, that in Christ we have all things.

The fact that God had to deliver Christ to die for us, that He could not spare Him, shows the intrinsic evil of sin and the necessity of salvation through the atonement.

Now, of course, this verse is not introduced at this point to supply a theory of the atonement, but it does illuminate the atonement in a wonderful way. There was a crisis that demanded solving and a price that had to be paid. There was no way to meet this need except through the death of the Son of God. The Father did not hesitate. He did not spare His Son; He delivered Him over to death. Nothing could show us more clearly that the atonement is an act of God that proceeded forth from the heart of God through the will of God. It is an act and a fact in history, entirely beyond human beings, though man inflicted the death and many men profit by it. Everything in salvation is derived from the grace of God, while that grace is itself underived.

DELIVERANCE FROM SIN

When a believer first comes to the consciousness of his own salvation he has the idea that now, having received Christ, there will be complete victory over sin and deliverance from all its bondage. Then, often within a few hours of the flooding joy of faith, there comes the revulsion of doubt when sin's presence is recognized and its unchanged nature is seen to hunger for control of the life. I know that when I was first saved I was horrified when I realized that sin was still within me. I wondered if I were truly saved. Fortunately the Holy Spirit led me to say, "Well, if I didn't do it right the first time I will do it over again, and right this time." Once more I was in the joys of victory and lived on in that joy until sin once more made its presence felt. Again I thought that perhaps I was not truly saved and rushed once more to the cross to "accept Christ" as I thought, all over again. I had long been quickened and was very much alive in Christ, but these wrestlings were grievous, and I needed the comfort of the Holy Spirit. In my own mind I was going back and "getting saved" all over again. Now I know what was really happening—the Holy Spirit was applying the finished work of Christ to me and was bringing me into growth and strength. Every young child of God needs this last section of Romans eight in order to triumph in the struggle that arises in the early phases of the Christian life before we have grown up, in some measure, to know what is really happening within us.

When I learn that God the Father spared not His own Son, then I can rest quietly in the certainty that He has dealt with my sin and my sins, and I am at peace. Nothing else can silence the voice of conscience and bring the heart to full rest in the Lord. As long as we live there will be within us the consciousness of sin's presence, but as long as we look at this passage of Scripture we can be quiet in our hearts.

BROKEN FELLOWSHIP

One evening I was the dinner guest of a young minister in Toronto, Canada. A beautiful little girl, Jean, aged three, sat at the table in her high chair. Seldom have I seen a child more bright, and so well disciplined. At one moment in the meal, however, she did some childish act that caused her father to pronounce her name with severity. "Jean," he said in a firm tone. Quick as a whip the child looked up, raising her hand against his as a policeman might lift a hand to halt traffic. "Don't speak, Daddy," the child said, as though she were in command of the situation, and then repeated, "Don't speak." Thus quickly had her sense of guilt been aroused. Thus quickly she had felt that she had offended against love. Thus quickly did her hand arise as though to ward off the separation of fellowship that might come even for a moment.

The child of God who has his sense of guilt aroused, who knows that he has offended against a holy God and a loving Father, who feels the chill that comes from broken fellowship, is in a situation quite different. We need not raise our hand to say to God, "Do not speak." For God has spoken, and God has acted. His word of grace and His act is the act of the cross. If for a moment I am tempted to lift my hand as though to ward off some blow from Him, I hear Him say: "Put down your hand, child. Fear not. I did not spare My Son; I delivered Him up for you. You have all things in Him."

The argument that God now sets forth for the comfort of our souls and the stilling of our fears is that the greater is more than the less. The whole is greater than any of its parts. God gave Christ for you and to you; how is it possible that He could withhold any lesser blessing?

ALL THINGS

With Christ God freely gives us all things. Freely. What are the things he gives us? "All things," says the text. With an answer so complete are we justified in analyzing it in order to find some of its component parts? I think that we must do so because of the context in which we find the promise. As we have seen, the believer, though justified, finds himself suffering, groaning, and filled with infirmities. What do we need to meet the sufferings of this present time? It is true that we are told that these sufferings are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us (vv. 17, 18). But in spite of that fact the sufferings must be lived through while the glory is, as yet, a distant hope. You may tell a man who is in the fire that when he is tried he will come forth as gold, but there is a moment when the flames are more real than the gold.

In the midst of our sufferings, our text assures us, we have certain spiritual things. They are available for us when we need them. We need to know that life with its sufferings has a definite purpose, and that we are not alone in those sufferings. Both of these things God has provided for us. What nobler purpose could there be than that we should be conformed to the image of the Son of God? To make us like unto the Lord Jesus Christ is the great purpose which God had in choosing us before the foundation of the world. Thus when the blow falls and useless chips are taken away, thus when the acid eats deeply and we find stains being removed, thus when the abrasive cuts deeply and we find ourselves being polished by God's processes of pain, we must rest quietly in the assurance that the goal is likeness to Christ. God wants to make you more like Jesus.

SAFE FOREVER

The purpose of this section of the Roman epistle is to strengthen the child of God in his assurance of salvation and to let him know that, being in Christ, he is safe forever. The apostle is answering his own question, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Having taken us into the inner councils of God and shown us our eternal position in Christ he then takes us to the cross and points out that the greater gift of Christ for us includes all the lesser gifts which the Father possesses.

Our text goes on to ask: "Who shall lay anything to your charge?" and answers by assuring us that God has declared us justified! There will be those who cry out against the injustice of this and will say that God has no right to clear the guilty. The answer is that He has put your sins on Christ and has seen them paid for there at the cross. He has punished Christ so that He might justify you. Let us remind ourselves once again that justification is the act of God whereby He declares an ungodly man to be perfect while he is still ungodly. This is the reason why no one can lay anything to your charge.

In the last book of the Bible the devil is called "the accuser of the brethren" (Rev. 12:10). But though he may cry out his anger and hatred against the believer, he can never be heard. He speaks the truth when he announces that you are a sinner by nature and a sinner by choice. But God knows that your sins have been laid upon the Savior and that they are gone forever.

Accusations against men are brought by God Himself, by men and by the devil. But God knows that His righteousness was satisfied in the death of the Savior so that He, Himself, will never think of bringing a charge against you. He knows that men are puny creatures, incapable of seeing the hearts of others or knowing the heart of God toward men. He will, therefore, never listen to a man bring a charge against another man. He knows that Satan is an enemy and that he hates the believers only because he hates Christ with the greater hatred. God, therefore, will never listen to an accusation from the devil.

Who, then, shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? God has justified us, and the question answers itself. There can never be an accusation brought against the soul who has been touched with life by the Holy Spirit because of the work of Christ on the cross.

We are saved, and we are safe.

It is impossible for any soul to be condemned except by God. God alone has the right of life and death in the spiritual realm. It is true that He has a case against all humanity, a case that brings all to condemnation and from which none can escape. But He has intervened because of His love and has justified a multitude because of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. The soul must be brought to an admission of personal guilt and then brought to an acceptance of God's decree concerning His Son Jesus Christ. To realize and accept as a fact that great truth that God has nothing against an individual is the proof of the quickening work of the Holy Spirit. To believe God's Word about salvation is a proof that He has implanted eternal life.

When the Holy Spirit has shown you your own sin, you are convicted of your guilt. You agree with God's declarations. You say that you know you have come to the end of your resources in the struggle against God, and you realize that judgment must come against you ultimately if you do not yield, so you are ready to capitulate.

The resurrection of Christ is our receipted bill. God is satisfied with the death of His Son instead of our death. God Himself will never look upon our sin and will never open a hearing in any case involving us in a cause that might bring us into eternal jeopardy.

OUR HIGH PRIEST

Christ makes intercession for us, He prays for us, He lives in order to pray for us. Did you ever wonder why the ancient formulators of the creed took the trouble to say that our Lord Jesus Christ, after He arose from the dead and ascended into Heaven, sat down at the right hand of God the Father Almighty? What is so important about Christ's being seated in Heaven? Simply this: the great difference between the priesthood of Christ and that of Aaron and his successors is that Christ sat down when He entered Heaven.

The tabernacle of Israel in the wilderness was ornamented with gold worth approximately two million dollars today, and yet there was not a chair in the tabernacle, nor in the temple which was later built in Jerusalem to take the place of the more temporary structure. There was no provision for a priest to sit. The reason that the priests who practiced the ancient liturgy could never sit down was that their work was never done. But when Jesus Christ finished His work on the cross as God's high priest, He arose from the dead and ascended into Heaven where He sat down at the right hand of God.

Our text states that Christ is making intercession for us. A parallel verse in the epistle to the Hebrews states, "Christ is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25). This leads us, then, to a discussion of Christ's work for us as a priest, our great high priest, as the New Testament calls Him.

The work of a priest in the Bible was twofold. The priest offered a sacrifice for sin, and he served as the mediator between God and man in behalf of the people.

The priestly work of Christ in dying for us on the cross was finished forever at the moment He bowed His head and yielded His spirit back to the Father. And since that work was finished it would be a terrible thing for us to think that it was incomplete and that we had to do something to prolong it, or add to it. This is why we who hold to the faith of the Scriptures will never allow ourselves to be called priests except in the sense that all believers are priests (Rev. 1:6). Rather, we are more than content to be pastors who feed the flock, or ministers who serve in the teaching of the people.

OUR UNIVERSAL PRIESTHOOD

When Peter tells us that we are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood (1 Pet. 2:9), he is not talking about my sacrifice for sin, but is setting forth that there is no difference whatsoever in the sight of God between believers, or between what we call clergy and laymen. All members of the human race are equal in God's sight and all who believe in Jesus Christ become equal before Him in the true Church, which is the body of all believers—not an organization, but the organism. Our universal priesthood is that grace of God which finds it possible for Him to accept a spiritual gift from us, even though He is perfect and we are sinners by nature.

The second phase of Christ's priesthood, in addition to His atoning work in dying for us on the cross, is all that work which He now accomplishes for us at the right hand of God. He is our Mediator, and the only Mediator that can exist between God and man. It is because Christ has died for us that we have access to pray directly to the Father through Christ. No one can get to the Father except through Christ and Christ alone. It follows that prayers through any but Christ are futile, and that if we come through Him, we may be sure of being received.

THE ALL-SUFFICIENT CHRIST

If we are honest with the plain words that were given to us by Jesus Christ, we are forced to admit that while He was here on earth He announced that He would never be moved by any intercession on the part of a member of His family. Jesus was not to be approached by brother, sister, or mother. The story that sets forth this truth is found in Matthew 12:46–50. Christ had been preaching to the people of Israel and He spoke very sharply against the leaders who led the people astray. He called men by the worst names that have ever been addressed to others. No one in all history has been able to go beyond the terrible things that Jesus Christ called

these men. He called them generation of vipers, which came to them as a lash of a whip. “You son of a snake” would be an adequate translation of the passage. The leaders drew back from Him, cut to the quick, and with the determination that He should be murdered. The outburst, so different from the normal speech of Jesus up to that time, caused some people to run to his mother, the Virgin Mary, who came with some others in order, as the passage suggests, to lead Christ away quietly.

In the meantime the Lord had continued to talk further with the common crowd. Someone approached Him as one might approach a mad person, not knowing what might be the volcanic result. Timidly he told Him that His mother and His brothers were outside. If they had thought Christ beside Himself before, what were they to think now? For He answered with what might be called insanity of deity, “Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?” Then pointing to those who stood around Him, perhaps extending His finger to touch grizzle-bearded Peter, Christ said, “Behold my mother and my brothers. For whosoever does the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my mother, my sister, and my brother” (vv. 49–50). As plainly as plain words can be spoken the Lord Jesus said that no one was ever to approach Him pleading the intercession of a member of His family. He denied that He could be reached through any earthly relationship. If we understand Heavenly things, we will have no difficulty in accepting that truth. Christ is all-sufficient.

But though there are examples of people who approached Christ through His mother and were refused, we know that no one can approach directly and be refused. He is closer to us than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet. He knows us completely, and can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities (Heb. 4:15).

CONSTANT INTERCESSION

But if you have bowed before God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, then know that even now the Lord Jesus Christ is seated upon the throne of God occupied with only your best interests. We might think it strange if the President of the United States met with the Prime Minister of Britain and the heads of other states and spent a large amount of time discussing, for example, a common standard of wage payment for street-sweepers in the various capitals of the world. There would be many who would think that these men in positions of great power should spend their time on more important issues which affect the peace of the world and the flow of history. In like manner it might be thought strange that the Lord Jesus Christ should be on the throne of Heaven considering the matters that are now before Him. Yet the Bible shows us that He is not now concerning Himself with the great plans of governments and the movements of the nations. These things have been planned before the foundation of the world and written down in their permanent form. Nothing can change the course of events that God has determined for this earth. The wonderful fact is that Christ has all the time in the world and in Heaven to be occupied with the flood of His love toward those whom He redeemed with the price of His blood.

Puritan Thomas Manton SERMON XLII

Source: From Manton's 750 page magnum opus, [Sermons Upon the Eighth Chapter of Romans](#) (go to page 609)

What shall we then say to these things? if God be for us, who can be against us?—ROM. 8:31.

WE are now come to the application of these blessed truths, and the triumph of believers over sin and the cross; yea, over all the enemies of our salvation. It is begun in the text—‘What shall we then say?’

The words contain two questions—

1. One by way of preface and excitation.
2. The other by way of explication, setting forth the ground of our confidence. So that here is a question answered by another question.

First, Let us begin with the exciting question, What shall we then say to these things?

Doct. When we hear divine truths, it is good to put questions to our own hearts about things.

There are three ways by which a truth is received and improved—by sound belief, serious consideration, and close application. Sound belief: 1 Thes. 2:13, ‘For this cause also we thank God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.’ Serious consideration: Deut. 32:46, ‘Set your hearts unto all the words I testify among you this day;’ Luke 9:44, ‘Let these sayings sink down into your ears.’ Close application: Job 5:27, ‘Lo! this it is, we have searched it out; know thou it for thy good.’ Now these three acts of the soul have each of them a distinct and proper ground; sound belief worketh upon the clearness and certainty of the things asserted; serious consideration on the greatness and importance of them; close application on their pertinency and

suitableness to us; see all in one place, 1 Tim. 1:15, 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.' These are all necessary to make any truth operative. We are not affected with what we believe not; therefore, to awaken diligence, the truth of things is pleaded: 2 Peter 1:5, 10, 16, 'And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge,' &c.; 'Wherefore the rather, brethren, give all diligence to make your calling and election sure,' &c.; 'For if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; for we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' So for consideration: Heb. 3:1, 'Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Jesus Christ.' The weightiest things lie by, and are as if they were not; sleepy reason is as none, and the most important truths work not till consideration make them lively. So for application, what concerneth us not is passed over; unless we hear things with a care to apply them, we shall never make use of them: Eph. 1:13, 'After ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.' It is not enough to know the gospel to be a doctrine of salvation to others; but we must look upon it as a doctrine that bringeth salvation to our own doors, and leaveth it upon our choice. A plaster doth not heal at a distance, till it be applied to the sore; truths are too remote till we set the edge and point of them to our own hearts. Now this question in the text relateth to all three.

1. It challengeth our faith—'What shall we say to these things?' Do we believe them, and assent to them as certain verities? The apostle doth in effect demand what we can reply or say to these things. The unbelieving, dark, and doubtful heart of man hath many things to say against divine truths; let God say what he will, the heart is ready to gainsay it; yet it is good to press ourselves thoroughly with the light and evidence of truths, to compel the heart to bring forth its objections and scruples. If any mind to contradict, have we any solid arguments to oppose? Truth wanteth its efficacy when it is received with a half conviction; and doubts smothered breed atheism, irreligion, and gross negligence. Certainly the weighty truths of Christianity are so clear, that the heart of man hath little or nothing to say against them; therefore follow it to a full conviction. Doth any scruple yet remain in our minds? It is good thoroughly to sift things, that they may appear in their proper lustre and evidence: John 11:26, 'Believest thou this?' Pose your hearts.

2. This question doth excite consideration or meditation. We should not pass by comfortable and important truths with a few glancing and running thoughts; it is one part of the work of grace to hold our hearts upon them: Acts 16:14, 'Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to the things that were spoken.' Otherwise, in seeing we see not, and in hearing we hear not, when we see and hear things in a crowd of other thoughts; as when you tell a man of a business, whose mind is taken up about other things. No, your minds must dwell upon these things till you are affected with them; a full survey of the object sheweth us the worth of it. 'What shall we say to these things?' that is, what can be said more for our comfort and satisfaction? or what do we desire more? How should we be satisfied with this felicity and love of the ever-blessed God to his people?

3. It awakeneth application to ourselves, that we may make use of these things for our own good. Application is twofold, direct or reflexive; and the question may be explained with respect to both.

[1.] Direct application: as when we infer and bind our duty upon ourselves, from such principles as are laid down; so, 'What shall we say to these things?' that is, what use shall we make of them? Christianity is not a matter of speculation only, but of practice; therefore, when we hear the truth of it enforced, we must commune with ourselves, What doth this call for at our hands, but serious diligence? 2 Peter 3:11, 'Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?' The truths of the gospel are not propounded that we may talk at a higher rate than others do, but to live at a higher rate. If I should be negligent, indifferent, careless, what will become of me?

[2.] Reflexive application is when we consider our state and course, and judge of it by such general truths as are propounded to us. Direct application is by way of practical inference; reflexive, by way of discovery; and to this sense may this question be interpreted, 'What shall we say to these things?' Doth heart and practice agree with them? Do I live answerable to these comforts and privileges? What, am I one called and sanctified, and one that continueth with patience in well-doing upon the hope of eternal life? 2 Cor. 13:5, 'Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye are reprobates?' If Christ be formed in his people, is he formed in me? Thus things must be brought home to the heart, and laid to the conscience, if we would make a profitable use of them.

Use. Is to awaken this self-communing; to make our assent more strong, our consideration more deep and serious, and our application, either by way of inference or discovery, more close and pungent. Do we assent? Is this a truth to be lightly passed over? If this be true, what must I do? or what have I done? Now this you should do upon these occasions—

1. When you are tempted to unbelief. There are some points which are remote from sense, and cross the desires and lusts of sensual men, and we either deny them, or doubt of them, or our hearts are full of prejudice against them; and also the devil doth inject thoughts of blasphemy, or doubts about the world to come, into the hearts of people; especially in those that take religion upon trust, or are secretly false to that religion they have received upon some evidence. Now, to prevent all this, it is good to commune with ourselves, that we may be well settled in the truth; therefore see with what evidence the great things of the other world are

represented unto us in the word of God, and what a just title they have to our firmest belief. Faith will not be settled without serious thoughts, and it soon withereth there where it hath not much depth of earth, Mat. 13:5, 6; no thoughts in the highway ground, slight thoughts in the stony ground. Faith is a child of light, and given upon certain grounds: Luke 1:4, 'That thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed;' and Acts 17:11, 12, 'They searched the scriptures whether those things were so;' therefore many of them believed. But presumption and slight credulity is a child of darkness, the fruit of ignorance and incogitancy; therefore it is good in those truths that need it most to ask, What say we to these things?

2. When you are in danger of dulness, deadness, and neglect of Christ and his salvation, so that your hearts need quickening and exciting to duty. Sometimes a coldness in holy things, and a sluggishness creepeth on the best, and you may find you begin to grow careless and customary; the conscience becometh sleepy, the heart dead, the affections cold. A lively inculcation is then necessary; you must rouse up yourselves by putting questions to your hearts: Heb. 2:3, 'How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?' both by way of assent: Is it not true that there is a heaven and a hell? and, Is the gospel a fable?—and by way of consideration: What trifles and paltry vanities do you neglect Christ for?—and application, by way of inference: Must not I work out my own salvation with fear and trembling?—by way of discovery: Is this a flight from wrath to come, and a pursuit after eternal life?—that, serving God instantly day and night, we may attain to the blessed hope; that, giving diligence, we may be found of him in peace.

3. When strong lusts tempt you to sin in some scandalous and unworthy manner, what will ye do to relieve yourselves, but by such kind of questions? Gen. 39:9, 'How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?' Rom. 6:21, 'What fruit have you in those things whereof you are now ashamed?' And your hearts should rise in indignation against the temptation or carnal motion, Shall I lose my fatness to rule over the trees? If of profit: Mat. 16:26, 'What is a man profited if he shall gain the world, and lose his own soul?' If of pleasure, What! lose the birthright for one morsel of meat?

4. In a time of sorrow and discouragements; when affliction breaketh us, and lieth heavy upon us day and night. Suppose continual poverty or sickness, or else when we are wearied with a vexatious and malicious world; then should we revive our hopes and comforts, expostulate with ourselves about our drooping discouragements: Ps. 42:5, 'Why art thou disquieted, O my soul? and why art thou cast down within me? still hope in God.' We must cite our affections before the tribunal of sanctified reason. This is the drift of this question in the text—'What shall we say to these things?' This were enough to comfort the most distressed and afflicted. Who will be so much grieved for what he knoweth is for his good? Yea, so great a good as eternal salvation?

5. Whenever any message of God is sent to you, go home and practise upon it speedily, whether any duties are pressed upon you in the name of Christ, or sins reproved—'What shall we say to these things?' Is it not a duty? or that a sin? A weighty duty, or a heinous sin? Do I perform this duty, or avoid this sin? or, What do I mean to do for the future? If upon the first opportunity, as soon as the message is brought to us, we did fall a-working of the truth upon our hearts, more good would be done, our christianity would be more explicate and serious; whereas the impression that is left upon us in hearing is soon defaced, and all for want of such serious reflections and self-communings: James 1:22–24, 'But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own souls: for if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like a man that beholdeth his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was;' they forget how much they were concerned in the truths delivered.

Second question by way of explication—If God be for us, who shall be against us? There observe two things—

1. The ground supposed—'If God be for us.'
2. The comfort built upon it—'Who shall be against us?'

From both observe—

That if God be for us, we need not be troubled at the opposition of those that are against us.

[1.] I shall explain the words of the text, both concerning the ground laid and the comfort thence inferred.

[2.] Show you the reasons of it.

(1.) To explain the words, and there the ground supposed—'If God.' It is not dubitantis, but ratiocinantis; not the if of doubting, but of reasoning. The meaning is, this being taken for granted, the other must needs follow. In the supposition, two things are taken for granted—

1st. That there is a God.

2dly. That he is with, and for his children.

[1st.] For the first: it is some comfort to the oppressed, that there is a God, who is the patron of human societies, and the refuge of the oppressed; who will take notice of their sorrows, and right their wrongs: Eccles. 5:8, 'If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and the violent perverting of judgment in a province, marvel not at the matter; for he that is higher than the highest regardeth, and there

be higher than they;' so Eccles. 3:16, 'Moreover, I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, and that iniquity was there. I said in my heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked.' Man, that should be as a god to his neighbour, proveth oftentimes as a devil or wild beast to him, making little use of his power, but to do mischief. And many times God's ordination of magistrates is used as a pretence to their violence; and tribunals and courts of justice, which should be as sanctuaries and places of refuge for wronged innocence, are as slaughter-houses and shops of cruelty. Now this is a grievous temptation; but it is a comfort that the Lord will in due time review all again, and judge over the cause, that he may right his people against their oppressors. There is a higher court to which we may appeal: all things are governed by a holy and wise God, who will right his people, and vindicate their innocency.

[2dly.] That he is with, and for his children—καὶ ὁ μὲν, 'If God be with us.' But when is God with us? This must be stated with respect to the forementioned acts of grace. Worldlings judge of God's presence by wrong rules; they measure his love and favour altogether by the outward estate; if their mountain stand strong, if their houses be filled with the good things of this world, then they conclude God is with them. No, we must determine it by the context; and we begin—

(1st.) With predestination. God is with his people, not by a wavering will, but a constant, eternal decree. There are some that belong to the election of his grace: 2 Tim. 2:19, 'The foundation of the Lord standeth sure.' See that reasoning: Luke 18:7, 8, 'And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him? Though he bear long with them, I tell you that he will avenge them speedily.' Now election is for awhile a secret; but we have the comfort of it when we make our calling and election sure. Certainly God loveth his people with a dear and tender love, since he hath carried them in the womb of his decree from all eternity.

(2dly.) Effectual vocation is the eruption of this purpose. God is not with us, but in us. When we are made partakers of a divine nature, we have a pledge of his being with us in our own heart. We dwell in God, and God in us, 1 John 3:24. The new creature is under his special care and protection, and he is very tender of them, 1 Cor. 1:9.

(3dly.) Justification is another act of his grace. We often give God occasion to withdraw from us; but his pardoning mercy maketh up the breach. Woe unto us if God depart from us! We often banish, and drive away our own mercies: Isa. 59:2, 'But your iniquities have separated between you and your God; and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.' But he multiplieth to pardon, and accepteth us in the beloved, to the praise of his glorious grace. And so his favour and gracious presence is continued with penitent believers that cry for mercy.

(4thly.) It endeth in glory. The God of our salvation discontinueth not his care over us till he hath brought us into his immediate presence. Here God is with us while we dwell in houses of clay; there we are with God for ever in his glory. If he be with us here, we are to be with him there for ever; for we do not part company, but go to him whom we love and serve.

(5thly.) God is with us with respect to his particular care and providence, ver. 28, guiding all things for good. Now God's providence is either external or internal.

1st. God's external providence is seen in blessing our affairs: Gen. 39:2, 'The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man;' and ver. 21, 'The Lord was with Joseph, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison;' Acts 7:9, 'And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt, but God was with him.' This was most eminently fulfilled in our Lord Christ; he had such great success because God was with him: Acts 10:38; and John 3:2. 'Nicodemus said, no man can do these miracles that thou dost, except God be with him.' But in their measure it is fulfilled in the saints also. God was with Christ; he driveth away the devil from him by a word, Mat. 4. They ask leave of him to enter into the herd of swine, Mark 5:12. So in christians; God is with them, to give them success, even to wonder, against Satan and his instruments. So God is with us when he loveth us, defendeth us, and blesseth our endeavours.

2dly. His internal providence, in a way of comfort and support, and sanctifying their troubles. Thus God was with Paul 'when all forsook him:' 2 Tim. 4:16, 17, 'The Lord stood by him and strengthened him.' And so he comforts his people: Isa. 41:10, 'Fear not, for I am with thee;' so Isa. 43:2, 'When thou passest through fire and water, I am with thee;' not only to keep them from fire and water, but to be with them in fire and water. A christian is never alone, though all forsake him. Well then, the meaning is, since God will fulfil his eternal purpose, to justify, sanctify, glorify, what can hinder our eternal salvation? We that were predestinated when we were not, called when we were averse, justified when guilty, sanctified when unholy, and glorified, though now miserable, what cause have we to fear?

2. The comfort built upon it—'Who can be against us?' Let us state the meaning of this clause.

[1.] The whole world seemeth to be against those that believe in Christ. There are but two sides in the world, God and Satan. The whole world is Satan's kingdom: if God be with us, all else but God and his confederates will be against us. All is divided into two seeds and two kingdoms: the saints fight under Christ's conduct, the world under the devil's. We were listed as soldiers in baptism, under the captain of our salvation, and we renew our military oath in the Lord's supper, wherein we are afresh engaged against Satan; therefore 'Who can be against us?' doth not imply an exemption from troubles and opposition, but only that the victory is

secured. There will be many against us: the army of wicked men is employed to uphold Satan's kingdom, to maintain what he hath gotten, and to hinder the redemption and delivery of his captives. We cannot expect none will be against us; but we need not fear them. Who are they that are against us, but vanquished enemies? We serve under a captain who hath already conquered, John 16:33; a captain whom Satan feareth, and who is able and willing to help us. This then is the first consideration: there will be enemies, but we need not fear them.

[2.] Though they be against us, yet they shall not do us any considerable hurt. See the like question, 1 Peter 3:13, 'Who is he that will harm you, if you be followers of that which is good?' God is with and for the sanctified and justified; the devil, the world, and the flesh, are against them; yet they cannot make void God's purpose; for if God be a friend, all tendeth to our good. So that the meaning of the question is, who will be against us so as to harm us? God's help is our safety and security.

[3.] Let us see how far they may harm us. The devil and wicked men are the enemies to Christ's kingdom and subjects; the devil desireth their spiritual, the wicked their temporal ruin. The devil useth the latter, in subserviency to the former, to shake their faith, by fines, imprisonments, exile, torture, death; but God is with them, standeth for them, helpeth them, strengtheneth them, protects them, many times giveth them safety in the midst of danger, bread in the midst of penury and want, joy in the midst of sorrow; if they kill the body, he will save the soul, and raise up the body at the last day. Let us see, then, how far the harm may extend.

(1.) Our conquest is not always nor principally by a visible prosperity, nor worldly greatness and dominion. God's protection is a secret: Job 29:4, 'The secret of the Lord is upon their tabernacle;' the special favour and providence of God, which the world knoweth not of, nor can discern. There is an insensible blessing goeth along with them; as the wicked are eaten out by an insensible curse, though they have great revenues. God can put a very great blessing in the compass of a very little means: so Ps. 31:20, 'Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man.' They find sure refuge and defence in God, whatever proud and contentious men design against them: so Ps. 91:1, 'He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High.' It is a riddle to the carnal world how they subsist; but the Lord, by the invisible conduct of his providence, taketh care of them, provideth for them, and protecteth those that love, fear, serve, and put their trust in him.

(2.) Sometimes God permitteth that they shall harm us in our temporal interests, but not eternal. Alas! many times the people of God suffer many hard things: Heb. 11:37, 'They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were slain with the sword, they wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented.' The meaning is not, who shall be against us to take away our lives and liberties? God will sometimes glorify himself in his people's sufferings, and in the general will have us perform to him a tried obedience: James 1:12, 'Blessed is the man that endureth temptations; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him;' make us perfect as Christ was by sufferings, Heb. 2:10. But if we keep our innocency, the worst they can do is to send us to heaven, and so make us partakers of that which we desire most, Luke 12:4. When they have killed the body, they can do no more. If they cut it to bits and parcels, they cannot find out the immortal spirit; and however they molest and mangle the flesh, they cannot hurt the soul, or hinder our eternal salvation, or take us out of Christ's hands, John 10:28. And a christian upon these terms should be content, that by conformity to Christ he may be brought to eternal glory.

(3.) Christians are to be considered, not only in their personal capacity, but also in their community. They may prevail as to single persons, to kill and burn them, but not as to root out the church: Ps. 129:1, 2, 'Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say: many a time have they afflicted me from my youth; yet they have not prevailed against me.' God hath still preserved his church from age to age, notwithstanding the many hostile attempts against it. His people have been severely chastised, but yet in mercy delivered: the 'gates of hell shall not prevail against it,' Mat. 18:18. The wit and policy, the power and strength of enemies, shall not utterly destroy the christian church. Their arms and weapons were usually kept over the gates, and there they were wont to sit in council. As not particular faithful believers eternally, so as it considereth the congregation and society of christian professors, it shall never perish totally and irrecoverably; but whatsoever changes it undergoeth in the world, it shall again lift up the head.

[2.] The reasons why we need not be troubled at the opposition of those that are against us.

(1.) Because of the infinite power of God; take it for his sovereignty, or his ability and sufficiency, or strength.

1st. If you take it for his sovereignty: all things are under his dominion, and are forced to serve him, both angels and men, good or bad of either kinds, they are all his hosts; therefore he is called the Lord of Hosts, who is the God of Israel. Whatever you fear is something under the dominion of God, and you need not fear the sword, if you do not fear him that weareth the sword: Ps. 103:19, 'His kingdom ruleth over all;' not only over all men, but all things, and those not only actually existent, but possible: 1 Chron. 29:11, 'Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all.' The most potent and most opposite creatures are not exempt from his subjection: he created them at his pleasure, and disposeth of them at his pleasure; they have a perpetual dependence upon him both for being and operation; their rebellion against him doth not diminish his dominion over them. Now this is a mighty comfort to God's people, that whatever creature they are in danger of, that creature is subject to this kingdom and dominion of God, be it angels or devils, man or beasts, sea or wind, sickness or disease, Mat. 8:7, 8, fire, wild beasts, &c.

2dly. For ability or sufficiency. All the ability of the creature lieth either in wit or strength. For the first: will they resist him with wit and policy? can any creature outwit God? Compare two places, Prov. 21:30, 'There is no wisdom, nor counsel, nor understanding against the Lord,' with Job 12:13, 'With him is wisdom and strength; he hath counsel and understanding.' Both man's wisdom and God's wisdom is set forth by three words, understanding, counsel, wisdom. Let us see what is in the Lord, and what is against the Lord? Is there wisdom against the Lord? In the Lord there is the same; only against him there is the wisdom, the counsel, and understanding of the creature; in him, of the creator. Surely the creature can do nothing without him or against him, for it is dependent. Whatever the creature hath, it cometh from him; otherwise our understanding is but ignorance, our counsel rashness, our wisdom folly. Pharaoh thought to go wisely to work, but that wisdom cost him dear, when he intended to suppress God's interest, Exod. 1:10. Ahab, when God threatened to cut off his posterity, begets seventy sons, and disposeth and placeth them in the most strong and fenced cities: 2 Kings 7:8, 'And it came to pass, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons, and slew seventy persons.' Herod would go wisely to work to destroy him that was born king of the Jews in the cradle; but Christ was preserved for all that. The synagogue of Satan is still hatching crafty counsels to destroy the spouse of Christ, but with what effect?—antichrist is consumed more and more. We are afraid of our subtle enemies. Are we ever in such straits but God knoweth how to bring us out? They cannot overwit the Lord by whatever is plotted in Rome or hell. God knoweth all, for he hath understanding; counterworketh all, for he hath counsel; in the issue they will but play the fool, for he hath wisdom.

3dly. Strength. If any have the courage to oppose God's people and interest in the world, the attempt will be fruitless; the malice of men and devils will be fruitless; he only that can overcome God can hurt us. Our enemies are strong, ourselves weak; but how strong is God? They are nothing, nothing in comparison with God. So God saith, 'I am, and there is none else,' Isa. 40:17. All nations before him are as nothing: as the stars differ in glory, but when the sun ariseth, the inferior lights are obscured, and their difference unobserved. Nothing, by way of exclusion of God; as the sunbeam is nothing when the sun withdraweth, the sound in the pipe nothing when the musician taketh away his breath: Ps. 104:29, 30, 'Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust: thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth.' Nothing, by way of opposition to God, and his cause and interest in the world: Isa. 41:11, 'Behold all they that are incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded; they shall be as nothing.' Usually we feel them something in the effects of their rage and malice; yet they are as nothing to faith: and therefore faith should wink out all the terror of the creature: Isa. 51:12, 13, 'Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and the son of man, that shall be made as grass, and forgettest the Lord thy maker?' Let God's favour and displeasure be well weighed and compared with man's favour and displeasure, and you will find little cause and temptation to divert you from your duty. We have a God of might to depend upon, who can preserve us, notwithstanding the malice of enemies; therefore why should we bewray any fear or apprehensions of dangers?

(2.) Because of God's love to his people. If he had never so great power, yet if he were not willing and ready to help them, we could not draw any security from thence. But we have no more reason to doubt of this than of the former. God, that is wise enough and powerful enough to defeat all opposition, is also good enough to do it. First, He knoweth their persons, and their wants, and all their dangers and necessities: Mat. 10:29–31, 'Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father; but the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.' It is spoken to the disciples, when Christ had first sent them forth upon his message. What is the comfort? The malice of men can extend no further than the providence of God seeth fit to permit and order; God hath the knowledge, care, and government of the least things that belong to his people; their lives are dearly valued by God, and shall not be destroyed by any negligence and oversight of his, or prodigally wasted. He that taketh knowledge of the least creatures will much more take care of his servants; so Ps. 56:8, 'Thou tellest my wanderings; put thou my tears in thy bottle; are they not in thy book?' David at that time had been long from home, flitting up and down from wilderness to wilderness, and cave to cave; but was God ignorant of his condition during the days of his exile? No; this was particularly known and considered by him, as if God had laid up all the tears that dropped from him, and kept a sure record and register of all his sorrows. Well then, since God knoweth all that befalleth them, will he be an idle spectator, or make a party with them to help and deliver them? Secondly, How tender he is of them: Zech. 2:8, 'He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.' The eye is a tender part; nature hath much guarded and fenced it. Now to meddle with them is to touch the apple of his eye. The troubles of his people go near his heart. Certainly they that are against God's people are against God himself; benefits and injuries as done to them, God taketh it as done to him: Mat. 25:40, 'And the king shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me;' and Acts 9:4, 'And he fell to the earth, and he heard a voice saying, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?' The Jews have a proverb, 'What is done to a man's apostle is done to himself.' Thirdly, It is his usual practice in the dispensations of his providence, namely, to regard them, and intend their good: 2 Chron. 16:9, 'The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of those whose hearts are perfect with him;' there is a description of providence, and the persons that have benefit by it. Providence is described by the eyes of the Lord; as the Egyptians in their hieroglyphics did set forth providence by the picture of an eye. God is all eye; and those eyes are not represented as shut up or closed by sleep, but as open, to note his vigilancy, and in motion, as running to and fro, prying into every corner of the whole earth, to note the particularity of his providence. And the persons who have benefit by it are those whose hearts are perfect with him. The world shall know that they are under the

protection of an almighty and all-sufficient God. As to knowledge he is all eye, so as to power all hand, which is the great comfort of his people. He will show himself strong, manifest this almighty power in preserving and protecting them. Fourthly, It is not only the ordinary practice of his love and free grace, but it is secured by promise and covenant: Gen. 15:1, 'I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward;' and Ps. 84:11, 'For the Lord God is a sun and a shield; the Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.' As to positive blessings, he is a sun; as to privative blessings, he is a shield. As to way and end: by the way he is more a shield, till we are ξωβελε ς; hereafter more a reward, and an exceeding great reward when our sun is in the high noon of glory. Well now, then it is blasphemy to say that either God cannot or will not help us. If he cannot save us, he is not God; if he will not save us, he is not our God: if he cannot, he is impotent, and so unfit to be God; if he will not, he is false, and must break his covenant; which are blasphemies to be abhorred by every christian.

(3.) The great foundation that was laid for God's being with us in the incarnation of the Son of God. Jesus Christ is the true Emmanuel, God with us, Mat. 1:23. There we see God in our nature, and so drawing nearer to us, and coming within the reach of our commerce; In and by him, we are made nearer to God, who stood more aloof from us before. Since our nature dwelt with God in a personal union, first, there is a way opened for access: Heb. 10:20, 'By a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the veil; that is to say, his flesh;' and Eph. 3:12, 'In whom we have boldness, and access with confidence, through the faith of him.' Certainly it is a great advantage to think how near God has come to us in Christ, and how near he hath taken the human nature to himself. This maketh our thoughts of God more sweet and comfortable. Secondly, Not only access, but reconciliation: 2 Cor. 5:19, 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself.' There was not only a distance between us and God by reason of impurity, but a difference by reason of enmity. God is a God of glorious majesty, and we are poor creatures; God is a God of pure and immaculate holiness, and we are sinful creatures, lapsed and fallen under the guilt of sin, and desert of punishment. There was our great trouble and grievance, and nothing comfortable could we expect from him. But when God is willing to come among us, and take our nature, and die for a sinful world, there is a foundation laid for his being with us, to help us, and bless us upon all occasions. The wonderful marriage which the divine nature hath made with the human doth help us against the thoughts of distance; but his death and sufferings, as the price of our atonement, doth make up the quarrel and breach between us and God. In his person, God manifested in our flesh, way is made for access; for in Christ God doth condescend to man, and man is encouraged to ascend to God; but in his sufferings the distance is taken away, and the guilty fears appeased which most do alienate us from God. God hath 'set him forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood,' Rom. 3:25. Now after such a foundation laid, will the Lord be strange to his people, as if the breach still continued? It cannot be. Thirdly, God in our nature hath taken upon him an office to defend and help his people, which he manageth both in heaven and in earth. In heaven by his constant intercession: Heb. 8:1, 2, 'We have such a high priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens: a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord hath pitched, and not man;' and Heb. 9:24, 'For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.' We have a friend in court, Jesus the true and great high priest, who hath the names of his people graven upon his breast and shoulder, to show how much they are in his heart, and to represent them and their necessities to God. On earth, 1. Externally, by his powerful providence; for all judgment is put into his hands, John 5:22, that he may defend his church and people. 2. Internally, by his Spirit: Mat. 28:20, 'Lo, I am with you always unto the end of the world.' Into what part or age of the world our lot falleth, Christ is ready with his protection and blessing. Now would Christ take such an office, to be head over all things to the church, and neglect the duty of it? No; the head of the church is also 'the saviour of the body,' Eph. 5:11. The whole body, and every member of it, is dear to him, as united to him in the sacred mystical body; and he will take care of them. And upon these accounts we may pray for, and expect 'grace to help in a time of need.' Heb. 4:16, 'Let us come with boldness to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in a time of need.'

Obj. But you will say, If there be such a power and goodness in God, and thus secured by the mediation of Christ and his blessed covenant, how cometh it that they are reduced to such great exigencies? Judges 6:13, 'If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?'

Ans. 1. It is supposed you are christians, and have not the spirit of a worldling, that liveth upon and seeketh his main happiness in the creatures apart from God. A true christian is one that is dead to the world, but alive to God; one that hath laid up his treasure above the reach of all enemies: Mat. 6:19–21, 'Lay not up treasure for yourselves upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.' Otherwise we cannot deal with you, for it is a vain attempt to hope to reconcile christianity with your carnal affections; but if you be such, though the feelings of nature be not altogether quenched in you, you will not be greatly moved as long as your main happiness is safe; that is, while God's love to you is not lessened, while your communion with him is as free as it was before, while you lose no degree of grace, and your hopes of glory suffer not any eclipse; for your solid happiness lieth in these things, other things are but appendages to sweeten our pilgrimage; and though a christian hath a value for his natural comforts, yet it is a value and an esteem that is subordinated to higher enjoyments, that he hath something of value to esteem as nothing for Christ.

2. Temporal protection and prosperity is not excluded from the compass and latitude of this privilege, but included so far as God seeth fit, so far as it is good to have peace and liberty. Heretofore the blessings of God's presence were visible and sensible; as they observed of Abraham, Gen. 21:22, 'God is with thee in all that thou dost;' so it is promised to Isaac: Gen. 26:3, 'I will be with thee, and bless thee;' to Jacob: Gen. 35:3, 'God was with me in the way that I went;' to Moses: Exod. 3:17, 'I will be with thee;' to Israel: Deut. 2:7, 'The Lord thy God hath been with thee;' Josh. 1:5, 'I was with Moses, and I will be with thee;' to David, 2 Sam. 6:18. So that we cannot say that he will not own and bless us in the course of his providence; but communion with him, and the enjoyment of his gracious presence, is that which the godly desire most: Exod. 33:5, 'If thy presence go not along with us, carry us not up hence.'

3. Though temporal happiness be not altogether excluded, there must be trial; for there is no crowning without striving, nor can a reward be expected for sitting still: 2 Tim. 2:5, 'He must strive.' According to the laws of the exercise, to put in for the prize in the Olympic games, and to refuse to run or wrestle, was ridiculous; so it is to think of heaven and do nothing for it, or run no hazard for it; partly because we need afflictions, that the inner man may be renewed, and we be more prepared, dispositively fitted for glory, being weaned from the world, and mortifying the flesh: 2 Cor. 4:16, 'For which cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day;' 1 Peter 1:6, 'Wherein ye greatly rejoice; though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.' We suffer to quicken us in our drowsiness and refine us from our dross. Partly to conform us to Christ, that we may overcome the world; he overcame it by suffering, to show us that by suffering we shall overcome it, which is a nobler victory than if we had overcome it by the sword: Rom. 8:37, 'Nay, in these things we are more than conquerors.' It is for the honour of God that it should be known that God hath a people that love him, and are dearly beloved by him.

4. In these trials God is with us; and so if he save you not from afflictions, he will save you in and by afflictions. How is God with us in deep and pressing afflictions? Partly in bridling the rage of men; if you be in your enemies' hand, your enemies are in God's hand: whatever power they have is given them from above, John 14:11, and they cannot do anything but as God permitteth. Partly by the effects of his internal government—(1.) Supporting them: Ps. 138:3, 'In the day when I cried, thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul;' 2 Cor. 12:9, 'And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee;' Phil. 4:13, 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.' If we have his supporting presence, though we have not his delivering presence, it is enough. (2.) His comforting presence: Ps. 91:15, 'I will be with him in trouble.' God is most with his afflicted people (as the blood runneth to the wronged part), as the mother is with the sick child, even to the envy of the rest. Then we are most prepared for the comforts of his Spirit, being refined from the dregs of sense. (3.) His sanctifying presence, blessing the affliction for an increase of grace: Heb. 12:10, 'But they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.' Now these experiences show that he is still with us.

Use. Is information.

1. It informeth us of the misery of wicked men in the general. By parity of reason, if God be against us, it is no matter who is for us. How soon are all things blasted when God is against a people! they make little reckoning of God's help, or securing their greatness by God's protection; therefore the ruin is the more speedy: Ps. 52:7, 'Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength, but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness.' Alas! how soon can God blast all their confidences. Man is the mere product of his maker's will, and all that supports his being is the fruit of his bounty; surely he that blew up this bubble can as soon crush and dissolve it. They look upon the godly as the most afflicted creatures, because the hatred of the world is usually upon them; but sure they are the most miserable: though they have all the world on their side, yet if they have God against them, they have cause to fear; there is a wall between them and heaven. Certainly wicked men have stronger enemies than the people of God have or can have; they have God himself for an enemy, and he will overcome.

2. What reason the enemies of God's people have to be afraid, and to stop their fury and rage against his cause and interest. It is fruitless and vain to curse those whom God will bless; Balaam could teach them this: Num. 23:8, 'How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy those whom God hath not defied?' It is ruinous; to allude to Acts 22:27: they that set themselves against his people set themselves against God: Isa. 37:23, 'Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? against whom hast thou exalted thyself, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel.' Men do not know and consider who is their party, and with whom they have to do, that breathe out nothing but threatenings and destruction against the servants of the Lord. Are you a match for God? He is their second, and engageth against you; and he can soon tread out this smoking flax, and with the wind of his displeasure scatter this dust that flieth in the faces of his people.

3. That a christian is, or may be, above all opposition; and the fear of man, which is a snare to others, should be none to him, for he hath God's favour and almighty protection to support his courage and fortitude. There are two things trouble us, an inordinate respect to worldly happiness as our end, or an inordinate respect to man as the author or means of procuring it; cure these two evils, and what should trouble or perplex a christian?

[1.] An inordinate respect to temporal happiness: that must be cured in the first place. What is your first and chiefest care? to secure your temporal interests, or to save your souls? To cure our cares and fears, Christ directeth us, Mat. 6:33, 'First seek the kingdom of

God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.' He promiseth us a kingdom, Luke 12:32. And the apostle describeth the true christian, Heb. 10:39, to be one that believeth to the saving of his soul. Now if you will be christians indeed, stand to this, that whatever becometh of other things, your business should be to save your souls, and then your trouble about worldly accidents is plucked up by the roots; for it is our affections to them cause our afflictions by them. Can men take away the privileges of God's kingdom from you? or cast you into hell, and prohibit your entrance into heaven? No; but you would save your stake? Agreed, so it be consistent with your duty and fidelity to Christ; but if it cannot be, venture it in God's hands. Heaven is worth something; and it is a question whether they desire it or no that will venture nothing for it; therefore this must be determined and fixed as your resolution in the first place, that you will get to heaven whatever it cost you, and will obey God at the dearest rates.

[2.] An inordinate respect to man, as if he did all in the world. Sense seemeth to tell us so, but faith must teach us better; therefore, to cure this, consider who is most able to help or hurt you, and whether it be better to have God a friend or an enemy. If you will take the judgment of the people of God, you shall see—

(1.) That they always profess that God's presence, to whom all things are subject, is their great security: Ps. 46:7, 'The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Israel is our refuge, Selah.' They think themselves safe enough with God, though all the world should be against them.

(2.) They have been confident of his presence with them, and fatherly love and care over them, in the saddest condition: Ps. 23:4, 'Though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear none evil, for thou art with me.' When death and they walk side by side, yet they are still confident of God's favour and presence; God doth not forsake his people, though he permitteth them to be exercised with divers calamities, Heb. 11:35, 36.

(3.) Upon this ground they defy the creature: Ps. 27:1, 'The Lord is my light and salvation, whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?' so Ps. 118:6, 'The Lord is on my side, I will not fear what man can do unto me.' It argueth great pusillanimity to yield to temptation when God is with us and for us, and to doubt of the sufficiency of his protection; for they must first prevail against God before they can against you.

(4.) Will you believe the judgment of your own reason? Then consider what is man and what is God, and set the one against the other—his wisdom against their policy, his power against their weakness, his love and mercy against their malice and cruelty. What do we believe God to be and man to be? Man, compared with God, is a sorry, feeble, worthless thing, a puff of wind or a pile of dust, nothing, less than nothing, and vanity. Surely God is infinite in wisdom, power, and goodness; man a poor creature, that in point of wisdom would give anything to know futurity, and the event and success of his enterprises, and is often cut off in the midst of his designs: Ps. 146:4, 'He returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish,' leaveth his projects and contrivances: Ps. 2:12, 'And ye perish from the way,' while in the course and heat of their undertakings. We do not tell you what is in the other world, what is matter of faith, but what is obvious and sensible here. In point of power, how fain would men do more than they could, but that they are in the chains of providence, and under the restraints of God's invincible power! It is in their thoughts to cut off and destroy; but there is a higher power that disposeth of all circumstances: all is in your Father's hands. So his love and mercy against their malice and cruelty: Ps. 76:10, 'Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain:' the frustration of their attempts. God often ordereth this.

(5.) How much it concerneth us to be in such a condition that we can say, God is with us; then you need not desire the best things in the world, nor fear the worst. But when can we say, God is with us? Three things are necessary.

1st. That the person be right, that he be renewed by the Spirit of God, and be reconciled to him; for called and justified are the privileges between the two eternities in the context, and the sure evidence of our interest in both. Then God taketh us into his special charge and protection, when regenerated by the Holy Ghost, and reconciled by the blood of Christ; for the new creation are his family: James 1:18, 'Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures;' Titus 2:14, 'Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' These are the peculiar people. With others, God is no more present than he is with the rest of his creatures, in a way of common preservation. Therefore, if you would be certain of God's favour, and that your peace is made with him, you must look to this, that you be in an estate of pleasing God, that you are sanctified by the Spirit, and, being justified by faith in Christ, are at peace with God, Rom. 5:1. If you be renewed, and God reconciled, you need fear nothing. The evidence of both, and so of our interest in his providence, is our unfeigned dedication to God; for if we be for both, God will be for us. If you have given a hearty consent to his covenant, then you shall have the privileges of it: he will be your sun and shield, and then we need fear nothing.

2dly. As to our cause, it must be good. Take God's side against Satan and his instruments: 2 Chron. 15:2, 'The Lord is with you while you be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you;' 2 Chron. 13:9, 10, 'With them are golden calves, and with us is the Lord our God.' God is there where his ordinances and worship are kept up in their power and purity. If his people warp and decline, he is against them. When his people had erred in the matter of the calf: Exod. 33:3, 'I will not go up in the midst of thee, lest I consume thee in the way.' Therefore, lest God depart, we must be tender.

3dly. Our conversation must be holy, for wilful sin and guiltiness breed fears of God's displeasure. It is our sins that give our enemies advantage against us: Judges 3:12, 'And the Lord strengthened Eglon, the king of Moab, against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the Lord.' We read often in Scripture that their shadow was gone from them: Numb. 14:23, 'Because you are turned away from the Lord, the Lord will not be with you.' We banish away God's presence from us, because he cannot with honour own such a people: Amos 5:14, 'Seek good, and not evil; so the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you.' If, after we have devoted ourselves to God, we retain our former sins, we lose the mercy and comfort of his favourable presence. We do but dream of God while we continue in sin. If we would have God to be with us, we must carry ourselves as in his presence, and be dutiful and obedient to him, seek him, rely on him, and keep his way.

Use 2. Is to press you to lay up this truth in your hearts; for it is the ground and foundation of all religion.

1. This is the ground of close adherence to God, when we cease from man, and cleave to God alone; then you live as those that from their hearts do believe that there is a God, and that he is a 'rewarder of those that diligently seek him,' Heb. 11:6, which are the fundamental principles which are at the bottom of all christian practice; and the more you live upon them, the more cause you will see to stick to God, and please God rather than man. They that trust in him, and do stand or fall to him alone, they are the best christians; you so far withdraw yourselves from God as you look to man. If once man get the pre-eminence of God, and be set above him in your hearts; that is, be loved, trusted, obeyed before God, so far your hearts grow dead to God, and religion presently withereth and decayeth: Prov. 29:25, 'The fear of man bringeth a snare, but he that trusteth in God shall be safe.' The soul that cannot entirely trust God, whether man be pleased or displeased, can never long be true to him; for while you are eyeing man, you are losing God, and stabbing religion at the very heart.

2. This keepeth us from shifting and helping ourselves by unlawful means: Gen. 17:1, 'I am God all-sufficient, walk before me, and be thou upright.' Were we soundly persuaded that his power is above all power, and his wisdom above all wisdom, and his goodness and fidelity invincible, it would save us from many sinful miscarriages and unlawful means that we take for our own preservation. We often lose ourselves by seeking to save ourselves without God, and because we cannot depend upon his all-sufficiency. Well then, since it hath such an universal influence upon all our conversations, we should get it rooted and settled in our hearts, that we may not be tossed up and down with the various occurrences of this life; God is our happiness, and not the creature.

3. This filleth us with courage and magnanimity in the most desperate cases: Dan. 3:17, 18, 'O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter; our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the fiery furnace; but if not, we will not serve thy god, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.' This is true fortitude, to look to God alone; he will deliver from death, or by death; he can save us from trouble; or if not, he will hasten our glory. Yet we must resolve to stick close to him, however he determine the event.

4. This maketh us live quietly from cares and fears, when we can commit and submit all to God: Phil. 4:6, 7, 'Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God; and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ.' It is a blessed frame, questionless, to be careful for nothing. This is to be had by ceasing from man, and trusting in the Lord, who hath the government and disposal of all things.

Directions—

1. Let the will of God be your sure rule. For God must institute that religion which you expect he should accept and reward. None trust in the Lord but those that keep his way: Ps. 37:34, 'Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land.'

2. Let the favour of God be your happiness. Be quieted in his acceptance, whether man be pleased or displeased: 2 Cor. 5:9, 'Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.' Let God be enough to you, without and against man.