

No Worries (Part 2)– Rom 8:31-39

With that in mind, let's turn to Rom 8:31-39; Happy Mother's Day

I'm so thankful for *my* Mom, and so thankful for Becky – our girl's mom; I'm doubly blessed for sure

- We're on the downhill side of our series on salvation, addressing our doubts at this point; Doubts that trouble us from time to time . . .
And threaten to rob us of our blessed assurance

And we found last week in **Part 1**, that as followers of Christ we can and should . . .

Rest assured of God's love

His unfailing, unrelenting care and grace; That's the purpose of this passage – no worries

And just to make sure we're confident of that, Paul addresses 4 unspoken doubts; Like . . .

1. What if my enemies are too strong? (v31-32)

What if my faith won't sustain me in the face of their bitterness and opposition?

To which Paul responds by basically saying – “So what?”

- **GOD** is on your side

If God is for us, who can be against us? (31) Especially as he blesses us

2. What if my sins are too many? (v33)

And Paul's like – *Who shall bring any charge against God's elect?* (33) Any accusation of sin for the purpose of disqualifying you as his child

Nobody; B/c it's God who justifies (v33)

- **GOD** is your judge

He's the one who strikes the gavel and says “forgiven”

3. What if my guilt is too much? (v34)

To which Paul say – (A) *Christ* was your substitute, the perfect Son of God; And (B) . . .

- **Christ** is your advocate

At the right hand of God interceding for us (34); Ensuring that your salvation will *never* be undermined and your innocence never questioned (**Summary**)

Those are the first 3 unspoken *doubts* to which Paul responds – taking us through v34

- And then he addresses a 4th, starting in v35 (**Part 2**)

[35] *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?* [36] *As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”*

[37] *No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.*

The 4th unspoken question Paul addresses is this . . .

4. What if my suffering is too great? (v35-37)

What if I can't hang on? What if I can't keep the faith in all my trials and tribulations?

That's the question; And it's pertinent for every single one of us b/c we *all* suffer from time to time; And some people *all* the time

Like those who struggle to make ends meet, and are just plain tired

Or those who lost a loved one, and are just plain mad

Or those who are persecuted for their faith, and wonder if it's worth it

Or maybe for you, your marriage is a wreck and you're ready to walk away

Or you can't have kids and wonder why

Or your body is sick, and you're tired of fighting

Every single one of us suffers

- And sometimes it rocks our world; Like it did for C.S. Lewis when his wife died of cancer; His beliefs underwent a *severe* test; Listen to what he wrote:

“When you are happy . . . if you remember yourself and turn to [God] with gratitude and praise, you will be – or so it feels – welcomed with open arms.

But go to Him when your need is desperate, when all other help is vain, and what do you find? A door slammed in your face, and a sound of bolting and double bolting on the inside. After that, silence.

You may as well turn away. The longer you wait, the more emphatic the silence will become. There are not lights in the windows. It might be an empty house. Was it ever inhabited? It seemed so once . . .

Not that I am (I think) in much danger of ceasing to believe in God. The real danger is of coming to believe such dreadful things about Him.

The conclusion I dread is not “So there's no God after all,” but “So this is what God's really like. Deceive yourself no longer.” (C.S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed*, 9)

His suffering was so great that it rocked his world; And almost wrecked his faith

Causing him to question whether God was really there; And whether his love is real

- All of which Paul addresses in v35, by saying – *Who* [or what, based on the following list of *things*] shall separate us from the love of Christ?

Nobody; That's the answer. Nobody and no thing; And just in case we're not satisfied or convinced of that, he follows it with a list of examples

Like *tribulation* – great difficulty and affliction; Will that do it?

How about *distress* – situations of desperation?

Or *persecution* – suffering due to your allegiance to Christ?

Or *famine* and *nakedness* – critical needs resulting from disaster or poverty?

What about *danger* – the risk of injury? Or the *sword* – premature death?

Will *any* of these things separate us from the love of Christ Paul asks? B/c that's our plight; Just like Ps 44:22 says; Which he quotes

“For your sake [this is us speaking to God] we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

It's an expression of ache and pain, that summarizes our suffering in life; Our experience as children of God in a fallen world

- And the question is – is it too much? Will we fail to persevere and overcome?

And the answer, in v37, is an emphatic *no*; *No*, you *won't* fail; *No*, your suffering *isn't* too much; Why? B/c *in all these things we are more than conquerors*

We will overcome, we will persevere, and God's ever present love will sustain us

And not just barely, but triumphantly; The victory is ours; Suffering or not

But don't miss the last 5 words of this verse – *through him who loved us*

In all our sufferings, *we are more than conquerors through him*; Through Jesus
It's through *him* that we are victorious; It's in *him* that we overcome
He's the one who carries us through

- We were flying on a 737 from Fresno to Dallas a few weeks back, when the pilot came on the intercom about 20 minutes into the flight . . .
And said we had to divert our course and land in Los Angeles due to an “electrical problem”

And I didn't think much of it until 15 minutes later as we were on approach, I noticed we were landing on a runway far away from the terminals, with no other planes nearby
And as soon as we turned off the runway, we were met by about 15 fire engines and emergency vehicles; Even a truck with a portable stairway
Which clued us in to the likelihood that there was a fire

But thankfully they didn't see anything, or at least anything they told us about, and after about 5 minutes we taxied to the terminal safe and sound

- Here's the point – just like an airplane carries us through the hazards of *flight*, Jesus carries us through the hazards of *life*
We may experience turbulence along the way, with bumps and bruises and suffering from time to time – but we get through it
Not b/c *we* fly, but b/c he does; It's *through him* that we are more than conquerors; It's in *him* that we are victorious

Does that mean everything is always going to turn out perfectly this side of heaven? No
We live in a fallen world among fallen people; Bad things happen
But (A) God is *with* us; And (B) He *loves* us; And no suffering will ever change that
It's *never* too great for God's love to win out; That's v35-37

- And then, Paul plays a game of biblical pile-on; Giving us even *more* reasons for why we will overcome; Saying in v38 . . .
For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, [39] 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.

What a glorious promise

- **Nothing can separate you from the love of God (v38-39)**

There's no suffering too great, no trial too big, and no obstacle too high
Paul's sure of it; Like he says in the first part of v38 – *I am sure*
Meaning I have *become* sure and convinced, and I *remain* sure and convinced

And you can be too; Just like Paul; B/c the same Jesus who saved him, saved you
And the same Spirit that indwelt him, indwells you

- You can be sure that *death* won't separate you from God and his love, and you can be sure that *life* won't either; Referring to the whole of our existence here on earth
Start to finish, our very existence is powerless to separate us from God's love

And regarding the *death* part, I have to believe it's the most precious truth in all the world for those who are facing it
That to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord; There's no separating us

- And the same is true of *angels* and *rulers* – the glorious host of heaven, and the demonic throng of hell
Not even the powerful *unseen* world can infringe on God's love for you

Nor can *things present* or *things to come* – circumstances *now* or in the future
Nor powers – powers of darkness or powers of man
And certainly not *height* or *depth* – b/c the entire *universe* is “in network”

And just in case you're not convinced, he finishes it with – *nor anything else in all creation*; A catch-all to emphasize the fact that nothing *will be able to separate us* . . .
From the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord
The love of God, shown to us and given to us, in the person and work of Jesus

If you've given your life to Christ, if you've repented of your sins and trusted him to save you – no enemy, no sin, no guilt, no nothing . . .
Will ever be too strong, too many, too much, or too great – to keep *you* from him, and him from you

- Illustrated so well by the story of a man who searched for his son in the aftermath of another earthquake in recent memory – the Armenian disaster back in 1988 (**Summ**)
An earthquake that left 60,000 people dead, and 500,000 buildings leveled

But that didn't stop one particular dad from rushing to his son's school (**Photo**), and digging through the rubble
And after 38 hours, during which time his friends begged him to stop – he finally pulled back a large rock and heard his son's voice; He and 13 others had survived

And when they finally pulled them out, his son exclaimed to his Dad – “I told them! I told the other kids that if you were still alive, you'd save me!”
And later on, the dad said – “I told my son, ‘No matter what, I'll be there for you!’”
(Scott Hahn, *A Father Who Keeps His Promises*, 13-14)

- How much more our loving heavenly Father? (**Summary**) How much more will he be there for us? How much more will *his* love surpass our suffering?
Rest assured; Be encouraged; And live accordingly

Pray – Lord, your love never fails, it never gives up, it never runs out on us; Thank you for that; Thank you for loving us, and keeping us, and blessing us even when we suffer
Receive our tithes now, for the advancement of your kingdom

Close

Nepal – we're following the situation closely to determine how we can best help, and should have some information on that next week
Rejoice with those who dedicated their children
Express your love and support for John Cochran
Visitor Bags; Happy Mother's Day – You Are Loved