

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

The Hymn of Security, Part 2

Scripture: Romans 8:35-39

Code: 45-68

Tonight, as you know, we come back to the 8th chapter of Romans for our last look in this series as we move through this marvelous epistle. And I want you to open your Bible, if you will, to the 8th chapter of Romans. And as our setting for the message tonight, I want to read to you beginning in verse 35.

Romans 8. "What shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword? As it is written, for thy sake, we are killed all the day long. We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

In Jeremiah 31:3, God said to His people Israel, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." And that is how God expresses His love here in Romans 8. It is an everlasting love. It is a love from which there can be no separation.

One hymn writer, unknown to us, expressed it so beautifully when he wrote, how firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord as laid for your faith in His excellent word. What more can he say than to you he hath said you who unto Jesus for refuge have fled. Fear not. I am with thee. Oh, be not dismayed. For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid. I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand. Upheld by my righteous omnipotent hand. When through the deep waters I call the to go, the rivers of grief shall not thee overflow. For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless, and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie, my grace all sufficient shall be thy supply. The flames shall not hurt thee. I only design thy drawest to consume and thy goal to refine. The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose, I will not, I cannot desert to expose that soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake, I'll never, no never, no never forsake.

What a promise. It is the age old promise of God to His redeemed people. It is expressed in the beautiful and familiar words of the apostle Paul in II Timothy 1:12 when he says, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I've committed unto Him against that day."

And so we can stand in our Salvation with great confidence that the one who loved us has loved us with an everlasting love from which there can be no separation. That that which we have committed unto Him, He will keep. What a confidence.

This, of course, is the truth of eternal security. This is the truth of Salvation seen in its fullness. That those who are redeemed are redeemed forever. And that is the theme, indeed, of the end of Romans 8. As it is really the theme of the whole chapter.

Paul has been presenting to us very powerfully the truth of eternal security. He summed up his presentation in verse 28 when he said, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God. To them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called and whom He called, them He also justified and whom He justified, them He also glorified."

In other words, the reason that all things ultimately work together for our eternal good is because when God called us, He called us unto glory, and nothing can change it. Marvelous comfort that brings to us.

And so all through the chapter we have been learning about how we are secure in Christ because of the Ministry of the Spirit, and it is culminated in verses 28 to 30 in the expression of the confidence that we have in the plan of God. That all things are working together for our ultimate good because that's the way God planned it from the beginning.

First came foreknowledge, then predestination, then calling, then justification, and then glorification, and He shows us to glory. And so we are on the path. And so we have been celebrating the security of the believer. Oh, what a wonderful thing it's been for us.

And as he brings to a conclusion these great truths, he asks the question in verse 31, as you remember from our last study. "What shall we then say to these things?" What should our response be? What should be our reaction to these great profound promises about our eternal security? Well, he anticipates that some will object, and some will say no, we can lose our Salvation.

Well, we could forfeit our Salvation. No, we could reject our Salvation, and we could abandon it, or it could be lost to us. And so as he closes the chapter, he has a sort of running dialogue with any possible objection that might come up. What should be our response? Well, some might say well, maybe God will change his mind, or maybe something will take us out of the hand of God, or maybe God isn't so set up to hold onto us. Maybe He willingly will release us. Maybe there's some way that God can lose His grip. And so he responds to that thought in verse 31 by saying, "If God if or us, who

can be against us?" You know anybody more powerful than God?

Who's going to break God's grip? Who's going to cause God to lose hold on His redeemed children? Those for which Christ paid the supreme price of His own blood. Who is powerful enough to do that? Especially when I John 4:4 says, "Greater is he that is in you than he that is," where? "In the world."

Who is greater than God? And the answer, of course, is a ringing no one. No one. You see, since God is God, and God is as God, infinite in power, it is utterly impossible to thwart His will. It is utterly impossible to halt the completion of His eternal plan, and if He saved us unto glory, nothing can change that.

Because my God is infinite in power, I can say I will not fear what man may do unto me. Because my God is infinite in power, I can say in what time I am afraid, I will trust in Him. Because my God is infinite in power, I will say I will both lay me down in peace and sleep, for thou Lord only maketh me dwell in safety. Because my God is infinite in power, I can say with Moses, the eternal God is my refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms.

We are secure in God. The Psalmist sums it up so wonderfully in Psalms 91. Look at it for a moment. I read it often. "He who dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." In the first place, we dwell in secret. We are hidden, as it were, from the enemy. We are hidden in the secret place where the most high abides, and we're under His shadow, and that is to say His protection.

"And he," verse 2 says, "is our refuge, and He is our fortress. In Him we trust, and He will deliver thee from the snare of the fowler and the noise from pestilence," as if He is a hovering eagle over us, and we are His fledglings. He keeps us safe from the nets of those who would catch the birds. He covers us with His feathers. Under his wings shall we trust. His truth is our shield and buckler, so we're not afraid for the terror by night or the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor the destruction and waste of the noonday. And while a thousand may fall at our side and 10,000 at our right-hand, it never comes near us. The only thing we'll ever see is with our own eyes to see the reward that the wicked. We'll not experience it. We'll only see it. "Because we've made the Lord as our refuge, the most high thy habitation, so no evil shall befall us nor any plague come near our dwelling, for He gives His angels charge over us to keep us in all our ways, and they carry us in their hands lest we dash our feet against a stone, and we tread upon the lion and the adder. The young lion and the serpent we trample under feet." Why? Because He hath done what? Set His love upon me. "Therefore," says God, "I will deliver him and set him on high because he's known My name."

And when someone loves God in return for His love, and when someone believes in God's name, He sets us on high. That's a promise. "He shall call upon me," says God, "and I'll answer him. I'll be with him in trouble. I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him and will show him My

Salvation." So you don't have to go only to Romans 8 to see the infinite wonder of the secure Salvation. You can see it in Psalms 91.

In Numbers 14:9, the Scripture says that the people said, "The Lord is with us. Fear them not." That was the word of Joshua and Caleb. In Deuteronomy 33:29, it says, "Happy art thou oh Israel. Who is like unto thee oh people, saved by the Lord. The shield of thy help, who is the sword of that excellency."

And you remember Joshua 10:42 where it says, "The Lord God of Israel fought for Israel." And in the same way does God stand to defend His redeemed people. And so it is a grand and glorious truth that if God be for us, no one can successfully be against us. No one. Certainly not God.

Verse 32, "He that spared not his own son, but delivered Him up for us all. How shall He not with Him that is with His son also freely give us all things. Shall not the God who gave His son to redeem us give us whatever we need." Shall not - to put it another way - the God who redeemed us from sin keep us? To put it another way - shall not the God who gave us the most in the gift of His son to save us give us less than that to keep us?

You see, God predetermined to set His love upon us, and out of that predetermination to an eternal love, we are secured in a strong Salvation that brings us to glory. Having given us the most, the gift of His son, God holds back not the less, or the least, the other things to keep us saved.

You see, if we understand the Cross and we understand what God did to save us out of sin, we understand what it means then to be secure in His Salvation. If we can see that God loved us when we were wretched and when we were wretched and ungodly, He loved us enough to save us, now that we belong to Him, and are in Christ, does He not love us enough to keep us? And if he is powerful enough to redeem us out of our bondage to sin, is He not powerful enough to keep us in His son? And so we understand that God will not abandon us.

To deny security of the believer is to misunderstand the heart of God. It is to misunderstand the gift of Christ. It is to misunderstand the meaning of the Cross. It is to misunderstand the biblical definition of Salvation.

Go back to Romans 5 for a moment, and verse 8. "God commended His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners," that's the important statement. Christ died for us. God loved us so much that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. "Much more then being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." If we've already been justified through the blood of Christ, we're certainly going to be ultimately saved from the wrath.

In other words, if He saved us here and now, He saved us unto glory. If his blood was applied now that we might be saved, He saved us now and then from the wrath that is yet to come. "For if when we were enemies," verse 10 says, "we were reconciled to God by the death of His son, much more already being reconciled, we are being saved by His life."

In other words, Paul says this. If when we were enemies we were saved by the death of His son, don't you think that now that we're sons, we are being kept saved by the life of His son? If in his death he could redeem us, in His living intercession, can he keep us? He answers, of course.

And so 32 says that he will give us all things to keep us in the place of security. He has saved us unto eternal glory, and that is unchanging. And that's why Philippians 4:19 is so comprehensive. "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." And the greatest need we have is the need to be saved and to stay saved, and to reach glory.

You say, "But what if we sin?" II Corinthians 9:8 says, "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you." So it is to understand that the love of God and the work of Christ that is the basis of an understanding of security.

You say, "But what if we fall into sin? What if we get so embroiled in some kind of sin?" Verse 33, comes another objection answered. "Ye shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect." Who's going to come into court and demand a retrial for those that are chosen by God? Who is going to do that? Shall God?! The justified? In other words, if God is the Supreme Court of the universe, then He already rendered His verdict that we are just in Christ. If He already exonerated us, forgave us and freed us from our sins - if that's already done by God, who's going to be a higher court? Who is going to lay any charge to God's elect?

Satan tries. He's the accuser. We saw that last night. Revelation 12:10. Night and day, accusing the brethren before God and always being rejected.

Because God has already rendered His verdict. You say, "Well maybe Christ will change His mind." Verse 34, "Who is he that condemns? Christ? Christ that died? Yay rather than has risen? Who was at the right-hand of God? Who is always making intercession for us?" Hardly.

Now in verses 31-35, as I told you last time, He's dealing with persons. Are there any persons that can take our Salvation away? Well, really we could only say maybe God could, and we find here that He won't. He holds us with an everlasting love. And if He gave us His son to save us, He'll give us less than that to keep us. Christ won't because He went to the Cross for us. He rose for us. He ascended for us. And He intercedes for us, so he's not going to condemn us.

You say Satan. Yes, but Satan isn't a higher court, and he's thrown out every time he comes with his accusations.

In Isaiah 50:8-9, listen to what the prophet says. "He is near that justifieth me, who shall contend with me?" What a great statement. "He is near that justifieth me. Who shall contend with me?" Let us stand together! Who is my adversary? Let him come near to me! Behold, the Lord God will help me. Who is he that shall condemn me? And just maybe Paul's thought came from Isaiah through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

If we're God's elect, if God has made us righteous in Jesus Christ, if Christ has given His life for us - died, rose, ascended, and interceding - if all of that has been done on our behalf, shall not He keep those for whom He has given His life?

Look at Hebrews 9 for a moment, and I want to share with you a few verses. Hebrews 9, and I want you to look at verses 7-11. Hebrews 9:7, "But into the second," that is into the inner part - the holies of holies, "went the high priest alone, once every year. Not without blood, which he offered for himself for the errors for sins of the people." This is the day of atonement. The high priest goes in and offers his offering in the holy of holies.

"The Holy Spirit thus signifying that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while the first tabernacle was yet standing." In other words, it was simply a symbolic act and the Holy Spirit was showing that the real sacrifice hadn't been made. Because if it'd already been made, the priest would have to keep going in there every year. Right?

So it was symbolizing what was yet to come. It was only a "figure for the time then present in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices that couldn't make him that did the service perfect." That's pertaining to the conscience.

In other words, they were only symbols. They couldn't perfect the individual, "that stood in foods and drinks and various washings and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation," or the new testament.

All those old testament symbols were picturing something to come in verse 11. "But Christ," underline that somewhere in your Bible. "But Christ," or draw a circle around it. "Being come in High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is to say not of this building." And he goes on to verse 14, to talk about how through the blood of Christ we have been purged to serve God.

You see, Jesus Christ was that perfect priest who offered that perfect offering to make us perfect. To bring us to God. And to deny security of the believer is to deny the sufficiency of the work of Christ.

The sufficiency of the work of Christ. We are secure.

Back up to Hebrew 6 for a moment. When God wanted to show us the security of His Salvation, it says in verse 17, "He was willing to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability," that is the unchanging character of His counsel. So God says, "I want to show you that I'm not going to change my mind. If I saved you now, I'll save you forever. And I want to show you that by confirming it by an oath." That by two immutable things - and the two, you can write them in the margin. His promise and His oath. He made a promise and He swore to keep it.

"In which it was impossible for God to lie that we might have a strong hope, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope that was set before us which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast."

Just think about it. Tremendous. God has given us a covenant of grace in Christ - that new covenant of which He's talking here, and that new covenant was promised and God swore to keep it, so by two immutable things, His promise and His oath, from God who cannot lie, He promises to keep us and that becomes for us a strong hope, who have fled to find a refuge and a hope we can cling to, and here indeed is one.

And our hope, verse 19, I love this, is an anchor of the soul. It's as if God has anchored us. And where's the anchor? It says it at the end of verse 19, "It's entered into that within the veil." The Lord took the anchor and He anchored it in the Heavenly sanctuary. So you're hooked, folks. If you're saved, you've got a rope from you spiritually speaking that goes behind the Heavenly veil, and it's anchored in the Holy of Holies and the Heaven of Heaven. By the work of Jesus Christ.

So there's no person - there is no person - not God, not Christ, not Satan, not anybody who can cause God to lose His hold on you, or to change His mind, or break His promise. And His promise was for eternal life in Christ. Right?

Now another objector might come along and say, "But wait a minute." Maybe not a person, but you yourself - and this is where the people who try to teach that you can lose your Salvation usually land. They say you can take yourself out by rejection, or unbelief, or changing your mind, or turning your back, or sinning and falling away.

It's sort of like there was a slide, and you could slide down it so far, but if you go past a certain point, you can't get back. And it's the sin slide. And you slip down so far, by willful rejection - you can get yourself out. In other words, they say sins, and circumstances, and temptations, and pressures, and all of that stuff cause you to reject your Salvation, and then they will invariably say, "because I know this guy and he used to be a Christian, and he turned his back and walked away." And that's always the way it's sort of defended.

And so in verses 35-37, the Apostle Paul deals with the fact of circumstance. What if, under pressure, for example - under the stress of temptation, we fall and we reject Christ, and we take ourselves out. Watch verse 35.

"What shall separate us from the love of Christ?" What's going to do that to you? What's going to pull you out? And the what here is the same word, this says the who and the only reason the "who" is in verse 33 and the "what" is in verse 35 is because in verse 33, it's obviously talking about persons, and in 35, it's talking about certain circumstances. Tribulation, distress, persecution and so forth.

And so what is it that's going to cause you to do that? What's going to make you turn your back or fall away or lose your Salvation? Some kind of heat? Some kind of pressure? What? Tribulation? Distress? Persecution? Famine? Nakedness? Peril? Sword? I mean, those are the heavies.

I mean, is it that you get into those kinds of things and you just bail out? Do those - watch this - separate us from the love of Christ? Would you notice this, please. That the love of Christ is not talking about your love for Him, but His love for you.

What can make Him stop loving you? Because listen beloved, your Salvation isn't based on your love for Him. You only love Him because he what - first loved you. And your Salvation is based on His love. So if you're getting out, He's got to change his mind. And what's going to do that? What's going to cause Him to cease to love you? We know it's the love that Christ has for you, because verse 37 emphasizes Him that loved us. Verse 39 emphasizes again, from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. So 37 and 39, put together with 35, tell us that He's talking about the love that Christ has for us. What's going to break that bond?

Oh, you say things come into the life of a person and they bail out. What kind of things? Well, all these kinds of things that He names. And I think that's just why He names them. They're the most stressful things that could be named.

Well, what can do that? Listen to John 13:1. "Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world to His Father," listen to this, "having loved His own that were in the world, He loved them unto the end." It's unchanging love.

II Thessalonians 2. I don't know if you've ever read this little benediction at the end of the second chapter. "Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father who hath loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace. Comfort your hearts and establish you in every good work."

What has God given us? He's loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace. If the reason we have everlasting consolation and the reason we have an unending hope is because we know that when we sin, He gives us what? Grace. It's everlasting consolation and good hope through grace that comforts our hearts.

So what's going to change God's love? Well, let's look at the list. How about tribulation? It's an interesting word. Thlipsis in Greek, it's when you're cornered and out of options. It has to do with tremendous pressure.

As I recall, the root even of our English word has to do with sort of a thrashing. They had some instrument they used to beat wheat to release the grain and separate the chaff, and it was a couple pieces of wood with a leather thong in the middle, and you flagellated it, and that sort of is behind-the-scenes. An intense pressure. The word is often used of outward difficulties in Scripture. Being accused of certain things. Being rejected by the people in your group or on your society or in your family, or wherever. Enduring bodily harm and so forth. When the real pressure comes, when the real heat is on, when the sun begins to burn and scorch, and there's a price to pay for being a believer, does that separate you from the love of Christ?

How about distress? That's another interesting word. That has to do more with inward difficulty. The word in the Greek, steno choria. Two words. Narrow and space. And it means to be caught in a narrow space. To be hemmed in with no way out. You're out of options. And I think it has perhaps to do with temptation. Wherein like in I Corinthians 10:13 it says that we're going to be taken through. The only way out is through. But when you're in the middle of temptation, God will make a way of escape that you may be able to what? Not get out of it, but what? Bear it.

And so not only outward pressure and the outward threats, and outward kinds of difficulties, but that internal hemmed in, no way out strong temptation that comes against you. Can that cause you to be separated from the love of Christ?

How about persecution? Diogmos. A _____ of the testimony of Jesus Christ. Physical or mental suffering at the hands of those who reject Christ. Can that do it? How about famine? To go without food. To be utterly deprived. To be slammed in a jail cell and left to die because of your faith in Jesus Christ. How about nakedness? That means not literally nudity, but to be without any clothes. To be so poor and destitute you can hardly clothe your own body. You have no food, you have no clothing. How about peril? He uses the word peril there which basically means to be exposed to treachery, to plot, to peril. He was always being plotted against. And the sword is Machaira. The assassin's dagger. And it means death.

I mean, all of these things are very heavy things. Outward rejection, animosity, and bitterness. Inward temptation, and struggles, and distress. The persecution that comes. The destitution that may come

on one who embraces Christ who has nothing to eat and no clothes. And the peril or the danger of being exposed to treachery and plots of those who hate what you love. And even death.

These are the worst possible attacks. I mean, these are the worst possible stress situations. Could they drive us to reject Christ? Could they drive us out of His love and affection? Could they drive us to doubt Him? Could we falter during those times, and could we get weak, and could we wonder things, and could we maybe fall into a sin and the Lord would just shut us off and boot us out?

By the way, this isn't just theory. Everything in verse 35 Paul experienced. Did you know that? All you have to do is remember II Corinthians, and the whole list is there. The whole list.

"I have been in labors more abundant, stripes above measure, prisons more frequently, death often, of the Jews five times received I 39 stripes. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. A night and a day I was in the deep. In journeys often. In perils of waters, perils of robbers, perils by my countrymen, perils by the heathen, perils in the city, perils in the wilderness, peril in the sea, peril among false brothers, and weariness, painfulness, watching often. Hunger, thirst, fasting, cold, and nakedness."

Every one of those and a lot more that are listed there in Romans are also listed in II Corinthians 11. This is not theory. This is Paul's life. And he's saying did tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril or sword sever me from Christ? Did it cause Him in my moments of weakness to say He's not worth the trouble? I'm going to abandon him. Shall that break the bond of Christ's love which holds me?

What's the answer? Verse 36. "As it is written." As it is written. What does that have to do with anything? "For thy sake we are killed all the day long. We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." And he quotes Psalms 44:22 out of Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament. And what he's saying is hey folks, this is old stock. This doesn't take us out of the love of God. This just shows us we're in it. I mean, this isn't anything strange. For thy sake we're killed all day long. I mean, this is the history of those who love God.

By the way, in that passage, it's a plea for God to deliver Israel in distress, and what Paul is essentially saying in taking that text is that all the saints of all the ages have endured this. It goes with the territory. I mean, Matthew 10:37-39. If you're not willing to say no to your father, and your mother, and your home and everything, if you're not willing to take up your Cross and follow Me, if you're not willing to pay the price, count the cost, and come after Christ, you're not worthy to be what? His Disciple. So Paul says, it isn't that this drives us from Christ. This just reminds us we belong to Him.

You see, it says in II Timothy 3:12, as I pointed out many times, all that live Godly in this present age will suffer persecution. I mean, it's just the way we know we're really there. Now if the drive - you say

what if that kind of stuff really happens to people, and it drives them away from Christ? Then the truth of the matter is, they were never saved.

And that is what I John 2:19 says, and you ought to know this verse because it's a very important verse. It says in verse 19, "They went out from us," I John 2:19. "They went out from us, but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out from us, that they might be made manifest that they all are not of us." You understand the point?

When somebody goes, that doesn't mean they lost their Salvation. That's proof that they never really had it. They never had it.

Oh, no. Verse 36 says for thy sake we're killed all day long. And that's just all day long stuff. That's nothing new. Notice the little phrase "for thy sake". "For thy sake" expresses a willingness. It does. It expresses a beautiful willingness on the part of God's truly redeemed people to bear the Cross. And it's just what the Savior said. Those who are my true disciples are willing to take up the Cross. For thy sake we're willing to suffer. For thy sake we're willing to pay a price to count the cost.

That's exactly what Jesus was confronting in Luke 9:57. "And as they went on the way, a certain man said to him, Lord, I will follow thee wherever thou goest. And Jesus said to him, the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Now that's a good way to discourage a follower. Tell him you have nowhere to go, and no resources.

And another guy said - followed along. Lord says follow me. And he said Lord, I just need to first go and bury my father. What he didn't say was the father wasn't dead. He wanted to hang around to get his inheritance. "And Jesus said let the dead bury their dead, and you go and preach the Kingdom of God. And another said I'll follow thee. Let me first go bid them farewell who are at home at my house, and Jesus said no man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God."

You see, the person who puts his hand on the plow and looks back not only isn't in the Kingdom, he isn't fit to be in the Kingdom. So when a person puts the hand to the plow and splits, they're not in the Kingdom and then out. They're not even fit to be in it. You come with a commitment to follow whatever the price, whatever the cost.

A true believer perseveres through these things like tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and sword. The true believer perseveres in that. He moves through that.

And that's why it says in Hebrews 3, "For we have become partakers of Christ. If we are holding the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." Verse 14. Very important verse. How can you tell one has become a partaker of Christ? Because he holds on steadfast to the end. See? He holds

on steadfast to the end. Doesn't bail out. And so there's a willingness to go all the way, if need be, to the death that would come to those who name the name of Christ in some circumstances.

So let's go back to Romans 8. So Paul says what's going to separate us from the love of Christ? And he lists these very serious things that could tempt us to abandon our faith or draw us into sin. Shall these things? No. Quite the contrary. This is something that just fits us perfectly. This is just the way it's been written about God's people. For His sake we're killed all the time. We're always being accounted as sheep for the slaughter. It just means we're like sheep on the way to be slaughtered. That's nothing new.

And then comes his answer in one word, in verse 37. No, no. No, these things don't separate us from the love of Christ. No. In fact, in all these things we are what? More than conquerors through Him that loved us. Not on our own strength. Through Him that loved us. In all these things. What things? Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword. Those things will never cause a true believer to leave his faith. They'll never cause God to let go. And the reason you stay saved isn't because you hold on. It's because He holds on.

And He's not going to break His grip through those things, and you from your side are going to persevere. He doesn't let go of His grip, and you don't either. Because you're steadfast to the end. That's the mark of a true believer.

John 8:31-32. Many believed on His name, and He said to them if you continue in my word, then you're my real Disciple. It's the continuers. The ones who hold on. That give evidence that God is holding them. And so in all these things, not only does it not blow us out of our Salvation, instead of that, we become super-conquerors. The word here is a tremendous word. Hupernikaoman. We use the word Nike to speak of a missile. It's from this word, conquer. Nikao, the verb. Nike, conquering.

And we're super Nike's. Super conquerors. Winners of a sweeping, surpassing, overwhelming victory. We don't just win. We win big. I mean, when we get hit with tribulation and we get hit with distress and persecution, and we get hit with famine and nakedness and peril and sword, we don't just squeak through. We come out roaring! Super conqueror.

You say how can you be a super conqueror. You either win or lose. Well, no. It's more than that. We don't just win. We come out super conquerors for two reasons. Reason number one is that when we come out, the whole thing makes us better than when we started. Because everything that happens in our lives is refining us. Right? And as I told you earlier, when we go through these kinds of struggles, we come out hating sin more, loving righteousness more, desiring more of God, understanding ourselves better, able to help others because we've been through it. It just enriches us every way you look at it.

The person who's been through these things and seen the ugliness of their own sin, and seen their own weakness and their own flesh, and seen all the struggles they have, comes out the other side with a better understanding of themselves. A greater longing for God, a greater hunger for holiness. All of that is good. So it's not just a victory. It's a victory that we come out better for it. We're super conquerors.

Not only that, but let me give you a second reason we're super conquerors. It's because everyone of those things works for us, a far greater eternal weight of Glory. Ultimately there will be a greater reward. Each time we go through those kinds of things which do not separate us from the love of Christ, but refine us, we not only come out better people here and now, but we come out the recipients of a greater reward then and there. And that's the super conquering aspect. It's a great thought. It's a great thought.

And so, I mean Paul really diffuses that argument. You think that those kinds of things are going to separate you from the love of Christ? Just the opposite! Just the opposite! When a true believer goes through those kinds of things, all of a sudden the Spirit of grace and glory rests on him and he sees things that he never saw before about what he ought to be. He sees his weakness. Yes, and he sees the strength of God. He wants to run from his own sin and run to the holiness of God with a greater sense of direction than ever before perhaps. And out of that comes a pure devotion to Jesus Christ, and a greater eternal weight of glory.

They don't separate us. And who makes it possible? It's all through Him that loved us. Through Him that loved us. He holds on. He holds on. The bond never breaks. It never breaks.

Paul wrote this, I think during the winter in Corinth, and neither Paul nor the church of Rome, I'm sure, could have understood how short a time would elapse before they would stand in need of this comforting truth. Because when the persecution flames began to hit, and they saw people split, it might begin to cause them to wonder about the doctrine of Salvation. Right? And all they had to know was that the true believers would come through that super conquerors. And if people bailed out and abandoned the faith, it was only evidence that they went out from us because they were not of us. How helpful is that to understand.

And so when you see someone who appears to have believed and abandons the faith, know this. That like that seed planted in the rocky soil, there was no real root there. It sprung up for a little time and when the heat was put on, it withered and died.

Paul would himself be killed with a sword of sorts. His readers of this Epistle would be men and women whose blood would soak the sands of the Roman amphitheater. And they would go to the deaths singing the praises of Jesus Christ, wouldn't they? You see, there's no person in the universe

that can lay a charge against God's elect and alter the Salvation God has promised, and there's no circumstance that can sever the bond of love that binds together a believer and his Savior. He doesn't let go, and we don't either.

Those dear Romans who had to suffer as martyrs must have been comforted by this. Those who were mauled by wild beasts. Those who were soaked in tar and burned at Nero's parties like torches in his garden. Those that fought with men and beasts, and demons from hell were always safe in the securing arms of the love of the Savior. What a thought.

Now, after affirming that no person and no circumstance could ever, ever, ever, ever take away our Salvation, Paul sums it up. Verse 38-39. And commenting on this is like gilding a Lilly. It's like taking a brush and trying to paint a sunset to add more color to it. There's just not much that you can really do, even to explain the wonder of this, but let me give it a try.

Here is his final summation. "For I am persuaded." Stop there. You've got to know what this means. It's a settled conclusion. He's not saying boy, I sure hope so. I have come to an absolute settled conviction. This is a fact. It is a fact. It's like II Timothy 1:12, "I am persuaded that He is able to keep that." I know that. I have a confident assurance. I am persuaded! That - and here it comes - neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor power, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Just a burst.

And the list is - I mean, I had to go look at this list. I am persuaded that neither death - the great enemy, the gates of Hades - death can't separate us. Why the Bible even says, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." The Bible also says that He's with us as we walk through the valley of the shadow of death.

And I'm always reminded of Dr. Barnhouse, the death of his wife when the children were still young and she died and went to be with the Lord. He was driving home from the funeral in his car, and he was trying to figure out a way to explain to his children what happened and a double trailer semi went right by them very fast and cast its shadow over the car, and it startled them, and he knew he had his illustration. He said to his kids, "Kids, would you rather be run over by a truck, or the shadow of a truck?"

They said, "That's easy, daddy. The shadow. That doesn't hurt." And he said, "Yes, and mommy went through the valley of the shadow of death." There's no pain there. Death can't separate us. All death does is do what? Bring us into His presence. Because to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

And then he says, "Not death or life." Life with all its dangers. Life with all its difficulties. Life with all its troubles and trials, and temptations. Life with everything that it can throw at us. All the pain, and all the sorrow, and all the hurt, and all the anxiousness of life. Can it do it? No. No. Not life. No. State of being. Not death and not life!

And then he says, "Nor angels." Probably thinking of good angels here. Holy angels. You say well, would a holy angel want to alter our Salvation? No, but that doesn't matter. He's just saying it couldn't happen if they did. And he said the same thing in Galatians 1 when He said, "though an angel from Heaven preach another Gospel, but let him be cursed if it isn't the truth." It's just hyperbole in a sense. I mean it can't happen, but if it did happen, even an angel, a holy angel, couldn't do it.

Aaah, but the demons, nor principalities, he says. And that seems to be a term that he probably uses here, though it is used for both good and bad, it seems most dominantly to refer to evil angels. At least that it's usefulness in Ephesians 6. Not good angels and not bad angels. No state of being, and no supernatural being can change it.

And then he says, "Nor things present nor things to come." Not anything here and now, and not anything there and then. Not anything in this age, and not anything in eternity. No dimension of time. Not now, not ever. You can't lose your Salvation, he says. Not now, not ever. Not in death, not in life. Not by holy angels taking it, or demons taking it. No. Impossible. No dimension of time, no being, and no state of being.

Then at the end of verse 38 he says, "nor powers." That's kind of an interesting single word. Commentators struggle with what it means. Let me give you McArthur's view. When it is used in the plural in the New Testament, the form of *dunamis*, when it is used in the plural most frequently it refers to miracles, or mighty deeds. And it may well be that that's what Paul has in mind.

No miracle, no mighty deed, no supernatural thing, nothing beyond our control can ever separate us from Christ. No state of being, no being. No time and no power.

And then he throws this in. Nor height, nor depth. Well, what in the world does that have to do with it? What is height and depth? The word *hupsoma* was used to speak of a star at its zenith, and when a star was at its zenith, they said the star was at its height. So it has to do with going out into the infinity of space. And depth is the word *bathos*, and it was astronomically used to speak of a star at its low point. So what he's saying is this. Nothing at the end of an infinite outer space out there, and nothing at the other end either. From one end of infinity to the other. Because height is infinite, and depth is infinite.

And so the sum of this stuff is mind-boggling. Where are you going to lose your Salvation? If it can't happen in death, and it can't happen in life, and holy angels can't do it, and demons can't do it, and

things present can't do it, and things to come can't do it, and nothing from the infinite edge of space up there to the infinite edge of space down there can't do it.

Oh, but there'll be someone say oh yes, but. But I can do it myself, so he says nor any other creation! See. It's like Romans 3 where he says, "For all have sinned." He talks about all of the sinfulness of man. He says "there's none righteous." And you know somebody will say except me. So he says, "there's none righteous. No, not one." And here he just throws in, or any other creation. Shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. It's the love of God in Christ, our Lord that holds us.

In verses 31-34, it kind of measures in the love of God. In verse 35-39 measures on the love of Christ. We're hidden with Christ in God. Right? Oh my. And we shouldn't be surprised at this. You know something? We shouldn't be surprised at this.

Listen to John 17:23. Jesus prays about us to the Father. He says, "I in them, thou in me they may be made perfect in one." He prays that the people He redeems will be taken to perfection. You think He gets His prayers answered? He's praying that the people He redeems will make it to perfection. I think He gets them answered.

"That the world may know thou has sent me and has loved them as thou has loved me. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am. That they may behold my glory which thou hast given me for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world." Oh, Father, he says, I want the ones you've given to me to be with me in my glory. You think God answered that prayer? Of course. So we're not surprised that we're secure.

There once was a Scottish man of God by the name of George Matheson. George Matheson, on June 6, 1882, wrote a hymn that has become a favorite of Christians. One of the loveliest hymns of the secure love of God ever penned.

He was born in Glasgow in about 1842. And he has, as a child, only partial vision. And his sight became progressively worse and worse. He became totally blind at the age of 18. Despite this handicap, by the way, he was a brilliant scholar, and he graduated from the University of Glasgow. Went on to seminary. Graduated there. Became Pastor of a church numbering 2,000 people in Edinburgh. Preached sightlessly.

He became one of the greatest preachers and one of the greatest orators of his time, and he never married. He had a great wound in his heart because he was in love with a young lady who decided that, though they were engaged, she would not marry him, but gave him back his ring because she could not learn to be content with a man who was blind. And so she left him. And out of the pain of that experience, he wrote a tribute to the love of God, and this is what he wrote.

"Oh love that will not let me go, I rest my weary soul in thee. I give thee back the life I owe, that in thine ocean depths its flow made richer, fuller be."

Let's bow in prayer. Father, we all rejoice in the love that will not let us go. We all rejoice with the text of Jeremiah, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." Oh, Father. How blessed are the people who are secure in that love. How thankful we are that You never let us go. No person, no circumstance can ever alter our eternal Salvation. Founded on Your predetermined love, to love us unto glory. Thank you, oh God, for hearing the prayer of Christ who said "Father, I pray that the ones given to me may be with me where I am to behold my glory." We long for that day.

Take a moment and thank the Lord in your heart for the wonders of this Salvation. It has swept us now for months and months. From Romans 3 through Romans 8. And ends in the crescendo of glory, the hymn of security. Offer your thanks.

Some of you may be saying, 'I can't.' Can't do that because I don't have that Salvation. Well, it's offered as a gift to you, and I would ask you to open your heart to Christ. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," the Bible says, "and you will be saved." Profess with your mouth Jesus is Lord. Believe that God's raised Him from the dead.

If the Spirit of God prompts your heart, just pray a simple prayer - Lord Jesus, be my Savior. Forgive my sins. Give me that eternal Salvation. Listen, dear friend, if there's any doubt in your mind, dispel that doubt with an honest prayer of submission to the Lordship of Christ. And submit your heart to Him in faith.

Our Father, we ask that You would touch every life with Your truth, and Your spirit. Convict those who are without the Savior. Draw them to Him, that they may know the glories of our wondrous Salvation. Make us ever thankful, ever filled with praise and wonder over such a great and undeserved gift as we possess.

Oh, God, what can we say? Yes, that we should live to Your praise, that You may know that our thanks is genuine. And bring into the prayer room, Lord, as we close, all that You desire to come that we may help them find a way to knowing thee. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

Available online at: <http://www.gty.org>

COPYRIGHT (C) 2015 Grace to You

You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (<http://www.gty.org/connect/copyright>).