

What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? 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? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written:

**“For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”**

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (NIV 84)

Theme: Conquerors in Christ.

1. God is for us.
2. God is with us.

What does it take to be victorious? Whether it's a war, a championship, or whatever it might be—there is one thing you need above all else: others on your side. You can't do it alone. But you can surround yourself with many different people but if they don't know what they are doing or can't get it done, then you won't come out victorious. So you need the right people on your side. When Japan bombed Pearl Harbor and the United States finally decided to enter WWII, we joined with Britain, Russia, and other Allies. We couldn't have won on our own.

Today we see that we are conquerors. But we can't beat the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh on our own. We are conquerors in Christ—because God is for us and God is with us.

Who is it in your life that is against you? Is it a neighbor that seems to fight and argue with you about every living thing? What about a

family member who can't seem to stop complaining about the way you are raising your children or trying to tell you how to live your life. Maybe it's your boss. It seems as if you can never do anything right. Even if you did exactly what was asked of you he still finds something to complain about. Or maybe your co-workers are always sabotaging your work, or taking credit for what you accomplished, or somehow just making your life miserable. It seems as if everyone is against you. You tell others about your problems but it falls on deaf ears. You wanted to talk to your spouse about it, your parents, or a close friend about it. But they were all so busy. And you can't really blame them—they have their own lives with their own problems. But it still seems as if you're all alone, that you have to fight your battles yourself.

When you watch the news you realize that someone else is against you—actually a group of people. There are many people in the world today—including many radical Muslims who want nothing else than to see you dead. They want to mistreat and abuse you. In their minds the world would be a better place without a Christian like you. And it seems as if lately they are getting the upper hand. More and more Christians being slaughtered while they are getting stronger and stronger.

Or maybe it's not specific people but the world in general. The world seems to be drifting further and further away from your worldview. It seems as if Satan and the sinful nature are winning more and more battles. Sin is more out in the open. People celebrate and defend wicked and sinful actions. Each year it becomes more and more apparent that you are different than much of the world. It seems as if everyone is against you. And maybe they are. But that's okay.

Or maybe your troubles and sorrows aren't exactly caused by other people, but are the results of living in a world full of sin. You have aches and pains—or worse, sickness and diseases. The diagnoses isn't good. Pills or surgery will help, but you will have to face this the rest of your life. Or maybe it's hard economic times that has you down. You work as hard as you can, but you can't seem to get over the hump—it seems as if you will always struggle to make ends meet. “You know who could help you with those problems,” Satan asks, “God. In fact, your suffering is proof that God doesn't love you, that

God isn't with you. If he loved you and cared for you, he would take care of you." That's the devil's lie, that's Satan's trap—he wants to you doubt God's love for you. He wants you to think that no one, including God is with you.

In the first part of Romans eight Paul makes two major points. The first point is summarized by verse one, **There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.** Because of the forgiveness of sins that Christ paid on the cross we will not be condemned, but we will live forever in heaven. And therefore we'll want to live a life according to God's will.

The other major point is summarized in verse 28, **we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.** Even though we suffer through many things in this world, in the end God makes them turn out to our benefit. We know that no matter what happens to us in this world, it can't compare to the glory that we'll enjoy in heaven—a gift received through faith given by the Holy Spirit.

So Paul asks to begin our text, What, then, shall we say in response to this? **If God is for us, who can be against us?** It's a rhetorical question. God is for us. And if God is for us, than no one can be against us. Okay, sure, people are still against us. But no one has power over God. So no one can do any real or lasting damage to us because God is for us. And since God is for us we have nothing to fear or worry about. God is for us.

And not only is God for us, but he also graciously gives us gifts! **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?** God gave us the greatest gift of all—his Son. Although we rebelled against God, although we were born as his enemies who constantly fail to obey his commands, God send his son into this world. He showed us true love. John also talks about this love, **This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.**

And if God gave us something as great as his Son, then what else won't God give us? If you asked your parents for some money and they gave you a 100 dollar bill, you can be sure that they will give you a penny as well. So if God gave us for free his one and only son then

he will give us many other gifts as well! Whether physical or spiritual—we can be confident that God will give to us whatever we need and will benefit us—because God is for us!

But still there is the devil, whispering in your ear, "You are still a sinner. Just think of all the horrible things you have done. Sure, people have done some horrible things—far worse than you. But they weren't Christians. They didn't claim to be believers; they weren't expecting to be saved. What you have done isn't what Christians do. God can't possibly forgive you. There is no way he'll save you after all the horrible things you have done."

The name Satan means "accuser." That is what Satan does; he accuses us of sin, and tries to lead us into despair that God won't forgive us. But Satan doesn't set the rules. He doesn't get to decide who is right or wrong. Only God does. And what does God do? He justifies those he has chosen. Those God has chosen from before the beginning of the world to be saved, he declares not guilty. Even though we constantly sin against him, he acquits us on account of Christ.

The devil tries to condemn us—to be that accuser. To try to drag us down to hell to keep him company. He tries to convict us in our sin. But again, it's not up to the devil. He has no say in it. It's up to God. And notice what Paul says, **Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.** To be sure, we should be condemned. For each and every one of our sins we deserve eternal damnation. But Christ is for us. He is the one who suffered and died for us. He paid the price for our sins—he took them way, nailing them to the cross. His perfect life was given to us and we are now pure and innocent in the eyes of the Lord. And even more than that—he was raised to life. If Christ had not been raised from the dead, then we are still in our sins; but he has indeed been raised from the dead. His new life is a guarantee that we too will rise from the dead. And right now Christ is on his throne in heaven ruling over his entire creation. And he pleads our case before God. Our Savior is also our defense attorney. He steps in for us and reminds the Lord of what he has done for us.

God has done all of these things for us. He has shown his love for us again and again. So what about all the things that cause all the trouble and hardship? What about everything we suffer through? What

should we say about all those things? Paul gives us the answer. We have troubles, and hardships, and persecutions. There are some that consider us nothing more than target practice.

But we don't have anything to fear. There is not a single physical or earthly difficulty in this life that we have to worry about. Because nothing can separate us from the love of God!

The same stands for anything else on this earth. Nothing can celebrate us from God. Not staring in the face of death or the prospect of suffering for a few more years in this sin-filled world. Not any heavenly being or world power. Nothing high or low, nothing that we face now or anything we may face in the future. Nothing in all the world will be able to separate us from God and his love because God is with us.

You can't win anything unless you have someone smart and powerful on your side. We can't defeat the devil and our sinful flesh by ourselves. But we are conquerors in Christ. Our God is for us. And our God is with us. And nothing—not the devil, not sickness or disease—nothing in all creation can separate us from God's love! Amen.