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Rice Memorial MBC

Rice Memorial Missionary Baptist Church
Apostle Walter F. Camp, Presiding Senior Pastor
Pastor David K. Baker III, 2nd Presiding
802 W. 15th, Little Rock, AR 72202, 501-773-6546
www.RiceMemorialBaptistChurch.org

Safe in God's Love

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Romans 8:28-39

Introduction: This great chapter is, in a sense, the heart of Romans, being a **shout of victory** contrasting with the wail of despair which closed the SEVENTH, the transition from the bleak and **depressing** condition of the **unregenerated** there, to the enthusiastic and joyful optimism of the EIGHTH, being signaled by the adverb "now." "There is therefore **NOW** no condemnation, etc." Thus, in the very first clause of this chapter, one encounters the dramatic affirmation and proof that the condition just described in Romans 7 **was NOT describing Paul's** or any other **Christian's experience**, but was a depiction of something **PRIOR TO** and **diverse** from the situation prevailing "NOW." Brunner commented on this fact thus:

With a **sharp turn**, Paul now **breaks off reflections on man UNDER the Law;** again, a "NOW" stands here as the signal of the new train of thought.^[1]

Actually, Paul here **returned** to a train of thought he had already followed in Romans 5 and Romans 6; but he took it up here again, following the interruption of Romans 7, that theme being the **blessing** and **privilege** of the **life "IN Christ."** **ENDNOTE:**

[1] Emil Brunner, *The Letter to the Romans* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), p. 69. (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/romans-8.html>)

Romans 8:16-26, *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the **children of God (the supreme [highest] Divinity):** And if children, then **heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ;** if so be that we **SUFFER** with him, that we may be also glorified together.*

*For I reckon that the **sufferings** of this **present time** are **NOT worthy** to be compared with the **glory** which shall be revealed in us. For the **earnest expectation** of the **creature (creation) WAITETH for** the manifestation of the sons of God.*

*For the **creature** was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same **in hope**, Because the **creature** itself also shall **be delivered from the bondage of corruption** into the glorious **LIBERTY** of the children of God. For we know that the **whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain** together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the **FIRSTFRUITS** of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, **WAITING** for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our **body**.*

*For we are **saved** by **HOPE:** but **HOPE** that is seen is **not hope:** for what a man seeth, why doth he yet **HOPE** for?*

*But **IF** we **HOPE for** that we see not, **THEN** do we **with patience WAIT** for it. Likewise the Spirit also **helpeth** our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself **maketh intercession** for us with **groanings** which **cannot be uttered**.*

Thought 1. Beginning with the phrase "For we are saved by HOPE" we see a list of God's THINGS that pertain unto LIFE and godliness, which are "**working** FOR us." And when we think about it, to mention "hope" is also to mention "FAITH." Because as we know,

FAITH is the substance of things HOPEd for, Heb. 11:1. Next, he speaks of “patience”, which as we know, is another fruit of OUR spirit. (Gal. 5:22-23) He moves on from there and speaks of the Holy Spirit, our comforter and teacher, making intercession FOR us.

Romans 8:27-28, And he that **searcheth** the **hearts** **knoweth** what is the **mind** of the Spirit, because he maketh **intercession** for the saints according to the will of God. 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.

Thought 1. Now that we've read from verse 16 down to verse 28, we should understand that the “THINGS”, to which verse 28 is referring, are “God's things”, which pertain to “LIFE and godliness!”

2 Peter 1:2-3, **Grace** and **peace** **be multiplied** unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath GIVEN unto us **ALL THINGS that pertain** unto **LIFE and godliness**, through the **knowledge** of him that hath called us to GLORY and virtue:

Thought 2. As a matter of fact, one writer in the Old Testament said our ENEMIES would have destroyed us, “**IF it had NOT been for the Lord (Yahweh) who was ON our side.**”

Psalms 124:1-8, If it had **not** been **the LORD (Jehovah [Yahweh])** who was **on OUR side**, now may Israel say; If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us: Then they had **swallowed us up quick (alive)**, when their **wrath (ANGER)** was kindled against us: Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: Then the proud waters had gone over our soul. Blessed be **the LORD (Yahweh)**, who hath NOT given us as a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird **out of the snare** of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and **we are ESCAPED**. Our **HELP** is in the **name (honor, authority, character)** of the LORD (Yahweh), who made heaven and earth.

Thought 3. So, contrary to popular belief “ALL things do NOT work FOR our good.” When we listen to those who hold that opinion, the ONLY verse that seems to say that even “BAD things” work FOR our good is Romans 8:28. And every believer deep down KNOWS we should NOT build any “belief” on what just “ONE witness” says. That’s NOT even almost “studying” as Paul told Timothy to do! He said we need at least TWO or three witnesses. And in addition we should always back up in a chapter, or book, to get the “context” right. That’s exactly why I started with Romans 8:16, and then led you down to verse 28.

1 Thessalonians 5:21-22, **Prove (EXAMINE)** ALL things; hold fast that which is GOOD. Abstain from all appearance of EVIL.

2 Timothy 2:15, **STUDY** to shew thyself **approved unto God**, a workman that needeth NOT to be ashamed, **rightly dividing** the word of truth.

Study, read and examine (to weigh arguments and compare FACTS, with a view to form a CORRECT opinion or judgment) for the purpose of learning and understanding.

Judgment, the determination of the MIND, formed from comparing the relations of ideas, or the comparison of facts and arguments. In the formation of our judgments, we should be CAREFUL to weigh and compare ALL the facts connected with the subject.

2 Corinthians 13:1, This is the **THIRD time** I am coming to you. In the mouth of TWO or THREE witnesses shall every word be established.

Thought 4. The Holy Spirit just brought some other “THINGS” to mind that our Father

has “WORKING FOR our good.” One is that ANGELS have been SENT forth by him to minister FOR us. Another is God’s “GRACE”, which he told Paul was sufficient FOR him.

Hebrews 1:13-14, But to which of the ANGELS said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all **ministering spirits**, **SENT FORTH** to minister **FOR THEM** who shall be heirs of salvation?

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 ...he said unto me, **My GRACE** is **sufficient** FOR THEE: for my strength is made perfect in **weakness** (feebleness; as the weakness of a child). Most gladly therefore will I rather glory (REJOICE) in my **infirmities** (feebleness; as the weakness of a child), that the **POWER** of **Christ** may REST upon me. Therefore **I take pleasure** in infirmities (feebleness), in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for **Christ's sake**: for when I am **WEAK** (feeble), **then am I STRONG**.

Thought 5. Last of all, because we KEEP our Covenant with our Father, he HAS to bless us with protection, deliverance, health, and all needs met according to our FAITH in him. This is TRUE for each and every Covenant Yahweh has ever made! He even spoke it, to have it written, in order for his people to KNOW it and be comforted in that TRUTH.

Psalm 89:34, My **covenant (compact** [agreement between parties; contract]) will I NOT break, **nor alter (CHANGE)** the thing that is gone out of my **lips**.

Deuteronomy 28:2, And ALL these **blessings** shall **come on** thee, and **OVERTAKE** thee, IF thou shalt **hearken (be obedient)** unto the voice of the Lord thy God.

Deuteronomy 28:15, But it shall come to pass, **IF** thou wilt NOT **hearken (BE obedient)** unto the voice of the Lord (Yahweh) thy God, to observe to DO all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these **CURSES** shall come upon thee and **OVERTAKE thee...**

Psalm 111:5 ...he will ever **be mindful** of **HIS covenant**.

Hebrews 6:13-19, For when God made PROMISE to **Abraham**, because he could SWEAR by no greater, he **SWARE** by himself, saying, Surely blessing I WILL bless thee, and **multiplying** I WILL **multiply thee**. And so, after he had **patiently endured**, he **obtained** the PROMISE. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the **immutability (unchangeability)** of his **counsel** (will), confirmed *it* by an **oath**: That by TWO **immutable (unchangeable)** things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong **consolation (COMFORT)**, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the **HOPE** set before us: Which HOPE we have as an **ANCHOR** of the **soul (MIND)** both SURE and stedfast...

Thought 6. So, when we OBEY Yahweh and CALL upon his name (authority), he KEEPS his Covenant with his people, DELIVERING us from the evil work of the Enemy, so we're SAFE through the work of "ALL of HIS things." That's what the writer in Psalm 124 was saying: "**If it had NOT been the LORD (Yahweh) WHO was ON OUR side...**" And we see this same thought expressed in Romans 8:36-37. The bottom line is IF our ENEMIES had their way, we'd be "slaughtered as sheep", which is NOT GOOD for us! Let's say a VERY venomous SNAKE bite someone. The person who is bitten will definitely die IF they do NOT get and antidote to counter-act the poison. Simply put, the poison is NOT working FOR their good. On the other hand, the antidote IS working FOR their good. So, Yahweh's things, that pertain to "LIFE and GODLINESS" are the only things working FOR our good. Psalm 124 gives Yahweh the credit he's DUE, for being our ONLY help FOR whatever BAD stuff the enemy desires to do! In truth, BAD stuff does NOT work for good.

Romans 8:29, For whom he did **foreknow** (foresee), he also did **predestinate** (settle in purpose or counsel, appoint) to **BE conformed** to the image of his Son, that he might be the **FIRSTBORN** among many **brethren**.

NOTE: For whom he foreknew ... In Acts 2:23, "foreknowledge" is expressly distinguished from "the fixed DECREE" and consequently can denote nothing but **prescience** (knowledge of events BEFORE they take place); and, as to Romans 11:2, "His people whom God foreknew," the idea of knowledge is the leading one in the word "foreknew."

People invariably suppose that by **God's foreknowledge** of an event, he **thereby became the CAUSE of it**, thus leaving no place for the freedom of the HUMAN WILL. That such a supposition is **incorrect** becomes clear in the analogy with human knowledge. A man knows an event that TOOK place in the PAST; and yet **his knowledge cannot be viewed as causing** the **event** to happen. God's knowledge of the future is just like that, only covering a different period of time; and his eternal knowledge of what **WILL happen cannot be viewed** as **the CAUSE** of those FUTURE EVENTS, nor as imposing any responsibility upon God for their occurrence. That Almighty God did actually know everything that would happen from all eternity is a fact totally beyond human comprehension, but the scriptural teaching of this fact is indisputable.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/romans-8.html>)

NOTE: He also did predestinate - See the meaning of the original of this word explained in the notes at Romans 1:4; see also the Acts 4:28 note; and 1 Corinthians 2:7 note. In these places the word evidently means to **determine, purpose, or DECREE beforehand**; and it must have this meaning here. No other idea could be consistent with the proper meaning of the word, or be intelligible. It is clear also that it does not refer to external privileges, but to real conversion and piety; since that to which they were **predestinated** was NOT the external privilege of the gospel, but **conformity to his Son**, and **salvation**; see Rom. 8:30. No passage could possibly teach in stronger language that it was God's PURPOSE to save those who **will (DESIRE)** be saved. Ephesians 1:5, "having **predestinated** us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself." Ephesians 1:11, being **predestinated** according to the purpose of Him who **worketh** all things after the counsel of his own will."

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/romans-8.html>)

Ephesians 1:11, In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being **predestinated** according to the PURPOSE of him who **worketh all things (always) after (according to)** the counsel of his OWN WILL...

Thought 1. This verse can actually be linked back to Romans 8:28, which should be understood as "God's things", or God who always USES his things by which he WORKS according to the counsel of HIS own will to help, wherever he can.

NOTE: Conformed to the image of his Son ... is another expression that means "becoming a Christian," but there is a specific reference also to the Christian's being **transformed** into the IMAGE or LIKENESS of Christ, **in MIND, character, obedience**, and all other **qualities** and **virtues** of the **SOUL**; but it does not end there. Finally, the children of God will be raised from the dead in the true likeness of the risen Saviour. As John wrote: Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that if he shall be manifested, we shall **be like him**; for **we shall SEE him even as he is** (1 John 3:2).

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/romans-8.html>)

Romans 8:30, Moreover whom he did **predestinate** (settle in purpose or counsel, appoint), them he also **called**: and whom he **called**, them he also **justified**: and whom he **justified**, them he also **GLORIFIED**.

NOTE: ... and whom he justified, them he also glorified. The last clause of this great

statement of the apostle, through its use of the past tense with the ultimate glory of the child of God, is plainly prophetic, VIEWING the entire scheme of **redemption**, from the **beginning plan** in the purpose of God before the world was created, to the **final glory**, as a single great design, encompassing within one grand operation the whole of time and temporal (pertaining to this life or this world or the body only) things.

The predestined include ALL people, although many refuse their destiny: the called include ALL people, although many shall not heed it; **the justified** are THEY ALONE **who through the obedience of faith** are transferred INTO Christ, in whom alone justification is possible; and the glorified are those finally redeemed above.

In view of these considerations, the mysterious doctrines of predestination, calling, election, etc., dissolve into this: **God's** eternal purpose from times eternal, **BEFORE the world WAS**, determined that his Son, Jesus Christ, should lead an innumerable company of the redeemed out of earth's populations, that these should be **made righteous** through perfect identification with Christ, as being truly "IN HIM," identifiable as his brethren, conformed to his likeness, and obedient to his will, this summing up of all thing in Christ being precisely the thing foreordained to happen. That body of Christ, the church, is destined to eternal glory, and to be presented before the throne of God's glory in exceeding **JOY** in absolute perfection; and all hell shall not prevent it, such having been foreordained from all eternity. All that is said in the New Testament regarding **predestination refers** to this eventual triumph of the **redeemed" in Christ,** absolutely nothing whatever being able to forbid or prevent it; but all this has nothing at all to do with any individual person, as an individual, of whom nothing could be predestined, **due to the freedom of HIS WILL.** (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/romans-8.html>)

Romans 8:31, What shall we then say to these things? **IF (forasmuch as; SINCE) God BE FOR us, WHO can be against US?**

NOTE: Seeing, as just stated, that God's eternal purpose relative to the redeemed in Christ is absolutely certain of fulfillment, how solid and secure is the state of the person in Christ. **"In Christ" is absolute SAFETY**, the only mortal concern of the Christian having to do, not with any doubt or uncertainty of final glory, but only with his being **"in Christ" and REMAINING so.** (Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/romans-8.html>)

Romans 8:32, He that **spared NOT** his OWN SON, but **delivered him up for us ALL**, how shall he **NOT with him** ALSO freely **GIVE us ALL things?**

NOTE: The confidence of the apostle in this verse is founded upon the **principle of logic** called "a fortiori", being a **progression** from the **great** to the **lesser**. The great GIFT is that of God's only Son; and surely the LOVE that provided such an unspeakable gift could NOT FAIL to PROVIDE whatever else might be required to accomplish his purpose of redeeming people, the particular things apparently in view here being whatever earthly encouragement and provision might be necessary to the achievement of the Christian's ultimate salvation to the uttermost.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/romans-8.html>)

Romans 8:33-35, Who shall LAY ANY THING to the **charge** of God's **elect**? It is God that **justifieth**. Who is he that **condemneth**? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is **risen again**, who is even at the right hand of God, who **also** maketh **intercession** for us. Who shall separate us from the **love** of Christ?

NOTE: Locke paraphrased these verses thus: Who shall be the **persecutor** of those whom God hath chosen? Shall God who **justifieth them**? Who, as JUDGE, shall CONDEMN them? Christ that died for us, yea rather that is risen again for **our justification**, and is at the right hand of God making intercession for us?

In this and following verses, Paul mentioned the things conceived of as hostile, and

hindering to the Christian's life; and most of the things here mentioned should be understood as lying within the ordinary **daily experience** of the Christians of **that age**. **The love of Christ ...** refers NOT to OUR LOVE for him, but to **HIS LOVE** for us. The scripture quoted by Paul here is Psalms 44:22; and his employment of the expression "even as it is written" was his way of saying, "This is just our lot, exactly as the scriptures teach." Like many other lists found in the Pauline writings, this one should be understood as representative rather than exhaustive.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/romans-8.html>)

Romans 8:35-39 ...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 powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall **be ABLE** to **separate us from the LOVE of God**, which is **IN Christ Jesus** our Lord.

NOTE: More than conquerors... No matter what our circumstances, none of the sufferings of this present time can separate us from the love of God. This makes us **conquerors** and **MORE**.

- i. Earle on **nakedness**: "This term **today** suggests indecency on parade. **Then it meant** a LACK of clothes simply because one had no ways or means of getting any."
- ii. **Sword**: This word implies **execution**. It is the only item on the list that Paul had not yet personally experienced (1 Corinthians 4:11, 15:30).

d. **More than conquerors**: How is the Christian MORE THAN a conqueror?

He OVERCOMES with a **greater power**, the **power of Jesus**

He overcomes with a greater *motive*, the glory of Jesus

He overcomes with a greater *victory*, losing nothing even in the battle

He overcomes with a greater *LOVE*, conquering enemies with love and converting persecutors with patience

e. **Nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the LOVE of God which is IN Christ Jesus our Lord**: Nothing which appears to be good or nothing which appears to be evil can separate us from the love of God.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/guz/romans-8.html>)

Ephesians 1:15-20, Wherefore I also, after I heard of **your faith** IN the Lord Jesus, and LOVE unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the **spirit of WISDOM** and **REVELATION** in the **knowledge of him**: The **EYES** of your **understanding** being **enlightened**; that ye may KNOW what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of **his power to US-ward who believe**, according to the **working** of his **mighty power**, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places...

Ephesians 3:16-21 ...I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the WHOLE FAMILY in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the **riches of his glory**, to be **strengthened** with **MIGHT** by **HIS Spirit** in the **inner man**; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in LOVE, May be able to comprehend with ALL saints what is the **breadth**, and **length**, and **depth**, and **height**; And to **KNOW the LOVE** of **Christ**, which passeth knowledge, that ye might BE FILLED with all the fulness of God. Now unto him that is **able to DO** exceeding abundantly above all that we ASK or THINK, according to **the POWER** that **worketh IN us**, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.