

BOB HALLMAN - THE EPIC LIFE

The Believer's Confidence

Romans 8:28-39

2000

Introduction

There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus! Can it get any better than that?! YES!

I We Can be Confident in God's Sovereignty

A. We know that in all things God works for the good [Verse 28a]

Work together = Sunergeo = "To co-operate"

It is the root from which we derive our English word, "Synergism"; The simultaneous action of separate forces which, when combined, have greater total effect than the sum of the individual parts.

Application:

It is often difficult for us to believe the simplicity of this verse. If we did, we would gently and gracefully rest in God's promise during times of crisis and uncertainty. But we often don't. We believe that God makes some things, maybe even most things to work out for the good of believers. But "ALL THINGS?!" However, this does not mean that everything will turn out like we would like it to in this life.

No matter what happens in our lives, God will use everything for our ultimate good. Sometimes He will protect us from tragedy and sometimes He will allow us to go through it in order to mature us and draw us closer to Him.

Illustration:

Joseph was hated by His brothers, sold as a slave to Potipha, falsely accused of attempted rape, thrown into prison and finally raised up as second only to Pharaoh in Egypt. From a human standpoint, the best years of his life were wasted.

1. Jacob's response:

Gen 42:36 "Everything is against me!"

2. Joseph's response:

Gen 50:19-21 "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives."

Application:

The question is, "How can we respond differently when we face the various difficulties that come our way in life? We have the opportunity to either say as

Jacob did, “Everything is working against me.” Or we can respond like Joseph who said, “You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good.”

Of course, the supreme example of God working everything for the good, even the evil of the world and the diabolical intentions of Satan, is the death of Jesus Christ. In the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the Father took the most absolute evil that Satan could devise and turned it into the greatest conceivable blessing He could offer to fallen mankind – eternal salvation from sin.

The confident assurance of everything working for the good is promised only to those who:

1. Of those who **love** Him [Verse 28b]

One of the most predictable fruits of new life in Christ is a love for God.

John 14:21 “Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me.”

2. Of those who have been called according to His **purpose** [Verse 28c]

Called = Kletos = “Chosen or appointed as a saint”

Note, for everything to work for our good we must be called according to His purpose. Not my purpose. Not your purpose. Because what I want and what you want may be at odds with what God wants and knows is supremely best for us.

Romans 11:29 “... God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.”

2 Peter 1:10-11 “Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure.”

B. We know that God has a plan for our lives [Verse 29]

1. He **foreknew** us [Verse 29a]

Foreknew = Proginosko = “To know beforehand or to foresee”

From which we derive our English word “Prognosticate” = “To predict or foretell”

1 Peter 1:2 “To God's elect, strangers in the world ... who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood.”

2. He predestined us: [Verse 29b]

Predestined = Proorizo = “To mark out, appoint or determine beforehand”

The believer has been marked out and appointed for eternal life.

Eph 1:11-12 “In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will.”

Application:

But you say, “This isn't fair!” How can God predestines one man to heaven and another to hell?” Well, first of all, the scripture never teaches that God predestines anyone to hell. If a person goes to hell, it is because he rejects

God and His way of salvation. Unbelievers are condemned of their unbelief, not because of God's predestination.

The Bible repeatedly states that it is not God's will that any should perish, but for everyone to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9) and that He wants everyone to come to a knowledge of the truth (1 Tim 2:3-4). Every believer is indebted to God's grace for his eternal salvation, but every unbeliever is himself solely responsible for his eternal damnation.

There are two reasons for which God predestined us to have eternal life in Christ:

- a. To be conformed to the likeness of His Son [Verse 29c]

Conformed = Summorphos = "To be fashioned into the likeness of"

Likeness = Eikon = "Image"

We were made in the image of God (Gen 1:26) and it is God's intention for every believer to once again bear the fullness of the image of His own Son.

So every problem, every conflict, every setback, every disappointment has the potential as we submit ourselves to God, to build into us the likeness and image of Christ – which is the Father's ultimate goal for our lives and which is to our glory in this life and the life to come.

We will be like Christ in at least two ways:

1. Spiritually

2 Cor 3:18 "And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

2. Physically

Philippians 3:21 "... who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body."

- b. To be brothers to the firstborn Son of God [Verse 29d]

Firstborn = Prototokos = "First begotten"

This does not mean that Jesus had a beginning or that He was created. It has to do with the concept of preeminence. To the Jew, the first-born male was given a privileged status of preeminence in the family. God's supreme purpose for bringing sinners to salvation is to glorify His Son by making Him preeminent in the divine plan of redemption.

Col 1:15-19 "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold

together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.”

3. He **called** us [Verse 30a]

Called = Kaleo = “To summon or call forth”

2 Thess 2:13-15 “But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

4. He justified us [Verse 30b]

Justified = Dikaioo = “To render just or innocent”

Romans 3:24 “... and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.”

5. He **glorified** us [Verse 30c]

Glorified = Doxazo = “To honor or magnify”

a. Glory in this life

2 Cor 3:18 “And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”

b. Glory in the life to come

1 Pet 1:6-7 “In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith-- of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire-- may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.”

II We Can be Confident in God's Provision

In verses 31-39, Paul explores the question of the believers' security. Are there circumstances under which a believer can lose his salvation?

A. If God is for us, who can be against us? [Verse 31] Isa 50:7-9

Paul is essentially asking, “Who can take away our “no-condemnation” status that God has given us through His Son, Jesus Christ?” For this to occur it would require someone of greater power and authority than God.

John 10:28-30 “I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one.”

Application: God is for you!

We often think of God as being disappointed with us. This is absolutely not true! The only one who is truly against you is Satan. But he is impotent against the overwhelming power of God. Remember, Satan is not God's counterpart. He is not even Jesus' counterpart. At best, he is the angel Michael's counterpart. And if you study biblical prophecy, you will find that he can't even overcome Michael and his angels. If Satan isn't strong enough to destroy you, there isn't anything or anyone powerful enough to counter the fact that God is for you!

B. If God gave His Son, why would he withhold anything else? [Verse 32a]

1. He didn't not spare his own Son

There is only one other occurrence of the word "spared" in the Bible and it is in the account of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac in Gen 22:12. In this text Abraham took his son of promise, Isaac, and was prepared to sacrifice him on Mount Moriah, which happens to be location of Golgotha where Jesus was offered up as the perfect sacrifice for the sins for the world.

Gen 22:11-12 "But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied. Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son."

The word withheld is the same word translated as "spare" here in Romans 8:32.

2. He gave Him up for us all [Verse 32b]

Gave = Paradiomi = "To surrender or yield up"

John 3:16-17 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

3. He will graciously give us all things along with Jesus [Verse 32c]

Graciously give = Charizomai = "To freely and generously provide"

In the sacrifice of His one and Only Son, God demonstrated that He would not withhold anything good from those who belong to Him.

Illustration: Disneyland

Imagine that I paid for our airfare, our hotel and our car, but then told our kids that it would be a bit too extravagant to expect to actually go on the rides.

Matt 7:9-12 "If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!"

It is rather absurd to think that the Father would be so extravagantly generous in sacrificing the life of His own Son and then turn around and be even the slightest

bit stingy with anything else that might be to our benefit. He will provide whatever else we need in this life and in the life to come.

C. If God has chosen us, who will bring any charge against us? [Verse 33a]

Chosen = Eklektos = “Select or elect”

Charge = Egkaleo = “To accuse or demand payment for a debt”

There is one who will never stop accusing until the final day of the Lord. That person of course, is Satan. The scripture tells us that he is the accuser of the brethren (Rev 12:10) and he points his finger at us before the throne of God night and day.

Rom 8:1-2 “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”
All our sins – past, present and future – have been covered by the blood of Christ and we are now clothed in His righteousness.

1. He has **justified** us

1 Cor 6:11 “And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”

D. If God has justified us, who will condemn us? [Verse 34a]

John 5:24 “I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.”

1. Jesus Christ is our powerful advocate [Verse 34b]

a. He **died** for us

1 Peter 3:18 “For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.”

In doing so, He took upon himself the full penalty for our sins; and the condemnation we deserved He bore.

b. He was raised to life

Rom 4:25 “He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.”

Jesus’ resurrection from the dead proved conclusively that His sacrifice for sins was acceptable to the Father.

c. He is at the **right** hand of God

Mark 16:19 tells us that “After the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God.”

It is interesting to note that the Old Testament tabernacle or temple had quite a few pieces of furniture related to the worship of God. But one thing you will not find is a place for the priest to sit because the work of the priest was never done.

Hebrews 10:11-13 “Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this priest [Jesus Christ] had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.”

d. He is **interceding** for us

Intercedes = Entugchano = “To confer with or to make a request for another”

1 John 2:1-2 “My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.”

Heb 7:25 “... He always lives to intercede for them.”

Quote: “If accusations are brought against us, we have no reason to fear. For the charges, though they may be true, are silenced by the upraised, pierced hands of our Great Advocate and Intercessor, Jesus Christ.”

E. If God is for us, who will separate us from His love? **[Verse 35a]**

Paul’s question is this: “Is it possible for the circumstances of life or the forces of evil or even personal sin to separate a genuine believer from God’s love?”

1. **Trouble** can’t separate us

Trouble = Thlipsis = “Pressure or affliction”

It has the idea of being squeezed or placed under extreme pressure (stress/anxiety)

John 16:33 “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

2. Hardship can’t separate us

Hardship = Stenochoria = “Narrowness of room”

It is a reference to those times when the circumstances of life leave you feeling hopelessly hemmed in with no apparent way out.

2 Cor 4:7-12 “But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.”

3. **Persecution** can’t separate us

Persecution = Diogmos = “Suffering as a result of being a follower of Jesus Christ”

2 Timothy 3:12 “... everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”

Matthew 5:10-12 “Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven ... Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

4. **Famine** can't separate us

Famine = Limos = “Destitution; a scarcity of food, hunger”

Countless saints throughout the ages have been suffered hunger as a result of their allegiance to Jesus – some while in prison, some due to employment discrimination. Paul himself suffered hunger many times; for both reasons.

5. **Nakedness** can't separate us

Nakedness = Gumnotes = “The inability to properly clothe one's self

6. **Danger** can't separate us

Danger = Kindunos = “Peril”

A general reference to hazardous or life-threatening situations.

7. **Sword** can't separate us

Sword = Machaira = “A dagger or knife”

It was a dagger that could be concealed and was often a weapon of choice for assassins and murderers.

Paul and the first century church were familiar with the many dangers that came along with being a follower of Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 11:36-38 “Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated -- the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.”

Yet, not one of these horrors had the power to separate them from God's love.

III We Can be Confident in God's Victory

A. In all these things we are more than **conquerors**: [Verse 37a]

Conquerors = Hupernikao = “To gain a decisive victory”

In this case it means that we are guaranteed overwhelming victory over anyone and anything that may attempt to dislodge us from our secure relationship with the Father.

We are more than conquerors for two reasons:

1. Our difficulties serve to make us stronger and draw us closer to the Lord.
2. Our difficulties will be overshadowed by our final reward.

2 Corinthians 4:17 “For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.”

1. Through Him who loved us - 2 Thess 2:16-17

B. In all these things we are **inseparable** from God's love:

1. That is in Christ Jesus our Lord

a. **Death** and life can't separate us

Death has been conquered by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. However, as long as we are alive, we will face potential trouble, hardships, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, and sword.

Rom 14:8 "If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord."

b. Angels or **demons** can't separate us

Demons = Arche = "Powers or principalities"

A reference to the unseen principalities and powers in the universe.

Eph 6:10-13 "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

c. Neither the present nor **future** can separate us

Nothing we are experiencing now and nothing we ever will experience in the future will be able to separate us from the love of God.

d. No powers can separate us

Powers = Dunamis = "Forces or miraculous powers"

e. Height nor depth can separate us

The terms height and depth were technical terms in astrology that dealt with the extremes in distance and the power that people attributed to heavenly bodies.

Eph 3:17-19 "And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge-that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God."

f. Nothing in all **creation** can separate us

Separate = Chorizo = "To place room between"

Col 3:3-4 "For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory."

Conclusion

No matter what comes your way. No matter whether you understand the significance or not.
No matter whether you ever can ascertain a trial's value, you can be assured that your troubles (if you love God and called according to His propose) will work for your good.
God is for you! You can bank on it. You can stand of it. You can be confident in it!