

The Letter of St. Paul to the ROMANS

VII

OPENING WORSHIP

To begin your Bible study, read together **Psalm 46**. God is our Refuge and Strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Nothing can separate us from his eternal love in Christ!

INTRODUCTION

In the first chapters of his letter to the Romans, Paul describes all the wonderful things God has done for the world in Christ. He has justified the wicked, declaring us righteous in his sight, for Jesus' sake. He has brought us from slavery to sin to become slaves of righteousness. He has given us a new life through Baptism. Even though we still struggle daily with sin, there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Now we come to the practical implications of everything we have seen. If God has done all this for us, doesn't it stand to reason that God will watch over, guide and protect us through thick and thin? If God sacrificed his dearest treasure, won't he give us everything else that is good for our eternal soul? If Jesus, the beloved Son of God, is interceding for us before the Father's throne, won't God delight in Jesus' brothers and sisters, with whom he is well pleased?

Our lesson considers a portion of Scripture that is brief in length but rich in meaning.

MORE THAN CONQUERORS

Read Romans 8:28-30 and consider:

Can you honestly say that God works *all* things out for your good? Explain how difficult things can work for your good.

Describe the comfort and confidence that Romans 8:28 brings to your soul.

What is the difference between *foreknowing* and *predestining*?

We must be careful that we don't misuse the doctrine of predestination. The purpose of the doctrine is to comfort and amaze believing souls with the security of God's eternal love. It is not to be mistaken as a license for sin, nor is it to be misused to answer the question, "Why are some saved and not others?" For another reference to eternal predestination, see to **Ephesians 1:4-12**. When did God make his gracious choice?

Read Romans 8:31-36.

Paul's logic in this section of Scripture is irrefutable. Let's take it sentence by sentence:

"If God is for us, who can be against us?" What is the inevitable response to this question? What does this mean for you?

"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?" Evaluate this statement: God placed you and a world of sinners ahead of his only-begotten Son, his dearest treasure.

"Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen?" Who is constantly trying to bring charges against God's people? (For a picture, see **Zechariah 3:1-5**.) When someone brings charges against God's elect, what kind of success does he have?

"It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns?" If God has already rendered his verdict of "not-guilty for Jesus' sake," who can overturn the declaration of "redeemed and forgiven" which God has placed on his people?

If God has declared you innocent for Jesus' sake, what does that say to you when you feel unforgiven or unsure of your salvation?

"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." Jesus is now the King of kings and the Lord of lords. All things in heaven and on earth are subjected to him. What weight does his intercession carry before the throne of God the Father?

We offer our prayers in the name of our intercessor, Jesus Christ. What confidence do these words give you, when you pray "in Jesus' name"?

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Consider all that God has done for you. Think of how many ways he has lavished his love upon you (see **1 John 3:1**). What can possibly take away God's love from you, given all that he has already done for you?

"For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." What is Paul referring to with these words? Have you ever felt like a sheep waiting to be slaughtered?

Read Romans 8:37-39 together aloud as a group.

What picture does Paul paint when he describes us as "more than conquerors"?

This sequence of verses builds into a mounting crescendo that celebrates God's all-embracing love in Christ. What is the basis for Paul's conviction (verse 38: *"I am convinced . . ."*)?

How does this powerful testimony inspire your confidence in the Lord Jesus and his faithful love?

VERSE TO REMEMBER

Romans 8:28 *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*

For next time read Romans chapters 9 through 11.

These chapters present the mystery of election. After probing the depths of this mystery, Paul finally reminds us that we must let God be God, and he concludes with a beautiful doxology at the end of chapter 11.