

More than conquerors: Romans 8. 31-39.

SCRIPTURE

We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.

For those whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, in order that He might be the firstborn among many brothers.

And those whom He predestined He also called, and those whom He called He also justified, and those whom He justified He also glorified.

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things?

Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered'.

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8. 28b-39 (*English Standard Version*)

INTRODUCTION

This document focuses particularly on the final section of Romans 8, namely, from verse 31 to verse 39. But, before we home in on these verses, we need to get our bearings.

The '*things*' to which the apostle refers in verse 31 ('What then shall we say to these *things*?') are, doubtless, in the main, the blessings which he enumerates in verses 28-30.

Detailed comments on verse 28 are attached to the 'Musings' of 31 May 2021; for ease of reference, these comments (under the title, '*All things ... for good*') can be accessed at <https://voicesforchrist.org/writings/189>.

Verses 17-25.

As noted in the 'CONTEXT' section of that document, the passage Romans 8. 17-39 was written to encourage and sustain the saints at Rome in the face of opposition, suffering and trials. This it does by lifting their eyes in verses 17-25 to the certainty of a coming 'glory' which is 'out of all proportion to anything which the powers of this world or the powers of darkness could throw at them—a prospect so 'glorious', indeed, that the whole of creation can be said to stand on tiptoe, sighing for the time when it will have a share in that glory'.

Verses 26-28.

As observed in this document, Paul adduces two weighty considerations in answer to the possible objection, 'That's all very well but what about the present?'

(i) First, in verses 26-27, Paul points to the ministry of the Holy Spirit within, both to help us and to intercede for us.

(ii) Second, in verse 28, Paul directs his readers, not now to *the glory of God ahead* nor to *the Spirit of God within*, but to *the providence of God around*.

The document closes with expressing the joy it gives us to know that our highest 'good' (our ultimate and eternal 'good', that is) is God's sieve, which He uses when permitting the 'all things' to enter our lives ... and that nothing happens to us outside of His control ... that He is never taken by surprise ... that He never makes mistakes.

Although God can (and sometimes does) work seemingly adverse circumstances to promote the 'good' of His people in the present, He has given us no promise or guarantee that He will always do

this. However, we do have His assurance that everything which He permits to enter our lives will work for our 'good' in another (and a far better) world. Meanwhile, He asks us to trust Him.

Verses 29-30.

In verses 29-30, the apostle explains and amplifies his expression, 'called according to' God's 'purpose', in verse 28.¹²

It is important for us to recognise that, in the context, the apostle is viewing the believer's spiritual experience and history only from God's perspective. He is not looking from the human standpoint and he makes no mention, therefore, of any human response or action such as repentance, faith, practical sanctification, loving God or whatever.³ It is on God's viewpoint that the apostle wants the saints at Rome to concentrate.

It is as if he says, 'and it is not in the least bit surprising that God would weave all things together for the good of His saints when we remember who and what they are'. Their calling⁴ forms the central link in the great chain of salvation, a chain of five links⁵ which might be said to bind together two eternities, extending, as it does, both backward into the dateless past and forward into the unending future.⁶

And we note that the chain of God's 'purpose' concludes, not with our present justification (our being declared by God now to be righteous in His sight), but with our future glorification—with a blessing and experience so sure and certain in the context of God's agenda that Paul uses a tense which depicts it as good as done.⁷ Rest assured, not one of God's true saints is going to miss any of his or her journey connections along the way!⁸

In summary, the apostle traces (i) the commencement, (ii) the course, and (iii) the consummation of God's great programme of salvation. And we take heart from the knowledge that nothing – absolutely nothing – can thwart God's purpose of eternal good for His people.

EXPOSITION

Verse 31.

'What then shall we say to these things?'

It is at this point that Paul introduces the final section of the chapter with one of his frequently used formulas in this epistle: 'What shall we say?'⁹ In most instances, as here, he follows up that question with another, with the second question often requiring a negative answer. Certainly, the second question in this case demands an emphatic and categorical answer ... 'Nobody!'

To what conclusion, the apostle wants to know, does everything he has said so far drive us? 'What', Paul is asking, 'can we possibly say in response to all that we have considered?'—and considered, I suggest, not only in the passage immediately before but also throughout 'the whole previous argument of the epistle'.¹⁰

In response, in the latter part of this verse and in the following four verses, Paul fires a barrage of six further questions—to each of which there is no answer. First ...

'If God is for us, who can be against us?'

Had Paul simply asked, 'Who is against us?', he would doubtless have been bombarded with a host of answers; the apostle knows well that Christians at the time faced a whole range of formidable foes arrayed against them. We have only to think, for example, of the catalogue of hardships and afflictions which he lists in verse 35, not to speak of attacks from the Overlord of evil himself.¹¹

But the apostle is careful to prefix his question with an all-important qualifying factor; namely, that God (none less!) has most certainly proved Himself to be '*for us*'. And that changes everything, because, instantly, all the opposition (from whatever quarter it comes) shrinks and pales into insignificance. For nobody and nothing is on a par with God.¹²

So, when Paul throws down this particular gauntlet, no effective adversary is found to enter the lists against our glorious Champion. For all their very best efforts are doomed to failure because, as Paul says in effect, whoever and whatever is against *us* is against *God* ... and, in the final analysis, Omnipotence must win! The creation now suffers frustration¹³ but the Creator does not!

Well then did David say, 'when the Philistines seized him in Gath ... "My enemies will turn back in the day when I call: this I know, for *God is for me*"'.¹⁴

Truly, just as the sufferings of the present are of no account in comparison with our assured coming glory,¹⁵ so any number of foes (whether human or demonic) are of no account in comparison with our 'Lord God Almighty'.¹⁶

Verse 32.

'He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all ...'

The conclusive proof that God is 'for us' is that He 'did not spare His own Son¹⁷ but gave ('delivered') delivered Him up for us'.

I note, in passing, that it was the God (i) who spared not the angels that sinned, (ii) who spared not the antediluvian world and (iii) who spared not the ancient Egyptians ... that it was the God (iv) who once spared Abraham's son and (v) who once spared the great and sinful city of Nineveh, who did not spare His own Son!¹⁸

And it was this God who, as Paul adds, in contrast, 'delivered Him up for us all'. We might well reflect on the words of Octavius Winslow, 'one of the foremost evangelical preachers of the 19th Century':¹⁹ 'Who delivered up Jesus to die? Not Judas, for money; not Pilate, for fear; not the Jews, for envy—but the Father, for love! ... In this great transaction we lose sight of His betrayers, and His accusers, and His murderers, and we see only the Father'.²⁰

'How will He not also with Him graciously give us all things?'

And now, Paul questions, 'if God gave up His own Son for us, what will He keep back from us'. He who withheld nothing from His Son by way of suffering and judgment on our account, isn't going to withhold anything from us by way of blessing and good on His account!

If, when we were still God's enemies, He gave us the Supreme Gift of His Son in death,²¹ how much more now, when we are His children, will He graciously²² give us all these lesser gifts—in the context of Romans 8, that of His Spirit,²³ of our adoption as sons,²⁴ of our hope of glory,²⁵ of our righteous standing before God,²⁶ and of our eternal security.²⁷

Verse 33 and verse 34a.

Then, in verse 33 and the first part of verse 34, Paul insists that, in God's courtroom, no charge can be made to stick, nor verdict of condemnation to stand, against those who are God's chosen ... those who are God's choice (God's favoured) ones.

(i) Verse 33a.

'Who shall bring any charge against God's elect?'

First, who, the apostle asks, presumes to file any charges²⁸ against them? Accusations can come, of course, from the Christian's own conscience, from others around (and Paul himself was no stranger to being accused by his opponents of many things²⁹) and from his Satanic Majesty himself (who, by the apostle John, is given the title, 'the accuser of our brethren'³⁰).

But I think it likely that, as in verse 35, the apostle is personifying the sufferings and trials of life that he might assure his readers that the very fiercest persecution and opposition will invariably fail to pin even one charge on them before God.

But whichever agency - man, devil or physical affliction - every accusing voice is silenced and every allegation thrown out of court.

I was interested to find that, apart from its literal use in the context of ordinary human courts,³¹ the word translated 'bring a charge against' occurs only once again in the entire Greek Bible. That instance comes from the prophet Zechariah: 'Be not like your fathers, whom the former prophets charged, saying, "Thus says the Lord Almighty, 'Turn from your evil ways and from your evil deeds': but they did not hear ...".'³² There, frighteningly, it was God who was the accuser and, when it is God who lays the accusations, no voice can be raised in defence—then 'every mouth' is well and truly 'stopped'.³³

But here, where God's chosen ones are in view, no voice can be raised in accusation—there is no prosecuting counsel.

(ii) Verse 33b and verse 34a.

'It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn?'

And, as there is no accusation, so there is no condemnation.³⁴ In all probability with the words of the Servant of Jehovah in Isaiah 50 in his mind, the apostle adds, 'It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns?'³⁵ Interestingly, that which the Messiah says of Himself in prophecy, Paul does not hesitate to put into the mouth of the believer.

Will any dare to condemn that person whose case God Himself, as the Supreme Judge, has already dismissed?³⁶

It is, Paul stresses, God who ‘justifies’—who declares the believer righteous. Earlier, the apostle had made it clear to his readers that the ground of that justification lay: (i) in the grace of God,³⁷ (ii) in the blood of Christ,³⁸ (iii) in the resurrection of Christ,³⁹ and (iv) in the faith of the person justified.⁴⁰ But the point that he underlines here is that it is God (and no one less than God) who is the justifier; there is, then, no Court of Appeal.

Paul opens our chapter with the glorious words, ‘There is ... now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus’,⁴¹ and this because their sin had already been fully condemned in the person of the Lord Jesus on the cross.⁴²

And so, just as there is no one to *challenge* us successfully,⁴³ and no one to *charge* us,⁴⁴ so there is no one to condemn us.⁴⁵

And it is at this point that Paul turns our attention directly to our Lord Jesus.

Verse 34b.

‘Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us’.

The apostle begins by referring to the stupendous fact of Jesus’ death, the purpose and significance of which he has earlier explained.⁴⁶ But, more than that, Christ Jesus not only once died but also now lives again—His resurrection being God’s loud ‘Amen’ to His finished and perfect work at Golgotha. But He not only lives again ... but also is even now exalted by God to His own right hand—to the place of supreme dignity, honour and power.⁴⁷ But, not only is He exalted to the very highest place in heaven, He is also even now actively engaged in untiring intercession for every last one of His weak and struggling people in the world.

What a thought! That God’s “Right Hand Man” is on our side, continuously interceding ‘for us’. I have very much enjoyed the words of Robert Murray M’Cheyne: ‘I ought to study Christ as an Intercessor ... I am on His breastplate. If I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million enemies. Yet the distance makes no difference; *He is praying for me!*’⁴⁸

And you may note that actually only two actions are attributed to the Lord Jesus Himself; namely, His death and His intercession. We know from elsewhere in the New Testament that the two intervening experiences could have been attributed to Him,⁴⁹ but here they serve only as the necessary historical connecting links between ***the two great evidences of His measureless love***; (i) ***in His dying***, the proof *in the past* of the depth and extremity of His love⁵⁰ and (ii) ***in His intercession***, the proof *in the present* of His continuing and unchanging love.⁵¹

Hence, the apostle’s jubilant challenge ...

Verse 35.

‘Who shall separate us (‘who shall part us’) from the love of Christ?’⁵²

This phrase, ‘*the love of Christ*’, reminds me of a well-documented incident in the life of the renowned 20th century Swiss theologian, Karl Barth.

In a Question and Answer session following a lecture which he gave at an American University in 1962, Professor⁵³ Barth was asked by a student whether he could summarize his life’s work in theology in a sentence. His answer was something along the lines, ‘Yes, I can. In the words of a song I learned at my mother’s knee: “Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so”’.⁵⁴

And you cannot get beyond that!

As one great Australian New Testament scholar expresses it, ‘No matter how much we know of the love of Christ, there is always more to know’.⁵⁵ And Leon Morris is resting on the highest possible authority for his claim; the apostle Paul himself speaks, paradoxically, of knowing ‘the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge’.⁵⁶

The first verse of Mary Shekleton’s hymn captures Paul’s thought very well:

*It passeth knowledge, that dear love of Thine,
My Saviour Jesus; yet this soul of mine
Would of Thy love, in all its breadth and length,
Its height and depth and everlasting strength
Know more and more.*⁵⁷

‘Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?’

In the days of Joshua, Israel faced seven nations 'more numerous and mightier' than they, which sought to come between them and the enjoyment of their God-given inheritance, but which, in the event, God cast out before them.⁵⁸

Here in Romans 8, the apostle details seven forms of trial to which he and the Christians at Rome were exposed— seven forms of trial which represented potential obstacles to their faith and which some may have feared would come between them and the love of their Lord. But Paul is confident that these seven forms of trial would prove no more successful in defeating God's people in his day than had been Israel's seven enemies in the days of Joshua.

Nor was the apostle speaking theoretically, for, in his second letter to the Corinthians (written shortly before his epistle to Rome), he specifically mentions having already experienced personally the first six of the seven trials.⁵⁹ And half of these references are from his great catalogue of sufferings recorded towards the end of chapter 11.⁶⁰

Paul has not yet, of course, encountered the seventh item, the sword (the common symbol of capital punishment⁶¹), but he would in time. There is an early tradition that, some six or seven years later, Paul was beheaded in Rome,⁶² at which point he proved that the sword also was incapable of coming between him and the love of Christ.

In the book of Job, Eliphaz the Temanite backs up his exhortation to Job to repent with the promise that God would then bless him. 'He (God) will deliver you from six troubles', Eliphaz smugly declares, 'in seven no evil shall touch you'.⁶³ But Paul is on course to prove, in a way that Job's so-called friend would never have understood, that Eliphaz's words were most wonderfully true for the Christian—that, even 'in seven' troubles, 'no evil shall touch you'.⁶⁴

Verse 36.

'As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered".'

Paul quotes a verse from a psalm⁶⁵ in his Greek Old Testament to establish that the sufferings which faced him and others of the early church were nothing new—far from it. But Paul's attitude to those sufferings is very different from the Psalmist's.⁶⁶

The Psalmist is mystified as to why he and his people are being called on to endure persecution and affliction, for, as he sees it, they had done nothing to deserve their continual troubles. They must therefore have been suffering, he concludes, not on account of any disloyalty on their part to God, but, conversely, on account of their very faithfulness to Him. And the Psalmist struggles greatly with this but then he, and Old Testament saints generally, had no clear understanding of the afterlife and, therefore, looked for God's blessing in the here and now.

Paul, with his much higher horizon (with his clear glimpse of eternal glory⁶⁷) sees no problem in his being exposed constantly to the possibility of martyrdom.

I suspect that the apostle would gladly have signed up to the view that, since the Lord Jesus had once died *for his sake*,⁶⁸ he should be ready always to die *for Jesus' sake*⁶⁹ and that, since it could be said of the Lord Jesus that 'He was led as a sheep to the slaughter',⁷⁰ it should come as no surprise that the followers of Jesus should be 'reckoned as sheep for the slaughter'.

Verse 37.

'No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us'.

The apostle Paul's extensive catalogue of sufferings recorded in 2 Corinthians 11 reminds me of something I have read about 'Alexander the Great' (so-called). Alexander was one of the most successful military commanders of all time. He was undefeated in battle and, by the time of his death, he had conquered most of the world known to the ancient Greeks.⁷¹

On one occasion, 'when the veteran Macedonian soldiers of Alexander the Great threatened to mutiny and charged him with being indifferent to their hardships and wounds, Alexander sprang up on the dais and said to his soldiers: "Come now, who of you has wounds, let him bare himself and show them and I will show mine. No member of my body is without its wounds. I have been wounded by the sword, by the arrow from the bow, by the missile from the catapult, I have been pelted with stones and pounded with clubs while leading you to victory and to glory".⁷²

And Alexander's statement, 'No member of my body is without wounds' links in my mind to words written by Paul some 380 years later, 'I bear in my body the marks of Jesus',⁷³ referring to the many scars he had received as a result of his devoted service for the Lord.

But, if Alexander became known to later generations as ‘Conqueror of the Ancient World’ (which he did),⁷⁴ was the apostle Paul also a conqueror then? You can say that again; indeed, he was, to use his own expression, ‘*more than* a conqueror’!

‘In all these things’, he writes, ‘we super-conquer’—‘we overwhelmingly conquer’—‘we are hyper-conquerors’—through Him who loved us’.⁷⁵

I have read in several places that, when Horatio Nelson⁷⁶ reported to the British admiralty his great victory over the French fleet in the Battle of the Nile, he said that ‘victory’ was not a large enough word to describe what had taken place.⁷⁷ And I have no doubt that Paul would have gladly reported the same of the surpassing victory which the believer gains, in spite of all opposition, ‘through Him who loved us’ ... that the Christian is *pre-eminently* victorious.⁷⁸

Verses 38-39.

***‘For I am sure* (‘persuaded’, ‘convinced’) *that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord*’.**

And Paul’s confidence that no amount of suffering or hardship in the present can separate the Christian from Jesus’ love,⁷⁹ stems from his conviction that nothing – absolutely nothing – can ever separate the Christian from ‘the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord’.

And here we have reached the very summit of our passage.

Reverting to the use of the singular ‘I’ (which he had dropped after verse 18), the apostle declares, ‘I am sure—I am persuaded’⁸⁰—‘I stand convinced’⁸¹—that (if I may presume to paraphrase his inspired eloquence) nothing has the power to separate us from God’s love in Christ ... no, neither death nor life, for *we are loved both sides of the grave* ... not any spirit-intelligence (of any rank or station, whether the holy angels⁸² or the commanders-in-chief of the empire of evil⁸³) – not what *is* happening today, or *might* happen tomorrow – not any powers (natural or supernatural) – not anything in the world above or in the world below – nor indeed anything else in the whole realm of created being.⁸⁴

And we cannot miss that Paul beautifully intertwines the love of God and the love of our Lord Jesus: ‘the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord’.

When speaking of His spiritual ‘sheep’, the Lord Jesus asserts, ‘no one shall snatch them out of *my* hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of *my Father’s* hand’.⁸⁵ And if we can, therefore, ascribe the guarantee of our eternal security to *the joint hold* (‘the double grip’) exercised by the Father and the Son *on us*, we can also ascribe the guarantee of our eternal security to *the joint love* of God and of Christ *for us*.

What a joy it is to sing with conviction the well-known lines⁸⁶ of Thomas Kelly’s hymn:

*Trust in Him, ye saints, forever;
He is faithful, changing never;
Neither force nor guile can sever
Those He loves from Him.*

CONCLUSION

We could perhaps sum up the teaching of our passage (Rom. 8. 31-39) by saying:

- (i) that no one can successfully *oppose* the believer,⁸⁷
- (ii) that no one can successfully *accuse* the believer,⁸⁸
- (iii) that no one can successfully *condemn* the believer,⁸⁹ and
- (iv) that no one can successfully *separate* the believer from God’s love in Christ.⁹⁰

Now, *that* should put a spring in our steps!

Notes

² Hence, the connecting word 'For' with which he begins verse 29.

³ Nothing in scripture supports the claim of some that God has predestined the mass of mankind to perish. The God I know does *not* choose any for eternal destruction. Scripture makes it clear that men perish because of their unbelief and rejection of God and not on account of any predetermination on His part.

Note the following: (i) 'The Lord ... is longsuffering towards men, not desiring that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance' (2 Pet. 3. 9); (ii) 'God our Saviour ... desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth' (1 Tim. 2. 3-4); and (iii) when He was in the world, our Lord made it clear that, if the inhabitants of Jerusalem (and the nation of Israel generally) would later suffer destruction and the judgment of God, this would come as a consequence of their own rebellious will and in spite of His own will to bless (Matt. 23. 37; Luke 13. 34).

⁴ The Christian's calling is:

(i) according to God's *purpose* (Rom. 8. 28),

(ii) by God's *grace* (Gal. 1. 15) and

(iii) through God's *gospel* (2 Thess. 2. 14).

It is a high (Phil. 3. 14), a holy (2 Tim. 1. 9) and a heavenly (Heb. 3. 1) calling.

⁵ (i) Foreknowledge, (ii) predestination, (iii) calling, (iv) justification and (v) glorification.

⁶ The apostle says, 'Predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, in order that He might be the firstborn among many brethren'.

God has one altogether unique Son, and loves Him so much that He determined to populate heaven with a vast company of others made just like Him ... patterned after His 'image'. To be like Christ! It is impossible to imagine a destiny more glorious.

And that itself forms part of God's *ultimate* purpose that then He (the Lord Jesus) will be 'the firstborn' ... that He will have the chief, the pre-eminent, place (cf. Col. 1. 16) Then, not only 'the firstborn' (i) in creation (Col. 1. 15), (ii) in resurrection (Col. 1. 18; Rev. 1. 5) and (iii) in dominion (Heb. 1. 6; Psa. 89. 27), but also 'the firstborn (iv) 'among many brethren' ... among, that is, the 'many sons' whom God is bringing to glory and whom the Lord Jesus is 'not ashamed' to call 'brethren' (Heb. 2. 10-12).

⁷ 'So certain is Paul that this will take place that he speaks of our glorification in the past tense! He uses what is called the "proleptic aorist", a device in Greek when an author is indicating that "it's as good as done", D. B. Wallace, 'Do All Things Really Work Together for the Good? Romans 8:28 in its Context'; accessible at ... <https://bible.org/article/do-all-things-really-work-together-good-romans-828-its-context>.

⁸ 'Every link was forged in heaven, and not one can ever be broken. This blessed portion is not for theologians to wrangle over but for the saints to rejoice in', H. A. Ironside, 'Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans', page 106.

⁹ Paul poses this question no less than seven times in this epistle (Rom. 3. 5; 4. 1; 6. 1; 7. 7; 8. 31; 9. 14, 30) yet in no other of his known epistles. (Cf. the question, 'What then?', Rom. 3. 9; 6. 15; 11. 7.)

¹⁰ H. C. G. Moule, 'Romans: Cambridge Bible', page 157.

¹¹ Rom. 16. 20; cf. his comments in his earlier epistles, 2 Cor. 12. 7; 1 Thess. 2. 18.

¹² Compare the point made by the prophet Isaiah, 'the Egyptians are *men, and not God*', Isa. 31. 3.

¹³ Rom. 8. 20.

¹⁴ Psalm 56; title and verse 9.

Compare how, in the face of the mighty King of Assyria and his army, King Hezekiah encouraged his people, 'Do not be afraid ... with him is only the arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us', 2 Chron. 32. 8.

"I am *against you*", declares the Lord' must be one of the most terrifying expressions which God ever utters. It occurs not only frequently in prophecies concerning the Gentile nations (for example, against Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, Tyre, Sidon and Edom) but also even, on occasions, in prophecies concerning His own people and their false prophets, Ezek. 13. 8; 21. 3.

¹⁵ Rom. 8. 18.

¹⁶ The divine title in Rev. 4. 8; 11. 17; 15. 3; 16. 7; 21. 22.

¹⁷ The word translated 'own' ('ιδίου') in verse 31 is much stronger than the word ('εαυτου') we find in verse 3 ('God sending His own Son'). Here, Paul is stressing—not the difference between our sonship (referred to in verses 14, 15, 29) and Jesus' unique sonship—but the immensity and magnitude of God's love.

¹⁸ For further details of these various incidents, see the document, '*He spared not His Son*', which is attached to the 'Musings' for 15 June 2020. For ease of reference, the document can be accessed at Malcolm's Monday Musings - 2020-06-15 - He spared not His Son (voicesforchrist.org).

¹⁹ See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Octavius_Winslow.

²⁰ "Delivered him up for us all". If any other expression were necessary to deepen our sense of the vastness of His love, we have it here. Who delivered up Jesus to die? Not Judas, for money; not Pilate, for fear; not the Jews, for envy—but the Father, for love! "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain". In this great transaction we lose sight of His betrayers, and His accusers, and His murderers, and we see only the Father travailing in the greatness of His love to His family', Octavius Winslow, '*No Condemnation in Christ*', Chapter 31, 'The Gift of God's Son, the Guarantee of All Other Blessing'.

²¹ Rom. 5. 10; Col. 1. 21-22.

²² The verb rendered 'freely give' in the King James Version is 'χαρίζομαι', which denotes 'to bestow as a gift of grace'.

²³ Rom. 8. 9.

²⁴ Rom. 8. 14-15.

²⁵ Rom. 8. 18.

²⁶ Rom. 8. 30.

²⁷ Rom. 8. 38-39.

²⁸ Compare the use of the word ('εγκαλεσει') in Acts 19. 40; 23. 29; 26. 2.

²⁹ See Acts 22. 30; 23. 29; 25. 16; 26. 7.

³⁰ Rev. 12. 10 (possibly spoken by the Tribulation martyrs of Rev. 6. 10).

³¹ The Greek word occurs eight times with this sense in the Greek Bible: Exod. 22. 9; Prov. 19. 5; Acts 19. 38, 40; 23. 28, 29; 26. 2, 7.

³² Zech. 1. 4 (Greek Old Testament).

³³ Cf. Rom. 3. 19.

³⁴ Romans 8. 33b-34a.

³⁵ '*He is near that justifies me, who will contend with me? ... who is my adversary? Let him come near to me ... who is he that shall condemn me?*' Isa. 50. 4-9.

³⁶ Together with which, our heavenly Advocate stands as our 'Counsel for the Defence' in God's Court, 1 John 2. 1.

³⁷ Rom. 3. 24.

³⁸ Rom. 5. 9.

³⁹ Rom. 4. 24-25.

⁴⁰ Rom. 5. 1.

⁴¹ Rom. 8. 1.

⁴² Rom. 8. 3.

⁴³ Rom. 8. 31.

⁴⁴ Rom. 8. 33.

⁴⁵ Rom. 8. 34.

⁴⁶ Rom. 5. 6, 8, 10.

⁴⁷ As the New Testament insists on no less than 17 occasions.

⁴⁸ Andrew Bonar, *The Memoir and Remains of the Rev. Robert Murray M'Cheyne*, 1844, page 185; accessible at <https://archive.org/details/memoirremainsofr00mcherich/page/184/mode/2up>.

⁴⁹ (i) John 2. 19; 10. 17 and (ii) Heb. 1. 3.

⁵⁰ Cf. John 13. 1. You can obtain instruments which measure the temperature, the air pressure and the wind force. But no gauge exists in heaven or in earth which can measure our Saviour's boundless love.

⁵¹ Rev. 1. 5.

⁵² This section no doubt gives an insight into the apostle's personal stimulus and motivation; 2 Cor. 5. 14.

⁵³ Barth was appointed professor at the universities of Göttingen, Münster, and Bonn, successively (1922-1935).

⁵⁴ See <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/rogereolson/2013/01/did-karl-barth-really-say-jesus-loves-me-this-i-know/>, http://www.patheos.com/blogs/rogereolson/2013/01/quick-follow-up-to-the-karl-barth-jesus-loves-me-series/,_and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk%3AKarl_Barth (under Doggerel).

⁵⁵ Leon Morris, *Expository Reflections on the Letter to the Ephesians*, page 107.

⁵⁶ Eph. 3. 19.

⁵⁷ Written by Miss Mary Shekleton (1827-1883) in 1863.

⁵⁸ Deut. 7. 1-2; cf. Deut. 4. 38.

⁵⁹ 'Tribulation', 2 Cor. 7. 4, 'distress', 2 Cor. 12. 10, 'persecution', 2 Cor. 12. 10, 'famine' ('λιμος'), 2 Cor. 11. 27, 'nakedness' (a word often applied to insufficient dress, not only to complete exposure), 2 Cor. 11. 27, and 'peril' ('danger'), 2 Cor. 11. 26.

⁶⁰ 2 Cor. 11. 26-27.

⁶¹ 'The citation from Psalm 44. 22 (applied by second-century rabbis to martyrdom) reinforces the certainty that martyrdom is in view here', C. S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, comment on Rom. 8. 35-36.

⁶² 'It is ... recorded that Paul was beheaded in Rome itself, and that Peter likewise was crucified under Nero. This account of Peter and Paul is substantiated by the fact that their names are preserved in the cemeteries of that place even to the present day'. Eusebius of Caesarea, *Church History*, Book II, Chapter 25, Paragraph 5; accessible at <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/250102.htm>.

⁶³ Job 5. 19.

⁶⁴ Cf. 1 Pet. 3. 13.

⁶⁵ Psa. 44. 22.

⁶⁶ Cf. Rom. 5. 3-5.

⁶⁷ Rom. 8. 18.

⁶⁸ Rom. 5. 8.

⁶⁹ 1 Cor. 15. 31; 'we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake', 2 Cor. 4. 11.

⁷⁰ Acts 8. 32; cf. Isa. 53. 7.

⁷¹ See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wars_of_Alexander_the_Great#cite_ref-1.

⁷² C. E. Macartney, *The Greatest Men of the Bible*, 1941, pages 18-19; accessible at ...
http://archive.org/stream/greatestmenofthe012375mbp/greatestmenofthe012375mbp_djvu.txt.

⁷³ 'From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear in my body the marks ('the scars') of Jesus. Gal. 6. 17.

⁷⁴ T. McGowen titled his biography of Alexander, *Alexander the Great: Conqueror of the Ancient World*, Enslow Publications, 2006. Compare, 'As the greatest conqueror of the ancient world, Alexander ...', Robert Anderson, *Signs and Wonders: a Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, page 80.

⁷⁵ 'Conqueror (*ὑπερνικάω*). "To be more than conqueror" ... "to gain a surpassing victory" is found in Rom. 8. 37, lit., "we are hyper-conquerors", i.e., we are pre-eminently victorious', W. E. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, page 122.

A 'rare word ... "overcome" is almost too weak a term ... we win the supreme victory through Him who loved us', O. Bauernfeind, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Volume IV, page 945.

⁷⁶ Vice-Admiral The Right Honourable The Viscount Nelson KB, 29 September 1758 – 21 October 1805.

⁷⁷ John Schwarz, *A Handbook of the Christian Faith*, page 196. Also S. Huggins, *Morning will come*, page 166; C. E. Macartney, *ibid.*, page 9.

⁷⁸ It has been finely said that, 'Believers are on the winning side. They are not odds-on favourites; they are unconditional winners', R. Bonnke, *Faith: The Link with God's Power*; there is no pagination; the quotation comes from the section 'Light Conquers Darkness' in chapter 18.

⁷⁹ Rom. 8. 35.

⁸⁰ Compare Paul's later declaration, 'I know whom I have believed and am *persuaded* that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that day', 2 Tim. 1. 12.

⁸¹ The perfect tense: 'I have become and I remain convinced'. Cf. Rom. 15. 14.

⁸² Matt. 25. 31; Mark 8. 38; Luke 9. 26; Rev. 14. 10.

⁸³ Eph. 6. 12; Col. 2. 15.

⁸⁴ The structure may switch back and fore between (a) impersonal and (b) personal:

(a) neither death nor life (impersonal); (b) nor angels nor principalities (personal); (a) nor things present nor things to come (impersonal); (b) nor powers (personal); (a) nor height nor depth (impersonal); (b) nor any other creature (personal).

What is certain is that nothing in the whole of creation can drive a wedge between the loving God and His beloved people.

⁸⁵ John 10. 28-29.

⁸⁶ From the hymn, 'Praise the Saviour, ye who know Him', one of Mr Kelly's 760 hymns.

(<http://www.christianity.com/church/church-history/timeline/1701-1800/thomas-kellys-fervent-faith-11630280.html>)

⁸⁷ Rom. 8. 31.

⁸⁸ Rom. 8. 33.

⁸⁹ Rom. 8. 34.

⁹⁰ Rom. 8. 38-39.