

God will most definitely give us all things in Christ

A sermon preached by Henry Dixon
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“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?” Romans 8.32.

Introduction

We started last week to consider the section that concludes Romans chapter 8. We saw that in this section the apostle Paul asks a series of rhetorical questions, questions whose answers are obvious, which are designed to help his readers to realise that, if they are true believers, they are completely safe. Nothing can stop God from completing the work of salvation that he has started in those who have been truly saved. God will not change his mind towards his people. No demonic power can prevail against them. Not even our own failings and sin can thwart God’s plan to save those whom God has chosen to save.

Last time we were thinking about the first of the apostle’s questions: “If God is for us, who can be against us?” We saw that the obvious answer to this question is “No-one”. We learned that the apostle does not mean by this that we who are believers have no enemies. We do. We have many and very powerful enemies. But those enemies have no power to stop the work of God in the true believer. We considered the three main enemies that we face: the flesh, the world and the devil. We saw that though these enemies continue to trouble us, and will continue to trouble us until our dying day, they are utterly unable to stop the work of salvation that God is doing in those who are true believers.

This morning, the plan is to consider the second question, which is posed in verse 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?” This question is dealing with the issue of whether God might change his mind towards us. Could it be that somehow he might stop loving us? Could he decide that he will not, after all, give us the blessings of heaven, and that he will instead send us to hell? Could it be that, at the resurrection, we will be disappointed, and that the glory we had hoped for will not be given to us after all? The answer is, “Of course not”. It is impossible for God not to give all the blessings of the age to come to those whom he has saved.

The method of argument of the apostle is to go from the greater to the lesser. He says, effectively, “Look, God has already given to us the greatest thing he could possibly give – his own Son. So, if he has not spared his own Son, but given him up to be crucified for us, how could he possibly decide not to give us the lesser things that are in Christ? It is inconceivable.

So as we think about this verse, I propose to do so under two main headings.

1. God has already given us the greatest gift of all
2. He will therefore certainly give us all the other things he has promised

1. God has already given us the greatest gift of all

The apostle says in the first half of the verse, “He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all”. This clause is packed full of meaning and significance for us. Almost every word is very important. Note the following things:

1) The death of Christ is the work of God

The first thing to note is that the death of Christ is due ultimately to the action of God the Father. The apostle says, “He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all.” Who is the “He” that the apostle is referring to? God. It is God who gave him up for us, as a sacrifice for our sins.

There is a mistake that so many people make. They see the Cross merely as a human tragedy. They see it from a purely human point of view. They see a good man who was mistreated. They see the sin and

wickedness of those who plotted against him and killed him. They think of the death of Christ as simply the heroic death of a good man, who was mistreated by others.

Of course, in a sense, this view is valid. The death of Jesus was the most wicked and sinful act in the whole history of the world. Those who conspired against him and crucified him committed the most terrible crime that have ever been committed. But to see the Cross as ONLY a human tragedy is to miss the whole point. The Scriptures tell us that though the sins of men were involved, God was behind what happened. This was God's plan and purpose to save sinners.

This comes out in what the Peter said to the crowd on the day of Pentecost. He said to them, as recorded in Acts chapter 2 and verses 22 and 23,

Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by **God's set purpose and foreknowledge**; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.

Jesus was put to death by the crowd, "with the help of wicked men." But what they did was according to "God's set purpose and foreknowledge". It was God's plan that his Son should die. It had been predicted long ago in the Old Testament Scriptures.

The death of Jesus was described in great detail about seven hundred years in advance by Isaiah, in chapter 53 of his prophecy. Isaiah says in verse 10 of that chapter, "Yet it was the **Lord's will** to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the **Lord makes** his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand."

Paul says in Romans chapter 3 and verses 25 to 26:

God presented him [Christ] as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. **He did this** to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished – **he did it** to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

Revelation chapter 13 verse 8 says that Christ is the "Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world."

So we see that the death of Jesus was not just some human tragedy. Men committed terrible sins, but behind this was the work of God. This was God's way of saving his people.

2) It is the Son whom he gave

Hear again what the apostle says, "He who did not spare **his own Son**, but gave him up for us all." He gave his Son. Jesus was not only a good man, though he was human and he was good. He was not merely a prophet, though he was a prophet. He was not merely a great teacher, though he was a teacher. He was and is the eternal Son of God, who is worthy of worship as much as the Father is worthy of worship.

This verse shows us that the Son is distinct from the Father. There are those who teach that God is one, and that this one God takes three forms, or "modes". They say that God started as the Father, and then he went through a phase of being the Son, and then he became the Spirit. But this verse shows us that the Son is distinct from the Father. He was with the Father in heaven, but then the Father gave him to become a man and to die on the Cross for sins. The Son has to be distinct from the Father in order for the Father to give him.

This shows the greatness of God's love. That he gave his beloved Son for our sins. John says famously in chapter 3 of his Gospel, verse 16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his **one and only Son**, so that whoever believes in him may not perish but have everlasting life." John also says in his first letter, chapter 4 and verses 9 and 10, "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."

The one whom God gave for our sins is his dearly beloved Son, who was with the Father from before the world was made, and through whom the world was made, the one who is himself God, as much as the Father is God. There is no being in heaven or on earth who is as valuable and important as the Son of God. It was him whom the Father gave up for us.

3) He did not spare him

The apostle says, “He who did not **spare** his own Son, but gave him up for us all.” God the Father could easily have said, “I cannot give my Son. He is too valuable. He is too precious to me.” But he did not. He did not spare him. The Father did not hold back from pouring out on his Son the wrath that should have come upon us, dreadfully painful though this must have been for both the Father and the Son.

All of us who are parents would want to spare our children from experiencing suffering. But the Father did not spare his Son. He knew the terrible suffering he would go through on the Cross, but he did not withhold him from it, because of his great love for us, and his desire to save his people.

4) He gave him up

Hear again what the apostle says: “He who did not spare his own Son, but **gave him up** for us all.” The apostle uses an interesting word here. It means to hand someone over to the power of something else. We had it three times in chapter 1 of this letter, where the apostle says that God handed men over to the power of sin. He says in verse 24 of that chapter, “Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another.”

And then in verse 26, “Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones.”

And then again in verse 28, “Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done.”

God handed men over to the power of sin, so that they would receive in themselves the effect of their sin in their bodies.

The same word is used here in our verse. So when the apostle says that God “gave him up”, he means that he handed his Son temporarily over to the power of sin and death. For a while, the eternal Son of God was made subject to the power of sin. He himself did not sin, but he was made subject to the effect of sin. He was made subject to the condemnation of the law. He became accursed, as he hung on the Cross. Paul writes in Galatians chapter 3 verse 13, “Christ redeemed

us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.' ” Jesus experienced in his body the full penalty for the sin of his people.

There are those who try to remove from the Cross the idea of the wrath of God being poured out on his Son. They seek to say that the Cross is just God saying to the world, “I forgive you for the bad things that you have done”. But no, the Scriptures make it abundantly clear that what happened in the Cross is that Christ was handed over to receive in himself the full penalty for the sins of his people. This is why the Cross is such a display of God’s love. The Father was prepared to allow his Son to go through such terrible agony on our behalf.

5) He gave Christ to be a substitute

The apostle says that God “gave him up **for us** all”. Jesus died as a substitute, in the place of his people. We are the ones who should have died and borne the wrath of God, because we are the sinners, but Jesus died in our place, instead of us. Jesus himself made it plain that he came to die in the place of his people. He said, as recorded in Mark’s Gospel, chapter 10 and verse 45, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom **for many**.” Isaiah says, in chapter 53 and verses 4 to 6,

Surely he took up **our infirmities** and **carried our sorrows**, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for **our transgressions**, he was crushed for **our iniquities**; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

It was for us, and for our sins, that he died. He was the substitute, who was punished in our place.

There are those who say that the idea of Jesus dying as a substitute, in our place, is just one “theory” of the atonement. No. This is not a “theory”. It is a fact. It is the central teaching of Scripture about the Cross.

Peter says, in his first letter, chapter 2 and verse 24, “He himself bore **our sins** in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.” And in chapter 3

of the same letter, verse 18, he says, “For Christ died for sins once for all, **the righteous for the unrighteous**, to bring you to God.”

6) He died for ALL of those who trust in him

The apostle says, that God “gave him [Christ] up for **us all**”. To whom is the apostle referring when he speaks here about “us”? He is talking about true believers. Those who “love God and are called according to his purpose”, verse 28. Those who, verse 29, were foreknown by God. Those who were predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son. Those who have been called. Those who have been justified. Those who have been glorified. For them – ALL of them – God gave up his Son. There is not one of those who have been chosen by God who is left out. The blood of Christ pays for each one of them.

This is the doctrine which is known as “particular redemption”. Christ laid down his life for his sheep, whom he knows. It is recorded in John chapter 10 and verses 14 and 15 that Jesus said, “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me – just as the Father knows me and I know the Father – and I lay down my life for the sheep.” He knows those whom the Father gave to him. He loves each one, and he paid for the sins of each one. For all of them. None of those for whom Christ specifically gave his life will fail to be brought into God’s eternal kingdom.

So we see that God cannot possibly fail to grant to his people all the blessings that are in Christ. He has given the greatest one of all, his own Son. He did not spare him from suffering, even though he knew that bearing our sins on the Cross would be unspeakably painful for him. He gave him up, gave him over, to the power of sin, to bear in his body the wrath of God that should have come upon us. He gave him as a substitute, to die in the place of each and every one of the sheep whom the Father gave to the Son. He gave him up for all of us, for all those who truly trust in Christ as their Saviour. Each one of those who have been given by the Father to Christ has had his or her sins paid for. These things being the case, there is no conceivable way that God can fail to give to each one of his people all the blessings that are in Christ. To these blessings we now turn our attention.

2. God will certainly give us all things in Christ

The apostle says, in the second half of the verse, “How will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?”

You see the argument that the apostle uses. If God has already given us the greatest gift of all – his own Son – how can he possibly fail to give us all the other blessings that he has promised in Christ. He cannot do so.

Notice a word that is in this clause: “graciously”. The word means, “give according to grace” or “give freely”. What God is going to give us in Christ is entirely by grace. It is completely undeserved.

What things is he talking about here? The answer is, all the future blessings that he has promised us. Let us think about a few of these things.

1) The resurrection of the body

God has promised that all of those who have been saved will have new bodies which will be glorious, strong, healthy and very powerful. Just as Jesus was raised from the dead and is now dazzling and glorious, so we too will share in his glory, and be like him.

2) The total absence of all suffering

After the resurrection, there will be no more suffering of any sort for those who have been saved. The book of Revelation, chapter 21 and verses 3 and 4 says, describing the future state after the resurrection, that a loud voice will say,

Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.

3) Joint ownership of the whole world

We shall be vastly rich at the resurrection. We shall be the joint owners of the whole earth! Jesus said, as recorded in Matthew chapter 5 and

verse 5, “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.” Paul says, in his first letter to the Corinthians, chapter 3 and verses 21 to 23, “All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future – all are yours, and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.” Revelation 21 and verse 7 says, “He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.”

4) Total satisfaction

In the future we who have been saved will be totally satisfied. There will be no lack of anything. Revelation chapter 7 and verses 15 to 17 says about those who are in heaven,

They are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

5) The joy of being with other believers

At the resurrection, we shall be with all other believers who have ever lived. We shall be reunited with members of our family who are believers, and with fellow church members. We shall also have the delight of meeting millions of other believers, and of getting to know them and hearing the wonderful things that God did in their lives. There will be no quarrels between believers at the resurrection, and no differences of views about different matters. We will perfectly know the truth about God, and will be united in that truth. We shall love one another perfectly.

6) The delight of seeing God and fellowshiping with him directly

The greatest thing of all will be that we shall see God, and relate with him directly. We shall be able to gaze upon him in his beauty, and we shall speak with him face to face. Revelation 22 verses 1 to 6 says,

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

7) All this will never end

These future blessings will continue for ever and ever. We will never grow bored or disenchanted. They will never “perish, spoil or fade”. The thrill and delight of being with God, and with all his people, and enjoying the new heavens and the new earth, will be ours for ever.

Conclusion

We have been considering the question that Paul asks “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?” The answer is that, having given his own Son for our sins, God cannot possibly fail to give us all that he has promised in him. The future is yours if you are a believer. You have a delightful inheritance. And this inheritance is absolutely sure and certain. It can never be taken from you.

Do you sometimes say to yourself, “Is it too good to be true? Am I really going to inherit all this?” Stop doubting. Believe the promises of God.

What effect should these things have upon us? They should lead us not to be that bothered about having a happy and comfortable life here and now. If you are blessed with good health and a certain amount of money now, thank God and be grateful. But if your life is hard now, with poor health, poverty, persecution, family difficulties, problems and stresses where you live, do not let this get you down. These problems will only last a few more years at most, and then you will have an eternity of supreme happiness with God. Rejoice! Lift up your heart! Look forward to your inheritance!

What about those among us who are not yet Christians? What is the message for you? Do you want these blessings? You can have them. God is offering them freely. Come to Christ. Forsake your old life. Put your trust in Jesus to save you, and then you will know these wonderful blessings yourself.

This booklet contains the edited notes of a sermon which was preached by Henry Dixon. A recording of the actual sermon that was preached may be found at

<http://www.sermonaudio.com/saplayer/playpopup.asp?SID=10117410530>

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