

## **Romans 8:31–34**

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

### **What to Say When Suffering**

**Main idea:** In the midst of suffering, a Christian should remind himself of God and the gospel.

**Introduction:** Our current sufferings... the battle with sin; the broken creation; even blows inflicted by men and devils. But we having something to say to these that neutralizes/overwhelms them all.

1. **God is for us**
  - a. Not "if" but "since."
  - b. God being for us isn't just a truth. It's the reason behind everything.
2. **Nothing/nobody is against us**
  - a. They may wish/try to be (cp. Gen 50:20, cf. v35, 38)
  - b. But they are still just created things (cp. Gen 50:20, cf. v39)
3. **Gospel love desires to give me all things freely**
4. **Gospel justice demands to give me all things freely**
5. **God justifies me, rather than charging me**
  - a. A comfort only to those who are clinging to Christ
  - b. An unassailable comfort to them
6. **An enthroned Christ makes intercession for me**
  - a. His death assures me that atonement has been made
  - b. His resurrection assures me that atonement has been accepted
  - c. His ascension assures me that my accuser has been replaced by my Advocate
  - d. His enthronement assures me that He rules all things
  - e. His intercession assures me that, in this authority, He is applying His salvation to me.

**Conclusion:** The certainty and power of these things driven home by use of the rhetorical question (even more than conveyed in our English version). These are things that are always true, and from which we ought always to live, so that they are ready-to-hand (ready-to-heart!) in our suffering.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via [hopewellarp.org](http://hopewellarp.org))

Romans 8, verse 31 through 34, these are God's words. 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 delivered him up for us. All How shall he not with him also freely give us. Or things. Who shall bring a charge. Against God's elect. That is God, who justifies? Who is he? Who condemns? This Christ who died. And furthermore is also risen.

Who is even at the right hand of God. Who also makes intercession. For us. Oh man, nothing's just reading of God's inspired. And inherent word. What then shall we say? To these things. The question. Or a question that. We might rightly ask reading verse 31 is Which things? And the discussion that immediately proceeds, it has come out.

Of the certainty that we are sons and heirs but that being sons who are Uh adopted. In the only begotten, son. Being sons through union with him. Means that before we come into. Are inheritance before we are glorified together with him. We must suffer with him first. And a great part of this suffering has, Has been.

Open. Especially Since. The middle of chapter 7 or so, and the battle against all remaining sin. The frustration with a remaining sin. This is the greatest suffering for the Christian. Ourselves that which remains of our flesh. That, which opposes What this wonderful new mind new nature that the Lord Jesus has given us by his spirit desires.

Our new nature from Christ that we've been hearing about these. Lord's day mornings and Matthew chapter 3. It delights in the law of God and our inner being it wants to do. Uh, that which is good and yet We are our own greatest suffering, but we also live in the midst of a creation.

That is subjected to futility. That is bound to corruption. It's bound. To decay. And not only is the creation bound to To decay. But this means that sin is still not just an us but in the world And God is patiently enduring vessels prepared for wrath vessels prepared for destruction.

As we'll hear about, not too long from now in chapter 9 And yet, these vessels include those, Who are opposed to us, the sort of people who do bring charges against us, the sort of people who are against us. And mean, us ill, the sort of The sort of people who bring sword upon us verse, 35.

And even not just people but fallen angels. Those who Belong to the unseen and spiritual world. Demons, who hate us? And they are very real and they are very powerful. They are referred to as principalities and powers. And so there's a great deal of suffering. Between that which remains in us, which is the worst and the, the brokenness of the creation, the continued bondage of the creation to corruption, And the hatred and opposition of men and angels.

Men and demons. We should say fallen angels. Those who sinned and for whom there was no help as there is for the children by faith. Of. Of Abraham. There is. Much. Suffering. But here, then the Lord is instructing us. What to tell ourselves. And light. Of. Are sufferings and in light, especially of the fact that God is for us.

And that his intentions toward us are to bring us into the glory of the lord Jesus himself. To know. God like Jesus knows God, and to love God, like Jesus loves God. As we heard in the previous passage, which is to me, not just as good and impressive as Jesus not just as good as Jesus and great.

Um, Glorious in. Our character. But also to be as glad as Jesus. For herein is the greatest gladness that any creature can have. Is to know, the God, who knows us and loves us. And to laugh, the God who knows us? And loves us and so, in light of the suffering, that is present and the glory that is certain Our Father comes now by His Spirit and gives us in His word instruction for self-talk.

In the midst of suffering, what shall we say to these things? And he gives us Amazing things to say. That neutralize and overwhelm all of the suffering. And the first thing is that God is for us, this is another one of those that our English translations have given us an, if where they're really belongs a sense for we have just said, we know That all things work together for good and if we know that all things work, Work together for good.

Then we don't say if God is for us. We say, since God is for us, And you can say as one who has come to love God, and the only way that a sinner comes to love God by being called, according to His everlasting electing justifying calling justifying glorifying purpose.

Since God is for me. Since God is for me, even in the midst of your frustration that you are not for God, so much as you ought to be. And yet, the greater end of that equation, the infinitely greater end. As that God is for you. And that's how you came to be frustrated that you are not for God.

As you wish you were. So, since God is, For me. We've just heard last week. God being for the believer. God being for the one who loves Him and has been called because He was foreign known and therefore predestined to glory. That's not just a truth. We're not just bringing a truth into our suffering.

We are bringing the reason behind everything. The reason there is anything is because God decided That His son would be the firstborn among many brethren. And so it's not like you're in the midst of Of suffering, and you're going to reach outside of the suffering to bring a A pleasant theological idea to help you in the middle of your trouble.

No, you are actually reaching out for that truth. That is the reason behind the existence of everything and the currents of everything, all of creation, all of history exists, Because God is for you. A marvelous reality for the Christian to be able to embrace, God is for us and therefore Nothing.

Can be against us and no one can be against us. Oh, they can certainly try. You remember, Joseph's brothers. Tried very much to be against Him. But as they intended, In their evil to do Him evil. God was intending in His goodness to do Joseph good. And which one of those was the more fundamental truth.

About Joseph's brothers, which one was the decisive truth? About His brothers and what they did. Are the evil absolutely where they against Him, well, so far as they could be. But how far can they be? If God is superintending, them. For Joseph's, good. And so there are people who are against us in their intentions.

But in their And the ultimate fruit of their actions. They are actually for us to their shame and frustration and horror. Even the devil. Cannot be against us. In the effect of what He does.

Remember how he was against job. We'll be thinking about that. And a moment when we think about our advocate being where that adversary once was, But he was against job.

And yet, in all that he did and all of his hatred to job. Was he not used by god to bring job to a greater knowledge of his god? The god, who was already, his trust, the god, who has already his righteousness, the god, who has already his hope, the god, who has already his purpose.

The god, who is already his pleasure. And yet by the end of what satan in his wickedness. Intended. The end of the evil that satan and his wickedness intended and did Job says, without even knowing. The interaction between god and the devil. Job says that the knowledge of god that he has at the end.

Is better than it ever was. And god even multiplies. Of course jobs earthly blessedness in this world. But which is not to be compared to the earthly blessedness that you will have in the new earth when the new heavens. On the same is true for us, it's not just Who can?

Be effective against us. It's that we know that despite The intentions. If anyone who is against a believer, they are being employed by a divine hand. For us. This. Incidentally, you remember was the means by which Joseph was able to forgive his brothers And if you are in a situation where you're having difficulty forgiving your enemy, after the fact, or loving your enemy in the midst of the circumstance, Just remember.

They may mean to be against you. But in the sovereign providence of god, They're actually for you to despite what they intend despite what they desire. And then you can receive the providence. Of enmity from an enemy. As something that comes from the hand that gave you jesus, And you will be enabled.

Thereby to love your enemy, even as our lord, jesus loved his enemies, which we were And yet the love of god has demonstrated. Unto us in christ dying for us, while we were Those enemies. They are after all whether they are bringing the sword as in verse 35, or whether they are principalities or powers, as in verse 38, They are still created things.

As in verse 39, nor any Created. So god is for us, god is for me as something. You can tell yourself in the midst of your suffering. Nobody can be against me. Nothing is against me. Everything is for me. How do i know that? Well, because Jesus. Is for me, not just that he is god and therefore he loves me.

He's for known me. He's predestined me or all those things are true. But jesus has been given by god. For me. God did not spare his own son. But delivered him up for us. All How shall he not with him also freely give us. All things. We know that god is infinite in his power.

He solverly superintendents all things in his providence. As we've been just been hearing from verse 31. But now, think of what is behind. That almighty power think of what is behind that sovereign providence? There is the love of god. And the justice of god. Excuse me. The love of god that has already given you the lord jesus christ.

Put them in the balance, the lord jesus on the one hand and all the worth of all the rest of creation from all of history. On the other side, which is more valuable It's not even close, is it? The lord jesus says infinitely more valuable. And when, you know, the love that gave you jesus Is the love that superintendents, what happens with everything else, then you say, how can i doubt that all of that is being freely given to me as well?

Not have to do anything else. Ever. To earn from god to get him to be favorable form toward me so that so that perhaps if i conduct myself well enough in this circumstance then the

circumstance will turn out for my good as god as god makes the Lemonade out of the situational lemon.

No, he freely gives us all he freely gave you Christ. But love that gave you Christ. And yet not just his love but also has justice. Now, demands to give you all things has justice did not want to give you all things. Because we were under his wrath. But now that he has given us jesus, And we have jesus as obedience counted for us.

And jesus is sacrifice atoning for our sins. Doesn't his justice demand? That jesus received everything, good that everything be for the glory of christ and everything, be for the joy of christ, and everything, be unto the praise of christ and the benefit. Humanly speaking. Of the lord jesus christ.

Well, if we are united to him, So united to him, that jesus christ could die under on the cross, under the wrath of god. Then certainly, we are so united to him that we may live in our lives. Under. The vindication the justification. Of god and his justice demands.

That all things. Be for our good. That all things are ours because we are christ. And christ is gods. And so gospel. Love. Desires. To give me all things. Freely. And gospel, justice demands. To give me all things freely. Just, Two verses in. And you have many wonderful things.

Now to tell yourself when you are suffering, don't you? God has for me. Nothing is against me. Gospel, love desires to give me all things freely. Gospel, justice demands to give me all things freely. God justifies me. Got justifies me. Verse 33 who shall bring a charge against god's elect.

Just god, who justifies? God justifies me. Now, this is only a comfort to those who are clinging to christ to those who know that jesus is righteous to know that jesus has died for sinners and that whoever calls upon the name of the lord will be saved. And that if you believe in him, that faith is accounted for you as righteousness because jesus is your righteousness.

You can't just You can't just say no one can bring a charge against me because god justifies unless you're actually justified. Through faith in jesus christ. But all, if you cling to jesus christ, you know, That god will not bring any charge against you. And so this is an unassailable, comfort.

Who is going to bring a charge against the one that god has declaring righteous about You see there is None of that dreadful talking back that sometimes is in our kitchens or in our living rooms. There's none of that in God's courtroom. I hope you don't talk back, dear children.

Where your mom or your dad gives a verdict? I hope you don't even let your heart. Resist and rebel, and oppose against it, but that you are meek and honoring of your parents from the heart. But certainly, i hope that you aren't permitted to speak Against it. Could you imagine Your dad, or your mom says about one of your siblings, he's in the right.

Her. She's in the right. Say, no, he's wrong because no We don't talk back to our mom and dad that way. Well, you can't talk back in the courtroom of God. He doesn't permit. Any other speech? And so god has justified us, he's declared us righteous. In the lord, jesus christ.

In fact, he continues to declare us righteous Isn't that a wonderful present tense? Not just that he declared me righteous once on a day when his spirit gave me life and faith to believe into jesus christ, and he declared righteous But that the believer in jesus christ receives. A continual declaration of righteousness from god.

This is another and there are many, but This is another reason why you should watch out. For people who speak about justification and final justification. As if they're possibly two different. Verdicts There are those who will say that that there are those who are justified but they have to remain in the covenant by covenant faithfulness, so that they're final justification will be secured.

There's no such thing in the mind of the bible. The one who is justified is continually then vindicated by god. Who justifies? There is now. No condemnation. For those who are in christ jesus. And so this is an unassailable, comfort. No one is allowed to argue. With the Judgment.

The verdict of god. You know, not even your own heart. Isn't that what the apostle John says? If our heart accuses us. God. Is greater than our hearts. So you don't lightly treat a defiled conscience? We're very grateful. That the god who in his mercy didn't want his, his people living with the filed consciences in the old, covenant.

And so, he provided them that sin offering, and that trespass offering that we heard about. So that having their conscience cleansezed, they can then go ahead and participate in the three main offerings by which they were given to come near to god, but we're all the more grateful that jesus is our sin offering and our trespass, he trespass.

Offerings been offered. He's shed his blood once for all, and he's done what the blood of bulls and goats could never do. And he's given us the sacrament of baptism. Washing, our bodies with pure water. So that we can have our consciences sprinkled clean. Our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience by the blood of the lord jesus christ.

And so, There is a precious provision in clinging to the lord jesus and in loving and enjoying a clean conscience before. God, this is not letting us off easily from unrepentant sin. No, if we use it that way, we are abusing it. And yet. If you cling to the lord jesus, and if you hate to your sin, And your conscience comes and tries to accuse you.

Can you not say with the apostle, john? God is greater than my heart.

I know that that was wicked and i know that i did it. But i have turned from it and i hate it. And i trust in the lord, jesus christ. And i've asked him for help. In my endeavoring afternoon, obedience. And all of these things come. From. God. Who elected me?

Because you see hating your sin from the heart. And turning from it and seeing the goodness of god and jesus christ, and turning to him. Just like the loving him in verse 28. That couldn't come from us, could it? And so you have that precious little word there in in verse 33, god's elect And how do we know that they're elect not by peering into the the secret things that belong to god and examining the eternal decree to say i'm elect?

But by looking at, The life and repentance and faith and love that he's given me. And clinging to jesus saying, god is greater than my heart. And his greater of course, than the devil. And those anyone else? Who would bring a charge against us now and Of course, who won't be permitted to bring a charge at the last?

God justifies me through faith in jesus christ, rather than charging me. And then, finally, Not just god is for me and nothing is against me and gospel love desires to give me all things and gospel. Justice demands to give me all things and god justifies me. But And enthroned christ.

Makes intercession for me. Who is he? Who condemns? Well, we know who the one who condemns is. Because jesus announced that all judgment is given into the hands of the sun.

That in the last day when the father and the son and the spirit have brought a conclusion to all history, That the father will actually give the sun, the centrality and the judgment.

Jesus goes so far, as to say not even the father judges but he's given old judgment well it's Jesus who condemns But who is the Jesus, who will be condemning on that last day. He's the one who died. His death assures me. That atonement has been made for all who trust and Jesus Christ.

But not just, who died verse 34. Furthermore also his risen. So atonement hasn't just been made as displayed at the cross, but it's been accepted. The wrath of God has been fully absorbed the justice of God has been fully satisfied. He was, he was Given up on account.

Of our transgressions, but raised up on account of our justification. This is what you said at the end of chapter 4. Was on his death assures. Me that atonement has been made. His resurrection assures. Me. That atonement has been accepted. His ascension assures me. That my accuser has been replaced.

By my advocate. The sun, the child has been caught up into heaven and the accuser of the brethren has been cast down from heaven. That seem that we were referring to in the book of Job just a few minutes ago it never occurs again. He no longer has a voice.

In the heavenly places. Satan has cast down and Satan isn't raged. But we actually have the continual presence and voice of the Lord. Jesus Christ who sits at the right hand of God. The place of honor and the place of council the place that determines All that will be done.

And it is all done for our sake. In application of that good that Christ has earned for us application of redemption to us. My accuser. Has been replaced. By my advocate.

And he advocates for me from the throne. He sits at the right hand of God. He rules all things. Yes. All judgment is given into his hands in the last day, but all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to him today. Your Christ who died for your sin, your Christ who rose again because that sin had been completely wiped out and you were not justified.

He rules heaven and earth now. And it will be, he who condemns in the last day, and he won't be condemning you. Could it be that? He made continual intercession for you from the moment that he sat down at the right hand of God and brought out the Holy Spirit until the last moment?

When the heavens open and he returns. And having made intercession for you continually for thousands of years, will he? Then condemn you. Of course, not. And enthroned Christ. Makes intercession. For me. You know, I rarely quibble. With Mr. Machine. But distance does make a difference. You know the quote I can't remember it.

Word. Perfect just now but he says, if he could only hear the Lord, Jesus praying for him in the next room. What would he not be able to do? And yet distance makes no difference. He is praying for me. Well, distance makes this difference. He's not in the next room.

Because he's ruling heaven and earth from the throne of heaven. And that is a much greater place. To have him praying. For you.

His intercession assures me. That in this authority in which he rules. Heaven, and earth, what he is doing is he is applying to us and for us The redemption. That he has accomplished for us. And his earthly ministry. So, these six things that we can say, To our suffering.

God is for me. Nothing is against me. Gospel love desires to give me all things. Gospel, justice demands to give me all things. God justifies me. And enthroned christ makes intercession. For me. And these things are all absolutely. Certain in fact, just in the literary style, That the holy spirit carried the apostle to use.

There are more implied question marks in the original. In fact, the whole thing is rhetorical questions. Because of the absolute certainty, that all things are for us. 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 delivered him up for us. All How so he not with him also freely, give us all things. Who shall bring a charge against god's elect. God, who justifies? You see the italics? If you're reading in, in, Copy of the word of god who shall bring a charge against god's elect.

God, who justifies Who is he? Who condemns? Christ, who died? And furthermore is also risen. Who is even at the right hand of god. Who also makes intercession for us.

And you can hear. In the series of questions. The crescendo And even. The key change. As he piles argument upon argument, For why? Even my sufferings, Even the battle that i have with my sin. The sin is hateful. But the difficulty of the battle. Is for me. And for my good.

Is it not that frustration that humiliates me? And throws me upon the goodness and grace of my god. And sins me to tell myself all about him being for me and nothing being against me and gospel love desiring to give me all things and God's will justice demanding to give me all things.

And god justifying me and christ making intercession for me.

Even the Enslavement of the creation to corruption and decay. I find out. I have cancer. I found out a loved one. Has cancer. Or when there is enmity from men. Or whatever comes. Is it not a created thing?

And so this series, Of rhetorical questions. Gives us something to tell ourselves. When we are suffering. And so dear Christian tell these things even your to yourself all the time. Not just when you are suffering. You will find, of course that if you are not Training your mind and your heart and the habit of clinging to these truths, it will not come so easily.

Or strike home so strongly. When you are suffering. Which you prepare ahead of time. By living in these truths. Goddess for me. Nothing is against me. Gospel love desires to give me all things. Gospel, justice demands to give me all things. God justifies me and an enthroned christ. Makes intercession for me.

That's what we shall say. To all these things. Amen.