
IF GOD IS FOR US

(READ *Romans 8.31-39*)

“*If God is for us, who can be against us?*” Those words were written by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans, chapter 8, verse 31.

A lot of the books of the New Testament were originally written as letters, many of them by Paul. Sometimes Paul’s letters were to a specific person that he knew (like Timothy or Titus), and sometimes he wrote them to churches (like the church in Corinth) that he had visited or even helped to plant in the first place. Because Paul generally wrote to people he knew, he would talk about specific problems that he knew they were having, or encourage them in specific ways that he knew would benefit them.

The letter to the Romans is different though, because at the point when he wrote it, Paul had never been to Rome. He was talking to people he didn’t know. This means that rather than write about a lot of specific problems that the church in Rome was having, he talks in general terms, teaching what Christianity is all about:

- He talks about how all people, Jews and Gentiles, fall short of doing God’s will—how everyone sins, and no one is perfectly righteous by God based on their own effort.
- He talks about how we’re made righteous through our faith, how God *counts* us as righteous when we believe in him.
- He talks about how we enter into a relationship with God through obedient faith, and how when we’re baptized, we become free from sin, free from wrath, free from the consequences of living under the law of Moses, and free from spiritual death.
- And He talks about how, when we have a relationship with God, *it puts God on our side*. That’s the context of Romans 8.31-39.

The first big point that Paul makes is that **God is on the side of His people**.

It’s important for us to remember that Paul was writing to the Christians in Rome, people who had made a commitment to follow Christ. People who had decided to be disciples of Jesus.

Throughout the Bible, God makes many promises. He promises to bless people many times. But those promises are made to His *children*—to people He has a relationship with. Certainly God loves everyone and gives everyone the opportunity to be saved. Certainly He wants to have a relationship with everyone. But God doesn’t support those who live their lives in open rebellion to Him.

On the other hand, there are tons of examples throughout the Bible of how God is on the side of His people:

- When the Israelites fled slavery in Egypt, God was on their side, parting the Red Sea and allowing them to escape.
- When a shepherd boy named David went out to face the giant Goliath who had been taunting the Israelites for 40 days, God was on his side, and he conquered the giant with a slingshot and a stone.
- When the Kingdom of Judah, led by King Hezekiah, was besieged by the Assyrian Empire, God was on the side of His people, defeating the Assyrian army and sending them away.
- When the Jews were taken into captivity and Daniel was thrown into the lions' den for refusing to deny his beliefs, God was on his side, and he wasn't harmed.

The Bible is very clear: God is on the side of His people.

But Paul makes another important point: **If God is on your side, it doesn't matter who is against you.**

Sometimes we find ourselves in situations where it seems like everyone and everything is against us. Sometimes the friends we spend our time with are bad influences on us. Sometimes we can't go a day without fighting with our siblings or parents. Sometimes it seems like nothing you do at school is good enough and it's hard for you to keep your grades up.

But if we think about it, the problems we face are nothing that God can't handle. Just think:

- The Israelites were trying to run away from Pharaoh, at a time when Egypt was the most powerful country in the world. Pharaoh sent his best soldiers and his chariots after them. The Israelites weren't an army, they were just a bunch of refugees, and then, they come upon a body of water that they can't hope to cross—it seemed like even nature was against them! But it didn't matter who was *against* them. **God was on their side.** He parted the waters, and while the Egyptian army was destroyed, not a single Israelite was harmed.
- Not many people would've given David a chance against Goliath. Goliath was a giant, 9 and a half feet tall, who had been a soldier all of his life. No one in the Israelite army was willing to fight against him. It must've seemed crazy for David, a shepherd boy to challenge someone like that. But it didn't matter who was *against* him. **God was on his side.** He helped David overcome Goliath, and the Israelites to overcome the Philistines.

- Hezekiah and the Kingdom of Judah were threatened by the Assyrians when Assyria was the world superpower. They had already conquered Israel to the north, and now they were coming after Judah. But Hezekiah knew that it didn't matter who was *against* them. **God was on their side.** As he said in 2 Chronicles 32:7-8: *"Be strong and courageous, do not fear or be dismayed because of the king of Assyria, nor because of all the multitude which is with him; for the one with us is greater than the one with him. With him is only an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us and fight our battles."* And that's exactly what happened. God helped them and fought their battle for them, taking out 185,000 Assyrian troops. And Judah was saved.
- It must've seemed like everything was going against Daniel as well. Taken as a captive from his home as a young man and raised in a foreign country, his whole life was changed. At a time when praying to Jehovah God was prohibited, Daniel was willing to stand up for what was right, and King Darius had him thrown into the lions' den as a result. But it didn't matter who was *against* him. **God was on his side.** He shut the mouths of the lions and Daniel emerged unharmed.

When you think about these examples, our problems don't seem so big and terrifying anymore, do they? Romans 8:37 says, *"...In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."* Did you hear that? "More than conquerors." Another translation says, *"We overwhelmingly conquer."*

That means that with God on our side, it's not even close! Whoever or whatever is against us, no matter how big or how terrifying it seems, with God on our side, we overwhelmingly conquer.

Think about a movie...an epic, war type of movie like *Gladiator* or *The Patriot*, or *Lord of the Rings*, or even *Rocky*. At the end, at the climax, there's always a big dramatic battle or fight where it seems like the good guys have no chance of winning and then something happens and they manage to pull it out. They manage to win, but just *barely*.

What Paul is saying is that that's *not* how it is with God. With God, there's no drama to it. It's not even close! It's a blowout.

"If God is for us, who can be against us?" The answer to the question is "No one!" If God is for you, it's as if no one is against you, because no one can stand up to God. Live in such a way that God is on your side, and you have nothing to fear!

This devotional was downloaded from lukedockery.com/free-resources. Check there for other resources including Bible class series, stand-alone lessons, and eBooks.