

Maker Fun Factory: God Is For You
July 16, 2017 (Fusion)
Lynn Haven UMC

Introduction

“What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?”

“Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, ‘For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.’ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am 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.” Romans 8:31, 35-39 (NRSV)

God is no fair weather fan who cheers for us only in our victories. He is that proud parent walking before us, hoping we will seek and find Him in all of life’s hills and valleys. What a comfort to know that no matter what we have done (or will do) God is unequivocally standing in our corner. This is one of His many gifts to us in creation: we never have to be alone! This week we will explore the truths behind Romans 8:31: if God is for us, who can be against us?

Digging Deeper

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

SURROUNDINGS

- We live in a fallen world full of unpredictable circumstances caused by either the ill intent of a misguided person or the devastation of environmental tragedies. All too often, the human reaction in these situations is to cry out “God, where are You?” or “what did I do to deserve this?” Psalm 34:18 (NIV) tells us that “The Lord is close to the broken hearted; He rescues those whose spirits are crushed.” We must keep the truth of the Lord’s word hidden in our hearts. How can faith that is deeply rooted in knowledge of God’s word strengthen and prepare us to deal with adversity?
- Even when faced with the uncertainty of what might occur in our surroundings, the nearness of God can be seen if we are truly looking. We need only take a moment to stop to smell the proverbial roses. Will you cast a glance in His direction to behold His mighty love for you? How has God revealed Himself to you through His creation? Is there a particular spot or region that conveys His greatness more definitively for you?

SPIRITS

- Do you believe in spiritual warfare? If we are unwilling to recognize (or unaware of) his prowling do you think it makes the devil’s job easier to get a foothold on us? What can we do to become more alert to the presence of evil forces in our lives and prepare a defense against such attacks?

SELF

- We are created beings made in the image of God. But we live in a fallen world so we must deal with the consequences of our bad choices. And sometimes we are our own worst enemy. How can the example of our biblical predecessors, like Paul, who sinned and struggled just like us, be used to frame and improve our own self-image?

- As created beings made in God's image, we are amazing specimens if you stop and think about it. What expert craftsmanship our Maker has that He masterfully formed our bodies to work in such perfect synchronicity so as to provide each area with exactly what it needs to keep us healthy and in motion. He knit us together and knows every hair on our head! Have you ever been able to make the connection to God's awesome love for us by reflecting on His careful attention to the complex nature in which our bodies function?

Conclusion

Paul asks the question wondering who can be against us when we follow Christ. The human condition reveals that there are many who do, who bring great struggles in this life. That said, there are countless ways in which God demonstrates that He is for us, connecting our current struggles to our eternal victory. Forgiveness, grace, mercy and love, name a few divine gifts. The greatest of all is, of course, the unwavering love He showered upon us when not even His own Son was spared for the benefit of our salvation. The cross is the unspeakable, indescribable proof that God is for you. When you truly receive all that entails, you cannot remain as you are. May all His people be compelled with an unfaltering desire to live a life that honors the One who always has their back.

None of this phases us because Jesus loves us. Romans 8:37 (The Message)

But in all these things we are completely victorious through God who showed his love for us. Romans 8:37 (NCV)