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Series: Romans: The Just Shall Live by Faith
Message: Questions – Answers

Transcribed Message
August 8, 2021
Romans 8:31-34

There was a commercial a few years ago that showed people in different settings and they were asking lots of questions almost to the point of annoyance of the people around them. Whatever the setting was, there was someone firing one question after another after another after another. Then the commercial cuts to a different scene to the doctor's office. Maybe this commercial was made by the AMA or maybe some doctors association because it cuts to the doctor's office and the person is sitting there and the exam is evidently over and the doctor asks do you have any questions. They just sit there. No. Stone silence. Not a word. Not a question comes to mind. It just reminds us of how valuable, how important, how powerful questions can be. Questions help us to learn. Questions help us to process different things that might be going on in our lives. Questions help us think through challenging circumstances and so very often it is good to ask questions.

The apostle Paul, who is not just a good teacher but he was a great teacher, he loves to ask questions. I didn't go through and count, but if you went through the book of Romans just to where we are right now, you would be shocked about how many questions the apostle Paul raises and asks and answers as he goes through the teaching that we've gotten to this point. and so that's what he's going to do again this morning. In this section, this 8th chapter where we've been talking about the development of the doctrine of suffering, is there any time in our life when there are more questions than when we're going through hard and difficult times. It seems then that we ask lots of questions. This morning, having the assurance of a forever salvation changes everything. It truly does. It changes everything about the way you live and even changes the way you die. We have this wonderful assurance.

Let's begin with a review. I want to step back in to what we talked about last Sunday in this review because I want you to see the relationship between eternal life

and this matter of eternal security and the issue of assurance. The very first thing I want you to see again is what we touched on last week. Eternal life is God's business. Eternal life is God's business. He's done everything that needs to be done in order for us to be saved, in order for us to be kept in this salvation. What is it after all that He has delivered us from? It is sin. He has delivered us from sin. What is that people think can cause them to lose their salvation? Sin. And yet this whole matter has been resolved. That's why Jesus said it's finished. Not 99.9%. Not everything but this one category. Eternal life, eternal security is God's business irrespective of whether I understand and know that or not. Irrespective of whether I feel that or not. Eternal life, eternal security is a settled matter. I think it would be so disingenuous for God 52 times, as we said last week, in the New Testament to talk about the fact that He gifted us with eternal life and then at the end of it all it turns out to not really be eternal life. I say to you again. Eternal life is God's business.

The other part of that – assurance. Assurance is my believing what God has said. There is a difference between eternal life, eternal security, and the matter of assurance. Eternal life is God's business. Assurance is my taking God at His word. Now my feelings do come into play. Now my emotions are part of the equation. Now my understanding of God's truth is a part of this and how it's factored in. My experience is a part of this whole matter of assurance. I look at it like this. I see three possibilities. I think everybody here this morning falls into one of these three categories.

You can be secure but not sure. You can be secure but not sure, so that you are in fact saved. If you have put your faith and trust in Christ alone, God has given you the gift of eternal life. You are saved. You may not have assurance. We're not going to take the time to go into all the reasons why people do not have assurance. There is a whole page that I could've given you as to why people don't have assurance. Sometimes it's as simple as they were taught that they couldn't have assurance. They were just taught something different than I think the Bible teaches in that regard. But doubt in that person's mind and heart rules. They're saved. They just don't realize the salvation that God has provided.

A second group is those who can be sure but they're not secure. They're sure but they're not secure. What does that mean? That's the person who's thinking that good

works are going to get them to heaven. They're quite confident that their good works are going to get them to heaven. If you ask them, how are you going to get to heaven, they'll have a list for you of all the things that they're doing to get to heaven. They're very sure but they're just not secure. That points us to the importance of the gospel. It points us to clarity in the presentation of the gospel. This is why we have to be absolutely clear as to what the gospel is so that we don't have people who are sure but they're not secure. We've got hundreds and thousands of people in churches all across America who are quite sure they're going to heaven because they'll tell you all the good things they're doing. But they're not secure.

If I could just step into this for a moment, parents, this is why this is so important in how you understand and present the gospel to your children. Getting your children to ask Jesus into their heart is not necessarily the gospel. I know it's a language and a familiarity with which we address and talk to children, but I think we have to be very careful when we talk to children because that's not the gospel. The gospel is our children understanding sin. The gospel is our children understanding who Jesus is, what He's done, what His death means to them, their understanding of sin. All of those things have to be a part of that. We need to be constantly vigilant as parents and grandparents that we're not simply getting our children to follow a traditional mantra that exists in the church to invite Jesus into your heart.

What we can do is we can make people sure who aren't secure, because they've never confronted and heard and believed the gospel. You can be secure and you can be sure. That's the best place. You can be sure and you can be secure. You can be saved and know it. How many of you know this song? How many of you know where I'm going with this? If you're saved and you know it, say amen. And that is a good thing to amen. Here's the thing. God wants you to be sure. That's what we are looking at this morning. God wants you to be sure.

We're going to step into five unanswerable questions after we just looked at five really remarkable, undeniable affirmations. We're not going to get all the way through all five, but we'll get through most of them. The five undeniable affirmations were that God has foreknown us. He has set His love upon us. He has predestined us. He has committed our destiny to be like Christ. He has called us. He has justified us. He has

glorified us. Following that affirmation. Verse 31. "What then shall we say to these things?" Since God is for me I can be absolutely certain. That's what he wants us to see in this 31st verse. If God is for me I can be absolutely certain. I could be absolutely certain for two reasons.

The first one is the love of the Father. I can be absolutely certain first of all because of the love of the Father. The very first thing Paul does in the 31st verse is he raises the issue of these things. What then shall we say to these things? That's not one of the five questions. That's the introduction to the five questions. We want to say back to Paul at this point Paul, what things are you talking about? He's going to ask us questions. We're going to come right back and say Paul, what are you talking about?

We read in verse 31 – What then shall we say to these things? I think we can answer that question this way. "These things" first of all clearly have to be connected with the preceding passage. He just finished this amazing declaration in verse 28 to 30. When he starts off verse 31 and says what then shall we say to these things, he has to have in mind the things that he has just talked about. We're in the high point of Romans. This 8th chapter. We just stepped off of the highest peak of verses 28 through 30 that we've been to so far. He has to be pointing us back to these things that he has talked about in terms of the eternal purposes of God. If your heart is ever going to be steeled against doubt, then it's what we find in these verses. If you're going through a time of suffering, remember this whole chapter is wrapped in the context of suffering. If you're going through a time of suffering and hardship and heartache and he just reminded us of the eternal purposes of God in verses 28 through 30. When he starts off this 31st verse and says don't forget about these things, you immediately go back to verses 28 to 30, but I don't think you have to stop there. These things that he is talking about I think could very well be the whole 8th chapter. We don't have to just stop at verses 28 to 30 when he says don't forget about the things that I've been talking about. I think he could very easily have in mind the whole 8th chapter. Remember he starts off the 8th chapter with there is therefore now no condemnation. He's going to end the 8th chapter with there's no separation either. You've got in four words the whole of the book of Romans. There is no condemnation and there's no separation either. That's basically the whole

book of Romans in four words. He could very easily have us be thinking “these things” are verse 28 to 30 for sure but they are all of chapter 8.

But why stop there? I think there's a possibility here, and many Bible teachers argue this, that you don't stop even at chapter 8. You go all the way back to the beginning of the book, that very likely Paul has in mind the entire epistle to this point. All the things that he's talked about. Go back to chapter 1. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God's salvation, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed. The just shall live by faith. From that point on it's just been one high point after another.

Here is how to wrap it all up. This is what it is all saying. Whether it is verses 28 through 30, whether it is all of chapter 8, or whether it's chapter 1 through chapter 8, all of them are saying God is for me. God is for me. God is for me. When you think about meditating on Scripture, God is for me. God is for me. God is for me. That's what he is doing here. That's what he launches us into with regard to the love of the Father which brings us to our first question.

The end of verse 31. “What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?” In my mind, as we go through these four questions, there is a sense in which each of these five questions (we'll look at four) can be answered. It's almost like Paul goes outside and he goes to the highest point that he can and he just throws these questions out to the world. He goes: If God is us, who can be against us? It's a rhetorical question. The answer is obvious. But we press into it. That is true. If God is for us, who can be against us? We are absolutely secure and we are absolutely secure because who is this God? Who is this God? The immediate answer is He's the God who set His love upon me before I was even born. He is the God who determined my destiny before I was even born. He was the God who called me when I was born. He's the God who justified me at the moment of belief and faith and trust. He is the God who has already glorified me. He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the God who is infinite and eternal. He is the God who is omniscient and omnipotent and everywhere present. The list goes on and on. That's what Paul wants us to do here. He wants us to be stopped dead in our

tracks. He wants us to think about the fact that the creator God has said if I'm for you, who could possibly be against you?

When he asked that second part of the question who can be against us, what does Paul expect us to answer? Let me ask you a question since we're asking questions today. Can anyone be against us? Now don't answer right away. Just think about that for a moment. Can anybody be against us? All of God's people said yes... and no. okay. I think this time the yeses have it because he didn't ask can anybody overcome us. Can anybody be victorious over us? He said can anybody be against us. The answer has to be yes. A 1000 times yes, people can be against us.

We read in 1 John chapter 2 the apostle John says we know we have three enemies right out of the gate. The world is against us. Do you think the world loves you? Do you think the world is wanting to embrace you and your values? They mock you. They hate you. They have no regard for you. That's the world. Of course the world is against us. If they're not, we need to be looking in the mirror and saying who are we that they're not even against us. Our own flesh. Romans 7:6-7. The things I want to do I don't do. The things I don't want to do, I do. Our own flesh can be in opposition to us. Then of course the devil himself. All of those things work against us, but it doesn't stop there.

You might have a boss that is against you. He makes your life hard and you can't wait to not go to work tomorrow, but you have to anyway. You can have a coworker that is against you. you can have a neighbor that's always causing trouble and opposing you. Sadly, some of you know what it's like to have a spouse who is against you in your desire to walk with God. Children can be against us. Parents can be against us. The list is similar to the first one. There are lots of ways that we can be opposed. What's the point of it all?

The point of it all is this. If God is for us, who can be against us? if God is for us, then one plus God always equals victory. One plus God always is the majority. It doesn't matter who or what is in opposition to us. God is for us. That's the point he is making. It takes us to the story remember in the Old Testament 2 Kings chapter 6. Elisha and his servant is in the city and the Syrian army surrounds them. The Syrian king has finally figured out that Elisha is the guy who is causing him all the trouble. He

sends an army and they're stationed around the city. Remember the servant goes out and he looks and he's struck with fear. Elisha says God, open this guy's eyes. Open his eyes and let him see what's really out there. God opened his eyes and he sees the armies of heaven between them and the army of Syria. That's what Paul is saying here. If God is for us, it doesn't matter who's against you. Reason number one we can be certain is the love of the Father.

Reason number two we can be certain is the work of the Son. The work of the Son. We come to verse 32. "He who did not spare His own Son." I want to bring to you two things and the first thing I want you to see is this matter of divine intervention. Divine intervention. When I read that phrase "he who did not spare his own son", tell me what Old Testament story comes to mind. Abraham in Genesis 22. You read that and you think it brings to mind an Old Testament story. Abraham was asked to sacrifice his only son. He willing to do it. He did not hold back. He was willing to not spare his only son. I am positive that the Holy Spirit, when Paul wrote these words, brought that in the background of Paul's mind that Abraham was asked to do this incredibly hard thing. One of the hardest things you'll read anywhere in the Bible. Abraham was asked to do that and he did not spare, he was willing, he was prepared to offer Isaac.

When the Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures were translated into the Greek language because so many Jewish people could no longer read Hebrew, they translated the Old Testament Scriptures into Greek. The translators took this same word from Romans 8 to translate the story in Genesis 22. He did not spare his son. Why didn't he spare his son? Because God intervened and provided another way. There is in that part of the story divine intervention, but here's what I want you to see.

The other part of that is divine intention. Divine intention. The negative is He didn't spare His Son. The positive is that He gave Him up for us all. I read that. He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all. I sense in those words, I feel in those words, I see in those words the preciousness of the relationship between the Father and Son. That is a part of this revelation. The love relationship between the Father and the Son. At Jesus's baptism. the voice of the Father. This is My Son. This is My only Son. This is my beloved Son. I am well pleased in Him. Here's what we need to

see. The Father held nothing back – so great is His love for you. He held nothing back. He held nothing back. It was divine intention. He gave up His Son.

Another way to translate that verb is He delivered Him up. Listen. Here's what you see in the unfolding of the story of the cross. This expression “he who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all”. It's the same word that is used of Judas delivering up Jesus to the religious leaders. The Father gave up the Son. In a similar way, Judas gave up the Son. It's used of the religious leaders who gave up Jesus, delivered Jesus to Pilate. It's used of the Jewish people who gave up, delivered Jesus to be crucified. But that doesn't even begin to touch what we read in Acts 2 with regard to the divine intention, because in Acts 2 and verse 23: “this Jesus delivered up.” Same exact word. This Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God you crucified by the hands of lawless men. But it was divine intention. It was determined in eternity past that God the Father would send His Son and He would literally deliver His Son in payment for our sin. What flows out of this picture is then the greatest blessing ever given because the promise that follows is the promise of all things.

Look at the second question at the end of verse 32. He (the Father) who did not spare His Son (Jesus) but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things.” What's the principal here? The principle is He has given you the greatest that He could possibly give. He's given you His Son. There isn't anything that comes close to that. It's the greatest to everything after that being the lesser. If He's given us the greatest, why in all the world would we wonder if He would give us the lesser?

“All things” here are not your wish list. It's not anything that you want. It's so sad that because of the prevalence of false teaching in the church, it's so sad that in the exposition of the Word that you actually have to stop and address the idea that the “all things” here isn't for you just to get out your wish list and ask God for a Lamborghini. But that's where we are. There's so many who come to every phrase like this in the Bible and they rip it out of its context. They tell people that God wants to give you anything you want because after all that's who He is. He's a rich Father. He is some of those

things, but it is also a distortion. This is not prosperity gospel. This is not let's make a wish.

You want to see why that's not the case? Just read verse 35. Verse 35 goes into a description of a really hard life, so it isn't all prosperity gospel. In fact, it is not that in any way. It is this. All things are the infinite riches of His Son. That's what it is. The "all things" are the infinite riches of His Son. Just let that sink in. All things that He has given us are the infinite riches of His Son. It's who you are in Christ. It's your position in Christ. It's all the blessings that flow into your life as a result of being adopted into God's family. It's Ephesians 1. He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

The phrase that you read in this verse "how will He not also with Him". That is the emphatic position in the Greek text. He's emphasizing that all of this comes to us from Him, with Him. We have the Son. We have this staggering promise. Remember in John 15, Jesus said greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. That is the greatest measure of love. A willingness to give your very life. Jesus did that. God says to us having done that for you, having given you My Son, you now possess all of the riches that are available in Christ. You won't lack for anything if your heart is centered on the right things. You might lack the things of this world, but the things of this world are not how we measure the riches of life. Another distortion. it is a statement of security, my friends. We are certain, we are sure because of the love of the Father and because of the work of the Son.

Notice secondly, since God is for me, the accuser will fail. Since God is for me, the accuser will fail. In verses 33 and 34, we look at question number three. In verse 33, we know who the who is. Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? Verse 34. Who is to condemn? The "who" is none other than the accuser. We know who is the who. The who is Satan. Revelation talks about the fact that he's the accuser. We'll look at that in just a minute. He's the enemy of God. He is the enemy of God's people. He is the enemy, the destroyer. He's a liar and a deceiver from the beginning. He hates you. He hates this church. He hates the church of Jesus Christ. He wants to do anything he can to sow seeds of destruction in our lives. That's who he is. That's what he's about. That is his business, his business model. That's what he wants for every one of us. He

wants to destroy you as a person. He wants to destroy you if you're married. He wants to destroy you if you're single. He wants to destroy your testimony, your walk with Christ. He wants to destroy your marriage. He wants to destroy your family. This is who Paul is talking about here. Who is going to bring a charge against God's elect? We know who that is. We also know his tactics.

Notice secondly, we know his tactics. Question number four. Verse 34. Who is to condemn? Who is to condemn? Who is going to bring a charge against God's elect? Who is to condemn? It's like a scene out of a courtroom. That's what Paul wants us to do here. He wants us to step into a courtroom. In every courtroom there is an accuser. There is a protagonist. Somebody is pressing the case. Satan is, as we have said, the accuser. Revelation chapter 12 and verse 9: "And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent who was called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. He was thrown down to the earth and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, 'Now the salvation and the power of God and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come. The accuser of our brothers has been thrown down who accuses them day and night before our God.'" That is what he does. It's his *modus operandi*. He is the accuser.

This takes us to the story of Job, doesn't it? In chapter 1 verse 9, there is this interplay between Satan and God. Basically Satan says to God, You know why Job loves You so much. God, I don't know if You're aware of this, but he loves You so much because You pay him off. You've blessed his life to such an extent that how would he not love You. he basically accused Job being a paid lover. God said no, you don't know the heart of Job. Let Me show you. Satan was there as an accuser.

But here's the good news. Whatever accusations Satan can bring against us, God is fully aware of those. There's nothing hidden in anybody's closet that God is going to be surprised about. There isn't anything that God doesn't know about any of us. That's why it's so sad when the accuser, the deceiver, the liar convinces somebody that they're so bad that they think they couldn't ever be loved by God. It is just the opposite of the truth. He's the accuser of the brethren. But notice it is God who justifies at the end of that statement. We'll come back to that in just a minute. But he's also a condemner. He's an accuser. One of Satan's favorite tactics is to get us to fall into the pit of self-

condemnation. He's accusing us and reminding us of this and that and the other thing and then depending on how effective that is, he loves to come to us and through our thought life, he loves to say to us who in the world do you think you are? Do you think that God would love you? Look at you. Look at what just happened. Look at your past. What kind of future do you think you'll have? He loves to do that. He loves to cause us to doubt. He loves to cause us to call into question God's ability to even forgive us. You don't deserve this. All kinds of accusations that weigh people down in defeat because what is it that Satan ultimately wants to do? If he has already lost you to the gospel and to salvation, he wants to constantly stir and cause you to doubt that salvation so that there is no joy in your salvation. That's why he is an accuser and a condemner.

But listen. This is the good news. We have a defender. We have a defender and He's never lost a case. I don't know how many lawyers can say they've never lost a case, especially if they've practiced for very long. He's never lost a case. Here's the really, really good news. He has a law office here on earth and He's got another law office up in heaven. We've read about the law office here on earth in Romans 8, right? We have the Holy Spirit who intercedes for us. He is right here with us. He lives within us and is constantly making intercession for us. But we have also an intercessor who is in heaven and He's manning the law office in heaven. He's defending us as well. Look at how He does that. That 33rd verse. Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? He points us to the cross. He points us to the cross. Christ Jesus is the one (verse 34) who died, more than that, who was raised, is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. He takes us right to the cross. He takes us right to the place where my sins have been paid for. He takes us back to Romans 5:1 – therefore having been justified by faith, having been declared righteous before God, I have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jump in to Romans 8 again. There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ. What we have here is Paul picking out of these five undeniable affirmations of verses 28 through 30. Which one does he pick out for us to hold onto in the face of the accuser? He picks out this matter of our justification. He picks out the fact that we have been justified. The focus of our justification in this verse is of the one who justifies, who is at the right hand of God. It is the one who has justified us. God.

When did God justify you? He justified you at the moment of belief. He called you. He opened your eyes. He gave you understanding. You responded in faith and believed, and at that moment you were justified.

Tell me a little something about yourself at that moment of time. If you won't, I'll just read it out of the Bible. I'll include myself. What were we like? We know what we were like. We were ungodly. We were sinful. We were the enemies of God. We cared nothing about Him or His Son. We could go on. The list goes on and on and on. When we were justified, He knew everything about us and He loved us anyway. This is why this passage screams to us you are secure because God loves you. he knows everything about you. there's nothing that you're going to do that is going to surprise Him and cause Him to say I changed my mind. You don't really have eternal life. You had it just for a little while. No, you have it and you have it forever.

Look at what he said. Jesus rose from the dead. He rose from the dead and validated what He did on the cross. He ascended and He is seated at the right hand of the Father, the highest place of honor that there is. He presently intercedes for us. right now He is interceding for us. I say to you, my friends, having the assurance of a forever salvation changes everything about the way you live life today, and it changes even how it is that you will face death itself. You can do so because God is for you.

What do we take away? We know we can't eliminate all the problems, dangers, pain, and suffering of life. That's what this whole chapter is about. We can trust in the God who promises to keep us forever. That we can do. In the midst of these things which we so often have no control over, we can do the one thing that God enables us to do by His grace. Trust Him and trust Him alone. Here's the promise. The promise is whosoever will may come. Whosoever will may come. If you've never put your trust and faith in Jesus as your Savior, this morning is the best time to do it, right now is the best time to do it. God says whosoever will may come. He says whosoever believes on the Lord Jesus Christ will be saved. He says whosoever comes and whosoever believes will be given the gift of eternal life.

Let's pray. Father God, this is again the steadfastness of Your Word and of Your truth that causes our hearts to rejoice in Your provision, Your grace and mercy, Your kindness, Your goodness. This glorious gospel of Your grace, Father, thank You. Thank

You, Jesus. Thank You, Holy Spirit, for opening our eyes to these things. I pray even now, Father, someone that is listening by livestream, someone who is here this morning will put their faith and trust in Jesus as their Savior and receive forgiveness from their sin and the gift that is eternal life. We pray in Jesus's name, amen.