

"It Is Well With My Soul"

Assurance

How to Cultivate a Confident Life

*Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.*

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

(Romans 8:31-34)

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Monday:

- (1) Read "Day 1: Blest Assurance"
- (2) Answer Questions for "Day 1"
- (3) Memorize Romans 8:31-34
- (4) Memorize Stanza of "It Is Well With My Soul."

Tuesday:

- (1) Read "Day 2: The Security of God's Children"
- (2) Answer Questions for "Day 2"
- (3) Memorize Romans 8:31-34
- (4) Memorize Stanza of "It Is Well With My Soul."

Wednesday:

- (1) Read "Day 3: Sovereign Grace Reigns"
- (2) Answer Questions for "Day 3"
- (3) Memorize Romans 8:31-34
- (4) Memorize Stanza of "It Is Well With My Soul."

Thursday:

- (1) Read "Day 4: The Courtroom: Debt Paid"
- (2) Answer Questions for "Day 4"
- (3) Memorize Romans 8:31-34
- (4) Memorize Stanza of "It Is Well With My Soul."

Friday:

- (1) Read "Day 5: The Courtroom: Judgment Pronounced"
- (2) Answer Questions for "Day 5"
- (3) Memorize Romans 8:31-34
- (4) Memorize Stanza of "It Is Well With My Soul."

Saturday:

- (1) Read "Supplement: Charles Spurgeon on Assurance"
 - (2) Answer Questions for "Bonus: Supplement"
 - (3) Memorize Romans 8:31-34
 - (4) Memorize Stanza of "It Is Well With My Soul."
 - (5) Write a Testimony: Choose one of the truths learned from the lesson and explain how you personally experienced that truth in your life during the week.
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1. Day 1: Blest Assurance

- (1) What is the two-fold assault brought against the Christian in the spiritual warfare?
- (2) What are the two natures united together in the Person of Jesus Christ? Explain.
- (3) How does the work of Christ assure the Christian of certain victory?

2. Day 2: The Security of God's Children

- (1) Explain the plan of God in salvation as described in Rom. 8:29 and 30.
- (2) Explain the two categories organized by Paul as stated in Rom. 8:31.
- (3) Explain the type of argument Paul uses in Rom.8:32-34.

3. Day 3: Sovereign Grace Reigns

- (1) What does "sovereign grace" mean?
- (2) Who are the recipients of sovereign grace?
- (3) Name some of the enemies of sovereign grace which have attacked you.

4. Day 4: The Courtroom: Debt Paid

- (1) Describe the five characteristics of the courtroom as explained in the introduction.
- (2) What problem is the Advocate resolving?
- (3) How does Jesus Christ solve that problem?

5. Day 5: The Courtroom: Judgment Pronounced

- (1) What is the meaning of justification?
- (2) How does a sinner receive justification?
- (3) What happens to the enemy who try to accuse the justified sinner of condemnation?

6. Bonus: Supplement

Why is the blood of Christ necessary in order to be justified with God?

The Scripture Frame

Romans 8:31-34

(These notes are to be used in conjunction with the daily studies)

(31a) The Challenge: What Conclusion Can be Drawn from Verses 29 and 30?

31 What shall we then say to these things?

(31b) The Proposition: Sovereign Grace Reigns Supreme

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

(32-34) The Argument: An Examination in a Court of Law

(32) The Debt is Paid: Christ Crucified - freely giving us all things

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

(33a) The Accusers are Silenced: Who Shall Charge God's Elect?

33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?

(33b) The Judge has Sentenced: God Has Justified

It is God that justifieth.

(34a) The Accusers are Silenced: Who Shall Condemn God's Elect?

34 Who is he that condemneth?

(34b) The Debt is Paid: Christ Crucified - making intercession for us

It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Day 1: Blest Assurance

*Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.*

Introduction: Christianity helps us to face the "war", even when we do not like fighting the "battles". Describing the Christian life in terms of a warfare may sound rather pessimistic, yet we are not only warranted to use this analogy from the Word of God, but we are also witnesses through personal experience. The battles we fight are many with varying degrees of danger. However, the war we face is one with absolute assurance of victory. We may learn two important lessons from the second stanza of our hymn, "It Is Well With My Soul."

I. A Warfare of Casualties. "Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come." (1) The Nature of the Warfare. There is a two-fold assault brought against the Christian. First, temptation, which is the deceptive allurements to partake of something unlawful or unprofitable. This is the modus operandi of Satan wherein the Christian is warned to "be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist stedfast in the faith." (1 Pet. 5:8,9) Second, trials, which are the providential testings that bring resistance to the Christian's advancement in life. Such trials are purposed to strengthen the spiritual "muscles" which can only be accomplished through resistance. "There hath no [trial] taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be [tried] above that ye are able; but will with the [trial] also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1 Cor. 10:13) (2) The Limitations of the Warfare. Although there are casualties in the Christian ranks, yet there is never a spiritual fatality. Jesus advised His disciples to "fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul..." (Matt. 10:28) The believer in Christ is secured by grace so that we may testify with Paul, "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life...shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:28-39)

II. A Strategy of Conquest. "Let this blest assurance control..." God has guaranteed the victory by "giving to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." (1 Jn. 5:11) This strategic plan is centered in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. (1) His Person. "Christ has regarded my helpless estate", because "though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich." (2 Cor. 8:9) The Creator became one with His creation, yet His divine nature remained unmingled with His human nature, being one unique and distinguished Person. Unless Jesus is absolutely God, He would be unable to save us; unless He is completely man, He would be unqualified to save us. (2) His Work. "And hath shed His own blood for my soul." He came to this earth in order to redeem His people. This is why we "give thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins...and you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in His sight." (Col. 1:12-14)

Day 2: The Security of God's Children

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." - Romans 8:31-34

Introduction: It is natural for a child in his underdeveloped life to entertain fears and doubts about the daunting and intimidating world around him. This is equally true for a child of God. There are many things to unsettle a Christian, not least of which is the insecurity of his salvation, experienced at different times and with fluctuating degrees of uncertainty.

I. The Challenge. Paul said, "What shall we then say to these things?" He had been explaining in verses 29 and 30 how God had completed His plan of salvation before He made the world. Foreknown unto God are all things that shall come to pass, because He has ordained all things that will come to pass according to His eternal counsel. Before bringing us into the world, He predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His Son. Upon our exit from the world, He glorifies us to be perfected in His Son. Between birth and death, He then ties together the string of time by giving to His people spiritual life through regeneration and granting His people a new legal standing through Justification. Thus, the Christian has a permanent right to be a child of God through a spiritual birth and by a legal adoption. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." (Gal. 4:4-7) What more need be added to strengthen the assurance of our eternal security?

II. The Proposition. With a resounding voice of bold and confident conviction, Paul concludes, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" It is as if the apostle took a survey of the world and organized the facts into two categories. In the first group, he includes the world of nature as a thing proceeding from and depending on God; the wicked works of Satan and his demonic host; the sinfulness and misery of man as he suppresses and perverts his innate knowledge of God; and the consequential judgment of death pronounced against sinners. In the second group, he includes the Creator who upholds all things by the power of His Word; the vanquishing of Satan by the victory of Christ; the redemption of sinful man by the blood of Christ; and death, the last enemy to be destroyed by Christ. After careful examination, it was Paul's deduction that "if God be for us, none can be against us!"

III. The Argument. However, lest his conclusion be dismissed as an unfounded opinion of unrealistic or delusional assumptions, he goes on to argue the case as in a court of law. He contends the debt of the sinner has been paid in full: "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?...It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." What is the verdict? "It is God that justifieth." The Divine Judge has pronounced a sentence of "not guilty" as a result of Christ's sacrifice and substitutionary work. If this is true, then "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?...Who is he that condemneth?" All accusers are silenced because God has passed the final sentence!

Day 3: Sovereign Grace Reigns!

"If God be for us, who can be against us?"—Rom. 8:31

Introduction: "Sovereign Grace" is an expression that is seldom used by Christians today. This is regrettable since the believer's entire life with God in Christ hinges on the truth behind the words. What then, do we mean by the terms? Grace is an essential perfection of the Godhead that guarantees all honour and glory belongs to Him. When the Lord extends His grace to the creation, it is His unmerited favour to creatures whose existence and all things therein are entirely dependent upon Him. For, "all things were created by [Christ], and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." (Col. 1:16,17) It is for this reason He "upholds all things by the Word of His power." (Heb. 1:3) All creation owes not only its existence to the sovereign grace of God, but its allegiance and subjection to "King of glory". Consider:

I. The God of Sovereign Grace. "If God..." Part of the difficulty in not sufficiently understanding the sovereign grace of God is not truly knowing the God of sovereign grace. We think of the Lord as a creature confined to the same boundaries and subject to the same limitations as ourselves. However, Scripture declares that Christ is the "King of kings and Lord of lords!" (Rev.19:16) For God has said, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure...yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." (Is. 46:9-11) So may we say, "Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee." (Jere. 32:17) Thus, when we learn that He is the "God of all grace" (1 Pet. 5:10) and that He reigns on a "throne of grace" (Heb. 4:16) then we know why He has "saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus." (2 Tim. 1:9) It is now our joy to sing, "Salvation belongeth unto the LORD: Thy blessing is upon Thy people. Selah." (Ps. 3:8)

II. The Recipients of Sovereign Grace. "...be for us..." The LORD God extends His sovereign grace to all creation: For the "heavenly Father feedeth [the birds]" and He "clothes the grass of the field" (Matt. 6:26,30) He extends His sovereign grace to the good and bad: For He "maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." (Matt 5:45) However, He extends His sovereign grace to His chosen people in a special way: For, "blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world...according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace." (Eph. 1:3-12)

III. The Enemies of Sovereign Grace. "...who can be against us?" The apostle makes a list in Romans 8:35-39: tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth and any other creature. He then draws this conclusion: none of these things "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord", yea, "in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." Truly, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?...It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."—Rom. 8:32,34b

Introduction: Sovereign grace has been declared: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Paul now supports the proposition with a concise argument in the form of a legal case. "The Lord, the righteous judge" presides on the bench. (2 Tim. 4:8) The evidence is presented: "for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God". (Rom. 3:23) The penalty is announced: "the wages of sin is death". (Rom. 6:23) The sinner stands condemned: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." (Rom. 1:18) There is, however, an advocate for the sinner: "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:" (1 Jn. 2:1) The problem to be resolved by the Advocate: If justice requires the sinner to suffer the penalty of death, how then can God "be just, and the justifier" of the ungodly? It is within this context Paul establishes the sovereign grace of God.

I. The Price. "It is Christ that died". This He voluntarily did in accordance with Divine justice. Justice is the pivot on which the scales of right and wrong are balanced. God is the righteous and just Lawgiver, meaning He not only establishes the law in righteousness, but faithfully upholds justice by administering judgment. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ez. 18:20) There is no escaping the judgment of God, "for His eyes are upon the ways of man, and He seeth all his goings. There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves." (Job 34:21) It matters not how much the sinner tries to forget or deny God's judgment, "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." (Heb. 9:27)

II. The Payment. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all...It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again." Divine justice requires the sinner to suffer the penalty of death, for he has earned the wages of sin. (Rom. 6:23) However, God has paid that price for the sinner by redeeming him with the blood of Christ: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold...but with the precious blood of Christ." (1 Pet. 1:18,19) For, "without shedding of blood, there is no remission" of sins. (Heb. 9:22) Therefore, the sinner is "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins." (Rom. 3:24) It is for this reason alone that "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 Jn. 1:9) We beseech you, "Be ye reconciled to God. For He hath made [Christ] to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. 5:21)

III. The Procurement. "How shall He not with Him also freely give us all things...Christ is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." And so, what great blessings has Christ purchased for His people? First, "all things" are freely given unto us, for the Father "has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1:3) Second, Christ is in heaven "making intercession for us", "seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed unto the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession...let us therefore come bodily unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. 4:14)

Day 5: The Courtroom: Judgment Pronounced

*"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?
It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" — Rom. 8:33,34a*

Introduction: Sovereign grace has been declared: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" The legal case has been argued: "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?...It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." What then is the final verdict of the Judge? And, are there any further accusations to be brought against the sinner once God has ruled in judgment?

I. The Judge has Sentenced. "It is God that justifieth." We have already examined the legal case wherein Christ is made a sacrifice for sin and thereby becomes a substitute for sinners. Based on this transaction, what is the pronouncement of God in the court of justice? Is it acceptable? Here is the conclusion to the matter: "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly...God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have now received the atonement." (Rom. 5:6-11) Justification is "the judicial act of God, in which He declares, on the basis of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, that all the claims of the law are satisfied with respect to the sinner." (L. Berkhof) It is not only possible for God to justify the sinner based on the person and work of Jesus Christ, it is most definite. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 8:1) How does a sinner receive justification? We know that "a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." (Gal. 2:16) Justification is a gift of God that must be received through faith.

II. The Accusers are Silenced. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Who is he that condemneth?" If God has justified the sinner based on the atoning work of Jesus Christ, then is there anything remaining that may be used by the enemy to condemn the justified believer? The answer is an emphatic no. No one is able to bring a charge against that person whom God has justified; no one is able to condemn that person whom God has freed. "For if by one man's offense death reigned by one [Adam]; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore, as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." (Rom. 5:17) "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (Jn. 3:17) When the thundering voice of God reverberates across the expanse of humanity, no creature is able to breathe out a whisper in opposition to the sovereign grace of God.

Supplement: Charles Spurgeon on Assurance

“Without the shedding of blood is no remission.” — Hebrews 9:22

This is the voice of unalterable truth. In none of the Jewish ceremonies were sins, even typically, removed without blood-shedding. In no case, by no means can sin be pardoned without atonement. It is clear, then, that there is no hope for me out of Christ; for there is no other blood-shedding which is worth a thought as an atonement for sin. Am I, then, believing in Him? Is the blood of His atonement truly applied to my soul? All men are on a level as to their need of Him. If we be never so moral, generous, amiable, or patriotic, the rule will not be altered to make an exception for us. Sin will yield to nothing less potent than the blood of Him whom God hath set forth as a propitiation. What a blessing that there is the one way of pardon! Why should we seek another?

Persons of merely formal religion cannot understand how we can rejoice that all our sins are forgiven us for Christ's sake. Their works, and prayers, and ceremonies, give them very poor comfort; and well may they be uneasy, for they are neglecting the one great salvation, and endeavouring to get remission without blood. My soul, sit down, and behold the justice of God as bound to punish sin; see that punishment all executed upon thy Lord Jesus, and fall down in humble joy, and kiss the dear feet of Him whose blood has made atonement for thee. It is in vain when conscience is aroused to fly to feelings and evidences for comfort: this is a habit which we learned in the Egypt of our legal bondage. The only restorative for a guilty conscience is a sight of Jesus suffering on the cross. “The blood is the life thereof,” says the Levitical law, and let us rest assured that it is the life of faith and joy and every other holy grace.

“Oh! how sweet to view the flowing
Of my Saviour's precious blood;
With divine assurance knowing
He has made my peace with God.”