

“Who Is to Condemn?” Romans 8:31-34

Author: Paul the apostle (a Roman citizen by birth), born to proclaim God’s gospel (Gal 1:15-17).

Date/Provenance: Late 50s AD (58-59). Written from Corinth on his third missionary journey.

Purpose: Systematic proclamation of the gospel that saves (Rom 1:16-17), Paul’s “Magnum Opus.”

- 31 – In light of the Golden Chain (v29-30), “What shall we say?” in response to this sovereign gift of God to His people? Given that God’s omnipotent power is perfectly overseeing all things to work for His glory and our good (v28), we must rejoice and acknowledge His complete Fatherly care. Indeed, “We are more than conquerors” (v37)! Though we seem to be conquered at times, we are united w/Christ (2 Cor 4:8-18).
 - App: Many enemies stand against God’s church, including the evil one (Eph 6:10-20), the world and our own sinful nature as well (1 Jn 2:15-17). However, who are our foes, compared with Almighty God? Being opposed by *Him* is a terrible thing (Heb 10:31, Nah 2:13, 3:5, Jer 50:31, Ezek 13:8-20, Prov 3:34, Mt 18:6, 1 Pet 5:5).
- 32 – The argument here is from the greater to the lesser. The Father has given us His own beloved Son (w/a humiliation from glory that we cannot even fully comprehend, see Jn 17:5, Phil 2:5-11). For God to give us all the rest of the cosmos is a glorious truth (Mt 5:5, Col 1:20, Rev 21:1-7) but far *less* significant than handing over His Son to the unjust brutality and cursed death of the cross (Gal 3:13, Jn 3:15-17, Acts 2:23, 1 Jn 4:9). Winslow: “not Judas, for money; not Pilate, for fear; not the Jews, for envy;—but the Father, for love!”
 - App: In this life, we face all sorts of afflictions and trials (all of creation and we ourselves “groan” with eager expectation of a sinless world to come, v 23-25). Though these things are real and weighty, they cannot ever possibly outweigh the gift of God in Christ Jesus (Mt 6:33, 2 Cor 4:17-18). We can *trust* in our faithful God for daily needs, knowing that He has provided more than we can even ask or imagine (Eph 3:20). We can pray “How long?” but at the same time we should certainly expect to return to the Lord with praise (Ps 13:1, 13:6, 1 Thess 5:16-18).
- 33 – God’s elect are sovereign saved from eternity (v28-29, Eph 1:3-4). How will any charge stand against them, given that they are united with God’s beloved Son, Jesus (Rom 5:12-19)? God the Father is the just judge and the justifier of sinners (Rom 3:21-26, 1 Jn 1:9). App: Accusations from Satan, conscience or others? Spurgeon on criticism... Rom 6:23!
- 34 – The Supreme Judge of the cosmos has spoken. There is no higher court of appeal (Ps 2:10-12, 58:11, Isa 11:3-4 Jn 5:22-23, Acts 17:31, Rev 19:16). Isa 50:7-8 speaks of the suffering servant, Jesus. Since *He* will not be condemned, then neither will those *in Him*.
 - Paul adds “More than that, who was raised.” This is not tacked on but essential to the gospel message. With His spotless sacrifice vindicated, Jesus *ever lives* to make intercession for His flock, saving “to the uttermost” (Heb 7:25, 1 Jn 2:1).
 - App: The gospel is centered on the work of Christ. He paid the full price of sin on the cross (Jn 19:30, Col 1:14, 2:13-14, 1 Pet 2:24, 1 Jn 2:2, Rom 8:1). “Justification is the article by which the church stands and falls.” (Martin Luther) It is an act of God (*monergism*) and rooted in His eternal counsel. To Him alone be glory (Ps 115:1)!