

A Lord's Day Snippet!

Sovereign Grace Baptist Church

Pastor Ron Rumburg

SBSS

525

1. O love that will not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
That in thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.
2. O Light that follows all my way,
I yield my flick'ring torch to thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
That in thy sunshine's blaze its day
May brighter, fairer be.
3. O Joy that seekest me thru' pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow thru' the rain
And feel the promise is not vain
That morn shall tearless be.
4. O cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be.

George Matheson (1842-1906)

The Majestic God Is for Us

“What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?”

Romans 8:31

There was a little girl once who was asked by her grandfather what the memory verse for her Sunday School Class was, and she replied, “If God be for us, you are up against it!” Although she quoted the verse wrongly, she preserved its sense.

There are two questions in this verse “What?” and “Who?” Please consider the question of “What?” “What shall we say to these things?” What could be said of what has been already said? This question releases the pent-up appreciation for the glory revealed already, and forthwith a stream of triumphant questions and answers are unleashed! Oh, the giving nature of God. In Him is unfathomable love as evidenced by the sacrificing of

His only begotten Son. God the Father was violently treated by sinful rebellious men; yet He provided His Lamb for sacrifice for those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; the objects of His choice by His sacrificial Lamb now have no condemnation; now are freed from the bondage of sin and death; now they have the spirit of life; now they are the sons of God by adoption; now they are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ; now they have all things working together for good; now they who were foreknown, predestinated, called, justified are glorified. What can we say about these things?

Please consider the question of “Who?” “If God be for us, who can be against us?” We shall consider this negatively and positively. *Negatively*, “who can be against us?” Here we look at the enemy first. Our greatest enemy is ourselves, our flesh. Augustine put it this way, “Lord, deliver me from my worst enemy, that wicked man myself.” This is an enemy who is against us. Paul was personally aware of this enemy, “For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing” (Rom. 7:18). Paul’s “flesh” is not yet glorified so it still has a connection to the present evil world. Paul still sins because sin dwells in him (7:17). He confessed: he does evil (7:19), sin dwells in him (7:20), and when he would do good he doess evil (7:21). The world we live in is an enemy, but we are not to love it. “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (1 John 2:15). When you are in enemy country be alert for there, you find, yes, you guessed it, enemies. Then there is the enemy called the devil. That loose lion seeking to devour you so resist him (1 Pet. 5:8-9). “He who made us knows more of us than Satan does; but, next to God, Satan is the best student of humanity” [Spurgeon]. The devil is a mighty enemy but not an almighty one, but our God is Almighty! The Lord controls this enemy as in the case of Job and His children in the faith. He is on God’s chain and therefore limited.

Positively, “If God be for us” or “Since God is for us.” Remember Paul did not say “what can be against us” but “who can be against us” for the hostile enemy is personal, but since God is for us, all opposition is defeated. “If” is not suggesting doubt but is revealing the foundation of victory. “In the last analysis there is no *against* within the orbit of the interests of the people of God” [John Murray]. Here Paul assures his readers of God’s invincible preservation. Yes, God is for us in His Triunity. *God the Father is for us* as the object of His grace. After all He would not be against His own children whom He has chosen. Therefore, “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth” (v. 33). Who has the authority to indict those the Almighty Father has acquitted? Anyone who brings to court any charges seeking to injure one of the Father’s children who were chosen in Christ, given to Christ, and adopted into His family must face Him. Why? “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him give us all things” (Rom. 8:32)? Paul’s grounds for stating that God the Father is going to give us everything is because He has already sacrificed His Son in

our place. God the Father is not going to put one of His sheep on trial for whom the debt for their sins has already been paid in full.

God the Son is for us having satisfied once and for all our sin debt. Since this is true, “Who is he that condemneth” (v. 34)? In other words, “who will stand up in the court of heaven to condemn?” “Condemn” means stand as judge, and here before the holy almighty God! Consider this especially in the light of “It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again” (v. 34), that is He is the accepted perfect sacrifice who has gained the eternal victory. Not only so, He “is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” (v. 34). Not only is the criminal sin debt paid off forever, but this Saviour is at the Father’s right hand making intercession “for us” or “in our behalf.” Now in the light of this “who shall separate us from the love of Christ” (v. 35)? Who can rival Christ’s love? Who can cut us off from His love? Then Paul uses some possible examples: “shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword” (v. 35).

God the Holy Spirit is for us. “As it is written” (v. 36) refers to the Word of God which is the direct result of the guidance and inspiration of the Spirit. Jesus said, “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth ... for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (John 14:16-17). The Comforter provides the following account, “For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter” (Rom. 8:36). By the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we are led through all our trials so they cannot separate us from the love of Christ.

Paul then says, “Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us” (v. 37). Literally, we are super conquerors through the loving Christ. He makes us overwhelmingly victorious or preeminent conquerors! Jesus could say to His own, “be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). Paul identifies himself with certainty. He said, “For I am persuaded (convinced)” (v. 38), “that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (vv. 38-39).

Scottish preacher George Matheson (1842-1906) lost his sight in early youth. He wrote the hymn above on the occasion of some extreme mental distress. He wrote it while his family was away at a wedding on the evening of June 6, 1882. “O love that wilt not let me go.”