

## Romans 8. 29-39. Nassau. 15 April 2015.

Although I looked with you at verse 28 of Romans 8 last Wednesday, for the sake of continuity we begin this evening with reading the *whole* of the passage from verse 28 to the close of the chapter ...

But we know that to those who love God He works all things<sup>1</sup> together<sup>2</sup> for good, to those who are called according to His purpose.

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. And whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.<sup>3</sup>

What then shall we say to these things?

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

He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not with Him also freely give<sup>4</sup> us all things?

Who shall bring a charge against God's elect?

It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns?<sup>5</sup>

It is Christ Jesus who died, but rather is also raised up, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: 'For your sake we are being put to death all day long; we are reckoned as sheep for the slaughter'. No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

As we noted at the outset last Wednesday, the closing section of Romans 8, from verse 17 to verse 39,<sup>6</sup> was written to encourage and sustain the saints at Rome in the face of opposition, 'suffering',<sup>7</sup> and trials, and to do this by lifting their eyes to the certainty of a coming 'glory' which is out of all proportion to anything which the powers of this world or the powers of darkness could throw at them<sup>8</sup> – a prospect so 'glorious' indeed that, as we said then, the whole of creation can be said to stand on tiptoe, sighing for the time when it will have a share in it.<sup>9</sup>

And, should anyone be disposed to raise the objection, 'That's all very well, but what about the present?' – Paul introduces two other factors. First, in verses 26 and 27, the ministry of the Holy Spirit *within us*, both to help us and to intercede for us. And second, in verse 28 (which I considered with you last week) the providence of God *around us*. And you may recall that we ended by expressing the joy which it is to the Christian to know that our highest 'good' – our ultimate and eternal good – is God's sieve which He uses when permitting the 'all things' to enter our lives ... and that nothing – but nothing – happens to us outside of His control ... that He is never taken by surprise ... and He never makes mistakes.<sup>10</sup> No, you won't find the word 'Oops!' in God's dictionary!

When Paul says that God works all things for the good of those who love Him and who are called by Him, he views the believer first from the human standpoint, and second from the divine. I suppose you might say that these are two sides of the same coin.<sup>11</sup>

In the following two verses the apostle explains and amplifies what he means by being 'called according to' God's 'purpose'. Hence the connecting word 'for' with which he begins verse 29. And it is important for us to recognise that here the apostle is looking at the believer's spiritual experience and history – through its commencement, its course and its consummation – *only from God's viewpoint*. He is not looking here at any of this from the human standpoint, and he therefore makes no mention in verse 29 or verse 30 of any human response or action such as repentance, faith, practical sanctification, loving God or whatever.

And I want to emphasise that, as I understand it, nothing which we read here – or anywhere else in scripture – supports the teaching of some that God has predestined – has chosen – the mass of mankind to be damned.<sup>12</sup> Yes, of course, God chooses and appoints some to eternal life,<sup>13</sup> but, in spite of man's reasoning, He does not choose any for eternal destruction.<sup>14</sup> Scripture makes it clear that men perish because of their unbelief and rejection of God, and not on account of His predetermination – that is, the cause of their eternal doom lies in their own will and not in God's – that, in terms of His design, He prepared hell for the devil, and not for men.<sup>15</sup>

My Bible teaches me that the God I know 'is longsuffering towards men, not wishing ('not desiring') that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance'<sup>16</sup> ... that 'God our Saviour ... desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth'.<sup>17</sup> When He was here, my Lord made it clear that, if the inhabitants of Jerusalem – and the nation of Israel generally – would later suffer destruction and the judgement of God, *this* would come as a consequence of their own *rebellious* will, and in spite of His own *benevolent* will.<sup>18</sup>

But here, in our passage, Paul has very much in view the 'other side of the coin' – the divine viewpoint. For, paradoxical as it may seem, though men have only themselves to blame if they perish in their sins, we (God's people) bless and praise *Him* for our salvation from start to finish.

This latter aspect is, of course, only part of the complete picture, but, because of the circumstances in which he was writing, it is on this that the apostle wants the saints at Rome to concentrate ... 'Called according to His (God's) purpose', Paul says – which 'purpose' he proceeds to expand, pointing out that this calling – which is by His (God's) grace<sup>19</sup> and through His gospel<sup>20</sup> – that this calling which is, according to scripture, a high, a holy, and a heavenly calling<sup>21</sup> – that this calling forms the central link in the great chain of salvation, a chain of five links which might be said to bind together two eternities – extending, as it does, both backward into the dateless past, and forward into the never-ending future.

And it seems to me as if, having spoken of God's providential dealings on behalf of His people, the apostle is saying, 'and it is *not in the least* surprising that God should weave all things together for the good of His saints when we remember *who* and *what* they are'. For he immediately adds that they are (and have always been) the objects of a mind-blowing, eternal purpose and plan – a plan which, as we have seen, he traces out in five successive steps, stretching back long before the world began, when God brought His people into view and into focus,<sup>22</sup> and stretching on to a magnificent consummation in the everlasting ages to come, when they are glorified both *with* and *like* the Lord Jesus.

'For whom He foreknew', Paul says – and we recall that in both Testaments, 'knowledge' *sometimes* includes the idea of an intimate awareness and love, suggesting special favour,<sup>23</sup> – these, on whom therefore God has had His eyes before all time, 'He also predestined ('marked out beforehand'<sup>24</sup>) to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren'.

Well indeed do we sometimes sing:<sup>25</sup>

*A monument of grace, a sinner saved by blood,  
The streams of love I trace, up to their fountain, God;  
And in His sovereign counsels see,  
Eternal thoughts of love to me.*

How true! God had one altogether unique Son, and loved Him so much that He determined to have in heaven a vast company of others made just like Him,<sup>26</sup> every one of whom would be patterned after His 'image'. To be like Christ! Surely, it is impossible to imagine any destiny more glorious.

And that itself forms part of God's *ultimate* purpose that then He (the Lord Jesus) will be 'the firstborn' – will have the chief, the pre-eminent, place.<sup>27</sup> Not only *then* 'the firstborn' in creation,<sup>28</sup> in resurrection<sup>29</sup> and in dominion,<sup>30</sup> but 'the firstborn among many brethren ... among the 'many sons' whom, according to the writer to the Hebrews, God is bringing to glory, and whom the Lord Jesus is 'not ashamed' to call 'brethren'.<sup>31</sup>

And we note that the chain of God's 'purpose' concludes, not with our *present justification* (our being declared by God to be righteous in His sight), but with our *future glorification* – with a blessing and experience so sure and certain in the context of *God's* agenda that Paul uses a tense which speaks of it as good as done.<sup>32</sup> Rest assured, not one of God's true saints is going to miss any of his connections along the way!<sup>33</sup>

Here then we trace the commencement, the course, and the consummation of God's great programme of salvation, and the important point to note is that nothing – but nothing – can thwart God's purpose of eternal good for His people.

Paul introduces the final section of the chapter with a formula, 'What shall we say?' – which he uses no less than seven times in this letter.<sup>34</sup> In most instances, as here, he follows up *this* question by *another*, and often the second question requires a negative answer – here an emphatic and categorical answer of – 'no-one!'

To what conclusion, the apostle wants to know, does everything he has said so far drive us? 'What', Paul is asking, 'can we possibly say in response to all we have pondered?' – and pondered, I suggest, not only in the passage *immediately* before, but throughout 'the whole previous argument of the epistle'.<sup>35</sup>

Well, what *does* Paul say in response? Interestingly, in this verse (31) and the following four verses, he fires a barrage of six further questions – of six rhetorical questions – questions to each of which there is no answer.

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

Now, had Paul simply asked, 'Who is against us?' I suspect he wouldn't have been in the least surprised if he had been bombarded with answers. For he knew as well as any that Christians at the time faced a whole range of formidable foes arrayed against them. We have only to think, for example, of the catalogue of hardships and afflictions which he lists in verse 35 – not to speak of attacks from the Overlord of evil himself.<sup>36</sup>

But the apostle is careful to prefix his question with an all-important qualifying factor. Namely, that God – none less – has most certainly proved Himself to be 'for us'. And that changes everything. Because, instantly, all the opposition – from whatever quarter it comes – shrinks, and pales into insignificance. For no-one and nothing is on a par with God.

So that, when Paul threw down this particular gauntlet, no effective adversary was found to enter the lists against our glorious Champion. For all their very best efforts are doomed to failure ... because, as Paul says in effect, whoever and whatever is against *us* is against *God* ... and, in the final analysis, Omnipotence must win. The *creation* now suffers frustration,<sup>37</sup> but the Creator does not!

Well then did David say, 'when the Philistines seized him in Gath',<sup>38</sup> 'my enemies will turn back in the day when I call: this I know, for God is for me'.<sup>39</sup>

Truly, just as the sufferings of the present are of no account in comparison with our certain coming glory,<sup>40</sup> so any number of foes (whether human or demonic) are of no account in comparison with our Lord God Almighty.<sup>41</sup>

And surely the most conclusive proof that God is *for us* is that He 'did not spare His own Son,<sup>42</sup> but delivered Him up *for us*'. Given the shortage of time, I can only remind you briefly that it was the God who spared not the angels that sinned, who spared not the antediluvian world, and who spared not the ancient Egyptians ... that it was the God who once spared Abraham's son, and who once spared the great and sinful city of Nineveh ... that it was the same God who, in an act of sacrifice which cost Him most dearly, did not spare His own Son!

But who, as Paul adds, in contrast, 'delivered Him up for us all'. We might well reflect on the words of Octavius Winslow, 'one of the foremost evangelical preachers of the 19th Century',<sup>43</sup> 'Who delivered up Jesus to die? Not Judas, for money; not Pilate, for fear; not the Jews, for envy—but the Father, for love! ... In this great transaction we lose sight of His betrayers, and His accusers, and His murderers, and we see only the Father'.<sup>44</sup>

And now, Paul questions, not 'If God is for us, who can be against us?', but, 'if God *gave up* His own Son *for us*, what will He *keep back from us*'. He who withheld nothing from His Son by way of suffering and judgment on *our* account, isn't going to withhold anything from us by way of blessing and good on *His* account!

If, when we were still God's enemies, He gave us the Supreme Gift of His Son in death,<sup>45</sup> how much more, now when we are His children, will He give us all these lesser gifts – in the context of Romans 8, whether that of His Spirit,<sup>46</sup> of our adoption as sons,<sup>47</sup> of our hope of glory,<sup>48</sup> of our righteous standing before God,<sup>49</sup> of our eternal security<sup>50</sup> – or whatever?<sup>51</sup>

Then, in verse 33 and the first part of verse 34, Paul insists that, in God's courtroom, no charge can be made to stick, or verdict of condemnation to stand, against those who are God's chosen – who are God's choice (God's favoured) ones.

First, who, he asks, presumes to file any charges<sup>52</sup> against them? Any such accusations *can* come, of course, from the Christian's own conscience, from others around (and Paul himself was no stranger to being accused by his opponents of many things<sup>53</sup>), or from his Satanic Majesty himself – who, by the apostle John, is given the title, 'the accuser of our brethren'.<sup>54</sup>

But it is at least possible – and indeed I think quite likely – that, as he certainly does in verse 35, so here the apostle is *personifying* the sufferings and trials of life, that he might assure his readers that the very fiercest persecution and opposition will invariably fail to pin even one charge on them before God.

But whichever (man, devil or physical affliction), every accusing voice is silenced – every allegation thrown out of court.

And I was interested to find that, apart from its literal use in the context of ordinary human courts,<sup>55</sup> the word translated 'bring a charge against' occurs only once again in the entire Greek Bible. The other place is Zechariah 1 verse 4 in the Greek Old Testament, which reads, 'Be not like your fathers, whom the former prophets charged, saying, "Thus says the Lord Almighty, 'Turn from your evil ways and from your evil deeds': but they did not hear ..."'. There, frighteningly, it was *God* who was the accuser, and when it is God who lays the accusations, no voice can be raised in defence –

then 'every mouth' is well and truly 'stopped'.<sup>56</sup> But here where God's chosen ones are in view, no voice can be raised in accusation – there is no prosecuting counsel.

And, just as there is no accusation, so there is no condemnation.<sup>57</sup> In all probability with the words of the Servant of Jehovah in Isaiah 50<sup>58</sup> in his mind, the apostle adds, 'It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns?' Interestingly, that which Messiah (our Lord Jesus) says of Himself in prophecy, Paul does not hesitate to put into the mouth of the Christian.

Will any dare to condemn that person whose case God Himself, as the Supreme Judge, has already dismissed?<sup>59</sup>

It is, Paul stresses, God who 'justifies' – who declares the believer righteous. Earlier, he had made it clear to his readers that the ground of that justification lay: in the grace of God,<sup>60</sup> in the blood<sup>61</sup> and the resurrection<sup>62</sup> of Christ, and in the faith of the one who is justified.<sup>63</sup> But the point he underlines here is that it is God – none less – who is the justifier.

Paul had opened our chapter with the glorious words, 'There is ... now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus',<sup>64</sup> and this because their sin had already been fully condemned in the person of the Lord Jesus on the cross.<sup>65</sup>

And so, just as there is no one to successfully challenge us,<sup>66</sup> and no one to charge us,<sup>67</sup> so there is no one to condemn us.<sup>68</sup>

And it is at this point that Paul turns our attention directly to our Lord.<sup>69</sup>

He begins by referring to the stupendous fact of Jesus' death – the purpose and significance of which he has earlier explained.<sup>70</sup> But, more than that, Christ Jesus not only died; He now lives again – His resurrection being God's loud 'Amen' to His finished and perfect work at Golgotha. But not only lives again, He is now exalted by God to His own right hand – to the place of supreme dignity, honour and power.<sup>71</sup> But not only is He exalted to the very highest place in heaven, He is even now actively engaged in untiring intercession for every last one of His weak and struggling people in the world.

What a thought! That God's "Right Hand Man" is on our side, continuously interceding 'for us'. When preparing my notes, I very much enjoyed some words of Robert Murray M'Cheyne: 'I ought to study Christ as an Intercessor ... I am on His breastplate. If I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million enemies. Yet distance makes no difference. He is praying for me!'<sup>72</sup>

And you may note that actually only two actions are attributed to the Lord Jesus Himself; namely, His death and His intercession. We know from elsewhere that the two intervening experiences *could* have been,<sup>73</sup> but here these serve only as the necessary historical connecting links between the two great evidences of His measureless love – first, in His dying, the proof *in the past* of the depth and extremity of His love,<sup>74</sup> and then, in His intercession, the proof *in the present* of His continuing and unchanging love.<sup>75</sup>

Hence, the apostle's jubilant challenge, 'Who shall separate us ('who shall part us') from the love of Christ?'<sup>76</sup>

That phrase 'the love of Christ' reminds me of a well-documented incident in the life of the renowned 20th century Swiss theologian Karl Barth. In a Question and Answer session following a lecture which he gave at an American University in 1962, Professor<sup>77</sup> Barth was asked by a student whether he could summarize his life's work in theology in a sentence. His answer was something along the lines, "Yes, I can. In the words of a song I learned at my mother's knee: 'Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so'".<sup>78</sup>

And you cannot get beyond that! For, as one great New Testament scholar expressed it, 'No matter how much we know of the love of Christ, there is always more to know'.<sup>79</sup> And he was resting on the highest possible authority for that claim ... for the apostle Paul *himself* spoke, paradoxically,<sup>80</sup> of knowing 'the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge'.<sup>81</sup>

The first verse of one of our well-known hymns captures Paul's thought very well :

*It passeth knowledge, that dear love of Thine!  
Lord Jesus! Saviour! yet this soul of mine  
Would of Thy love, in all its breadth and length,  
Its height and depth, its everlasting strength  
Know more and more.*<sup>82</sup>

In the days of Joshua, Israel faced *seven* nations 'more numerous and mightier' than they – nations which sought to come between them and the enjoyment of their God-given inheritance – but which, in the event, God cast out before them.<sup>83</sup>

Here in Romans 8, the apostle details *seven* forms of trial to which he and the Christians at Rome were exposed – seven forms of trial which represented potential obstacles to their faith, and which some may have feared would come between them and the love of their Lord – but which Paul was confident would prove no more successful in defeating God’s people than had been Israel’s seven enemies in the days of Joshua.

Nor was the apostle speaking theoretically. For in his second letter to the Corinthians – written shortly before this to Rome – he had specifically mentioned having already experienced personally the first six of the seven trials.<sup>84</sup> And half of these references are from his great catalogue of sufferings recorded towards the end of chapter 11.<sup>85</sup>

He had not yet, of course, encountered the seventh item – the sword (the common symbol of capital punishment<sup>86</sup>) – but he would in time. There is an early tradition that, some six or seven years later, Paul was beheaded in Rome<sup>87</sup> – at which point he proved that the sword also was incapable of coming between him and the love of Christ.

Eliphaz in the book of Job had backed up his exhortation to Job to repent with the promise that God would then bless him. Eliphaz had smugly declared, ‘He (God) will deliver you from six troubles; in seven no evil shall touch you’.<sup>88</sup> But Paul proved, in a way Job’s so-called friend would never have understood, that his (Eliphaz’s) words were most wonderfully true for the Christian – that even ‘in seven’ troubles ‘no evil shall touch you’.<sup>89</sup>

In verse 36, Paul quotes a verse from his Greek Old Testament – verse 22 of Psalm 44 – to establish that the sufferings which faced him and others of the early church were nothing new – far from it. But Paul’s attitude to those sufferings was very different to the Psalmist’s.<sup>90</sup>

The Psalmist was mystified as to why he and his people were called on to endure persecution and affliction, for, as he saw it, they had done nothing to deserve their continual troubles. They must therefore have been suffering, he concluded, *not* on account of any disloyalty on their part to God, but, conversely, on account of their very faithfulness to Him. And the Psalmist struggled greatly with this<sup>91</sup> – but then he, and Old Testament saints generally, had no clear understanding of the afterlife, and they therefore looked for God’s blessing in the here and now. Paul, with his much higher horizon – his clear glimpse of eternal glory<sup>92</sup> – saw no problem in his being exposed constantly to the possibility of martyrdom.

I suspect that he would gladly have signed up to the idea that, since the Lord Jesus had once died *for his sake*,<sup>93</sup> he should always be ready to die *for Jesus’ sake*<sup>94</sup> – that, since it could be said of the Lord Jesus that ‘like a sheep He was led to the slaughter’,<sup>95</sup> it should come as no surprise that the followers of Jesus should be ‘reckoned as sheep for the slaughter’.

As you may know, Alexander the Great (so-called)<sup>96</sup> was one of the most successful military commanders of all time. He was undefeated in battle, and by the time of his death, he had conquered most of the world known to the ancient Greeks.<sup>97</sup>

I referred just now to the apostle’s extensive catalogue of sufferings recorded in 2 Corinthians 11. And that catalogue reminds me of something I have read about Alexander. On one occasion, his veteran soldiers ‘threatened a mutiny on the grounds that their great leader was indifferent to their hardship and to their wounds that they bore for him. When it got too much, he sprang up ... stood on the dais,<sup>98</sup> and ... said to his disgruntled men: ‘Come now, who of you have wounds? Let him bare himself, and I will show mine – no member of my body is without wounds! I have been wounded by the sword, by the arrow from the bow, by the missile from the catapult. I have been pelted with stones and pounded with clubs while leading you to victory and to glory!’<sup>99</sup>

And Alexander’s statement, ‘no member of *my body* is without wounds’ links in my mind to words written by Paul some 380 years later, ‘I bear on *my body* the marks of Jesus’<sup>100</sup> – referring to the many scars he had received as a result of his devoted service for the Lord.

But, if Alexander became known to later generations as ‘Conqueror of the Ancient World’, was the apostle *also* a conqueror then? You can say that again. He was, to use his own expression, ‘more than a conqueror!’<sup>101</sup>

‘In all these things’, he wrote, ‘we are more than conquerors (‘we super-conquer’ – ‘we overwhelmingly conquer’ – ‘we are hyper-conquerors’, as Mr Vine renders the word literally<sup>102</sup>) through Him who loved us’.

I have read in several places that, when Horatio Nelson<sup>103</sup> reported to the British admiralty his great victory over the French fleet in the Battle of the Nile, he said that “victory” was not a large enough word to describe what had taken place.<sup>104</sup> And I have no doubt that Paul would have been happy to say the same of the surpassing victory which the believer gains, in spite of all opposition, ‘through Him who loved us’<sup>105</sup> – that the Christian is *pre-eminently* victorious.<sup>106</sup>

And Paul's confidence that no amount of suffering or hardship in the present can separate the Christian from Jesus' love,<sup>107</sup> stemmed from his conviction that nothing – but nothing – can ever separate the Christian from 'the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord'.

And *here* we have reached *the very summit* of our passage.

We began last week with Paul's expression 'But we know', and we close this week with another expression sounding his note of assurance. Reverting to the use of the singular 'I', which he had dropped after verse 18, the apostle declares, 'I am persuaded'<sup>108</sup> – 'I stand convinced'<sup>109</sup> – that (if I dare paraphrase his inspired eloquence) *nothing* has the power to separate us from God's love in Christ – no, neither death nor life, for we are loved *both* sides of the grave – not any spirit-intelligence (of any rank or station – whether the holy angels or the commanders-in-chief of the empire of evil) – not what *is* happening today, or *might* happen tomorrow – not any powers (natural or supernatural) – not anything in the world above or in the world below – nor indeed anything else in the whole realm of created being.<sup>110</sup>

And we cannot miss that Paul beautifully intertwines the love of God<sup>111</sup> and the love of Christ.

We read in John 10 how, speaking of His spiritual 'sheep', that our Lord asserted, 'no one shall snatch them out of *my* hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of *my Father's* hand'.<sup>112</sup> And if *there* we can ascribe the guarantee of our eternal security to the joint hold (to the double grip) exercised by the Father and the Son *on us*, then *here* in Romans 8 we can ascribe the guarantee of our eternal security to the joint love of God and of Christ *for us*.

What a joy it is to sing the well-known lines<sup>113</sup> of Thomas Kelly's hymn:<sup>114</sup>

*Trust in Him, ye saints, forever;  
He is faithful, changing never;  
Neither force nor guile can sever  
Those He loves from Him.*

We could perhaps sum up verses 31 to 39 by saying that no one can successfully oppose the believer,<sup>115</sup> accuse the believer,<sup>116</sup> condemn the believer,<sup>117</sup> or separate the believer from God's love in Christ.<sup>118</sup> It certainly makes you feel good to be a Christian.

The great Scottish preacher Robert Bruce<sup>119</sup> filled the shoes of John Knox's successor in Edinburgh, Scotland, UK. In his lifetime Mr Bruce saw thousands of people come to Christ. On the morning of his death,<sup>120</sup> he came down for breakfast with his daughter Martha. As he meditated, he suddenly said, 'Hold, my Master calleth me', and 'asked that the house Bible ... be brought. Unable himself to read it, he said, "Cast me up the 8th of Romans", and he began to recite much of the second half of the chapter until he came to the last two verses ... "Set my finger on these words", he asked. "God be with you", he added ... "I have breakfasted with you, and shall sup with my Lord Jesus this night. I die believing these words".<sup>121</sup>

May God give us each the grace to *live* believing them.

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> 'All things' can only be the *object* of 'works together' (which verb is in the singular). That is, 'all things' are not working for the good, but are being worked for the good. 'All things' do not work themselves out for good, but it is God himself that is working all things in the life of the believer for good.

<sup>2</sup> A singular verb never takes a plural noun. That would be like saying, "They has money," or "Young children is smart." For some reason, despite their expertise, the linguistic experts of 1611 did just that. To construct a sentence in this manner would be poor English; it would be horrific Greek. Basically, they said, "all things works together for good". Greek verbs have built in subjects. Where English grammar requires a separate subject, the Greek allows the omission of the subject, understanding from the suffix of the verb who was producing the action. The suffix (ei) directs us to the subject we are seeking. We have already identified this suffix as the third person singular, so in other words the subject can be either 'he', 'she', or 'it'. The immediate text reveals to us which: '...to those who love the God, He works all things together...'

*The entire statement in verse 28, as well as a significant textual variant, indicates that πάντα may be taken as the emphatic object of the verb, with the singular subject of the verb ("He") being the true subject of the sentence. So understood, the sentence may be rendered, "And we know that to those loving God all things He works together unto good, to those according to purpose called ones being." That various early scribes and interpreters so read the verse is clear from the fact that the words ὁ θεός ("God") were added as the expressed subject of the verb in Papyrus 46 (dated about A.D. 200), uncials A (fifth century) and B (fourth century), cursive 81 (ca. 1044), and the Sahidic Coptic version, and used in two of five known quotations of Romans 8:28 in the writings of Origen.<sup>15</sup> Though this textual evidence is too weak to accept ὁ θεός as the original reading, its presence indicates that "God" rather than "all things" was understood as the subject of the sentence. Since in the original Paul had already used the noun "God" (τόν θεοῦ), to have written ὁ θεός as the expressed subject of the verb συνεργεῖ would have resulted in making Paul "a rather clumsy stylist."<sup>16</sup> But the textual variant establishes that Paul, having just mentioned God, would expect the reader to understand that "God" (ὁ θεός) was the intended subject of the singular verb. This interpretation is expressly indicated in the NIV rendering and various other English versions. (Bibliotheca Sacra . BSac—V148 #590—Apr 91—175)*

It is probable that the minority form of the text came into being at an early date to clarify the meaning by tracing this activity definitely to God. Whether or not the words in the original Greek text literally indicate God is the source of the good which comes to the Christian, the inference of the text is clear.

<sup>3</sup> There are sceptics who, after looking at the vastness of the universe, think it nonsense to believe that even if there were a God that He would choose to become a miniscule human being and live on earth - a very minor planet in a very minor solar system. The universe is too awesome and vast for God to care about this tiny planet. Lewis replies to this thinking in his book, *Miracles*. He writes, It is a profound mistake to imagine that Christianity ever intended to dissipate the bewilderment and even the terror, the sense of our own nothingness, which come upon us when we think about the nature of things. It comes to intensify them. Without such sensations there is no religion. Many a man, brought up in the glib profession of some shallow form of Christianity, who comes through reading *Astronomy* to realise for the first time how majestically indifferent most reality is to man, and who perhaps abandons his religion on that account, may at that moment be having his first genuinely religious experience.

Christianity does not involve the belief that all things were made for man. It does involve the belief that God loves man and for his sake became man and died. I have not yet succeeded in seeing how what we know (and have known since the days of Ptolemy) about the size of the universe affects the credibility of this doctrine one way or the other.

The sceptic asks how we can believe that God so 'came down' to this one tiny planet... If it is maintained that anything so small as the Earth must, in any event, be too unimportant to merit the love of the Creator, we reply that no Christian ever supposed we did merit it. Christ did not die for men because they were intrinsically worth dying for, but because He is intrinsically love, and therefore loves infinitely. And what, after all, does the size of a world or a creature tell us about its 'importance' or value?

There is no doubt that we all feel the incongruity of supposing, say, that the planet Earth might be more important than the Great Nebula in Andromeda. On the other hand, we are all equally certain that only a lunatic would think a man six-feet high necessarily more important than a man five-feet high, or a horse necessarily more important than a man, or a man's legs than his brain. In other words this supposed ratio of size to importance feels plausible only when one of the sizes involved is very great. And that betrays the true basis of this type of thought... The conclusion is inevitable: the importance we attach to great differences of size is an affair not of reason but of emotion-of that peculiar emotion which superiorities in size begin to produce in us only after a certain point of absolute size has been reached...

Medieval thinkers believed that the stars must be somehow superior to the Earth because they looked bright and it did not. Moderns think that the Galaxy ought to be more important than the Earth because it is bigger. Both states of mind can produce good poetry. Both can supply mental pictures which rouse very respectable emotions-emotions of awe, humility, or exhilaration. But taken as serious philosophical arguments both are ridiculous. The vastness of the universe is awe-inspiring, and is too large for our finite minds to comprehend fully. And yet what is even more amazing is the fact that the Triune God of the universe loved us so much that He came down to our tiny planet and lived among us. Now that really is mind-blowing!

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"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

C. S. Lewis. *Miracles*. Touchstone: New York, 1996, pages 70-73.

[http://www.cslewisinstitute.org/webfm\\_send/3309?utm\\_source=September+Reflections+2014&utm\\_campaign=September\\_Reflections\\_2014&utm\\_medium=email](http://www.cslewisinstitute.org/webfm_send/3309?utm_source=September+Reflections+2014&utm_campaign=September_Reflections_2014&utm_medium=email)

<sup>4</sup> The verb rendered "freely give" is *charizomai*, which literally means "to bestow as a gift of grace."

<sup>5</sup> The Apostle clearly has in his mind Isa. 50. 4-9: 'The Lord God hath given me the tongue of them that are taught, that I should know how to sustain with words him that is weary: he wakens morning by morning, he wakens mine ear to hear as they that are taught. The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away backward. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore have I not been confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me [vindicate that not deceiver – declared righteous by god – as well as by Pilate's wife and the centurion. See 1 Tim. 3. 16. He justified because righteous in Himself, we by grace. Which of you convinces me of sin?]; who will contend with me? let us stand up together: who is mine adversary? let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? behold, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up'.

This distinctly favours the view that each affirmation is followed by a question relating to that affirmation.

'These verses in Romans 8 should be divided thus. "It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, etc.; who shall separate us from the love of Christ?", JND.

<sup>6</sup> Paul wrote this section to provide the believers at Rome with encouragement in the face of opposition and trials. He had earlier said, 'we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings', Rom. 5. 3. He would later exhort the Roman Christians to 'bless those who persecute you... if your enemy is hungry, feed him', Rom. 12. 14, 20. To encourage the Christians, the apostle had spoken in verses 21-25 of the believer's glorious prospect and hope – a hope out of all proportion to present sufferings – a hope so glorious that the whole of creation can be said to stand on tiptoe, sighing for the time when it will have a share in it. And, should anyone be disposed to raise the objection, 'That's all very well for the future, but how are we expected to cope in the present?', he introduces two further factors. First, in verses 26-27, the ministry of the Holy Spirit within, both to help us and to intercede for us. And second, in verse 28 – not the glory of God ahead of us, nor the spirit of God within us – but the providence of God around us.

<sup>7</sup> Rom. 8. 17-18, 35-36; cf. Rom. 5. 3; 12. 14. 'Many Christians in Rome had been expelled from their homes less than a decade earlier, and had returned only a few years before Paul wrote. A few years after Paul wrote Romans, the evil emperor Nero killed many of his readers due to false accusations against Christians'.

<http://www.craigkeener.com/all-things-for-good-romans-828/>

<sup>8</sup> Rom. 8. 17-18, 29-30.

<sup>9</sup> Rom. 8. 19; cf. Rom. 8. 21b; 'the freedom of the glory of the children of God', literally.

<sup>10</sup> The word 'Oops' doesn't appear in God's dictionary.

<sup>11</sup> Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. THE 2000 BAPTIST FAITH & MESSAGE ... <http://www.sbc.net/bfm2000/bfm2000.asp>. (includes Southern Baptists, such as David Platt.)

<sup>12</sup> But Calvin wrote in his 'Institutes of the Christian Religion', 'OF THE ETERNAL ELECTION, BY WHICH GOD HAS PREDESTINATED SOME TO SALVATION, AND OTHERS TO DESTRUCTION ... All are not created on equal terms, but some are preordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation; and, accordingly, as each has been created for one or other of these ends, we say that he has been predestinated to life or to death ... We say, then, that Scripture clearly proves this much, that God by his eternal and immutable counsel determined once for all those whom it was his pleasure one day to admit to salvation, and those whom, on the other hand, it was his pleasure to doom to destruction'. Book 3, Chapter 21, Sections 5 and 7. Also, 'Many professing a desire to defend the Deity from an invidious charge admit the doctrine of election, but deny that any one is reprobated. This they do ignorantly and childishly since there could be no election without its opposite reprobation'. Book 3, Chapter 23, Section 1. To my mind, this makes God into a monster who creates people for the express purpose of tormenting them eternally in hell.

<sup>13</sup> Acts 13. 48; Eph. 1. 4; 2 Tim. 1. 9.

<sup>14</sup> God choose individuals to belong to Himself and at the same time make a bona fide offer of salvation to all people everywhere? How can we reconcile these two truths? The fact is that we cannot. In a way we cannot grasp, human freedom exists alongside God's sovereignty. Men are not puppets. And God is not a celestial chess-player God who shifts players on both sides of the board, making both all His own moves and all of ours too. God gave man a will, including the freedom to reject Him. Think through the implications of our Lord's words, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often I would have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!', Luke 13. 34; Matt. 23. 37. Whose will prevailed? When I am tempted (whether by devil or own desires) and (i) resist and overcome, I give God the glory; but if I (ii) succumb, fall and sin, I hold myself responsible and do not give God the blame. So in salvation ... if someone is saved, he or she gives God the glory, but if they reject Him they have nobody to blame but themselves.



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<sup>15</sup> Rom. 9. 22-23; Matt. 25. 34-41.

<sup>16</sup> 2 Pet. 3. 9.

<sup>17</sup> 1 Tim. 2. 3-4. In context, this refers not so much to all people without exception, but to all people without distinction – especially to Gentile as well as Jew (cf. v. 5 and Rom. 3. 29-30. But when Paul speaks of praying for 'all men', although not meaning every individual everywhere, he clearly does not mean 'all kinds of men; that is, the elect', v. 1 – nor, of course, that we are to pray only for those kings etc, v. 2, who are elect! Cf. 'on behalf of all', v. 6 with 1 John 2. 2. Also, 'the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men', Tit. 2. 11 ("The absence of the article before σωτήριος (see crit. note) skews that it is not attached to the subject χάρις, but is connected with the predicate; it is as bringing salvation that this grace has visited us, not 'the saving grace of God has appeared'. The construction and order of the words require us to take πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις, with σωτήριος, not with ἐπεφάνη ... It is the Universality of the Atonement (cp. 1Ti\_2:4) which is the thought in the second clause of the verse', Cambridge Greek Testament.

<sup>18</sup> 'How often I would have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!', Matt. 23. 37; Luke 13. 34.

<sup>19</sup> Gal. 1. 15.

<sup>20</sup> 2 Thess. 2. 14.

<sup>21</sup> .. I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high (ἄνω) calling of God in Christ Jesus. Phil. 3. 14. "Who hath 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 before the world began...." (2 Tim 1:9). "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus" (Heb 3:1);

<sup>22</sup> 'In the New Testament the noun *propiis* occurs only twice, and signifies a knowledge in advance or beforehand. The corresponding verb occurs five times. The verb is used in a non-theological way in Acts 26.5 and 2 Peter 3.17. In relation to God's foreknowledge, Peter uses the verb of Christ in His office as Redeemer, 1 Pet. 1. 20, and he uses the noun of Christ's sufferings, Acts 2. 23, closely linking it with God's determinate counsel. Paul once uses the verb of Israel, Rom. 11. 2. The other two references concern the believer. The verb occurs in Romans 8. 29. In the face of distressing earthly circumstances, Paul assures the Roman saints of God's providence and sovereignty. He reminds them that they were the subjects of foreknowledge and predestination, the recipients of calling and justification, and the heirs of glorification. In the light of these truths, they could be confident that all things in the present would work for their good. Foreknowledge is therefore the first of five successive steps in the spiritual history of the believer. The steps are clearly co-extensive: all men are not foreknown any more than all men are predestinated, etc. Before the world began, of course, God knew about all men, but He did not "know" all men. Foreknowledge indicates something other than mere prevision. Before God formed any plans or intentions for the objects of His special interest (predestination), He first brought them into view and focus (foreknowledge). It may be that, as often in Scripture, the knowledge in mind involves more than mere intellectual apprehension. "Knowledge" sometimes includes the idea of an intimate awareness and love, and suggests special favour and affectionate regard, e.g. Amos 3. 2; Matt. 7. 23; 1 Cor. 8. 3; 2 Tim. 2. 19. God's foreknowledge might therefore imply that He lovingly "unites Himself beforehand" with the believer', *Malcolm Horlock, The Treasury of Bible Doctrine, page 281.*

The Hebrew verb 'to know' sometimes expresses a personal relationship of care and affection. "For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish" (Ps 1:6); "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" (Amos 3:2); "The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him" (Nah 1:7). "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt 7:23) The Lord knoweth them that are his. (2 Tim 2:19).

The Greek verb "foreknew" (προέγνω) means "to know in advance, to foreknow." The word in itself certainly does not mean loving regard in advance. See, e.g., Acts 2. 23 – foreknowledge of actions/events not persons. Foreknowledge is coupled with counsel or will, perhaps in order to show us that the counsel or will of God, as far as it comprehends the action of free agents, is connected with his foreknowledge, and does not involve any force put upon the will of man. Cf. 2 Peter 3:17: ' You therefore, beloved, knowing these things beforehand (foreknowing these things), take care lest, being led away along with the error of the wicked, ye should fall from your own steadfastness' See also, 'My manner of life then from my youth up, which was from the beginning among mine own nation, and at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; having foreknown me from the first, if they be willing to testify, how that after the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee', Acts 26. 5.

Else see 1 Pet. 1. 2; Rom. 11. 2; 1 Pet. 1. 20.

<sup>23</sup> For example, Amos 3. 2; Nahum 1. 7; Matt. 7. 23; 1 Cor. 8. 3; 2 Tim. 2. 19. In Acts 2. 23 foreknowledge is closely linked with, but clearly distinguished from God's determinate counsel.

<sup>24</sup> Used only of God, Acts 4. 28; 1 Cor. 2. 7; Eph. 1. 5, 11, and always with a specific destiny in view. 'Foreknowledge and predestination are distinguished. The one is the choice of persons, the other the destination of those persons. It is well to notice that predestination is always to something', J. N. Darby, God for us ... <http://www.stempublishing.com/authors/darby/DOCTRINE/31009E.html>

<sup>25</sup> 'Indulgent God', by John Kent (1766-1843), written in 1803, but with slightly different words; for the original see <http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=hQ48AQAAMAAJ&pg=PR15&lpg=PR15&dq=Indulgent+God%E2%80%99,+by+John+Kent&source=bl&ots=FXmz2RJoOi&sig=j-OpB5-7wRcRZyz5oiuZn3QJxe4&hl=en&sa=X&ei=EGYLVPjFNZXkat-hvgvE&ved=0CEcQ6AEwBg#v=onepage&q=Indulgent%20God%E2%80%99%2C%20by%20John%20Kent&f=false>, pages 150-152. The version quoted in the notes comes from *Hymns of Truth and Praise*, number 72. See too Andrew Borland at ... <http://www.plymouthbrethren.org/article/9373>

<sup>26</sup> 'When He appears, we shall be like Him', 1 John 3. 2.

<sup>27</sup> God's ultimate aim is the supremacy and preeminence of Christ, Col. 1. 18.

<sup>28</sup> Col. 1. 15.

<sup>29</sup> Col. 1. 18; Rev. 1. 5.

<sup>30</sup> Heb. 1. 6; Psa. 89. 27.

<sup>31</sup> Heb. 2. 10-12.

<sup>32</sup> 'So certain is Paul that this will take place that he speaks of our glorification in the past tense! He uses what is called the "proleptic aorist", a device in Greek when an author is indicating that "it's as good as done".' D. B. Wallace, *Do All Things Really Work Together for the Good? Romans 8:28 in its Context*. Accessible at ... <https://bible.org/article/do-all-things-really-work-together-good-romans-828-its-context>.

<sup>33</sup> 'Every link was forged in heaven, and not one can ever be broken. This blessed portion is not for theologians to wrangle over but for the saints to rejoice in', H. A. Ironside, *Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans*, page 106.

<sup>34</sup> Rom. 3. 5; 4. 1; 6. 1; 7. 7; 8. 31; 9. 14, 30; but in no other epistle. Cf. 'What then?', Rom. 3. 9; 6. 15; 11. 7.

<sup>35</sup> H. C. G. Moule, *Romans in The Cambridge Bible series*, page 157.

<sup>36</sup> Rom. 16. 20.

<sup>37</sup> Rom. 8. 20.

<sup>38</sup> Psa. 56 title.

<sup>39</sup> Psa. 56. 9. Compare how, in the face of the mighty King of Assyria, King Hezekiah encouraged his people, 'Do not be afraid ... with him is only the arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us', 2 Chron. 32. 8.

One of the terrifying expressions which God uttered in the Old Testament: ' "I am against you," declares the LORD.' It occurs most frequently in the prophetic oracles against the nations, for example, against Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, Tyre and Sidon, and Edom ... Assyria and its capital Nineveh (Na. 2:13; 3:5); Babylon (Je. 50:31; 51:25); Egypt (Ezk. 29:3, 10; 30:22); Tyre and Sidon (Ezk. 26:3; 28:22) and Edom (Ezk. 35:1ff.). sometimes spoken against Israel herself in her disobedience and idolatry, E.g. Lv. 26:17; Ezk. 5:8; 14:8; 15:7; 21:3, specially against her false shepherds and false prophets. E.g. Ezk. 13:8f., 20; 14:9; 34:10.

See :

Jer\_21:13 "Behold, I am against you, O inhabitant of the valley, O rock of the plain, declares the LORD; you who say, 'Who shall come down against us, or who shall enter our habitations?'

Jer\_50:31 "Behold, I am against you, O proud one, declares the Lord GOD of hosts, for your day has come, the time when I will punish you.

Jer\_51:25 "Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain, declares the LORD, which destroys the whole earth; I will stretch out my hand against you, and roll you down from the crags, and make you a burnt mountain.

Eze\_13:8 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "Because you have uttered falsehood and seen lying visions, therefore behold, I am against you, declares the Lord GOD.

Eze\_21:3 and say to the land of Israel, Thus says the LORD: Behold, I am against you and will draw my sword from its sheath and will cut off from you both righteous and wicked.

Eze\_26:3 therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against you, O Tyre, and will bring up many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves.

Eze\_28:22 and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I am against you, O Sidon, and I will manifest my glory in your midst. And they shall know that I am the LORD when I execute judgments in her and manifest my holiness in her;

Eze\_29:3 speak, and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lies in the midst of his streams, that says, 'My Nile is my own; I made it for myself.'

Eze\_29:10 therefore, behold, I am against you and against your streams, and I will make the land of Egypt an utter waste and desolation, from Migdol to Syene, as far as the border of Cush.

Eze\_35:3 and say to it, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against you, Mount Seir, and I will stretch out my hand against you, and I will make you a desolation and a waste.

Eze\_38:3 and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.

Eze\_39:1 "And you, son of man, prophesy against Gog and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.

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Nah\_2:13 Behold, I am against you, declares the LORD of hosts, and I will burn your chariots in smoke, and the sword shall devour your young lions. I will cut off your prey from the earth, and the voice of your messengers shall no longer be heard.

Nah\_3:5 Behold, I am against you, declares the LORD of hosts, and will lift up your skirts over your face; and I will make nations look at your nakedness and kingdoms at your shame.

<sup>40</sup> Rom. 8. 18.

<sup>41</sup> The title in Rev. 4. 8; 11. 17.

<sup>42</sup> Indeed the word 'own' is much stronger than the word we find in verse 3, 'God sending His own Son'. Here Paul is stressing - not the difference between our sonship, (referred to in verses 14, 15, 29) and Jesus' unique sonship – but the immensity and magnitude of God's love. For, out of love for us, He didn't spare His own Son any of the great debt we owed.

<sup>43</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Octavius\\_Winslow](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Octavius_Winslow)

<sup>44</sup> "Delivered him up for us all". If any other expression were necessary to deepen our sense of the vastness of his love, we have it here. Who delivered up Jesus to die? Not Judas, for money; not Pilate, for fear; not the Jews, for envy—but the Father, for love! "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." In this great transaction we lose sight of his betrayers, and his accusers, and his murderers, and we see only the Father travelling in the greatness of his love to his family. Octavius Winslow (1 August 1808 – 5 March 1878), '*No Condemnation in Christ*', Chapter 31, "The Gift of God's Son, the Guarantee of All Other Blessing".

<sup>45</sup> Rom. 5. 10; Col. 1. 21-22.

<sup>46</sup> Rom. 8. 9.

<sup>47</sup> Rom. 8. 14-15.

<sup>48</sup> Rom. 8. 18.

<sup>49</sup> Rom. 8. 30.

<sup>50</sup> Rom. 8. 38-39.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Eph. 1. 3.

<sup>52</sup> Compare the use of the word in Acts 19. 40; 23. 29; 26. 2.

<sup>53</sup> Act\_22:30 But on the next day, desiring to know the real reason why he was being accused by the Jews, he unbound him and commanded the chief priests and all the council to meet, and he brought Paul down and set him before them.

Act\_23:29 I found that he was being accused about questions of their law, but charged with nothing deserving death or imprisonment.

Act\_25:16 I answered them that it was not the custom of the Romans to give up anyone before the accused met the accusers face to face and had opportunity to make his defense concerning the charge laid against him.

Act\_26:7 to which our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly worship night and day. And for this hope I am accused by Jews, O king!

<sup>54</sup> Rev. 12. 10, possibly spoken by the Tribulation martyrs of Rev. 6. 10.

<sup>55</sup> Eight times: Exod. 22. 9; Prov. 19. 5; Acts 19. 38, 40; 23. 28, 29; 26. 2, 7.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Rom. 3. 19.

<sup>57</sup> Romans 8. 33b-34a.

<sup>58</sup> '*He is near that justifies me, who will contend with me? ... who is my adversary? Let him come near to me ... who is he that shall condemn me?*' Isa. 50. 4-9.

<sup>59</sup> And when our heavenly Advocate stands as our Counsel for the Defence in God's Court, 1 John 2. 1.

<sup>60</sup> Rom. 3. 24.

<sup>61</sup> Rom. 5. 9.

<sup>62</sup> Rom. 4. 24-25.

<sup>63</sup> Rom. 5. 1.

<sup>64</sup> Rom. 8. 1.

<sup>65</sup> Rom. 8. 3.

<sup>66</sup> Rom. 8. 31.

<sup>67</sup> Rom. 8. 33.

<sup>68</sup> Rom. 8. 34.

<sup>69</sup> 'It is Christ Jesus who died, but rather is also raised up, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us', Rom. 3. 34b.

<sup>70</sup> Rom. 5. 6, 8, 10.

<sup>71</sup> As the New Testament insists on no less than 17 occasions.

<sup>72</sup> 'The Memoir and Remains of the Rev. Robert Murray M'Cheyne', Andrew Bonar (1892), page 154.

(Downloadable freely from ... ..

<https://ia700504.us.archive.org/7/items/memoirremainsofr1892mche/memoirremainsofr1892mche.pdf>.)

<sup>73</sup> (i) John 2. 19; 10. 17 and (ii) Heb. 1. 3.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. John 13. 1. You can obtain instruments which measure the temperature, the air pressure and the wind force. But no gauge exists in heaven or in earth which can measure our Saviour's boundless love.

<sup>75</sup> Rev. 1. 5.

<sup>76</sup> This section no doubt gives an insight into the apostle's personal stimulus and motivation; 2 Cor. 5. 14.

<sup>77</sup> Barth was appointed professor at the universities of Göttingen, Münster, and Bonn, successively (1922-1935). <http://people.bu.edu/wwildman/bce/barth.htm>

<sup>78</sup> <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/rogereolson/2013/01/did-karl-barth-really-say-jesus-loves-me-this-i-know/> and <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/rogereolson/2013/01/quick-follow-up-to-the-karl-barth-jesus-loves-me-series/> Also [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk%3AKarl\\_Barth](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk%3AKarl_Barth) (under Doggerel).

<sup>79</sup> Leon Morris, *Expository Reflections on the Letter to the Ephesians*, page 107.

(See [http://www.theologicalstudies.org.uk/theo\\_morris.php](http://www.theologicalstudies.org.uk/theo_morris.php).)

<sup>80</sup> See ... <http://grammar.about.com/od/tz/g/verbalparadoxterm.htm>

<sup>81</sup> Eph. 3. 19. An example of oxymoron.

<sup>82</sup> The version in *Hymns of Truth and Praise*, number 610. Written by Miss Mary Shekleton (1827-1883) in 1863.

<sup>83</sup> Deut. 7. 1.

<sup>84</sup> Tribulation, 2 Cor. 7. 4, or distress, 12. 10, or persecution, 12. 10, or famine (λιμος), 11. 27, or nakedness (a word often applied to insufficient dress, not only to complete exposure), 11. 27, or peril, 11. 26.

<sup>85</sup> 'Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine (or '*hunger*' – λιμος), or *nakedness*, or *peril*, or sword?', Romans 8. 35. Cf. 'in *perils* of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in *perils* among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in *hunger* (λιμος) and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and *nakedness* ...', 2 Cor. 11. 26-27.

<sup>86</sup> 'The citation from Psalm 44:22 (applied by second-century rabbis to martyrdom) reinforces the certainty that martyrdom is in view here'. C. S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*.

<sup>87</sup> 'It is ... recorded that Paul was beheaded in Rome itself, and that Peter likewise was crucified under Nero. This account of Peter and Paul is substantiated by the fact that their names are preserved in the cemeteries of that place even to the present day'. Eusebius of Caesarea (circa 265-340 AD), *Church History*, Book II, Chapter 25, Paragraph 5. See too ... [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul\\_the\\_Apostle](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_the_Apostle), <http://www.biblestudytools.com/classics/barnes-scenes-in-life/death-of-the-apostle-paul.html> and <http://www.biblestudy.org/question/sauldie.html>.

<sup>88</sup> Job 5. 19.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. 1 Pet. 3. 13.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Rom. 5. 3-5.

<sup>91</sup> 'The psalmist grieves over the defeat and exile of the people of God. God has not gone forth with their army to battle (Ps. 43:10 LXX [44:10 ET]). "You have given us as sheep for slaughter [LXX: 'eating'] and have scattered us among the nations" (43:12 LXX [44:11 ET]). The people of God have been abandoned by God, their shepherd. God has sold them without price (43:13 LXX [44:12 ET]). God, who hides his face and forgets their affliction, is absent from them (43:25 LXX [Ps. 44:24 ET]). The setting of "exile" is indistinct, but clearly it is not the exile to Babylon that is in view. The lament is not accompanied by a confession of guilt (see also Ps. 89:38–52). Precisely the opposite: the psalmist protests the innocence of the people of God: "If we had forgotten the name of our God and lifted our hands to another God, would not God search this out? For he knows the secrets of the heart" (43:21–22 LXX [44:20–21 ET]). He questions in anguish, "Why do you hide your face? You forget our oppression and our affliction!" (43:25 LXX [44:24 ET]; cf. Ps. 74:10; 79:5; 89:47). The complaint that Paul cites from the psalm, "on account of you we are put to death all the day" (43:23 LXX [44:23 MT; 44:22 ET]), communicates the irreducibility of this experience of God's people under trial'.

<sup>92</sup> Rom. 8. 18.

<sup>93</sup> Rom. 5. 8.

<sup>94</sup> 1 Cor. 15. 31; 'we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake', 2 Cor. 4. 11.

<sup>95</sup> Acts 8. 32; cf. Isa. 53. 7.

<sup>96</sup> 356-323 BC.

<sup>97</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wars\\_of\\_Alexander\\_the\\_Great#cite\\_ref-1](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wars_of_Alexander_the_Great#cite_ref-1)

<sup>98</sup> Pronounced 'day-is'.

<sup>99</sup> <http://www.preachtheword.com/sermon/spk12.shtml>. Plagiarised from *The Greatest Men of the Bible* by Clarence E. Macartney, 1941, pages 18-19 – downloadable from ...

[http://archive.org/stream/greatestmenofthe012375mbp/greatestmenofthe012375mbp\\_djvu.txt](http://archive.org/stream/greatestmenofthe012375mbp/greatestmenofthe012375mbp_djvu.txt)

<sup>100</sup> 'From now on let no one cause me trouble, for I bear on my body the marks ('the scars') of Jesus. Gal. 6. 17.

<sup>101</sup> Verses 35–39 form a chiasm (an ancient literary structure based on inverted parallelism): nothing can separate us from divine love (8:35a, 39b), no matter what it is (8:35b–36, 38–39a), which makes believers more than overcome their opposition (8:37).

<sup>102</sup> Conqueror (ὁ περνικῶν). "To be more than conqueror" ... "to gain a surpassing victory" is found in Rom. 8. 37, lit., "we are hyper-conquerors". W. E. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*.

Cf. 'The word *hypernikaō*, literally, to be supervictorious, has no adequate English equivalent. It is used here only in the New Testament'. Collected Writings of W.E. Vine. A 'rare word ... overcome is almost too weak a term ... we win the supreme victory through him who loved us', Bauernfeind (TDNT 4:945).

<sup>103</sup> Vice-Admiral The Right Honourable The Viscount Nelson KB, 29 September 1758 – 21 October 1805.

<sup>104</sup> 'A *Handbook of the Christian Faith*', John Schwarz, page 196. Also '*Morning will come*', Sid Huggins, page 166; '*The Greatest Men of the Bible*', C. E. Macartney, page 9 – downloadable from ...

[http://archive.org/stream/greatestmenofthe012375mbp/greatestmenofthe012375mbp\\_djvu.txt](http://archive.org/stream/greatestmenofthe012375mbp/greatestmenofthe012375mbp_djvu.txt).

Although it is natural to suppose that the time and attention of the Admiral, and all the Officers of his Squadron, were very fully employed in repairing the damages sustained by their own Ships, and in securing those of the Enemy, which

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their Valour had subdued, yet the mind of that GREAT and GOOD Man felt the strongest emotions of the most pious gratitude to the SUPREME BEING, for the signal Success which, by His Divine Favour, had crowned his endeavours in the Cause of his Country, and in consequence, on the morning of the 2d, he issued the following Memorandum to the different Captains of his Squadron:

*"Vanguard, off the Mouth of the Nile,*

*"2d Day of August, 1798.*

*"Almighty God having blessed His Majesty's Arms with Victory, the Admiral intends returning Public Thanksgiving for the same at two o'clock this day, and he recommends every Ship doing the same as soon as convenient.*

*"To the respective Captains of the Squadron."*

At two o'clock accordingly, on that day, Public Service was performed on the Quarterdeck of the Vanguard, by the Rev. Mr. Comyn, the other Ships following the example of the Admiral, though perhaps not all at the same time.

<http://www.history.navy.mil/library/online/nile.htm>

<sup>105</sup> 'Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last', Genesis 49. 19. Literally, 'Gad ('a troop'), a troop shall troop upon him; but he shall troop upon their heel'. There is a paronomasia, or an allusion to the name of Gad almost in every word of the verse, which signifies a troop: the whole is a prediction that this tribe would be a warlike one, and have the common fate of war, sometimes be conquered, and at other times conquer, but however should be at last entirely victorious. (The Pulpit Commentary.)

Their subordinate preacher too made a sermon about it, and he took that theme for his text, 'Gad, a troop shall overcome him; but he shall overcome at the last' (Gen. 49:19). Whence he showed that though Mansoul should be sorely put to it at the first, yet the victory should most certainly be Mansoul's at the last. The Holy War, Chapter XIV.

'as Mr. Bunyan says, that means forever, for nothing can come after the last'. C H Spurgeon, Faith's Chequebook, 11 May.

<sup>106</sup> It has been well said that, 'Believers are on the winning side. They are not odds-on favourites; they are unconditional winners', R. Bonnke.

<sup>107</sup> Rom. 8. 35.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. 2 Tim. 1. 12, 'for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that day'.

<sup>109</sup> The perfect tense, 'I have become and I remain convinced'; cf. Rom. 15. 14.

<sup>110</sup> The arrangement might be: (a) neither death nor life (impersonal); (b) nor angels nor principalities (personal); (a) nor things present nor things to come (impersonal); (b) nor powers (personal); (a) nor height nor depth (impersonal); (b) nor any other creature (personal).

<sup>111</sup> Nothing in all creation can drive a wedge between the loving God and His loved people.

<sup>112</sup> John 10. 28-29.

<sup>113</sup> From the hymn, 'Praise the Saviour, ye who know Him', one of Mr Kelly's 760 hymns.

<http://www.christianity.com/church/church-history/timeline/1701-1800/thomas-kellys-fervent-faith-11630280.html>)

*Hymns for the Little Flock*, number 256.

<sup>114</sup> 1769-1855.

<sup>115</sup> Rom. 8. 31.

<sup>116</sup> Rom. 8. 33.

<sup>117</sup> Rom. 8. 34.

<sup>118</sup> Rom. 8. 38-39.

<sup>119</sup> 1554-1631.

<sup>120</sup> 27th July 1631.

<sup>121</sup> The great Scottish preacher Robert Bruce took the place of James Lawson, John Knox's successor in Edinburgh. Over his lifetime he saw thousands of people come to Christ. He died on 27th July 1631, He came down for breakfast (without pain or sickness) with his daughter Martha by his side and enjoyed the meal. As he mused, he said 'Hold, my Master calleth me' and 'asked that the house Bible, the Geneva Version, be brought. Unable himself to read it, he said,, 'Hold, my Master calleth me', and 'asked that the house Bible ... be brought. Unable himself to read it, he said, "Cast me up the 8th of Romans", and he began to recite much of the second half of the chapter until he came to the last two verses ... "Set my finger on these words", he asked. "God be with you ... I have breakfasted with you, and shall sup with my Lord Jesus this night. I die believing these words".

Iain Murray, 'A Scottish Christian Heritage' (Banner of Truth, 2006), pages 56-57.

[http://www.thirstytheologian.com/2009/01/01/my\\_master\\_calleth\\_me.php](http://www.thirstytheologian.com/2009/01/01/my_master_calleth_me.php).

See too ... <http://www.middletoome.com/page66.html>