

God is For Us

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 29 December 2024

Preacher: Jon Hueni

- [0 : 00] Romans 8, beginning in verse 29. For those God foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.
- And those he predestined, he also called. Those he called, he also justified. Those he justified, he also glorified. What then shall we say in response to this?
- If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all. How will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?
- Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died, more than that, who was raised to life, is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.
- Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble, or hardship, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, for your sake we face death all day long.
- [1 : 12] We are considered as sheep to be slaughtered. No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, nor 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.
- Well, family of God, we are on the verge of another new year. And with it, its troubles, its trials, its tribulations, its pressures, its problems, its sorrows, its disappointments, and fears.
- These are the things we get from the world. We had plenty of them in this past year, and we will have them in this new year. Jesus assures us, in this world you will have trouble.
- Relational troubles. Medical troubles. Spiritual troubles. Financial. Political. National. International. That's life on planet Earth in the present evil age. So, Pastor, what can you tell us to encourage us as we head into a new year?
- [2 : 45] You haven't come here just to remind us of our troubles. And that's right, I haven't. So, I have good news for us all from God's own living and life-giving word.
- Three encouraging realities that will enable us to march with confident hope into the new year. And all three of these realities have to do with God.
- So, number one, God is. And you say, well, finish the sentence, John.
- I did. That's it. The sentence is, God is. That's the encouraging reality.
- It's what the Bible says in Hebrews 11 and verse 6. Without faith, it's impossible to please God. Because anyone who comes to Him must believe He is.
- [3 : 49] That He really is. He exists. Revelation 1-4. John, in his opening greeting, says to us, grace and peace to you from Him who is.
- And who was and is to come. He's the God who is. And when speaking about Himself, the God who is simply says, I am.

I am. I am. I am. I am. Exodus 3-14. From the burning bush, God says to Moses, I am who I am.

This is what you're to tell the Israelites. I am has sent me to you. So He's this great I am, the self-existing one, the eternally unchangeable I am.

He says, I am. And so we say, God is. So the fool is wrong because He says in His heart, God isn't.

[4 : 59] There is no God is what He says. Psalm 14-1. And that's why He's a fool. No matter how educated He might be. Because He denies the greatest reality of all, which is that God is.

Creation shouts it. Whether looking at the vast expanse of the heavens or the tiniest particle that man can see with a microscope.

It all says the hand that made us is divine. Creation shouts it. The Bible repeats it. It starts out in the beginning. God. God is.

There He is already. Before creation began. Your conscience echoes it. You know God is. Jesus proves it. He is Emmanuel.

God with us. He's come down where we can see God. In Jesus Christ. And your death will convince you of it forever. He is the inescapable reality.

[6 : 04] God is. God is. And yet in His pride, the wicked do not seek Him. In all their thoughts there is no room for God.

Psalm 10 and verse 4. God is. So though men deny it, suppress it, ignore it, try to forget it, the reality remains. God is.

God is. Now, you say, John, that's pretty basic, isn't it? Yes, it is. And we need basics, don't we? We need to get back to basics.

Perhaps we believed it for so long that we don't appreciate it as we should. Maybe some of you can't remember any time when you did not believe that God exists.

So maybe in order to appreciate the fact that God is, we need to imagine a world where God isn't. If we can even do that.

[7 : 02] But that's the atheist world. So, a world where God isn't. Well, automatically, right away, what have we lost? Well, we've lost our identity. We were made in the image of this God who is.

But if God isn't, then who are we? We don't have a clue who we are. What we're here for. What we're to do. We've automatically lost a moral standard of what's right and wrong if God isn't.

There's no lawgiver. There's no judge over us. It's just now each man for himself. The survival of the fittest. And sadly, the fittest is often the meanest.

We've lost the basis for all purpose in life. All we are is dust in the wind. And soon, we will return to dust and then back into nothingness.

We've lost any true grounds of real hope that things will ever get better. Because there's no director of history. No afterlife.

[8 : 06] Just this brief existence and then it's over. Or if that's all there is, then let's keep dancing. Or as Paul says, if that's all there is, let's eat, drink, and be merry. For tomorrow, we die.

What a dismal world is the world where God isn't. And yet, many are living in that sense of reality. That's their world tonight or today.

And every day. It's so out of touch with reality. John Duncan was a minister of the Free Church of Scotland back in the 1800s. He was a professor of Hebrew and the Oriental languages.

He knew something like seven languages. But he especially knew Hebrew and loved the Jewish people and was a missionary to them for some time. And so people affectionately referred to him as Rabbi Duncan.

Now, he was a Scot, but they called him Rabbi Duncan. And the Lord used him to see many converted and many men trained for the gospel ministry.

[9 : 13] But interestingly, he began his theological studies as an atheist. That God isn't. But he soon saw that that meant, I have no identity.

I have no moral standard. I have no purpose in life. And I have no hope for the future. And this great struggle was going on in his mind. Whether God is or isn't.

And when God brought him out of the darkness and into the light, he wrote, I danced with joy, thrilled with the one great fact that God is. That the cosmos is not empty.

The ship is not rudderless. The universe is not throne-less or king-less or government-less. Life is not hopeless because God is. He exists.

And brothers and sisters, we in the coming year need to recapture something of the wonder of that fact. Therefore, I know who I am. Therefore, I know who I am.

[10 : 20] And I know why I'm here and what I'm to do. I know whose I am and where I came from and where I'm going. My life is full of purpose and significance that we'll never understand the fullness of until we see Jesus face to face.

This world is going somewhere. God gives direction to history, to world history, to your history, to my history.

God gives you the truth. I'm headed for a utopian peace where the knowledge that God is will permeate every fiber of the new creation, every thought of the new humanity.

For then, the dwelling of God will be with man, and he will live with them forever and ever. Praise God. The cosmos is not empty. The ship is not rudderless.

The universe is not throneless. Life is not hopeless because God is. So take that encouragement with you into the new year, a year filled with who knows what.

[11 : 28] Because though it is a new year, it's the same old evil world that we live in. So we need to stay in touch every day, all day, with the reality that God is.

And that's what the Bible means when it talks about the fear of the Lord hundreds of times. At the heart of the fear of the Lord is to live with this constant awareness that He is.

The awareness that sees Him by faith in every situation. Have you not found that we can forget that He is? Sadly, it's often in our troubles, and especially in our little ones, that we forget the Lord.

Our troubles blind us. They monopolize our thoughts, and they leave us no room for God. But that's when we need Him the most, in our troubles. Isaiah 51, 12 to 13, the Lord says, I, even I, am He who comforts you.

Who are you that you fear, mortal men? The sons of men who are but grass, and forget the Lord your Maker. You fear man, mortal man, and you forget God your Maker.

[12 : 48] Oh, how sad it is that that can be true of us. So we need to be constantly reminding ourselves through the day, God is.

Think of David and Goliath and that showdown between the armies of Israel and the Philistines. When that teenager David woke up that morning, he had no idea that before the day ended, he would be going one-on-one with this giant warrior in a battle to the death.

No, he was just waking up to another day. It's just another day, but Father's going to send me away from the flock and send me in to see my brothers who are in the battle.

And he wants to get news about how they're doing and take a few provisions along for them. But upon arrival at the battlefield, David suddenly finds himself confronted with trouble.

He wasn't prepared for it, but there it is. His name was Goliath. He was big trouble, nine foot and a half. That's another two feet higher than I can reach.

[13 : 55] He's a big man. He has covered with armor. He's got a big sword, a big spear. He's got a big mouth with which he challenged the Israelites to send out a champion, if you can find one, to fight me.

And all the Israelite soldiers did one. It says they all ran in fear because all they could see was the size of the trouble, Goliath, compared to them.

They were living in their own little world where Goliath is big and God isn't. That's all they saw was Goliath. And so they panicked and ran for cover in terror.

David, on the other hand, lived in the big world of reality that God is. And that shrank Goliath right down to size.

So when he saw the same giant that they saw and heard the same challenge that they heard, it wasn't, look at big him to little me. It's rather now, look at little him to my big God.

[15 : 10] He saw Goliath as a big disgrace. That's what he saw. Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?

It was God who is in David's world. And it made all the difference. He was the only one on the field of battle that day that had God in the picture.

He lived in the world where God is. He talked with him first thing in the morning. He meditated on his word day and night. And that made all the difference in the moment of trial when he came face to face with trouble.

He had God in view. And nothing, nothing, nothing is the same with God in view. So he grabbed five stones, his slingshot, and was after Goliath saying, You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.

This day the Lord will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down, cut off your head. Today I'll give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel.

[16 : 35] Well, the rest is history. Just one stone, directed by the God who is. It was battle over. Last week in the Sunday school of the adult class, our brother Jeremy showed us the importance of David's morning routine of meeting with the Lord.

As he began his day, Psalm 5.3, In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice. In the morning, I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation. Or Psalm 16.8, I've set the Lord always before me because he's at my right hand.

I will not be shaken, be it lion, be it bear, be it giant. Why? Because David, early in the morning, had talked to that God who is.

Had set him before him in his mind's eye. He's at my right hand. And with him at my right hand, I'm ready to face whatever else is in my world.

Because that first thing in the morning sets the tone then for the rest of the day. I'm looking for this God. I'm talking to this God. I'm listening to him as he speaks in the word.

[17 : 50] And it's important that we start right because most of our troubles pop up unannounced, don't they? They pop up unexpected. They just show up like it did for David that day.

So we best be ready. My application to you for this first point is, will you be starting your days in 2026 in this way?

With the Lord. Hearing him speak in his word and speaking to him in prayer. Some of you may need to start that habit. Maybe you're not doing it.

Maybe some of you need to renew it. You once did it, but you don't anymore. Some of you need to continue in it. Good for you. Continue in it. And all of us need to be treasuring the fact that the God we meet with is.

He really is. Well, the second encouraging reality is that God is God alone. God is God alone.

[18 : 52] It's interesting how often God reminds his people of this. I'm reading through Isaiah, and it's just like a broken record. Israel was to be his people among the nations, and they were to be a light and letting them know about the one true and living God who is.

And instead, they were drawn aside to worship the gods of the nations around them and to expect that these gods can somehow bless my crops, bless my animals, my health, my home.

God looks upon this. The one God who is, and he's jealous of his glory and says, I'm not going to share it with anyone. So, the God who is is God alone.

That's the point we're seeing. He's not just one of the whole pantheon of gods, all vying for supremacy. Our God revealed in Scripture is the supreme being.

He's the only true and living God. Listen to a few verses from Isaiah 43.10. God speaking, Before me, no God was formed, nor will there be one after me.

[20 : 12] None before me, none after me. What does that mean? I'm the only God there is. 44.6. This is what the Lord says, Israel's King and Redeemer, the Lord Almighty.

I'm the first, and I'm the last. Apart from me, there is no God. Can't be if I'm the first and last. None before me, none after me.

44.8. You are my witnesses. Is there any God beside me? No, there is no other rock. I know not one. And if God doesn't know of one, there simply ain't one.

Because he knows everything. He does not know of one other God in the whole of the universe. And then chapter 46 and verse 9. I am God, and there is no other.

I am God, and there's none like me. So just summarize, just in those few chapters there in Isaiah. God says, none before me, none after me. None like me, none but me.

[21 : 12] None above me, none beside me. And brothers and sisters, that's good news for us. That our God is the only God there is. We don't have a whole bunch of gods like the Greeks and the Romans and the Hindus who have to, that we would have to figure out, now which God is the God of rain?

And which one is the God of sunshine? And which one's the God to bless my crops? And which one's the one to give me more money? No, we just have one God. And he reigns over it all.

And if we know him, we know the one who blesses us in all ways. He has no competition, no rivals in heaven and on earth.

He says in Daniel 4, 35, it's Nebuchadnezzar who says by his spirit, he does as he pleases with the powers in heaven and the peoples of the earth.

Now that wraps it up. That's the whole shoot match. Heaven and earth, that's the universe. And our God does what he pleases in that whole sphere. He reigns over devils and dictators, over nations and weather and storms, over disease, disappointments and death.

[22 : 27] Every single trouble you'll ever face in this coming year, he reigns over it. He is God alone. And no one can hold back his hand.

When this God acts in world history as he is all the time, no one can hold back his hand. He says in Psalms 33 that he foils the plans of the nations and he thwarts the purposes of the people.

But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever. The purposes of his heart through all generations. Brothers and sisters, his good purposes for you will stand. There's no one stronger than him to frustrate his good purposes for you in this coming year.

It's good news for us that our God is God alone and he reigns over all. And so it's meant to be for your peace, your comfort.

Jesus does say in this world, you will have trouble. But then he says, but be of good cheer because I have overcome the world. And there's nobody to overcome me in that overcoming of the world.

[23 : 40] But it's not only for our comfort. This idea that God is God alone is also meant for our correction. Again, we've just seen how often God is reminding his people he alone is God.

Why is that? It's almost like we must have a problem with this, right? God's not wasting his breath. Why does he keep saying to his people, there is no other?

Could it be that we are giving God-like status and priority in our hearts, in our loves, in our lives to things that are not God? Things that are not him, even including ourselves.

And so this issue rises to the highest importance of the very first of the Ten Commandments. Have you ever thought of this? That because there are no other gods besides him, the first commandment is you shall have no other gods besides him.

Is that not a kindness that God's saying, quit the chase, there are none other. You know me, have no other gods but me. But there is implied in that command that we are to have him as our God, isn't there?

[25 : 04] No other gods but me. You shall have me as your God. What does it mean to have him as our God?

It means that we take him as our God, personally. We take him, we receive him to be our God. We'd all rebelled against him. That's what the Bible says. We all like sheep have gone astray, we've turned each one to his own way.

And though we all had our different own ways, you know what they all had in common? They were against his way. We didn't want God in our world and we turned our back and went astray.

And how do we have him as our God? We repent of that wicked decision of throwing off this good and gracious God and we turn and we repudiate what we've done and we come and we trust in his son and what he has done to bring us back to God and thereby he becomes our God.

We enter into a covenant with him. It's called the new covenant sealed in Jesus' blood in which we're trusting only in what Jesus has done to bring us back to him. And we say to him in that covenant, even as they say in a marriage covenant, I forsake all others, all other gods, everything else I've given the status of God to and I receive you alone.

[26 : 26] And then God says to us, I will be your God and you will be my people and we can say you are mine and I am yours and he says the same, you are mine and I am yours.

What a wonderful covenant, a marriage of God and his people. That's how we have God as our God. So then, do you have him as your God or do you still give him the back side as you seek other gods, yourself included?

I want it my way. You see, you're wanting to be God. And are you treating him as your God alone? That's what he is.

So we're to treat him as God alone. What does it mean to treat him as God alone? It means we worship him and him alone. It means we love him supremely above every other love.

It means that we trust him fully. It means that we obey him implicitly just because you say so, God. I obey.

[27 : 33] It means we serve him willingly. We fear him reverently. We commune with him regularly. We run to him for help in trouble.

He's our God. He's there for us. We thank him and praise him for blessings received. We honor him as God. We prioritize him as God.

We seek first his kingdom and righteousness and we confess him as God, gladly owning this God, the God who is, the only one and true God is my God through Jesus Christ.

And for some of you that will be the most important thing you do in 2025 is to reject all false gods, your self-occluded, your righteousness, your religion, whatever you're trusting and you come back to God through Jesus Christ alone.

And this God who is becomes your God. The God who is God alone, you have him as your God. Well, believers, the more we treat God as God alone, the more we glorify him and enjoy him because this is what we were made for.

[28 : 47] We were made to live with him as our God and as our God alone. So the third encouraging reality for you dear believers, whether you've been saved a day or for decades, is this, God is for you.

God is for you. It's one thing to know that God is. It's another thing to know that God is God alone. There are none other. Oh, but it's another thing to know that the God who is and who is God alone is for me.

He's for me. He's no longer against me. He's for me. And that's the third reality that I want you to be encouraged with as you head into the new world, the new year of uncertainties.

Whatever I meet, I've got God for me. For me. This is something David knew. He tells us in Psalm 56, 9, this I know that God is for me.

And if you want to read Psalm 56, you'll find that he's in trouble again. And it's not just one Philistine, it's the whole nation of Philistines. And Saul's out to kill him with his army and he flees from Saul down to the Philistine town of Gath, the hometown of Goliath whom he's killed a few years earlier.

[30 : 17] And somehow he thinks they won't recognize him. They did. And now he's in a peck of trouble. And it kind of looks like he slobbered his way out of that one if you remember the story, but he reminds us, no, it wasn't that.

I was crying out for help from the God who is. And he rescued me. And this much I know, God is for me.

Now, turn to Romans 8, the passage that was read for us because Paul knew the same thing, didn't he? He had come to know as well that God is for me.

Now, he had lots of circumstances and people against him, both Jews and Gentiles who wanted him dead. But the one offsetting reality for Paul, as it was for David, was who was for him, not who was against him.

And so Paul says that this blessed reality of having God for me, it's not just true of me. It's not like I have some special apostolic gift here to have God for me.

[31 : 25] It belongs to all the people of God. God. It's part of your inheritance as being a child of God. As John Owen says, most of our troubles is we don't live up to our privileges as children of God.

Here's one of them. What a great one. That God's for you. And so Paul is saying it's not just that he's for me, he's for all of us. Verse 31, Romans 8.

What then shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? So let's break it down. Who are the us? Who are the ones that God is for?

Who's he talking about? Because this is all important because if you're not in the us, then God's against you and not for you. So who is it that God is for?

Well, verse 31 isn't just an island sitting there with any connection to what goes before or after. It's connected to everything. He says, what shall we say in response to this?

[32 : 27] All that I've been saying. Oh, so you've been saying a lot here in the first 30 verses, haven't you? Well, what should we say in response to this? Well, if God is for us, who can be against us?

Well, who are the us? Well, verse 1 tells us it's those who are in Christ Jesus. And we get into Christ by repentance and faith. And it's for those who are in Christ Jesus and therefore there's no condemnation for them because Christ was condemned for them.

That's verse 1. Verse 4, it's for those who do not live according to the flesh. Well, I just do whatever I want, whatever my flesh tells me. No, no.

The ones who are the us in verse 31 are those who do not live according to the flesh but live according to the Spirit. Verse 5, they are those whose minds are set on what the Spirit desires.

verse 6, there are those whose mind is controlled by the Spirit. Verse 9, they are those who have the Spirit of God living in them. Verse 13, they are those who by the Spirit are putting to death the misdeeds of the body.

[33 : 35] Verse 14, they are those who are sons of God, led by the Spirit of God. Verse 17, they are heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ. Verse 23, they are those who have the first fruits of the Spirit and who are groaning, can't wait for the redemption of their bodies in the last day when we'll see Jesus and receive a new body and a perfected soul.

Verse 28, they are those who love God and are called according to his purpose. Verse 29, they are those who have been foreknown, foreloved by God. Verse 30, they are those he has predestined, they are those he has called, they are those he has justified and glorified.

Verse 31, what then shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?

You see, the us is all that he's just said. They are the people of God who have become his people by faith in Jesus Christ. Well, we've clarified the us, what about the if? Our verse says, if God is for us, who can be against us?

Now, this if is not expressing uncertainty. It's not like he's questioning, is God for us or isn't he? He can't mean that after what he's just said for 30 verses. No, he's just saying if this is true, then this is true.

[34 : 54] He's drawing a conclusion. It could be said since, since this is true, then this is the case. So, if God is for us, and he is, as the first 30 verses show us, then who can be against us?

It's the idea of it really doesn't matter who's against us if this God is for us. for us. Paul knows very well who's against him.

He's not ignorant of that point. Who can be against it? He knows. He knows that threefold enemy of the world, alluring us. The flesh wants what the world's offering.

The devil is ever tempting, persecuting, getting to pull us away from Jesus Christ. He knows who's against him. But what he's saying is if God's for us, it doesn't matter if the world, the flesh, the devil, and come hell or high water, if God's for us, it doesn't matter who, what is against us.

Oh, I say, is there not something there to give you backbone, to move into the new year with confident hope, knowing God is for us? Well, let's ask the question, well, just how for us is God?

[36 : 12] I mean, is he kind of a little bit for us? Or is he a lot for us? Is he all in for us? It's like your closest friend. They're for you.

They've got your back. They're with you through thick and thin. They don't desert you. They want the best for you in every situation. And God is for us in that way.

How for us is he? Well, the whole chapter seems to be written in answer to that question. This seems to be the pivotal passage that says, well, how for us is this God then?

Well, he was for us in election when he chose to save us and not to leave us on our quick road to hell that we had chosen. He was for us in election. He was for us in calling when he came and effectually called us.

We didn't want to come to him. We loved our sin. And yet he came with a powerful call that was stronger and brought us to Christ. He was for us in justification. We had sin, but he declared us righteous, as righteous as Jesus Christ because he took the righteousness of Jesus and gave it to us.

[37 : 32] He was for us in glorification, making us to be like Christ. And so verse 31 pauses and says, well, if that's true, if God is for us like that, who can be against us?

But he doesn't stop. He goes on. Verse 32, he who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all. How will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Pastor Colin led us to the cross this morning in our worship. And that's where Paul's leading us right now when we're asking the question, how for us is this God who is and is a lone God?

Well, he's so for us that he did not spare his own son, but gave him up for for us. You see, at Calvary, there was a choice that God the Father had to make.

Here are my chosen. Here are the ones that I've chosen to save. And now, now, should I spare them of the hell they deserve or shall I spare Jesus of the hell they deserve?

[38 : 47] The choice was him or us to spare. You know what God did? He spared us. Instead of his son, he did not spare his own son.

We're talking about the eternal son that he had daily delight in him for the ages eternal. He didn't spare him, but delivered him up.

That word is the same word that is used of the Jews delivering Jesus up to be crucified. The Father was the one behind Pilate and the Jews and Judas and all those who condemned him.

The Father delivered him up for us all. Who are the us? I just told you who the us were. Verses 1 to 31.

And the Father says, is it going to be them or my son? And he spared not his son that he might spare us. Now, do you have any questions, any more questions about how for us God is?

[39 : 52] I feel like, Paul, put your pen down right there and let's just worship and say, I'm ready to go into the new year in the dark, not knowing what it's going to be, but having Jesus hold my hand.

I'm ready to go with this father in heaven that didn't spare his son that he might spare me. If he's demonstrated that much that he's for me, I'm ready to go into the world this year, this coming year believing that he'll take care of me.

And that's not even to mention verse 28 that I passed over that he's so for us that he says, I won't let anything in your life in this coming year come into your life that I will not work together for your good and my glory.

Oh, is he that? Is he that for me? Is he that for me that he's going to protect me so well that nothing can happen to me that but that he will work it for my good? Here's my hand, Jesus. Leave me.

Here's my hand, Father. Leave me. He's for us. But Paul doesn't stop there. He keeps going. How for us is God?

[40 : 56] Well, who can lay any charge to those whom God has chosen? It's God who justifies. Who can condemn one of these? It's Christ Jesus that died.

He got condemned for these people. So who can condemn them and have that condemnation stick? Nobody. If we're in Christ Jesus, there is therefore now no condemnation.

But Jesus isn't on the cross. He goes on to say in verse, what is it, verse 35? Verse 34, that he, not only that, but he rose again, conquering death for me so that I can know that one day I will rise.

And he ascended into heaven where he's now at the right hand of God. And he's interceding for us. How for us is he?

After having lived for us, died for us, risen for us, he went into heaven for us. What's he doing there? He hasn't forgotten us. He's praying for us.

[42 : 02] He's interceding for us. He's that advocate with the Father. I sin, I confess. The Lord Jesus says, Father, I've paid for that sin. He said, I know my son. He's forgiven.

He's my advocate before the Father. He's my forerunner. Because he's there, I will one day be there. What's a forerunner? He's somebody that goes before someone else. Jesus is the forerunner, Hebrews 6.

And he's gone ahead before. That means we're going to follow one day. That's how for us he is. He's going to see us home to heaven. And that's not all.

He keeps going. And he comes to the climax, what I think really is the climax of it all. Paul, at the end of Romans 8, there's one more thing to say for our comfort of how for us is this God.

And it's his love for us. He's for us in his love. And here, Paul has traced all these blessings that are ours, that he's laid out in the chapter.

[43 : 07] And he's bringing them back to the fountainhead. What's the cause of all this blessing? God giving his son for us. Christ dying for us, rising, praying for us, coming again.

What's the fountain? Let's lift up the hood on this car and see just what's the engine driving this kind of stuff. And inside we see it's the love of God in Jesus Christ.

What can separate us from the love of Christ? That's where he goes. And then he lists a whole bunch of horrible things that I hope never happened to you, much less than this year. Tribulation, poverty, hardship, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, or sword.

Can that separate you from Christ's love? No. Rather, in all those things, if those things do happen, you still will be more than a conqueror through him who loved us.

You see, it's that love. What will he not do for those he loves? That's the open-end question. Well, the way to find out is just to march into 2025 and see what he'll do for you.

[44 : 22] Because he set his love on you. And nothing can separate you from that love. And he goes on and asks, well, I'm convinced that neither death nor life, angels, demons, the present, the future, any powers, height, depth, anything else in all creation will be able to separate you from God's love in Jesus Christ our Lord.

That's meant to give you encouragement. Whatever happens to me in this coming year, I know he loves me. And if I know he loves me, I know he is for me in all these ways he has just laid out in Romans chapter eight.

Well, that's enough. That's enough for me to follow him into the new year. Is it enough for you? I trust it is. You know, the sad reality is that those whom God is for can think that he's against you.

Maybe you're struggling with sin, dear Christian. And you really wonder, is God for me? Come back to Calvary.

God didn't spare his son, but he might spare you. Some of you might wonder, everything's falling apart in my life. Everything's against me.

[45 : 38] You know, Jacob felt that way, didn't he? In Genesis. He lost Joseph. He thought he was dead for 25 years. And now his other son's being held down in Egypt.

And the guy selling the grain there isn't going to give us any more unless we bring my youngest, dearest, loved Benjamin. But we're out of food.

We need food. Well, Dad, the man said he's not going to give us any if we don't bring back Benjamin. Everything is against me, he says. And God's laughing.

Oh, Jacob, if you only knew how for you I am. You are just days away from getting Benjamin back, Simeon back, and that son you think has been dead for 25 years, Joseph back.

Everything is against me. Maybe that's you today. Everything's going wrong. If you're Christian, God is for you. And if God is for you, who, what can be against you?

[46 : 42] But hear me, lost person. If Jesus Christ is not your Lord and Savior, if he's not the God of your life that you are crowning with your worship, your praise, your trust, your obedience, then his wrath is still against you.

And if God is against you, it doesn't matter who is for you. Mom and dad, son, daughter, friend, the whole world.

If God is against you, it doesn't matter who's for you. You see, God will either be your best friend or your worst enemy. He's either for you or he's against you.

And here's the gospel that I want to bring you before we close. That if he is against you, and rightly so because you have rebelled and turned your back on him and gone your own way, the good news is, if you will turn and have him to be your God and Savior, he will have you.

He turns none away. So come to him. Come to him. Rely on him to save you, and he will. Let's pray.

[48 : 04] Our Father, we do confess our fears of the unknown. There are things that keep us up at night, that don't give us a good night's sleep, and all because we're fearful.

We're anxious. We're a people, a nation that's anxious. And we confess to you our weakness. We're not able to fix these problems that we're up against, and that only makes us more anxious.

But we thank you for these realities that you keep coming back to us with in your word. That you are the God who is, and you're God alone, and that you are for us who are in Christ Jesus.

So please open our eyes to that reality day by day. Help us to drink in the comfort of it. Help us then to have no other gods but you, and to delight in you as being our God, and bring others to trust, and to have you as their God through faith in Jesus Christ.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.