

Romans 8:31-39

History tells us that in the year 312, **Constantine**, the Emperor of Rome, was engaged in a **battle**. And during that battle he saw a **sign** in the sky - a flaming **cross**. On the cross were written these words: "*With **this** sign you will **conquer**.*" The emperor immediately ordered that the symbol on the shields of his **army** would be **changed** - from an **eagle** to a **cross** - and we're told that the next day Constantine's army won a great **victory**. The Emperor was so affected by this event, that later he became a **Christian**, and he proceeded to make **Christianity** a **legal** religion in the empire, instead of an **outlawed** one.

The **cross** of Jesus Christ is truly a power that **conquers**. It **conquers** because the love of **God** is seen in the cross, as God **used** a cross to **save** us from our **sins**, and to pledge His **continuing** love to meet all our **needs**. During the season of **Lent** we see the battles our **Lord Jesus** fought and **won** against the **devil**. We **also** see the battles of faith which **we**, through the **strength** of Jesus, fight and win - battles against the **devil**, against the **world** around us, and against our own **doubts** and **fears**. Today's sermon text brings out the victorious power of Jesus' love better than any other. It gives us the certainty that **God's Love Conquers Through The Cross**.

God displayed His **love** for us on the hill of **Calvary**. He didn't spare His own **Son**, but instead He freely offered that Son as a **sacrifice** for the benefit of **all people**. God the Father allowed His Son to take **our** place - to suffer and die to pay for **our** sins. We had earned God's holy and consuming **punishment** for ourselves because of our sins. But God loved us **so much** that He punished His holy and sinless **Son** in our place. God allowed **nails** to be driven through Jesus' hands and feet, so we would be **forgiven**, and **spared** from that punishment. God didn't **hold back**, but rather, He gave us the **best** He had - He gave us **His Son** to be our Savior.

This act of love is the **foundation** for **everything** that God does for us. It gives us the **assurance** that God will not **fail** us when it comes to all the **other** matters we face in life. There are many things which rise to **importance** in our lives - things which become our **cares** and **concerns**. As those things **arise**, we want **help** for them. It might be a troubled **marriage**, or perhaps our **income** isn't covering what we're **spending**. Maybe it's an issue with our **children** or **grandchildren**. Maybe it's dealing with a serious **illness**, or a destructive **habit**. Maybe we need a **job** and we just can't seem to **find** one. These are certainly **important** matters. And there are times when we **wonder** whether the help we

**need** will ever **come**. But as our **text** says, *“He who did not spare his own **Son**, but gave him up for us all - how will he not also graciously give us **all things** along with him?”* If God came through on the most **important** matter of our life - our eternal **salvation** - then He most certainly will come through on all the **lesser** things in our lives as well.

God loved us enough to **save** us from sin and death, so we never need to **doubt** His love and His continual **care** for us. God already invested His **Son** in us, so He’s not going to start **cutting back** on His love now. With the same love which He showed at **Calvary**, God will continue to provide us with **everything** we need. Let’s take God at His **Word**, and **throw away** all of our earthly **cares** and **concerns**.

Once again our text tells us, *“**Who** will bring an **accusation** against God’s elect? God is the one who justifies! Who is the one who **condemns**? Christ Jesus, who **died** and, more than that, was raised to **life**, is the one who is at God’s right hand and who is also **interceding** for us.”* Who **accuses** us, and **condemns** us? Satan does. He’s a **fallen angel** who seeks to **destroy** all the **good** things which God has done. As he tries to destroy our **relationship** with God, he **tempts** us to **disobey** God’s Word. He **acts** like our **friend**, and tries to tell us that by following his advice we’ll be much **happier**. All too often, in our **weakness**, we fall **victim** to his lies, and we **sin**. But Satan doesn’t **stop** there with us. After we **sin** he takes us to **court** and **accuses** us of being **shameful**, and deserving **condemnation**. His accusations strike **fear** into our hearts - the fear of spending an eternity in **hell**.

But whatever accusations the devil brings up in court, they won’t **hold up**, because **God** is the **judge**, and God **justifies** us through **Jesus**. He declares us to be **not guilty**. None of the charges will be held against **us**, because they were all held against **Jesus**. When He died on the **cross**, He suffered the **punishment** which **we** deserved. And not only **that**, but when Jesus **rose** from the dead, He proved that our sins have been paid for in **full**. And Jesus is now sitting at God’s right hand, continually **interceding** for us.

We never need to be **afraid** that we have done something which is **unforgivable**. We never need to be **afraid** that some sin from long ago will finally **catch up** with us and **condemn** us. We have **Jesus**, and we know that, *“There is now **no condemnation** for those who are in Christ Jesus.”* Satan cannot overpower us, because **Jesus** came, and with His death on the **cross** He **destroyed** Satan’s power. **God’s Love Conquers** all our fears.

In fact, **God's Love Conquers everything**. Again, Paul tells us, *“What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will **trouble** or **distress** or **persecution** or **famine** or **nakedness** or **danger** or **sword**? Just as it is written: For your sake we are being put to **death** all day long. We are considered as sheep to be **slaughtered**. No, in **all these things** we are **more than conquerors** through him who **loved** us.”* Every day we face many **enemies**, who try to **separate** us from Jesus. **Satan** stands at the **top** of the list. **Government** officials and **radical groups** in our society **persecute** Christians. They **cancel** them, and in some cases even threaten to **kill** them if they don't fall in line and **reject Jesus**. Godlessness is found **everywhere** - in **entertainment**, and **politics**, and even in the **classrooms** of our public schools. There are events happening in our world today which have the **potential** to undermine our **faith** in Jesus. We can't let that happen. The Apostle Paul dealt with events which are very **similar**. In our text he mentioned *“**trouble, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, and sword,**”* as well as *“**death and slaughter.**”* These are all **evils** which **try** to pull us away from our faith in **Jesus** - but they **will not succeed**.

**Nothing** can separate us from the love of God. In fact, Paul goes on to say, *“In all these things we are **more than conquerors** through him who **loved** us.”* It will not be an **easy** struggle, but we will **overcome** and **conquer** all of these enemies - not with our **own** strength, but because of **God's love** for us. God has **bonded** Himself to us with an **inseparable** bond of **love**, through His **Son**. Therefore, we can say right along with Paul, *“I am **convinced** that neither death nor life, neither angels nor rulers, neither things present nor things to come, nor powerful forces, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in creation, will be able to **separate** us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* **Nothing** - nothing that is happening **now**, and nothing that **will happen** in the future - **nothing** can tear us away from **God's love in Jesus**. Jesus Himself said, *“I am the good **shepherd** ... I lay down my **life** for the sheep ... My sheep **listen** to my voice; I **know** them, and they **follow** me. I **give** them **eternal life**, and they shall **never perish**; **no one** will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is **greater than all**; **no one** can snatch them out of my Father's hand.”* That's a **promise** - a promise which **cannot** be **broken**. **God's love** will get us through **whoever** or **whatever** is trying to drive a **wedge** between us and Jesus, because **God's Love Conquers Through The Cross**. Amen.