



June 28 – Held Fast

Weekly Reading – Romans 6-10

This Week's Passages – Romans 8:31-39

Main Point

Because of God's unwavering love in Christ, believers can endure in faith with confidence and hope.

Key Verse

Romans 8:38-39 – For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, [39] nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (ESV)

Try to emphasize this verse throughout the lesson, building up to the Weekly Challenge to memorize the verse this week.

Life Group – The Flow

- 15 minutes – Conversation and relationship-building
 - 5 minutes – Looking back
 - 5 minutes – Introduction (icebreaker, activity, or illustration)
 - 30 minutes – Study and apply the Bible
 - 5 minutes – Application exercise
 - 10 minutes – Pray Through the Passage & Prayer Requests
 - 5 minutes – Conclusion
-

Looking Back (5 min)



Use this time to celebrate obedience and encourage growth. Invite members to share how they sought to apply last week's challenge and what God taught them along the way. Focus on God's faithfulness and the progress He is making in our lives, not on perfect execution. Scan or click the QR code for last week's challenge.

Say:

Last week, we challenged ourselves to remember that Christ died for us while we were still sinners, and that no amount of effort on our part can earn the acceptance of God – only the work Jesus has done in us.

Discuss one or more prompts:

- What did God reveal to you as you examined your heart?
 - Were you able to identify any "empty wells" you tend to run to instead of Christ?
 - What encouraged or challenged you most from last week's lesson?
-

Introduction (5 min)

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Ask:

- When did you feel most secure as a child?

Examples:

- Riding in the car with a parent
- Being carried when you were tired
- Sleeping at home during a storm
- Holding a parent's hand in a crowded place
- Knowing a parent would protect and provide for you

Then ask:

- What made you feel secure in those moments?

Say:

As children, many of us felt secure because we trusted someone stronger than ourselves to protect and care for us. In Romans 8, Paul reminded believers that their ultimate security is found not in their circumstances or their own strength, but in the unwavering love of God through Jesus Christ.

Transition to Background:

“Before we examine Paul’s powerful words of assurance, let’s consider the context in which he wrote them.”

Background

The Background and Christ Connection sections are designed to provide context and a gospel lens for the lesson. Feel free to summarize these sections rather than reading them word-for-word.

Romans was written to believers living in the capital city of the Roman Empire. Throughout chapters 1–8, Paul carefully explained humanity’s need for salvation, God’s provision through Christ, justification by faith, and the believer’s new life in the Spirit.

Immediately before this passage, Paul declared that God works all things together for the good of those who love Him and described God’s saving work from beginning to end (Romans 8:28–30). These verses culminated in the promise of future glorification. Having established the believer’s secure standing before God, Paul then asked a series of rhetorical questions designed to strengthen the church’s confidence in God’s love.

Transition to Christ Connection:

“Understanding the setting helps us understand the passage, but understanding the gospel helps us understand why it matters. Before we study the text, let’s consider how today’s passage points us to Christ.”

Christ Connection

Romans 8:31–39 points directly to Jesus Christ. Every assurance Paul offered rests upon Christ’s finished work. Christ died for sinners, was raised from the dead, ascended to the Father’s right hand, and now intercedes for believers. The security of God’s people is not rooted in their performance, feelings, or circumstances but in the completed work of Christ. Because Jesus accomplished everything necessary for our salvation, believers can rest confidently in God’s unwavering love.

Transition to Passage 1:

“With that foundation in mind, let's examine Paul's first source of confidence for enduring faith.”

Study and Apply (30 min)

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says and how we can apply it in our lives this week.

Passage 1 - Romans 8:31-34

READ THE PASSAGE - Have a volunteer read Romans 8:31-34.

God's Everlasting Love

[31] What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?
[32] He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?
[33] Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.
[34] Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. (ESV)

Commentary

Use the following commentary to prepare ahead of time. As you lead, feel free to summarize key insights rather than reading it word-for-word.

Romans 8:31

Paul wrote from first-hand experience about the overwhelming impact of God's love on him. The first phrase invites a verdict, what then are we to say? The response to this question is based in reality on the previous seven and a half chapters. This section is the height of Paul's argument. That God is for us is the most important statement Paul could make. We do not need to be afraid of God or uncertain about the present or the future. God has demonstrated He is for us. By comparison, any opposition is inconsequential.

Romans 8:32-34

The offer of His own Son is the ultimate demonstration of God's favor. Paul had experienced many charges against him. His confidence in God was so great, however, that he dared anyone to bring an accusation against God's people. God has taken care of the greater things, our eternal destiny and our standing before Him. We should not allow lesser things to shake our faith in God. They simply are not qualified to do so.

Guide Discussion

You do not need to cover every question. Use the questions that best help your group engage with the passage. I do encourage you to use the Reflective question to provide more engagement from your Life Group.

1. **Good for Students.** What does it mean that God is "for us"?
2. **Discuss.** Why is Christ's sacrifice the ultimate evidence of God's love?
3. **Deeper Dive.** How does God's justification answer the accusations we often hear from Satan, others, or even ourselves?
4. ★ **Reflective** - write answers on an index card. When are you most tempted to doubt that God is for you? What truths from this passage help combat those doubts?

Teaching Insight

The Teaching Insight is intended to help you identify and emphasize the main truth of the passage. Consider using it as a brief summary after discussion or a way to clarify the lesson's central message if your group gets off track.

Say:

"Many believers evaluate God's love based on current circumstances. Paul pointed believers back to the cross. God's love is not proven by the absence of hardship but by the gift of His Son."

Transition to Passage 2:

"Paul's confidence did not stop with God's past actions. He also pointed believers to the unbreakable nature of God's love."

Passage 2 - Romans 8:35-39

READ THE PASSAGE - Have volunteers read Romans 8:35-39

[35] Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

[36] As it is written,

"For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."

[37] No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

[38] For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,
[39] nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (ESV)

Commentary

Romans 8:35-37

These last five verses begin and end with the idea of not being separated from God. Death is the great separator, but for believers that separation is only physical and temporary. Each of the perils in verse 35 arise from official suppression of Christianity. Verse 36 is a quote from Psalm 44:22. It shows God's people have always faced great danger. Rather than being extinguished, God's people have survived, flourished, and witnessed a new chapter in God's work amidst humanity. The verse probably refers to all of the items listed in the previous verse but is especially tied to the mention of "sword." For your sake is a stark reminder our faith in God puts us in danger. Against the modern notion that faith means protection from all difficulty is the biblical fact that faith places us in jeopardy. Paul responded to the Psalm with powerful confidence. Even in the face of physical danger, we who are in Christ are more than victorious.

Romans 8:38

Paul put forth his experience as proof of the contention that nothing can ultimately defeat a Christian. The Greek word for sure means "a firm and settled conviction." Paul had no doubt about his confidence. Death nor life is the first pair of challenges that could imperil a Christian's standing before God. Death appears the ultimate separator, the final end. But as Paul argued repeatedly, a Christian is raised with Christ and experiences life with Him. Life refers here to the travails of life. Nothing we have to endure will sever our relationship with God. The second pair, angels nor rulers, could be classes of angelic beings. In light of the contrast between life and death, however, Paul may have meant "rulers above as well as rulers below." The contrast continued between things present and things to come. Nothing in the present day can sever our relationship with God, nor can any future circumstance.

Romans 8:39

Paul continued the contrasting pairs with height and depth (v. 39). Some ancient writers used these terms to indicate things above the heavens and beneath the earth. Paul probably meant that nothing from any realm can alter a Christian's security. Nor anything else in all creation is a collective phrase to include anything Paul may have overlooked. In his experience and in his imagination, nothing will separate us from the love of God. With this stunning certainty Paul concluded this first section of Romans.

Guide Discussion

1. Good for Students. Which item on Paul's list stands out to you most, and why?

2. **Discuss.** Why do suffering and hardship sometimes cause people to doubt God's love?
3. **Deeper Dive.** What does it mean to be "more than conquerors" even when circumstances remain difficult?
4. ★ **Reflective** - write answers on an index card. Which circumstance, fear, or hardship most threatens your sense of security, and how does this passage challenge that fear?

Teaching Insight

Say:

"Paul did not teach that believers avoid hardship. He taught that hardship cannot separate believers from Christ. The Christian's confidence rests not in favorable circumstances but in God's unfailing love."

Transition into Application Exercise:

"Paul's message is clear: nothing can separate believers from the love of God in Christ. Yet we often find ourselves listening to other voices—fear, doubt, guilt, or circumstances—that tell us otherwise. Let's take a few moments to identify those voices and compare them to the truth of God's Word."

Application Exercise (5-7 min)

The Voices We Listen To

Time: 5-7 minutes

Supplies: None

Instructions

Give each person a moment to consider the following statement:

"I am most tempted to doubt God's love for me when _____."

Invite members to share as they feel comfortable.

Then discuss:

- What lies do we tend to believe during those moments?
- Which truths from Romans 8 speak directly against those lies?

- How can our Life Group help remind one another of these truths?

Transition into Year of Prayer:

“Understanding God’s Word is important, but Scripture calls us to respond with faith and obedience. Let’s spend a few moments praying through the truths we’ve studied today.”

Pray through the Passage (10 min)

Led by the Prayer Champion:

Read the verse/passage, then read the prayer prompt out loud. Allow a few moments between prompts for reflection and prayer. Encourage members to personalize each prayer by filling in the blank with their own response.

Prompt 1 - Confession

Romans 8:31–32 - [31] What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? [32] He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? (ESV)

- Lord, help me trust that You are for me even when I face _____.

Prompt 2 - Gratitude/Faith

Romans 8:32 - [32] He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? (ESV)

- Lord, help me remember Your love for me when I am tempted to doubt because of _____.

Prompt 3 - Response/Obedience

Romans 8:38–39 - [38] For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, [39] nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (ESV)

- Lord, help me endure _____ with confidence, knowing nothing can separate me from Your love.

Prayer Requests, Praises, and Follow-Up

Take a few minutes to ask the group for updates from the previous week’s prayer requests. Encourage the group to celebrate answered prayers.

Next, identify specific needs that can be prayed for throughout this coming week.

Record requests and praises, share them with the group during the week, and follow up on them at the next gathering.

Transition into Conclusion:

“Paul’s message is simple but powerful: our confidence does not rest in our ability to hold on to God but in His commitment to hold on to us.”

Conclusion (5 min)



Scan or click the QR code and share the link in your Life Group’s group chat (e.g. GroupMe, text or email thread, etc.) so they can see This Week’s Challenge. Encourage your group to keep these questions in mind, review/memorize the Key Verse during the week, and engage in the Year of Prayer reading plan this week.

Final Takeaway

After discussion concludes, read the takeaway statement:

Believers can endure every trial because the love of God in Christ holds them securely and never lets them go.

This Week’s Challenge

This week, identify one situation where you are tempted to doubt God’s goodness, provision, or love. Each day, read Romans 8:31–39 and intentionally replace those doubts with the truths found in this passage.

Reflect

- What circumstances most tempt me to doubt God’s love?
- Which promise from Romans 8 encourages me most?
- How would my outlook change if I truly believed God was for me?
- Who could I encourage this week with the truths from this passage?

Memorize

Review daily and/or memorize the **Key Verse** from this passage to remind yourself that you can do nothing to earn your way to heaven, and that God's love alone is what saves you.

[Romans 8:38-39](#) - For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, [39] nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (ESV)

Read

This week's reading is [Romans 11-15](#). You can access the Year of Prayer reading plan [here](#).

Prayer

Either pray something like the guide below, or invite someone in the group to close in prayer.

Father, thank You that Your love does not depend on our circumstances, performance, or feelings. Thank You for giving Your Son on our behalf and for securing our salvation through His death and resurrection. Help us trust Your promises when doubts arise and endure faithfully through every trial. Remind us that nothing can separate us from Your love in Christ Jesus. Strengthen our faith and help us encourage others with this hope. In Jesus' name, amen.