

Small Groups Study Guide: Read the entire Passage first

- Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

Other passages to look at: —John 8:1–11; Genesis 3:1–10; Zechariah 3:1–5; Revelation 12:9–10; Colossians 2:13–15; Galatians 6:1

READ THE PASSAGE

What does this passage tell us about God? Who He is and what He does.

³³Who shall bring any charge against God's elect?

The accuser attacks our identity, but the Spirit reminds us who we are. (vs 33)

It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who 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.

Only God has the authority to condemn, and he has declared his children justified. (vs 33-34)

When we condemn ourselves or others, we take God's seat. (vs 34)

Accountability should sound like the Spirit, not the accuser. (vs 34)

³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." ³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

We are not conquerors after our trials but in them. (vs 37)

³⁸For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor 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.

The accuser's goal isn't condemnation. It's separation. (vs 38-39)

Chapter 8 begins with no condemnation and ends with no separation. (vs 1, 39)

Put into Practice: —How to live as more than conquerors

[] Replace the lie with the truth

[] Listen to the right voice

[] Live like a super-conqueror

Small Group Discussion Questions

1. According to Romans 8:33, the accuser brings charges against God's people. How is his voice different from the conviction of the Holy Spirit?

References: Romans 8:15–16; Revelation 12:10; Matthew 4:3; 2 Corinthians 7:10

2. According to Romans 8:33–34, why does only God have the authority to condemn, and what has He declared about His children?

References: Romans 8:1; John 3:18; Romans 5:1; Hebrews 7:25

3. Why is condemning ourselves or others actually taking God's seat? Where are you most tempted to do that?

References: James 4:11–12; Romans 14:4; Romans 12:19; 1 John 3:19–20

4. What does it look like to hold someone accountable without condemning them?

References: Galatians 6:1–2; John 8:7–11; Matthew 7:1–5; Ephesians 4:15

5. According to Romans 8:35–39, what is the accuser ultimately after, and why can't he get it?

References: Genesis 3:8–10, 21; Colossians 2:13–15; John 10:28–29

6. Which practice would help you most this week: replacing a lie with the truth, listening to the right voice, or living like a super-conqueror? Why?

PURPOSE OF SMALL GROUPS

Small groups exist to promote spiritual maturity and personal growth together in deep Christian relationships through the application of God's Word. The goal is to care about each other enough to ask the BIG questions of life, such as, what is God doing in your life? What is He asking you to do about it? Then walk with each other through

sharing, caring, praying, serving, and mobilizing each other.

SHARING – We come together each week to share a meal, God's Word, and how His story impacts our daily walk.

CARING – We gather together each week to ask great questions, listen to understand each other, and what God is doing in and through our lives.

PRAYING – We meet together to pray with each other. Not just to speak to God, but to hear from Him each week in community, and daily individually.

SERVING - We work together, using our unique gifts, to serve one another by God's grace and build the body in love each week.

MOBILIZING – We are praying for our neighbors by name and pray through “Good Events” once a quarter.

Leader’s Guide (WITH SUGGESTED AND HELPFUL ANSWERS)

Main Purpose

Help your group see that the accuser can bring charges, but he cannot condemn and he cannot separate. Only God has the authority to condemn, and He has declared His children justified. Because of this, we stop believing the accuser’s verdict about who we are, we step out of God’s seat, and we live as more than conquerors.

Pathway

When people move off track of the purpose, point to Scripture and remind people of the purpose.

Understanding the Questions

1. According to Romans 8:33, the accuser brings charges against God’s people. How is his voice different from the conviction of the Holy Spirit?

Biblical Answer: The accuser goes after our identity. He often uses true facts about our sin to push a false verdict: “This is who you really are. You’re not really God’s.” His accusations push us away from God and make us want to hide. The Holy Spirit also convicts us of sin, but He does it by reminding us who we are: “That’s not who you are anymore. You’re mine. Come back.” Conviction draws us toward God; accusation drives us away. Satan used the same “if” on Jesus in the wilderness right after the Father called Him His beloved Son.

References: Romans 8:15–16; Revelation 12:10; Matthew 4:3; 2 Corinthians 7:10

2. According to Romans 8:33–34, why does only God have the authority to condemn, and what has He declared about His children?

Biblical Answer: God is the only Judge. Satan, other people, and our own voice can accuse, but none of them has the authority to condemn. God does, and condemnation is real for those who do not believe. But for those in Christ, the Judge has already ruled: justified. Justified and condemned are legal opposites, so we cannot be both. Christ died, was raised, is seated at God’s right hand, and is interceding for us. The only One with the right to condemn us is the One standing up for us.

References: Romans 8:1; John 3:18; Romans 5:1; Hebrews 7:25

3. Why is condemning ourselves or others actually taking God's seat? Where are you most tempted to do that?

Biblical Answer: When we condemn ourselves after God has forgiven us, we are overruling His verdict and putting ourselves in the Judge's seat. It can look like humility, but it is actually believing the accuser over God. Condemning others is the same move with a different defendant: deciding someone's final verdict is not ours to make. Setting boundaries with someone who has hurt us is wise, and justice matters, but justice belongs to God.

References: James 4:11–12; Romans 14:4; Romans 12:19; 1 John 3:19–20

4. What does it look like to hold someone accountable without condemning them?

Biblical Answer: Naming sin is not condemning. Jesus named the woman's sin ("from now on sin no more") but refused to condemn her. Real accountability sounds like the Spirit, not the accuser. It reminds a brother or sister of their identity in Christ instead of attacking it. The goal is restoration, done gently and humbly, because we are not above the same temptation. A good test: Am I trying to bring them back to God, or make them pay?

References: Galatians 6:1–2; John 8:7–11; Matthew 7:1–5; Ephesians 4:15

5. According to Romans 8:35–39, what is the accuser ultimately after, and why can't he get it?

Biblical Answer: The accuser's real goal is separation, and accusation is his tool. In the garden, the serpent questioned God's word and tempted Adam and Eve to "be like God." After they sinned, they hid from God, blamed each other, and were sent out of the garden. Revelation 12 identifies that serpent as the devil and the accuser. But even then, God came looking for them ("Where are you?") and clothed them. At the cross Jesus canceled the record of debt and disarmed the powers. Now nothing in all creation, including the accuser, can separate us from the love of God in Christ.

References: Genesis 3:8–10, 21; Colossians 2:13–15; John 10:28–29

6. Which practice would help you most this week: replacing a lie with the truth, listening to the right voice, or living like a super-conqueror? Why?

Biblical Answer: Replacing the lie with the truth means naming the accusation we hear most and answering it with what God says in Romans 8: not condemned (v. 1), a child of God (v. 16), justified (v. 33), more than a conqueror (v. 37). Listening to the right voice means asking whether a thought is pulling us toward God or pushing us away. Living like a super-conqueror means not settling for barely surviving. In Christ we are heirs of His victory, even in the middle of hard things.

References: Philippians 4:8; Romans 8:16–17; Romans 8:37