

God is For Us Romans 8: 31

Prelude-

Do You believe God is FOR Us? This is not easy for those of us that grew up with unreliable parents or who have been betrayed by people we thought cared about us.

Try this: Look at your neighbor and with an exploding fist bump – say God is for Us!

Intro – I was tempted to say “God is for you.” I used “us” because contrary to our cultural narcissism, God is for “all y’all” who have accepted Jesus as Savior.

Individually, yes, God is for You and that is true because You have become a part of the body of Christ. Romans 8 will help us understand this better.

Scripture is always true ^^^ and we hear it through the filter of our experiences. So first, to understand any hesitancy or doubt you have about God being for You, ask the Spirit to show you what experiences in your life may cause you to hold onto resentment, anger, despair, poor self-worth or doubt. Do hold blame for God in your heart? I know a lady who will not let God near because her 16 year old was killed by a drunk driver over 40 years ago. I empathize with her

and I know that is like holding your hand over a flame and expecting not to get burned. Confess any such attitudes so God can remove them. With less gunk in your filter, you can hear God more clearly.

Then replace those thoughts and emotions with truth and positive experiences.

Who was always for you? Who has your back? Who can you call in the middle of a crisis? These experiences will help you build new thoughts about your relationship with God.

In the movie “Inside Out” the human mind is represented by balls of different colors based on the feeling experiences in life have caused a person to feel. Anger is red. Joy is Yellow. Sad is Blue. Green is Disgust. You get the idea? Each person has balls stored in their core memory bank and they determine the person’s outlook on life. Negative experiences can be replaced by positive ones shifting the person’s outlook on life. You get the idea?

OK enough about pop psychology; let’s look at the truth of God’s word. The Scripture is the most reliable building block for our core beings. The Spirit of God, who resides in the core of believers, uses Scripture to build truth into our hearts and minds.

Romans 8:1 "There is now therefore No Condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus." Salvation and New Identity in Jesus 101. (Read verses 2-4)

Because of Jesus, we who have accepted the gift of salvation will no longer be condemned.

You see, Jesus entered into humanity's mess to take on the penalty for sin for all who believe in Him. Yes, contrary to culture's amoralistic beliefs, all we do apart from God has negative consequences. Ungodly behavior leads to destruction. In the Old Testament they made sacrifices all the time for breaking God's law. Since Jesus died as the sacrifice for our sins, we are not condemned to that penalty and can be freed from the consequences of sin. Does that mean we can sin all we want? No way! Even a believer who willfully sins will suffer consequences. However, when we repent, turn to God, and confess, agree with God that we sinned, God is faithful to forgive our sin and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

God is for us!

Because of Jesus' resurrection we have perpetual power over sin. If we choose to use it. We are freed from the shackles of sin which made us continually do wrong, and now we have Spirit power to choose not to sin. God's power and our

yielded will work together to make new behavioral patterns that give us abundant life.

God is for us!

We were shackled by sin with no power to fulfill the law. Now, in Christ, we fulfill the law of Love. When Jesus became a human, entered the mess of the world and took on our sin and its penalty, He pulled the cord on sin's power over us.

In overcoming sin and death on the cross, Jesus removed condemnation's yoke and freed us to live in Him with resurrection power. What felt like a dreadful leaden cloak, or like hobbling shackles was dissolved by the blood of Christ.

God is for us!

Oh to live like that!! We often live a lie. Every sin or act of rebellious selfishness on my part, deludes me into living like I am still shackled. The lies of the enemy never cease and the power of the truth of the Word of God will always overcome when we confess to God; yield to God; surrender it to God.

Read v. 5-8

The Message interprets verse 5 as “Embrace and be embraced by the Spirit’s work.” There is no way anything done in the flesh can please God or accomplish God’s good plan. In fact, self effort causes our spirit to wither.

These verses admonish us to exercise choosing a Mind SET on God. A mind set on God exercises the fruit of the spirit and puts on compassion, humility, gentleness, kindness and patience. Deliberately, whenever we are tempted to act differently, we choose to yield to the Spirit and practice godliness. When we yield to the Spirit, we are given life and peace.

Attend to God, think on the values of the Kingdom of God; submit to the Spirit and obey, that is, do what you know is right. Jesus died in the flesh so we would die to the flesh. Jesus rose in power to new life and In Him we are raised, transformed to new life.

GOD IS FOR US! Pow

We must be continually choosing the Spirit over the flesh, life over death, God over self. When we align our hearts and minds with God’s, Ephesians 3:20, 21

tells us, God will do exceedingly abundantly above all we ask or think. God's power is at work in each of us

GOD IS FOR US!

Read Vs. 9-11 Live like the flesh is dead. God in Christ by the Holy Spirit lives in us. LIFE, not death or sin, RULES in us ...When we choose to let it, by the Spirit's power.

Vs. 12-14 Be led by the Spirit. There is no do-it-yourself Christian life. LIVE BY THE SPIRIT. Live like the flesh is DEAD.

My Alzheimer's patient's wake up sometimes thinking they are younger, in a different time. They talk like they are living long ago. Some try to get out of bed and their legs don't work. Some talk to grown children like they were school kids. Some insist that they have to go to church at 2 a.m.. Their misaligned brain is telling them something not true in the present.

Our enemy and our flesh try to trick us the same way. "Man, getting high will cure all that ails you!" "Or, I can run with these young punks, no problem." "I just can't not...drink, smoke, watch porn, overeat, gossip..." "Divorce is the only

option." ALL LIES! Letting the enemy trick you into living by the flesh leads to failure, destruction and death.

Vs. 15-17 Step out into the Spirit life. Don't live bound by sin's shackles. Expect God to work. Have courage.

God is for us!

When we let fear control us, we put ourselves back in the shackles. Something inside us dies; relationships die, churches die. People turn away from other people every day out of fear. People turn away from their Father, ABBA, God out of fear: fear I am not worthy, fear I will be condemned, fear driven by shame or guilt or both. Fear that is groundless.

ABBA God continuously pursues us, reaching out in abundant goodness. God waits for us, to receive all God has to offer. When we receive God's love, our identity as GOD's children is confirmed. We can be assured that we have accessible to us all of the power and resources of God's Kingdom.

GOD IS FOR US!

Verse 17 reminds us that suffering is part of this Spirit life. Jesus suffered and so will we. Even when we suffer, God is with us. Even when we suffer, we have

access to God's provision for our life in Christ. Suffering is part of the transformation process. God excavates our flesh driven habits. We suffer as God removes unwanted patterns. We also suffer if we resist God's work.

Often when we suffer in the flesh, we get caught in the whirlpool of self pity, dragged down by discontentment, resentment or anger. When we only have fleshly resources, this is a natural response.

However when we suffer in the Spirit, we become identified with Jesus more closely. The lives of many godly Christians who have been martyred for living and teaching the gospel give us encouragement that this suffering has meaning. Suffering also holds hope for future rewards. These who have gone before us teach us that we can suffer with God's hope, comfort and strength.

I have a hard time relating to the ideas of being heir or having an inheritance. My "Seize the day" parents, are not focused on leaving anything for my siblings and I. Besides, any earthly inheritance can be blown away by disaster or stock market fluctuations or thieves who steal on paper or by hand. But God has prepared for us an inheritance that will not fade away. He has provided all we need every day of our lives and beyond.

GOD IS FOR US!

v. 18 Our present difficulties are a part of God's plan for our transformation and creation's redemption in the Kingdom of God still to come.

Even in hard times, God has a plan; God has our back.

GOD IS FOR US!

The Enemy whispers lies: God is not paying attention. God has abandoned you. You suffer because you are unworthy of God's love. You blew it. God will leave you now. LIES< LIES, LIES

GOD IS FOR US! Unconditionally and eternally.

Learn to wait for God; to turn with hope to God persistently.

Verse 22 brings to mind, a pregnant woman who suffers morning sickness, back pain, cravings, indigestion and energy depleting fatigue... and still waits in hope of a healthy baby (and getting her body back). We should hope in suffering because we know God is at work in us.

When we endure the suffering of the changes that will transform us, we strengthen our spiritual resilience. The Christian life is being pregnant with the

Spirit of God who is transforming our flesh into Christ's likeness. We wait with hope of clearly seeing more of Jesus in us.

GOD IS FOR US!

God can take the very things that have caused us the most sorrow and change the pattern and work them into Good. A master craftsman in India makes the design for Oriental rugs. They are hung high on a frame and women and children sit behind them, pull the strands of colored wool, in and out and tie the knots. If someone makes a mistake, the craftsman never makes him rip out the thread. Instead he changes the pattern, weaving the thread into a more intricate pattern and more beautiful design than the one he had first planned. (Agnes Sanford, Sealed Orders)

You can count on the heavenly Father's design weaving a new design in the tapestry of your life whenever suffering appears.

Neonatology tells us a fetus less than 24 weeks has no chance of normal survival. The less than 20% who do survive have disabilities. (Some people use these numbers to justify abortion.) However, we abort our spiritual growth when we despair because we aren't "seeing change fast enough." We may see other

Christians stumble or go through hard times. We may think “If they go through THAT, I will never make it.” Some people over work their spiritual gifts too early. Like me trying to lift 50 pounds, ruptures in our spiritual fibers appear when we try to do the work of a more mature Christian too soon. We burn out or live a disabled spiritual life. We may fall back into legalism to try to prove to God we were worth saving. PAUSE We weren’t. PAUSE No, really, we were not worth saving. Truth - God saved us anyway. God will restore us no matter what mistakes we make.

GOD IS FOR US!

Just because we are impatient or get discouraged, does NOT mean God has given up on us. God is ALWAYS for us! The Lord God is waiting for us to look to Him, to clasp His outreached hand, so He can form us into His image, so He can fellowship with us.

GOD IS FOR US!

God knows we are “but dust.” The Spirit prays for our weaknesses (v. 26). The Spirit prays especially when we can’t pray. The Spirit of God in us KNOWS God’s will and that GOD IS FOR US!

Keep this in mind: God chose YOU, God is calling You, God sent Jesus to die for you so you can be worthy of a relationship with God. God promises in His kingdom come that each of us will be glorified as Jesus is glorified in heaven with God the Father. Glory be to God. Give that an exploding fist bump!

Read vs. 28. Suffering is a normal part of being transformed by God. God's plan for each of us, works ALL things together for good. EVERY detail of our lives invites an act of God to love us and shape us into our best selves which was made in His image. God knew each of us before the beginning of time and made a plan for our redemption.

GOD IS FOR US!

God does not hesitate to do WHATEVER is needed to bring us closer.

Jesus is our constant advocate. We are given the Spirit when we accept Jesus as our Savior so that we CAN be transformed.

GOD IS FOR US!

But if you would rather stay as you are in whatever mess you find yourself, God allows that. PAUSE. AND God never quits prodding and pursuing you to put your hand in His; to trust Him whatever the circumstances. Whenever we hit bottom,

God's hand is reaching out for us. Eventually we will put our hand in His.

Eventually can start TODAY!

God is for us.

What are you afraid of? No thing or person or circumstance will ever be able to separate us from God's love.

Receive His Hand!

Believe GOD IS FOR US!

Let's pray