

The Patio Pulpit For Wednesday April 28, 2021

“The Good News Extravaganza”

I love getting good news, but don't we all. Recently my son went to work with FedEx after working at a job for many, many years that was taking a toll on his body. Working for FedEx is no walk in the park, but he loves it and he's quite satisfied with being one of their contract drivers. He is like me, I enjoyed driving and being on the streets by myself in a company vehicle. That's good news.

And two days ago I got some unexpected good news via email. Around the first of the month our mic system at church, as most of you know, went kaput and after calling in a sound system expert we determined that it really was kaput. So I researched different mic systems similar to our now broken one and ordered one that has gotten good reviews. That was April 12. I received an email the next day informing me that the manufacturer would keep me abreast of my order shipping status. Then I got another email telling me that my order was being delayed due to transportation problems in China and I would not receive my product until May 23. That was a bummer. Then I got another email saying it would now be arriving on May 10. That was better but still much later than I had hoped.

Well, this Monday, April 26, I got an email saying that it would arrive on that very day, April 26 via Prime. Now that was good news. And sure enough, it arrived that very day. Seriously. I almost shouted. I felt like a little kid getting what he wanted for Christmas. And now, even as I am preparing this study for my patio pulpit, I am holding it in my hot little hands. That is good news for our entire congregation.

Now, take your Bibles and turn to Romans chapter 8 and I am going to remind you of the fantastic outline the apostle Paul, unbeknownst to him, hid in this chapter.

This will be my second or third installment on the Patio Pulpit of my series **“The Good News Extravaganza.”**

First, Romans 8:1. “We will never be condemned.” Romans 8:1 *Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Rom. 8:1 NAU).* I am a stickler for context, therefore we must

see what the word “therefore” is therefore (I know that’s as old as the hills, so forgive me). It points us back in the immediate context to chapter 7, verses 24-25, where Paul has reached the conclusion that God is going to deliver us in the future from “*the body of this death*” which is the source of our wretchedness. **But** in the meantime, he is informing us that we are stuck in these flesh and blood, mortal and corrupt human bodies. And He tells us all this by referring to his own personal experience. Listen to how Paul puts himself in this verse. ***Romans 7:25*** *Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other hand, I myself, with my flesh am serving the law of sin.*

That explains why we constantly experience the battle between the flesh and the spirit. Our remaining corruption or remaining sinfulness will always be around to annoy us. And since it is God’s doing that we are this way, I can live with life the way it is. It isn’t like we choose to be this way. It is how God has decided to leave us for the time being that in all things He might get the glory.

Second, we will never be rejected.

³¹ *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? (Rom. 8:31 NAU)*

Some of you at Eastway will remember that the phrase in that verse, “If God is for us,” is grammatically a first class condition. And a first class condition assumes that what is being stated is true. So, we can read that phrase this way, “If God is for us, and He is,” or, “Since God is for us.” ³¹ *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, and He is, who is against us?* Since we know that God is for us and always will be, we can know that He will never reject us.

Having grown up in a home where I and my brother were physically and mentally and emotionally abused, I expected to be rejected by almost everyone, especially people in authority like my teachers and later my bosses at work. And then like all teenage boys, I was almost deathly afraid of being rejected by girls I wanted to date. It did not turn out that way, most of the time, but that fear of rejection was

always lurking in the back of my mind. And that transferred over into my relationship with the Lord Jesus. I for a long time expected God to reject me. I allowed my remaining sinfulness to determine my relationship with Him. And I was wrong and ignorant of the finished work of Christ on the cross and how God applied that finished work to me.

¹⁵ For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"

¹⁶ The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,

¹⁷ and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. (Rom. 8:15-17 NAU)

Beloved, once loved by God, always loved by God. Once adopted by God, always a child of God. Once justified, always justified. God will never reject His children anymore than He could reject Jesus.

No condemnation; no rejection.

Third, We will never be finally defeated. But we will face temporary defeats in this life.

If you are familiar with the original three-point outline of Romans 8, no condemnation, no defeat, no separation, then you see already how I have modified the second point of “no defeat.” And why, pray tell, did I modify it? I’m glad you asked that question. Here’s why.

CONTEXT!

Someone within the early Charismatic Movement came up with the original outline but failed to consider the immediate context of Romans 8:37. V.37 by itself sounds very impressive and maybe even powerful. It says this, ³⁷ *But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.* And the well-meaning folks in the movement took that to mean no defeat, period. But the context says otherwise. Notice v.36, ³⁶ *Just as it is written, "FOR YOUR SAKE WE*

ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED."

(Rom. 8:36 NAU) And any student of the Bible should read that before he reads v.37. ³⁷ *But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.* If we want to face some pretty serious disappointments in the Christian life, convince yourself that we are never going to face any defeats in this life and I guarantee you disappointments and heartbreak. It is simply not Biblical; it is simply not true.

It is true that we are more than conquerors, but we are more than conquerors while we suffer the ills of being disciples of Christ. Even if we are martyred because of our faith, we are still more than conquerors. Every defeat we face is temporary and confined to this life and in our flesh and blood, mortal bodies.

³⁶ *Just as it is written, "FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED."*

The persecution of Christians on a massive scale had already begun in different places in the known world, including in Rome. It wasn't as bad when Paul wrote this letter as it was about to get under Nero, but it was still really bad. *"FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED."*

But what about for you and me in our day and time? Here's what. ¹² *Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.* (2 Tim. 3:12 NAU). It is amazing how living a godly life as disciples of Christ is so offensive to so many people. The Greek word translated persecuted means to be hounded by our opponents, it means to be pursued, sometimes literally such as in communist and socialist and Islamic nations, but also metaphorically by our enemies who may be our co-workers or our neighbors and sometimes our families.

But we will never be finally defeated because we are, in the long-run, more than conquerors through Him who loves us. The Bible does not teach no defeat.

Finally, outline point **#4, “No separation. We will never be separated.”**

So, we have seen no condemnation, no rejection, no final defeat. And now we come to the final piece of our outline and the intended climax to this chapter. ³⁸ *For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,*
³⁹ *nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
(Rom. 8:38-39 NAU).

Check out that list. Death, life, angels, principalities, things present, things to come, powers, height, depth, any other created thing. And go back to v.35, tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, or sword. None of the above will or can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus.

And I am convinced with the apostle Paul as well. It’s the same for everyone who believes in Jesus and is saved. It’s the same for everyone who has by the grace of God heard and believed the gospel. We can know without a doubt that nothing in this life can separate us from a force as powerful as the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We will never be condemned; we will never be rejected; we will never be finally defeated; and we will never be separated.

And that, beloved, is a good news extravaganza.