

# Romans Chapter 8 v 31 Part 2

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[ 0 : 00 ] I wasn't going to read the whole psalm, but I think it would be good for us to read the whole psalm by way of coming to worship. And then we'll come to sing a hymn that reflects that truth.

That as we come to the beginning of a new year, we thank God for his leading in the past and we trust him for his leading in the future. So Psalm 139, beginning at verse 1.

You have searched me, O Lord, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise. You perceive my thoughts from afar.

You discern my going out and my lying down. You are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue, you, Lord, know it completely.

You hem me in behind and before. You lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

[ 0 : 57 ] Where can I go from your spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there. If I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me. Your right hand will hold me fast. Verse 11 reflects what we thought this morning.

If I say, surely the darkness will hide me and the light become a night around me, even the darkness will not be dark to you. The night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

For you created my inmost being. You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Your works are wonderful.

I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body.

[ 2 : 02 ] All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, God. How vast is the sum of them.

Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand. When I awake, I am still with you. If only you, God, would slay the wicked.

Away from me, you who are bloodthirsty. They speak of you with evil intent. Your adversaries misuse your name. Do I not hate those who hate you, Lord, and abhor those who are in rebellion against you?

I have nothing but hatred for them. I count them my enemies. Search me, God, and know my heart. Test me and know my anxious thoughts.

See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting. And that very last line, I'm sure, is the echo of our hearts.

[ 3 : 08 ] Lead me in the way everlasting in God's ways. Let's sing together 770. All the way my Savior leads me. What have I to ask beside? And when we've sung this hymn, we're going to go into a time of open prayer, time for several of us to feel at liberty, to give thanks to God for the past year, to ask for his help and blessing upon the year ahead, to worship and praise him for all that he is and all that he's done for us.

So we'll stand and sing, and then be seated and come to worship in prayer. Let's stand. Let's stand. If you've got one of the new red church Bibles, page 1173, Ephesians. And we're going to read the first 14 verses of chapter 1.

A bit later on, we're going to turn back to Romans 8 and look at the verse, which is our sort of verse for the year, this new year again. But let's hear God's word once more.

Ephesians and chapter 1, beginning at verse 1. Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to God's holy people in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus.

[ 4 : 56 ] Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every

spiritual blessing in Christ.

For he chose us in him before the creation of the world, to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will, to the praise of his glorious grace, which he's freely given us in the one he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us.

With all wisdom and understanding, he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment, to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

In him we were also chosen. Having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.

[ 6 : 29 ] And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession to the praise of his glory.

Amen. Please, would you turn with me to that passage we were looking at this morning, Romans and chapter 8, particularly that verse, verse 31, and especially the second sentence in that verse, which I bring before you as a verse for us, God's people, this year.

If God is for us, who can be against us? If God is for us, who can be against us?

I want to ask you a very personal question. You won't need to answer it. It's to do with money. We always find money hard to talk about, don't we?

We always get a bit embarrassed about talking about money. But I wonder, what is your overdraft limit on your bank account? Don't tell me. I don't want to know. Or here's another question.

[ 8 : 00 ] It's maybe something that you may not know. You may know that one. How's your credit rating? Perhaps you're one of those people who've gone onto the internet and various companies that offer you credit rating or how to improve your credit rating.

Well, as I say, I don't particularly want you to tell me those answers. None of my business. But the answer to both of those questions, what your overdraft is and what your credit rating is, will indicate just how much the bank trusts you.

After all, an overdraft, of course, on an account is really a sort of a short-term loan, a small loan that can be repaid. And your credit rating will determine how much you're allowed to borrow on your credit card or even on a loan.

Both, of course, the bank or the credit company require the lenders to have faith, those who lend the money to have faith in you that you will repay what you've taken from them.

And the level of trust that they have in you will largely be calculated by how you've handled your money in the past. And that's how it's possible to get a very bad credit rating by being overdrawn too much or exceeding your credit card limit and so on.

[ 9 : 18 ] If you've been declared bankrupt, and that's become quite common of late, then trust in your financial skills will be very low. The bank will not have a great deal of faith in you that you'll be able to repay what you now borrow.

But if they think that you're trustworthy, if they see that your previous dealings with your finances have been very good and you haven't gone into the red too often and so on and paid back your loans, then they will lend you vast sums of money because they are confident in your ability to repay.

Now, the Christian's faith in God works on a very similar principle. Our trust in God is limited by how much we believe He will not fail us.

We will entrust to Him only those things in our lives which we believe He will be faithful to meet our needs for. Our credit rating of God, that is our estimate of just how much He can be trusted, is dependent upon our dealings with Him in the past.

This morning, we consider that promise if God is for us, who can be against us? How much peace we enjoy from that promise, how much that promise delivers us from fear of the future will depend upon our view of God's trustworthiness and faithfulness.

[ 10 : 48 ] And it seems to me that Paul, knowing this, knowing the human heart, knowing his own and knowing that of his readers and therefore of every Christian, preempts any doubts we may

have about God's promise by quickly following this astonishing affirmation with supporting evidence to prove the absolute trustworthiness of God.

So he says, if God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will we not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things.

Verse 32 is the ironclad proof that we can take the promise God is for us and be certain that we are placing all our savings in a very sure thing.

So what is it that Paul tells us about God and His dealings with us that can encourage us to have faith in the promise that God will be for us in 2016 and that nothing that we face will deter Him, as we thought this morning, from working for our good and our blessing?

What is it that God has done? What is it that assures us that we are right and reasonable to trust Him? Well, what we see there, God gave His Son for us who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all.

[12:31] We know that such a truth is something which is repeated all the way through the New Testament and even into the Old Testament too. This truth that God gave His Son for us.

The greatest verse often thought of in the Bible, John 3.16, for God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son. Acts 2.23, on the day of Pentecost, the Apostle Peter preaches, this man, speaking of Jesus, was handed over to you by God's set purpose.

In Ephesians, we looked at Ephesians 1, but in Ephesians 5, verse 25, we're told, Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her. And even here in Romans 4, verse 25, we have this truth.

He was delivered over to death. Who delivered Him? But God Himself for our sins. Chapter 5, the very demonstrations of God's love is this. Chapter 5, verse 8, God demonstrates His own love for us in this.

while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. And we can go on and on and on throughout the Scriptures, realizing that the giving of the Son was done by the Father.

[13:52] God gave His Son. Yes, Jesus was the one who came. Yes, Jesus was the one who took on our nature, laid down His glory and majesty in heaven.

Jesus was the one who became human, the one who went to the cross willingly for our sake. But He did so because the Father gave Him.

The Father sent Him. One of the great descriptions that Jesus says of Himself is the one who sent me. That's how He spoke of God. The Father, the one who sent me is greater than I and so on.

We cannot escape this reality that God, the Father, gave God the Son for the church to those He had chosen to save.

We've been thinking even over Christmas time of the name Jesus which we were told because He will save His people from their sins. There is something wonderfully specific in the giving of the Son by the Father.

[14:58] He did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us, the us that God is for. When we buy a gift and we've been giving gifts of course over Christmas we give some thought to the gifts.

We think about who it is for who will appreciate it. There's a sense of being premeditated in the gifts we give. Even if they may be last minute shopping there's still some thought and premeditation.

And when we've got that gift we will wrap it up and we will put a tag on it whether it's a sticky tag or if we're really feeling flash we'll have a ribbon and a really nice sort of tag and we'll put the name of the person to whom the gift is for on that gift.

If like us then what we'll do then is take the present we'll either put it in a stocking or put it under the Christmas tree and those gifts are named because they are not just for anyone.

The gifts are named because they are for someone specific someone particular. If somebody comes to visit us or pops in or if we have a stranger and we take them in who isn't part of the family they can't just say oh there's some nice gifts I'll take one of those gifts that's for me.

[16:17] Gifts not intended for them. The gift is intended for the one for whom it was purchased. And so too the giving by the father of the son was premeditated.

We've already thought about that in Psalm 139 about the fact that everything that God does is premeditated. Everything that God does he does because he's planned to do it because he knows about things because he has all knowledge and all understanding.

And the gift of the son is particularly especially for the church for you for me for us he who did not spare his own son but gave him up for us all.

Talking to the believer. We know that he's talking to the believer because he goes on to say that this is the case when he talks about those who are the chosen of God.

God is for us. God is for you dear friends. God is for those who have taken Christ as their savior.

[ 17 : 29 ] if we say that God sent his son simply for the world and we don't make that clear then we rob ourselves of the confidence that we have in the giving of the son because the fullest comfort we have in the giving of the son is that he was given for us.

yes the wonderful promise of the gospel is whosoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Yes the wonderful comfort is that no matter what the sin no matter what and how hard and barren our hearts are to God if we will put our faith in Christ and repent of our sins there is forgiveness for us but dear friends for the it's so imperative that we recognize that God gave his son for me for us and therefore that God is for us here is the evidence that he's given his son.

But there's something more than that isn't there and there's a sense in which it comes quite clear that the giving of God's son was not only for us but was willingly done.

He who did not spare his own son but gave him up for us all. We have the sense don't we from what Paul is saying is that this that God should he have chosen to could have withheld his son.

God was under no directive from anybody else. He was under no pressure from anybody else. He was not forced by our sin or by anything else to send his son.

[ 19 : 10 ] He freely willingly of his own volition gave his son for us. God could have rightly honorably said I will not spare my son.

I will not send him. I will not give him for this sinful and wicked people. I will withhold him. They don't deserve him. They are unworthy of him. And God would have been quite right to have done that wouldn't he?

But no, we recognize that God gave willingly. we have all been receiving gifts. And I think we thought about this another time, didn't we?

That sometimes of course you get a, it particularly works with Christmas cards. You get a Christmas card in the letter box and you think, oh, I haven't sent them one. And so you hurriedly get a Christmas card and you find one if you've got one in the box or whatever and you send it.

I can't possibly not send them a card because they've sent me one. And sometimes it works with presents as well. You think, well, I don't really want to buy that person a present, but they'll probably buy me one, so I better buy them one.

[ 20 : 15 ] And we think in some way that God's like that. He's not like that. There's no duress.

There's no force being put upon God. There's nothing that makes him say, as it were, if I can put it this way, well, I have to send him. It was all of his own free will.

He did not spare. He could have spared him. He didn't spare. His own son, he didn't spare him. And once more, we've got to take this very seriously, haven't we? We've got to understand that the whole of the Bible's teaching is that God only acts according to his sovereign will.

God only does what he wants to do. He never ever does anything against his will. He never acts in any way to please somebody else.

He only acts to please himself. Why? Because his will is perfect. Not because God is selfish, as we understand selfishness.

[ 21 : 25 ] It's because what God wants is the right thing. When we want to please ourselves, it's often because we want to do the wrong thing. God's not like that. We can do nothing to make him act against his will.

Nebuchadnezzar, the great emperor of the Chaldeans, the Babylonians, was humbled by God. He came to this conclusion, which is recorded in Daniel chapter 4.

All peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He, that's God, does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him, what have you done?

So whenever God acts, he does so because he has planned to do so, because he is determined to do so. Our God is not a reactionary God.

There's that sort of view, isn't there, that God looked upon the world and there's the world and all of its sin and all of its wickedness. God sort of thought to himself, what can I do?

[ 22 : 36 ] What can I do to turn these people back to myself? What can I do to make things right?

Ah, I have an idea. No, that's not the case. God is not a knee-jerk God.

God is a controlled God, an unshakable God, a determined God, a planning God, a purposing God. God. And the wonderful truth is this, that we come to when it says that God did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all.

We recognize that he gave his son for us and determined to do so even before sin entered the world, even before the world was made.

There's that wonderful promise truth in 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 20. Speaking of Jesus, he was chosen before the creation of the world. The plan of God to send his son into the world, to be the savior of sinful people, was put together before the world was made.

And therefore, we have again more undeniable evidence that God is for us in the future. God was for us, dear friends, before the world was made.

[ 23 : 49 ] There has never been a time when God has not been for his people, the church. Even when we were in our sin, even when we were in rebellion against him, do you know, God was for us.

And working, as we thought this morning, in our lives to bring us to that place where we should hear the gospel and know Christ as our savior. Included in that wonderful plan was the choice of God to send his son into the world.

God knew that he would send him and knew he would send him for us. And we see as well then that we can be certain that God is for us, not only because he gave his son for us, not only because he willingly gave his son for us, but also because in giving his son for us, he gave that which has no equal.

He gave that which is most precious. He gave that which is most beautiful, most costly. He who did not spare his own son.

The greatness of any gift is in its value to the one who has given it. The greatness of any gift, is in the value to the one who has given it.

[ 25 : 18 ] It may be valuable to us who receive it, but it depends on the person who's given it that makes the gift so valuable. So if you received a Rolex watch this Christmas from one of your billionaire uncles, that Rolex watch may cost many thousands of pounds, but if the person who gave it was a billionaire, it's nothing is it?

It's trifling. It may be worth tens of thousands. But it really isn't worth a great deal. It's not a great gift. But the gift of a pair of socks is priceless to someone who barely makes ends meet and has had to go without a meal to save enough money to buy them.

Yeah? That's why, remember, when the Lord Jesus was at the temple with the disciples and he saw the rich people put in their gold bags, didn't he? Bags of gold they put in. And then the woman, the widow with the two tiny copper coins, she's given the greatest gift.

Why is it greater? Not in monetary value, but in the cost to the person who gave it. And so again, what is the most valuable gift that God could give us?

He's given us the world. He's given us life, health, and strength. In all the treasures of heaven, in all the glories of the galaxy, there is not one thing that is more valuable or precious to God the Father than his only begotten Son.

[ 26 : 49 ] The greatest loss that God could suffer was to lose his Son. The jewel in God's home, which took the most treasured position, was his Son, yet he gave him up for us.

That's the power of Paul's argument, you see. Since God has willingly given us the unparalleled gift of his Son, we can be certain that God is for us, whatever else happens.

Whatever we face in 2016, whatever circumstances come away, we can be certain that God is for us. Why? Because he's given the most precious, the most costly, the most valuable thing that he could.

He has willingly subjected himself to loss. for our sake. And whatever loss we may suffer in the year, that cannot take away the fact that God gave up his Son for us.

How can we doubt his promises? How can we doubt that God is for us when he could not have given anything more to prove his love and prove his faithfulness?

[ 28 : 03 ] God is for us? There's one last thing here as well, isn't there? One thing again that should encourage us to take God's promises for ourselves. One more thing that should encourage us to trust him and to renew our faith in him daily and to lean upon him and find him faithful in every circumstance.

For he says in verse 32, He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also along with him graciously give us all things?  
The giving of God's Son includes everything. Everything. That's the dramatic climactic conclusion of what Paul is saying here.  
When God gave his Son to us, he has not withheld from us anything that is for our good but has given with him all things.  
Everything. Everything. Back in Exeter when we lived in Devon, we would go to a shop called The Range. There was one in Newcastle.  
[ 29 : 14 ] We were up there earlier in the week for a little bit of a jaunt. There's a motto that The Range has. I don't know if they still have that motto. It's something like this. It says, If we don't sell it, then you don't need it.  
If we don't sell it, then you don't need it. It certainly does have a wide variety of things from pet food to fishing tackle, to clothes, to haberdashery and upholstery and furniture and art and crafts.  
It just has everything. But of course, when it says, If we don't sell it, then you don't need it, it doesn't really mean that you can buy every conceivable item in the world in that one store.  
No one is going to take that company to court for false advertising because it doesn't have a stock of nuclear submarines. Nobody is going to take it to court under false advertising because they wanted a giraffe as a pet.  
No, of course not. But when Paul tells us that God has given us with Christ all things, he really means it.  
[ 30 : 23 ] It's not just a superlative. It's not just a sort of like, you know, well, he's got everything. What do you buy the person who has everything? Well, they don't have everything. But we know it's a general coverall. They've got lots and lots.  
So God is not saying here, along with Christ, graciously give us everything, but, you know, within reason. No, not, no. Give us everything beyond our imagination, beyond our understanding, beyond our comprehension.  
Everything. No limits to the promise. When we're dealing with God, we are dealing with one who is not like ourselves, everything is ours. So we read from Ephesians 1, because in verse 3 we're told that God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ.  
And in Philippians chapter 4, 19, we have that promise of Paul, my God shall supply all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ. There's no limit to that.  
There's no fine print with that. There's no exclusions with that. So God is for us, as we thought this morning, means that every single thing, every single circumstance, every single part of our lives in 2016 is full of the truth that God is for us.  
[ 31 : 45 ] Can you think of everything that you will possibly need this coming year? You may be one of those sort of people who plans, and you plan for your holiday, and you plan for what's going to happen.  
You may be one of those people who's already bought all your Christmas presents in the sale for next year. The reality is none of us can know what we will need in every circumstance.  
None of us can know what we will need on the car, what we will need in the home, what we will need in the larder. None of us can know what we will need in any given situation and circumstance. None of us can, but God can and does know. He wouldn't make a promise like this without knowing that he had all that was needed to supply that promise and keep it.  
Remember Jesus' teaching, and he's taught about, you know, what man decides to build a tower and then realizes after he's laid the foundation he hasn't got enough to finish it. That's not like God.  
[ 32 : 47 ] God says to us, I am for you and in Christ I will give you all things, and he doesn't then worry that he's going to find it difficult to keep that promise.  
It's going to be no difficulty for him. He has already provided for every eventuality for you and me in Christ. And notice that he has given us these things graciously.  
He who did not spare his own son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also along with him, he's given it to us, Christ has given to us, so with him we already are ours, graciously give us all things.  
It's already paid for. There's nothing that you or I need to do to obtain these things. It is our possession already ever since Christ was our Savior.

When you received Christ, you dear friend and I received all things necessary in every circumstance. This is the real deal.

[ 33 : 58 ] This is the full package. This is the Ford Escort gear model with the sunroof and the radio and CD player and the electric windows and the central locking.

it's the whole caboodle. God is for us. The evidence, the proof, the certainty is this, he did not spare his son but gave him up for us all and with him God has included everything for our good in every circumstance.

I have one last question to ask you and again only you can answer that question. Do you believe this?

Do you believe God's promise? And more importantly, will you believe this in the days to come? because here is our peace.

Here is our freedom from fear. Here is our confidence. Here is our joy. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine according to his power that is at work within us.

[ 35 : 26 ] To him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations forever and ever. Amen.