

# “LIVING BY FAITH”

## Romans 8:31-39

**“Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you’ve got to keep moving.”**

That profound assertion came from none other than Albert Einstein.

As Christians we face enormous challenges from time-to-time. These trials could surface in ...

- our health
- our marriage
- our finances
- our parenting
- our work
- our spiritual lives

Insecurity can wreak havoc in our lives. Paul Newman was a super successful actor. In spite of his success, he was dogged by self-doubt. He said...

**“I’m always anxious about admitting to failure, to not being good enough, to not being right.”**

Insecurity in a believer's life can result in him/her becoming stagnant and stationary. To keep your balance in life, you've got to keep moving forward in faith.

**Hebrews 11:6...** And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

**Hebrews 11:17–19...** By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten *son*; **18** *it was he* to whom it was said, "IN ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS SHALL BE CALLED." **19** He considered that God is able to raise *people* even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type.

Learning to live by faith is a vital part of every believer's life. Today we're going to take a deep dive into one of the greatest chapters in the Bible, Romans 8. The flow of truth in this chapter highlights the supernatural security that breeds faith and confidence in the lives of believers. In fact, the Holy

Spirit inspired Paul to include 15 powerful assurances about the Lord in the last 12 verses of the chapter...

- **HE works in our lives (28)**
- **HE works for our good (28)**
- **HE works for our good in all things (28)**
- **HE works for good in those who love Him (28)**
- **HE works in us according to His purpose (28)**
- **HE foreknew you (29)**
- **HE predestined you (29)**
- **HE called you (30)**
- **HE justified you (30)**
- **HE glorified you (30)**
- **HE is for you (31)**
- **HE provides everything you need (32)**
- **HE defends you (33)**
- **HE extends grace to you (34)**
- **HE loves you (35-39)**

Praise the Lord! Don't let the challenges of life cause you to yield to insecurity and to a life of stagnant and stationary faith. For the rest of our time this morning let's drill down on this thought...

## KEEP MOVING FORWARD IN FAITH!

Beginning in verse 31...

**The apostle hurls 5 questions out into space, as it were, defiantly, triumphantly, challenging any creature in heaven or earth or hell to answer them or to deny the truth that is contained in them. But there is no answer, for nobody and nothing can harm the redeemed people of God.” (Stott, *Men Made New*, p. 103)**

In regard to these, I want to lay out three facts that can bolster your security in Christ and motivate you to keep moving forward in faith ...

### **1. GOD'S SUPPORT IS UNLIMITED**

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

Look at this phrase—“*If God is for us.*” The “*if*” does not insinuate an uncertainty; instead, it presents us with a certainty. GOD IS FOR US. Let those words sink in for a minute. He is for you...

- **when you get sick**
- **when you lose your job**
- **when you take a financial hit**
- **when somebody close to you dies.**

He will never leave you nor fail you. How can we count on this being true? The answer is found in verse 32...

**Romans 8:32...He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?**

Paul used a *greater-to-lesser* argument. **If God would offer His Son as a sacrifice for our sins while we were enemies, will He not fully provide for our needs now that we are His children?** The point here is huge and it should bolster our security in Christ and motivate us to...

## KEEP MOVING FORWARD IN FAITH!

We're looking at three glorious facts that you can lean into by faith when life gets tough. Here's the first one—*GOD'S SUPPORT IS UNLIMITED*. Here's the next fact...

### 2. GOD'S PROTECTION IS UNDENIABLE

Romans 8:33...Who will bring a charge against God's elect? *God is the one who justifies*; 34 who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

Satan has access to God's throne where he makes accusations against believers. Do we have reason to fear? Is our eternal security in jeopardy?

Don't miss this statement—*God is the One who justifies*. Who does He justify?

**Romans 5:1**...Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Have you received Jesus as your Savior and Lord? God's promise is clear. If you have then you can rest assured that the infinitely holy God has forgiven all your sins, imputed to you the perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus, and declared that you are "*not guilty.*"

Listen, nobody can go over God's head to get your salvation revoked because there is no one greater than God Himself. Besides that, Jesus has done everything necessary to save your soul ...

### **Jesus Died for your sins**

The idea of Him allowing a believer to be condemned is absurd!

### **Jesus was raised from the dead**

The resurrection of Jesus proves that God the Father was totally satisfied with His Son's sacrifice.

### **Jesus is at the right hand of God**

In heaven, Jesus is seated on His exalted throne. He wields absolute authority over everyone all.

## Jesus intercedes for us

Jesus is committed to making sure that you as a believer receive the full benefits of your salvation (**Heb. 7:25**). Don't let insecurity bog you down...

### KEEP MOVING FORWARD IN FAITH!

We're looking at three glorious facts that you can lean into by faith. Here's the first two—**GOD'S SUPPORT IS UNLIMITED** and **GOD'S PROTECTION IS UNDENIABLE**. Here's the third fact I want to call to your attention...

### 3. GOD'S LOVE IS UNWAVERING

**Romans 8:35...Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?**

Here's the question we have to settle in our minds and hearts—*Is God's love for believers conditioned on their actions or is His love unconditional?*



The Scripture is clear. God's love is unconditional.

**Romans 5:8**... But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

To help us comprehend the unfathomable love of God, Paul launched into a list of adversities and adversaries that could threaten the security that comes with knowing that God loves us...

- **Tribulation**—This is a word for strong outward pressure (losing a job or dealing with a disease).
- **Distress**— This word means to be caught in a narrow space— inward distress or anxiety.
- **Persecution**—This was a prevalent reality for the early church and an increasing possibility for today's church.
- **Famine**—This refers to a disruption in the food chain that leads to a shortage of food.
- **Nakedness**—This is a lack of clothes because people don't have a way of getting them.

- **Peril**—The danger associated with betrayal by those who have rejected Christ.
- **Sword**—This refers to execution or martyrdom.

Paul quoted Psalm 44:22 to remind believers that there are inherent risks associated with living for Christ in a fallen, defective world.

**Romans 8:36... 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.”**

Every believer will have to face the harsh realities of life. What can we expect? I love Paul’s conclusion...

**Romans 8:37...But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.**

*“We overwhelmingly conquer”*— is a compound verb that literally means to conquer with success to spare. We don’t just win. We win big!

The Lord’s unconditional love guarantees our victory over everything and everyone that would threaten our relationship with Him. Jesus will always love us

and He will leverage our hard times to conform us to His image (**Rom. 8:28-29**) and to increase our rewards in heaven (**Rom. 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:17**).

**Romans 8:38–39...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.**

The first four words are crucial. This is a perfect tense verb meaning "I have become and I remain convinced." This is an unalterable conclusion despite a wretched list of challenges to God's unconditional love and our resulting security.

- **Death**—Death can't separate a believer from the love of God.
- **Life** —Many people live their lives in fear, but nothing can stop God from loving us.
- **Angels**—Angels can't separate us from the love of God.

- **Principalities**—Demons can't separate a believer from God's love.
- **Nor things present**—Nothing in this present time can sever us from God's love!
- **Nor things to come**—Nothing that happens in the future will separate us from God's love.
- **Nor powers**—This refers to people in positions of authority.
- **Height**—This word was used to speak of a star at its zenith. A believer could travel to the outer edges of space and still God would love them.
- **Depth**— This word was used to speak of a star at its lowest point. Nothing at either end of outer space can separate us from God's love.
- **Nor any other created thing**—Paul abandons specifics and settles for a sweeping overview wide enough to cover everything else.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; InterVarsity Press, 1988), 342.

Get this now. Nothing can make God quit loving you.

- If you lose your temper, *God still loves you!*
- If you tell a lie, *God still loves you!*
- If you don't read your Bible, *God still loves you!*
- If you fail to pray, *God still loves you!*
- If you use a curse word, *God still loves you!*
- If you disobey your parents, *God still loves you!*
- If you view pornography, *God still loves you!*

## CONCLUSION

This chapter begins with no condemnation and it ends with no separation. God will finish what He starts in your life (Philippians 1:6) ...

**KEEP MOVING FORWARD IN FAITH!**

We've looked at three facts that can help you to lean into faith and to avoid the dreaded stagnation that will cause you to lose your spiritual balance and the security that comes with it.

**1. GOD'S SUPPORT IS UNLIMITED.**

**2. GOD'S PROTECTION IS UNDENIABLE.**

**3. GOD'S LOVE IS UNWAVERING.**

**There is one thing that can eternally separate you from God's amazing love.** That one thing is the rejection of Jesus. Wouldn't you love to have the absolute peace of knowing that God has forgiven your sin and that you have His unlimited support, His undeniable protection, and His unwavering love?

Turn from your sin and place your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord.

**KEEP MOVING FORWARD IN FAITH!**

## **Paralyzed Football Player's Life of Faith**

Darryl Stingley was declared dead in a Chicago hospital on April 5, 2007, after having been found unresponsive in his home. He was 55.

Stingley spent 29 years of his life in a wheelchair, and his death was related to an injury he suffered on August 12, 1978. A top receiver for the New England Patriots, he was leaping for a pass thrown by quarterback Steve Grogan. Jack Tatum of the Raiders laid a hit on him that broke Darryl's neck and left him a quadriplegic.

When the press interviewed Stingley ten years after his injury, he said, "I have relived that moment over and over again. I was 26 years old at the time, and I remember thinking, *What's going to happen to me?*"

*If I live, what am I going to be like? And then there were all those Whys, whys, whys?"*

He then commented, "It was only after I stopped asking why, that I was able to regroup and go on with my life."

A crucial part of moving on was forgiving Jack Tatum, the Oakland Raider who had ended Stingley's career. Tatum hit violently, and how he played has been debated in football circles for years. He even wrote a book entitled *Final Confessions of an NFL Assassin*. Though disturbed by reading it was Tatum's intent to hurt those on the opposing team, Darryl Stingley forgave the man who changed his life.

"For me to go on and adapt to a new way of life," Stingley said, "I had to forgive him. I couldn't be productive if my mind was clouded by revenge or animosity."

When Darryl learned Jack Tatum had to have part of a leg amputated because of diabetes, he felt for him. When interviewed by *The Boston Globe* in



2003, Stingley said, "You can't, as a human being, feel happy about something like that happening to another human being. Maybe the natural reaction is to think he got what was coming to him, but I don't accept human nature as our real nature. Human nature teaches us to hate. God teaches us to love."

The Reverend Edward C. Brown, Stingley's cousin, conducted the paralyzed player's funeral. He stated, "Darryl was a good man. He didn't stop serving God just because he had a life of suffering and pain ... he lived a life focused on the future and not on the past."

Darryl visited others in the hospital who were paralyzed, helped the inner city youth of Chicago, and wrote a book, *Happy to Be Alive*, that told of his trying experiences.

*"Milestones", Time (4-23-07), p. 22; Associated Press, "Paralyzed NFL player Stingley dies at 55," www.sportingnews.com (4-5-07); Peter Smith, "Darryl Stingley and forgiveness," www.courier-journal.com (4-9-07)*