

Christ Our Sanctification #4

by Ed Miller

The sermon teaches that Christ is our sanctification and encourages believers to trust in God's providence while exercising their authority responsibly.

Duration: 54:12

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Sanctification"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher starts by describing a powerful scene where a person confronts the gates of the dead and challenges anyone to accuse him. He then shifts to the idea that every moment of every day is an opportunity to draw closer to Christ through the experiences and challenges that God brings into our lives. The preacher emphasizes the importance of relying on the Holy Spirit for understanding and revelation while studying the Bible. He also highlights the sensitivity of Jesus and encourages the audience to approach the passage in Romans 8 with reverence and worship, as it contains deep theological truths.

Transcript

And I think you're familiar with Eli. And according to the record, God had called him to three areas. He had called him to be a judge, he had called him to be a priest, and he called him to be a father.

And in all three areas, he received custody. He received, as a priest, the custody of the ark, and as a judge, the responsibility of the people, and as a father, the custody of his children. And according to the record, there's not a godlier man in the Old Testament.

When you read the record of Eli, and the way he received the word of the Lord, even when it was condemning him, and his heart toward God, this man was godly. But he failed as a judge, and he failed as a priest, and he failed as a father. And the only record of his failure was weakness.

He didn't use the authority that God had given to him. There was nothing else in the record against Eli except his weakness. He loved his sons.

He loved the Lord. He loved the people of God. His heart trembled for the ark.

He just had a heart toward God. But when it came to authority, he was weak. And out of love, he was weak.

He didn't want to... You know, when they wanted to take the ark, he just trembled, and he says, don't do that. And then they insisted, and he said, oh well, go ahead. And when his sons were acting ungodly, he rebuked them.

And he said, you're going to have to answer to the Lord for this. But the Bible says he didn't restrain them, and so on. And oh my God spoke to my heart on that.

And whatever reason I'm sharing that, you know, maybe before the Lord, we can just ask God, since we've been delegated the authority over our children, that in that responsibility, by his grace, we would not be weak. And maybe he can really minister unto us in that. But it felt like I had to share that.

I'll ask you to turn please to Romans chapter 8. As we come to the study of God's Word, there is a principle of Bible study that is absolutely indispensable. And that is total reliance upon God's Holy Spirit. Only the Spirit of God can take the things of God and reveal them unto us.

Our hearts need to see Jesus. Our hearts need to be fed. Our spirits need the Lord.

And God is the only one that can do that. You know, we come to this book and we study it, but it's just like gathering water. And unless he turns it into wine, we've just got water.

And so we need the Lord to minister unto us. As we go to prayer, I'm reminded of that passage in the Scripture on the sensitivity of Jesus. And I think one of the greatest pictures of the sensitivity of Jesus is when that woman reached out and with a little finger touched a thread.

And he felt it. Talk about the sensitivity of Jesus. And I don't know as we get ready to wrap up another week, and that's always difficult for me, you know, and what's going through our minds and our hearts and how the Lord has met us and where we're coming from.

But the Lord Jesus is so sensitive to your need, to your heart. And as we look in this marvelous passage of Scripture, just reach out in simple faith. And even if you only touch a thread, he'll feel it.

My, he'll feel it. And he'll meet you and he'll touch your heart. And let's just commit our time unto him and trust that he'll minister unto us.

Father, we thank you again for your marvelous Word, for the Holy Spirit who translates that for us and shows us Christ and then transforms us from glory to glory. Lord, we'd ask you to tie up any loose ends that we might have or leave them untied, whatever is your desire. But give us Christ.

We thank you in Jesus' name. Romans chapter 6-8, the unfinished work. Oh my, there's an unfinished work in our heart.

He's doing it. He's working. He will complete it.

And it's all because of the finished part of the unfinished work. Once again, Romans chapter 6 is the unfinished part. Or rather, the finished part.

The finished part of the unfinished work is that the Lord Jesus is victorious. The Lord Jesus is dead to sin. The Lord Jesus is alive to God.

The Lord Jesus is sanctified on our behalf as our substitute. Romans 7 is the unfinished part of the unfinished work. And that's the ongoing process of conforming us to the Lord Jesus.

Chapter 8 shows us God's marvelous means by which He finishes the unfinished work. And that is by the blessed life of God. The Holy Spirit living in our hearts to conform us and to change us.

Now what we've been looking at, and we'll continue this morning, God gracing us. If we see the Lord Jesus as our sanctification, what will be true in our lives? And I've suggested at least these three things we'll issue from our lives. Number one, if we see Christ as our sanctification, we'll get our eyes off our sin.

Number two, if we see Christ as our sanctification, we'll get our eyes off holiness. Off victory. Off sanctification.

Don't worry about sin. Don't worry about holiness. And now this morning in chapter 8, 18 to 27.

No, it's the end of the chapter to 39. Don't worry about anything. Now, we're coming to some of the most beautiful verses in the Bible.

And I've asked different brothers if they'd really uphold me this morning, because, you know, you're in over your head in any part of the Bible, but in a special way at the end of Romans 8. I'm sure you're all familiar with these passages. My, this is deep water. And we don't want to drown together.

We want to see the Lord, but we don't want to drown. And so I just ask you to keep us before the Lord in that attitude of intercession. Now, let's read the passage, please.

Begin at verse 28. And we know that God causes all things to work together for good, to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

And whom He predestined, these He also called. Whom He called, these He also justified. Whom He justified, these He also glorified.

What shall we then say to these things? If God is for us, who's against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies. Who's the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather, who was raised, who was at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. Who shall separate us from the love of God, or from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it's written, for thy sake we're being put to death all day long.

We're considered as sheep to be slaughtered. But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

See my problem? Look at that passage. Now, I think it's important how we approach this tremendous passage. The Apostle Paul is not reaching for words at all in this passage.

He's not looking to pile superlatives on superlatives and get descriptive. The Apostle Paul, I think, is very aware that touching on these truths, flowery words, trying to be fancy, would detract from the message.

And so he doesn't try to be theological, though some of the deepest theology you'll ever touch is included in these words.

But he stops what he has been doing. He's been a teacher. In chapters 6 and 7 he's been logical and deductive.

And all of a sudden he stops describing, and it's almost like he begins admiring. He falls into a worship here. And when you begin to read these verses, he's not instructing.

He's not teaching. He's not debating. He's worshipping God on paper.

He's worshipping the Lord. He's writing in rapture and astonishment and wonder. He's overwhelmed with these things.

This man is full of praise. And he's just bubbling over. And his heart seems to be glowing like an ember over these tremendous truths.

And I think if you're going to understand any part of God's Word, you ought to read it like they wrote it. And since he wrote it in worship, the way to understand it is by worshipping with him. And by adoring with him.

I think the secrets in these verses are absolutely locked to those who approach it theologically. They're just locked. You can't find them.

It's not in the halls of controversial debate that you're going to understand these precious things. Not from the pulpit of an abstract theology are you going to get these marvelous things. Not by poring over the ponderous tomes of comments that have been made on these verses.

These verses, the truths in these verses, are scattered as treasures at the feet of babes. There's light here for the hungry. And if we would come just to see the Lord Jesus, I think we're going to get a lot because this is written by a worshiper for worshipers.

And if we can come with that heart to see what Paul is rejoicing in, I think we can really see the Lord. Alright, let's immediately put it into its context. Chapter 6-8, Christ is our sanctification and now He's saying a big thing.

Don't worry about anything. Just for the sake of logical connection, glance at verse 28 please. God causes all things to work together for good.

Now, what's left out of that all things? You'll say, well, nothing's left out. God causes all things to work together. When God says all things, there's a list.

All and all means all and everything's in the all. Well, that's not quite true. There's a lot of things left out of all things.

You say, well, what's left out? Well, verse 32. He did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all. How will He not also with Him freely give us all things? Now, here's another list of all things that's different than the first list.

And so you've got two lists of all things and they're not the same. They're different. What He causes to work together and what He gives us are a different list of all things.

So what's left out of that? You say, well, that includes everything. Well, no it doesn't because of verse 37. In all these things we overwhelmingly conquer.

Now, here He gives us a list. It's not vague. He tells us what these all things are.

And though that also is open-ended because of the general way He speaks, but that's different too. So you've got three lists of all things. All things God causes to work together.

With Him He freely gives us all things. And then another list that He gives. In all these things we overwhelmingly conquer.

And it's because of those all things that I'm suggesting this last section says, don't worry about anything. He's given you three lists of all things and I don't think there's anything left out after that. And what I'd like us to do then is to look at each of the lists of all things God gracing us.

With the intention, don't worry about anything. Anything. Because Christ is our sanctification.

All right, verse 28 and 29. We know God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. The first thing we need to do, brothers, is to identify the good.

And this is not new and it's not unique, but it's very healthy to do this. The good in verse 28 is the conform to the image of His Son in verse 29. In other words, God causes all things to work together for good.

What's good? The good is to make you like Jesus. That's what all things are working together for. Sometimes something takes place in our life and we say, what's the purpose of this? Well, I'll give you an all-inclusive answer.

To make you like Jesus. That's the purpose of it. All things are working toward that.

And this connection, may I encourage you to be real careful when you're sharing the dear Lord Jesus with somebody. Be careful when you say something like, come to the Lord Jesus and He'll solve all your problems. Come to the Lord Jesus, He'll straighten out your mess.

He'll put the pieces back together. He'll tidy up your sin. He'll change the curse to a blessing.

He'll rescue you. Ultimately, He will. I mean, you're right when you say that.

In the final analysis, all things will work together. But along the way, it doesn't always look like He's solving your problems. In fact, it looks like He's creating them.

And I know I have far more problems since I've trusted in the Savior. Because of the way God is working to conform us to Christ. But, so be careful when you say that.

Because you know Jesus, that doesn't necessarily mean that your wife is going to stay with you. That doesn't necessarily mean you're not going to go bankrupt. To receive Christ, I received a letter from a brother in prison.

Well, he's not a brother. We've been praying that he'd become a brother. And he said, if I accept Christ, am I guaranteed parole? Just because you accept Christ, you're not guaranteed parole.

Doesn't mean that your problems are going to go away. Now, there's not a more comforting truth in the Bible than Romans 8.28. Don't be afraid to share it. Just make sure that they understand.

A person doesn't receive Christ to solve his problems. A person receives Christ because that's God's will for his life. That's why a person is to receive the Lord Jesus.

And so the good is to make us like Him. Now, I want you to glance at verses 28 to 30, please. Because God touches here on two of the most mysterious doctrines in the Bible.

Mysterious because they're big. Mysterious because they're so all-inclusive. Not because they're difficult to understand.

They're not difficult to understand. Verse 28 is the doctrine of His providence. And verse 29 and 30 is the doctrine of God's decrees.

His eternal decrees. Now, decrees are what God ordains to happen. Providence is what God orders to happen.

In the decrees, He's both the author and the initiator and the controller of everything. But in providence, He's just ruling and overruling. The all things that God causes to work together for good refers to His providence.

Whatever comes into your life is controlled by the Lord. We won't get into all the development of this, but there's only two reasons why everything happens. One is to show you Jesus.

The other is to prepare you to see Jesus. And that's the only reason anything takes place in your life. Either that you might see the Lord, or that you might get ready to see the Lord.

That's what He's about. He's showing you the Lord. Now, His providence includes every place in the universe.

The heavens, the earth, the sea, hell, every place. His providence includes every person on the globe and all of their actions. His providence includes everything that occurs at any time on the entire earth.

His providence reaches to the very hairs of your head. His providence takes into account not only things actual, but things possible. Just think about that.

You know, we say this happened in my life and that happened. What if something else took place? Well, God also has considered all the what ifs. The things that come into your life are controlled by the Lord, and He's already considered all things actual and all things possible.

And the only things that finally come into your life are those things that either show you Christ or prepare you to see Christ. And if you had at your disposal the wisdom and the knowledge and the light that God had at His disposal, and you had to select a path for your life, you wouldn't change a thing. You wouldn't change one thing.

It's so perfect. That's God's providence. Now, this is not cold theology.

Believers must know that there are no second causes. There's no luck. There's no happenstance.

There's no chance or fortune. A hundred percent everything that is in your life, God causes to work together to make you like Jesus. It all has to do with sanctification.

Everything. I found a wonderful verse in Job, and I found it like I'm the only one that ever found it. That's not true, but it felt so new to me.

It's in Job chapter 36 and 37, and Elihu is sharing with Job the providence of God. 36.22, he's exalted. God's exalted in His power.

In 36.5, God thunders with His voice wondrously, doing great things which we cannot understand. And then He begins to speak about the works of nature, about storms and animals and calamities and so on. Chapter 37 of Job, 12 and 13, He says, that it turns around by His guidance, that it may do whatever He commands on the face of the inhabited earth.

Whether for correction or for His world or for loving kindness, He causes it to happen. Isn't that marvelous? Whether for correction or for His world or for loving kindness. I think that can be tied into Romans 8.28. Now why do things come into my life? Whether for correction, to bring you back, or for His world, there's a need, or loving kindness.

It's just the grace of God. And God causes all things to work together for good. This is a mighty argument, brothers, not to worry about anything.

If you really believe that, it's so easy to read this la-la-la. I know it might appear at times that His providence is running in a collision course with His covenant and His promises. And it looks like it's the opposite.

It may appear that you're a victim of circumstances and second causes. It may appear that God wouldn't dirty His hands by controlling such and such an event in your life. But I'll tell you, from man it may come to you as sin.

Like in the case of Joseph, or in the case of Jezebel, or in the case of Saul, or what Judas did. From man it comes to you as sin, but from God the same thing comes to you as good. In order to make you like Jesus.

In order to conform you in the Christ. You know, Paul had that thorn in the flesh, and he called it a messenger of Satan. Oh indeed it was, because he's a little errand boy.

Messenger of Satan, but the message of God. What was that thorn? That was to make him humble. And Satan delivered the message, but it was a message of God.

Your trust in God, and your belief in Romans 8.28, and your knowledge of God as the God of providence, that's absolutely inconsistent with anxiety and worry and fretting and caring. If God would begin to go on these things on us, we're being made like Christ. Every moment of the day, things are coming into our life, and God's controlling them, and superintending them.

You know, we come to a conference like this, or we go to a fellowship once or twice a week, and we have the prayer, Oh I just pray Lord, that what I hear, and this experience of being together will make me like Jesus. And I pray it will too, but I'll tell you, getting together twice a week, or twice a month, or twice a year, that's not what conforms you to the Lord Jesus. Whatever you hear.

It's getting up in the morning, and it's going through the day, and as God brings everything in your life, it's the grind of every day. It's all that God is bringing into your life to show you Jesus, or to make you like Jesus. Your responsibilities, and your duties, and your interrelationships with other people, and your clashes.

I'll tell you, that acts like the desert sun, and that exposes what's within, and then God can take that and show you the Lord Jesus. Now every moment of every day is crowding you to Christ. That's where you're conformed unto the Lord.

Not in a church, or in a school, or in an institute. Life is your school. And the experiences of God that keep coming in, and purposely coming in, to make you like the Lord Jesus.

Glance at verses 29 and 30. These have to do with the decrees of God. What He has decreed would happen.

In fact, verse 33 gives that five-letter word, elect. You say, uh-oh, now we're going to get on predestination, and election, and the eternal decrees. Only to make the point that Paul is making here.

And it's a marvelous point. You know, Paul gives another list of words here. Notice it.

It begins in eternity past, and it stretches all the way into eternity future. Verse 29, forenew, that's the first word, predestined, that's the second word, called, that's the third word, justified, glorified, and then all of those he puts together, and he says, the elect. Now, as far as your experience, where'd you enter that list? Now here's the list.

Forenew, predestined, called, justified, glorified. Where'd you enter the list? See, you came in at called. Right, so you came in the middle of the list, and where'd you leave? You left at justified.

So you came in the middle, you didn't see the beginning, you didn't see the end. You just came in the middle, and as far as your experience is concerned, you came in when you were called, and you experienced justification, and there's things gone before that you know little about except what's written, and there's things coming down the road that you know little about except what's written. What are we called as Christians to believe? Electing love? And the answer's no.

We're called to believe redeeming love. That's where we came in. We heard about redemption.

We heard about the Savior. We heard about the marvelous thing He did for us as our substitute. We saw Christ as our Savior.

God didn't bother our hearts with eternal decrees and everlasting election and predestination. He broke our heart with redemption. He came to us with redeeming love.

Now, where does electing love come in? Let me make a suggestion to you. I'll ask you to trust me on it now, and then check me on it on your own. Do you realize this? When you read about election in the Bible, in every case, at least every case I can find, it's an inference.

It's an inference. It's an inference from grace. Let me explain what I mean.

When is my head cleared on election? You say, when you digest Calvin's Institutes. No, that's not when my head's cleared on election. You say, well, after you have studied the ponderous work by Shedd on

election.

No, that doesn't clear my head. My head's clear on election when I respond to redeeming love. The more I enter into redemption, the more I appropriate Christ as my Savior.

After a while, when I have a full Savior, election dawns on me. And I begin to look back in my life. I say, wow! I've tasted such mercy and such grace.

I've seen such a marvelous Savior. Then you begin to look back and you say, you know, I think a higher hand has been involved in this. I think there's been something a little bit before this.

I don't think my ear came to the ring of the Gospel by accident. And I begin to see how God has orchestrated and moved and worked. And the more I enter redeeming love, the more I understand electing love.

And I think in every case, it's just an inference. And what God is saying is this, that redeeming love is yours by faith. Electing love is yours by experience.

And the reason many people are confused on election is they haven't entered into redemption. You get people understanding redeeming love and seeing what a full Christ is. And they'll be buried with evidences of election.

And that's all implied. Every true Christian who is laying hold of a full Savior, he doesn't have any problem knowing that he's been elect. He doesn't understand it.

But he knows that the Lord has been in the back. I heard the doctrine of election too soon. I really did.

I hadn't entered into the fullness of redeeming love. I didn't know beans about a present Savior. And all of a sudden, I heard about all this election and predestination.

And I'll tell you, that almost destroyed me. I think we can do a lot of damage with that doctrine by giving it to people who haven't experienced redeeming love and salvation. And don't embarrass yourself with that doctrine of election.

There's nothing in that doctrine to encumber or to confuse. It's a marvelous truth. And it's experienced by those who enter into a redeeming love.

And why did Paul bring it up? You see, he's trying to tell the Christian to stop worrying about anything. And he knew the more they entered into their salvation and embraced a complete Savior, the more electing love would dawn on them. And he wanted them to see that if they came in the middle, certainly there was something before and something after.

And if they came into the middle, certainly they were guaranteed what's going to follow. Now look at verse 30 please. "...Whom He justified, then He also glorified." Now what is glorification? You say, that's the last stage of my salvation.

Glorification, that's heaven. That's resurrection. That's when I see a full Christ in full view.

That's freedom even from the presence of sin. Glorification, that's glory. I can't wait.

Someday, when will I be sanctified? Well, the answer is when I'm glorified. I'll be sanctified when I'm glorified. I'm already sanctified in Christ, but personally, when I see Christ, I'll be like Him.

I'll see Him as He is. Now let me ask this question. Is anybody glorified now? Then in verse 30, why does he use the past tense? See, he doesn't say, those He justified, He will glorify.

He didn't say that. He says those He's justified, He has also glorified. I'll tell you why He does it.

Because it's as good as done. That's why He could put it in the prophetic past tense. Whom He foreknew, He predestined.

Whom He predestined, He called. Whom He called, He justified. Those He justified, He also glorified.

It's like the Lord Jesus' prayer in John 17. Before He even went to the cross, He said, I've accomplished the work You've given Me to do. I've finished the work.

He hadn't even been to the cross. How could He say He finished? And the answer is, it's as good as done in the mind of God. See what Paul is saying? See what the Holy Spirit is saying through Paul? He's saying, don't worry about anything.

God's providence is working for you. And not only that, don't worry about anything. God's decrees are working for you.

You've come in the middle, but you've already tasted the end. It's just as good as it's done. What has to come is as certain as what has been.

You might think in your heart, I won't know I'm safe until I get to heaven. And then I'll sigh of relief when I'm finally there and say, whew, I made it. Let me ask you this.

When you're in heaven a billion years, and I know there's no time there, but let's not get into that. When you've been in heaven for a billion years, will you be safer than you are right now? I'll tell you, you're already glorified, brothers. My mother's been in heaven almost five years now.

She sees more than I see. She knows more than I know. She enjoys more than I enjoy.

And I don't doubt it for a moment, she's happier than I am. But she's not more secure. She's not more secure than I am.

And she's not more secure than you are. Because those He foreknew, He predestined. And those He predestined, He called.

And those He called, He justified. And those He justified, He glorified. Christ is your sanctification.

His providence is for you. His decrees are for you. That's the first list of all things.

Let's look at the second list. Verse 31, What shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, will He not with Him also freely give us all things? Now Paul's not asking this question because he wants an answer. The answer is already implied.

He's not in doubt. He's not trying to be instructed. The answer is obvious.

This is a question of triumph. The comfort he offers comes from this argument in verse 32. He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? Brothers, don't miss the Father's heart in this verse.

You know, there's an academic theology that saps the Father out of all heart and all feeling and all emotion. God is sort of viewed as a computer. He has power.

He has wisdom. He has a faultless morality, but no sensitivity. In Romans 8, and at this point, the Holy Spirit puts the spotlight on the Father and on the Father's heart.

This doesn't minimize the love of Jesus. That's not what He's trying to say. But He's trying to show you that the Father's in view.

This is like John 3.16 and the word soul. That's the key to that verse. God's soul of the world.

He's talking about the Father's heart. You see, the parent heart of God is on trial in this verse. It hurt the Father to give the Son.

It hurt the Father. There was pain there. There was suffering there.

There was a struggle in the Father's heart when He gave the Son. You know, no words that I could ever say will be able to describe the painful surrender of the Father's heart. That's a matter of revelation.

We need to see that from God. But try to appreciate His heart when He consented to the cross. Yes, He poured out vials of wrath on the Lord Jesus.

Yes, He commanded the sword of justice to fall on the one that was His equal. Yes, the Father was involved in that. He laid on Him the sin of us all.

And when the Father endured that spectacle of tears and agony and pain and the cries, and when He saw His Son writhing in pain until full atonement was made, He wasn't standing by as some unconcerned spectator. The Father's heart was broken. Don't think about the Father as somebody that's frigid and some desolate abstraction.

He's not that at all. And here's the argument God is giving. If God spared not His Son, if God in all of that pain and all of that struggle didn't withhold His Son, oh, the ravishing love of God the Father in this passage.

Catch this. If God did not hold back the most painful part of His gift, you know, in the Bible, God's mercy is presented three ways. Number one, it's presented as preventing mercy.

That's the strongest mercy of God when by the mercy of God you escape. God steps in between you and the trouble and you don't even have it. It's prevented.

That's mercy when God delivers you that way. And then the Bible talks about supporting mercy. When you go through it, but He supports you and He gives you strength and He gives you grace.

And the weakest mercy in the Bible is the sparing mercy of God. And that is when God tones it down. You go through it, but then God says, alright, I'll cut it short.

Or I'll just turn down the degrees a little bit. Ahab received mercy. And the Ninevites received mercy.

And Hagar and Ishmael received sparing mercy. And the Bible even uses that for the ravens that cry. They received sparing mercy.

But God spared not His own son. The weakest mercy in the Bible was denied the Lord Jesus. He wasn't allowed to tone down even one little second off of that suffering or one little degree.

He did not spare Jesus one stroke or one tear or one agony or one groan or one sigh or one circumstance of the misery He went through. On earth, when we make a down payment, when we give in earnest, that's the easy part. You know, we put a down payment on a car or a house or a piece of land.

That's the easy part, to pay the down payment. The hard part comes later when you pay the thing off. But in the Bible, it's reversed.

In spiritual things, it goes the other way. In heavenly things, when God gave the down payment, when God spared not His Son, that was the difficult part. That was the hard part.

That was the struggle. That was the painful surrender to God. The pledge was the most dear and the most valuable thing to His heart.

That's what He gave in the down payment. He gave His darling. He gave His beloved Son.

That was the first part of the down payment. And here's what God is saying. He's saying, Brothers, if God did the most difficult part, now that the suffering is over, will He withhold the easy part? That's His point.

What's remaining in your sanctification? Two things. Making you like Jesus and taking you to heaven. That's all that's left.

The hard part is finished. And the delightful part is left. What's left is fun for God.

Making you like Jesus. I have a book in my library called Select Discourses. And it's a book of sermons published in 1858.

And there's some unique authors in this particular book. And one is a brother named Krumacher. Frederick Krumacher.

Have you ever heard of him? Have you? Get him. Read some of the stuff he has. I don't even know if this is in print anymore.

He's got a whole section on the temptations of Christ in the wilderness. I'll tell you. But he has a sermon on the last part of Romans 8. And he says there's something here.

Of course, he's in the German. He says there's something in the Greek that you miss in the German. Well, you also miss it in the English, I think.

We read these things la, la, la. He said in the original language, and I see it now, and I'm almost afraid to say it because we've been saying a few radical things. If we can end up like Krumacher says, Paul ends up here.

This is amazing. I'll quote him so that if you don't agree with it, it's his fault, not mine. He said these verses end up in a holy defiance, a defying challenge.

He said the Apostle Paul is standing here. My, this is tremendous. On the finished work of the Lord Jesus.

And he looks in every direction. He stands on that finished work. He looks in every direction and he defies everybody in the universe to find one thing against him.

He challenges the angels. He challenges the devils. He challenges the scowling world.

He challenges his inflamed conscience. He challenges the law of God. He challenges God Himself.

Look at these verses. 831. If God is for us, look at it as a challenge.

If God's for us, who is against us? 33. Who will bring anything to the charge of God's elect? 34. Who's the one who condemns? 35.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? He's challenging. He's defying. He's daring.

In verse 33, my, there's something wonderful in that verse. God is the one who justifies the very one who should condemn us out of His mouth comes arguments in our defense. Our vindication should have come from His, our vindication comes from His corner.

Our condemnation should have come from His corner. And in this marvelous sermon, Brother Krumacher follows the Apostle Paul with his daring defiance. And of course, he gets poetic and all.

But he pictures him taking the world's honors and throwing it right back in their face and taking their shame and reproach and weaving it into a crown, putting it on his own head. I'm more than conqueror. And he says, Paul, who are you? You presumptuous man.

Who are you to make dares like this? To challenge every intelligent creature in the universe? The one who was godless without parallel. The enemy of the Jews. The persecutor of God's people.

The one who dared call himself chief of sinners. What right does he have to stand there and challenge and dare and defy? And so in his graphic way, Krumacher pictures him going up to Mount Sinai, the mountain of the law. And he stands there and he looks straight at Mount Sinai and he yells, who is he that condemns? He takes the holy law of God and he says, I dare you, find one thing against me.

And after he turns away from the law, he goes over to the abyss of hell and he cries into all the demons and Satan himself, forehead to forehead. And he says, I challenge you. I dare you.

Find something against me. I'm a child of God. God is the one who justifies.

You find something to condemn me. And then he runs down to the gates of the dead and he swings the gates open and he looks in there and he sees those he's killed and those he's put on the rack and those who've suffered. And he said, I brought you here and I brought you to death.

I dare you to accuse me. Anybody, stand up. Find something against me.

Then he stands up in the mirror and he looks at his own conscience and he says, scream all you want. Find all the condemnation and I'll admit to everyone and I'll multiply them by ten million. I agree.

But I dare you to condemn me. And then how he ends. He pictures him going up to the great white throne judgment.

Appearing at the white throne when the curtain has finally been rolled up and the heavens have fled away and the earth and the sea has given up the dead that was in them. And upon that throne sits one whose eyes are a flame of fire, whose feet are brass, whose wrath is horrible. Before him are all the multitudes and he'll say to so many, I never knew you.

And he says, Paul then begins to shout which makes the throne tremble. Who is he that condemns? And he looks at God himself and he says, if there's any condemnation, speak now or forever hold your peace. And God says, there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ.

These are Krumacher's words. Here's how he ends his sermon. Who is he who condemns? Ha! The curse sticks in your throat.

Away you accusers! Fido! Fido! The tongue must dry up that would judge us. Who is he that condemns? Brothers, is that too bold? Is that too presumptuous? I suggest it's the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. That's the good news.

In all these things we overwhelmingly conquer. Christ is our sanctification. Don't worry about sin.

He's dead to sin. He's alive to God. Don't worry about holiness.

The whole universe knows you're going to arrive. You've already had the down payment. The spirit in your heart praying for the will of God.

Don't worry about anything. God is for you. His providence is for you.

His decrees are for you. His love is for you. Your enemies are for you.

Don't worry about anything. Don't worry about anything. May God enable us to believe these things.

I want you to read the Benedictine. I'm going to ask you to turn, please, 1 Thessalonians 5. Brothers, this is from my heart to you. I pray this.

1 Thessalonians 5, 23, 24. Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely. May your spirit and your soul and your body be preserved complete without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Faithful is he who calls you. And he will also bring it to pass. In Jesus' name, amen.

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