

Where to Stand When All Is Shaking

by John Piper

John Piper emphasizes the transformative power of Romans 8:32, highlighting God's unwavering promises and the significance of Christ's sacrifice.

Duration: 24:56

Scripture: Romans 8:32

Topics: "Gods Love", "Holy Spirit"

Description

This sermon delves into the profound impact of specific Bible verses that have deeply affected the speaker's life, highlighting how the power of the Holy Spirit can bring about lifelong transformation. It explores the life-altering nature of scripture, focusing on the awe-inspiring glory of God and the sacrificial love demonstrated through the giving of His Son. The ultimate obstacle to salvation is revealed to be God's infinite love for His Son, which necessitated the greatest sacrifice. The sermon emphasizes the unshakable promises of God rooted in Romans 8:32, providing unwavering strength and courage in the face of fear and uncertainty.

Transcript

There are two ways that a text becomes profoundly life-altering in a human soul. One is that there comes a point in your life where the text, by the power of the Holy Spirit, penetrates into your mind, heart, soul, spirit so deeply that at that moment, a change is effected that bears lifelong fruit from that moment on. Happened to Jonathan Edwards that way when he was 17, spring of 1721.

The first that I remember that ever I found anything of that sort of inward, sweet delight in God and divine things that I have lived in much since was on reading those words in 1 Timothy 1, 17. Now unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

As I read the words, there came into my soul and was, as it were, diffused through it a sense of the glory of the divine being, a new sense, quite different from anything I had ever experienced before. Never any words of scripture seemed to me as these words did. That's one way.

A second way that a passage of scripture becomes profoundly life-altering is that there comes a point where it penetrates into your mind, into your soul, into your heart, into your spirit, not in such a way that the change is effected decisively there, and from then on, you're new and different, but rather, the text lodges itself so profoundly, so unalteringly that it becomes a source of never-ending, ever-repeating,

life-altering power when you need it. And that's what happened to me in a class in Romans 1 to 8 with Dan Fuller when I was, I think, my second semester, first year at Fuller Seminary, Romans 8, 32. Of all the passages in the Bible that are designed as solid places to stand when everything around you is giving way, this is the place I have stood more often than any other.

He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, will he not, with him, freely give us all things? And it didn't come in isolation. It came as a quintessential summary of the argument of Romans 1 to 8. It came bringing a trainload of truth with it. There are other summaries of the argument of Romans 1 to 8, 1, 16.

Since the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel, therefore it is the power of God unto salvation. Chapter five, verse nine. Since we have now been justified by his blood, therefore we shall be saved by his life.

Chapter five, verse 10. Since while we were enemies we were reconciled to God, therefore much more shall we be saved by his life. Chapter five, verse 21.

Since the grace reigns through righteousness, therefore it will lead us to eternal life. 8, 29. Since God foreknew and predestined and called and justified us, therefore our glorification is as good as done.

8, 31. Since God has shown himself to be for us, therefore no one can successfully oppose us. 8, 33.

Since God is the one who justifies, therefore no one can bring any charge successfully against God's elect. 8, 34. Since Christ is the one who died and rose and intercedes, therefore no one can condemn us.

But, Romans 8, 32, is the most sweeping, the most focused, and the most ultimate summary. Since God did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, therefore he will give us everything with him. I call it the solid logic of heaven.

That's what I called it in future grace. I still call it that. The solid logic of heaven is an a forcioere argument.

Isn't it good that you can enjoy the truths of the Bible without knowing their logical names? A forcioere is Latin for from the stronger. It's an argument from the lesser to the greater, from the stronger to the weaker, from the harder to the easier. I'll give you an illustration.

Suppose I want my little Karsten, say, when he's six, to go next door and ask Mr. Smith if he would lend the pliers to us. And Karsten says, maybe Mr. Smith won't let me have his pliers. Maybe he won't want us to borrow his pliers.

And I use my a forcioere reasoning with my six-year-old, which he totally understands, and I say, yesterday Mr. Smith was very happy to loan me his car all day. I'm sure if he would loan me his car all day, he'll be happy to let us borrow his pliers for a few minutes. And off he goes.

A car's worth more than a pair of pliers, and loaning it all day is a harder sacrifice to make than loaning a pair of pliers for an hour. And if Mr. Smith was willing to do the harder thing, then surely he'll be willing to do the easy thing. That's a forcioere arguing.

So Paul says, God did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all. That's the hardest thing. Therefore, he will most certainly give us all things with him.

That's the easy thing. If he was willing to do the harder thing. I'd read that all my life.

And in that class, at age 26, God opened my eyes to this God-inspired logic. This holy, heavenly, glorious, inexhaustible logic in Romans 8, 32. It penetrated deep, it implanted itself in me, and has become a lifelong, living agent of practical, life-altering power for the last 40 years this year.

I'll try to show why in a minute. But first, ponder with me the content of two halves of the verse. What is the greatest obstacle between you and your sin, and you, with every need met, every desire satisfied, and eternally happy in the presence of God? What's the greatest obstacle between you as a condemned sinner, and you as a glorified saint? My guess is that most of us would answer something like my guilt and God's wrath are the greatest obstacles that stand between me and happiness forever in the presence of a holy God.

I am a condemned sinner, I am guilty. God's wrath is on me, and there's nothing I can do to change that. I've done all I can do, I have become guilty, I can't stop being guilty.

I don't deserve his favor, and I can't start deserving it. It's over for me. If that obstacle is to be removed, my guilt and God's wrath, I can't do it.

But Romans 8, 32 shows us those are not the biggest obstacles between me as a sinner, and me as glorified, saved, happy, with God forever. They're not the biggest, most ultimate obstacles. God's love for his son is the biggest obstacle standing in the way of my salvation.

Since he did not spare me, his own son, but gave him up for us all, therefore certainly he will also give us all things with him. In other words, since he has done the hardest thing, not spare his own son, therefore he'll do the easy thing, give me everything with him. Paul, when we read this, expects us to feel the massive tension between his own son and did not spare.

He expects us to feel a massive Mount Everest tension. That's impossible, that's impossible. That isn't going to happen.

His own son, not spare him that. When Paul calls Jesus his own son, God's own son, the point is there is no other, and he loves him infinitely. Twice in Jesus' life, God said this is my loved son.

Paul said in Colossians 1.13, Jesus is the son of God's love. Jesus told a parable of the tenants in which the master's servants came for the fruit and they beat them and killed them. And Jesus said, he had still one other, a loved son.

One son, that's all he had. And he loved him infinitely. And the point of Romans 8.32 is that this love of God for his one and only son was like a massive Mount Everest obstacle between us in our sin and our salvation.

Could God, would God overcome his cherishing, admiring, treasuring, white-hot, infinite, affectionate bond with the son and hand him over to be lied about, betrayed, denied, abandoned, mocked, flogged, beaten, spit on, nailed to a cross, pierced with a sword, hung up like an animal, butchered on a rack, that's the biggest obstacle to my salvation. Well, the text says, Romans 8.32, he did. God did not spare his own son, he did give him up, he did hand him over to the worst possible suffering.

The Bible says Judas did that. The Bible says Pilate did that. The Bible says Herod did that.

The Bible says Jewish people did that. The Bible says the Gentiles did that. The Bible says we did that.

And the Bible says Jesus handed himself over. Nobody takes my life from me. But what Paul says is that in Judas, Pilate, Herod, the crowds, the Gentiles, my sin, and Jesus' lamb-like submission in all of that, God handed him over.

My sin and my guilt is not the ultimate obstacle to my salvation because what makes my sin sinful is that it devalues the all-satisfying glory of the Father and the Son and the infinite love between them, that's ultimate. God's wrath is not the ultimate obstacle to my salvation because the wrath of God is the holy reflex of his righteousness and his righteousness at its essence is that he infinitely values what is most valuable, namely his Son. No, the ultimate obstacle to my salvation is not my guilt, not my sin, and not God's wrath, it is God's infinite love for his own Son.

His infinite cherishing, infinite admiring, treasuring, white-hot affection for the beauty and the greatness of his Son. This is the ultimate obstacle that had to be overcome when he did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all. So what should we say to that? We will say the logic holds.

Since God did not spare his own Son but in fact did give him up for us all, therefore he will most certainly give us all things with him. Since he didn't spare his own Son, therefore all things will work together for my good. Since he didn't spare his own Son, therefore I will be conformed to the image of his Son.

Since he didn't spare his own Son, I will be glorified. Since he didn't spare his own Son, nothing can stand against me. Since he didn't spare his own Son, no charge can be brought against me.

Since he didn't spare his own Son, nothing can separate me from the love of Jesus. Since he didn't spare his own Son, in tribulation and distress and persecution and famine and nakedness, I am more than a conqueror. Since he didn't spare his own Son, therefore nothing can separate me from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Nothing. There isn't any greater obstacle yet to be put in the way. It is finished.

Everything is coming my way freely. Everything is going to work for good. Now, here's how it has worked for 40 years.

When God promises in Romans 8.32, therefore he will most certainly with him graciously give us all things. Among the all things that he will most certainly give us are all the promises of God made to the elect. All the promises of God are yes to the elect in Christ Jesus.

Second Corinthians 1.20 rests on the solid logic of heaven in Romans 8.32. Since he did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all, therefore every promise will come true for my elect. No exceptions. Among those promises is a cluster, a very precious cluster.

John Piper, I will be with you to the end of the earth. I will never leave you. I will never forsake you.

I will strengthen you. I will help you. I will uphold you with the right hand of my righteousness.

You go to. With that cluster of promises resting on the solid logic of heaven, Romans 8.32, I have fought almost all my battles against fear for 40 years. Thousands of them.

From preaching that first sermon in Fuller Chapel to flying to Germany when I didn't know the language, to taking my final oral exams in a language not my own, to leaving academia with all of its security and becoming pastor of this church with almost no pastoral experience, to going late one night with Tom Steller that first year to cast a demon out of a woman when we didn't know what we were doing. We just had a promise. To hearing false prophecies spoken over me that my wife would die, to visiting church members who were livid with anger at me, to witnessing on the street and in the airplane, to laying down the leadership of Bethlehem and walking into an unknown chapter.

I have fought this fight against fear thousands of times by listening to the voice of God. Say to me, I did not spare my own son. I gave him up for you, John Piper.

Therefore, my promise to be with you and help you cannot fail, get up there. And I just wanna close by testifying to you younger folks, especially at age 66, and you're right where I was when this happened. I bear witness before God, it has never failed.

The promise has never failed and it never will. The logic of heaven holds. He who did not spare his own son but gave him up for us all, will he not? He will most certainly give us all things with him.

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