

St. Paul's Dorking Small Groups Nov 11th 2007

Remembrance – Our Confidence in Christ

Romans 8: 28 - 39



Word: Key points from Sunday's sermon

St Paul's words from Romans chapter. 8 are full of **confidence, hope and assurance.**

St Paul knew from very early on that he wasn't bound for a life of ease. The Lord had spoken to Ananias before he went to the house in Damascus to lay hands on Paul when he said "*I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.*" (Acts 9:16) He knew what awaited him. Later on he was to write to the Corinthians and record what he had suffered to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to the ancient world. (2 Cor 11:23-27)

Only someone with an assurance of hope could face such trials and still continue on. Three years before Paul would actually find himself in Rome, he wrote his letter to the Church there and in this passage Paul writes; ²⁸*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.* This passage speaks of the confidence that we can have for the future. Nothing that can touch us lies outside the scope of God's providential care. Here is cause for joy and a rock-solid foundation for hope. But what is the good that God is working to produce for us?

He knows that our greatest good is to know him and to enjoy his presence for ever. That means that through *all things* whether ill health, poverty or even war he is working out his purposes. Our joy will come not from knowing that we will never face such difficulties but whatever the difficulty, we have the assurance that our loving father is at work to make us stronger as his children. The whole purpose of our Christian life is that we might be *conformed to the likeness of his Son* (29) for our destiny is to be like him and to be in relationship with him.

Paul knew God's providential care through all his sufferings and he seeks to bring to these early Christian people **confidence, assurance and hope.** The questions that Paul asks sum up the hope he sets before us:

- *If God is for us, who can be against us?* (31). The answer is no one can, because God has not spared his own Son but gave him up for us all and by trusting in Him we too may have life – eternal life – but not just life after death but new life here and now.
- *Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen?* (33). No one can. The answer is that it is God who justifies us, who has put us in right standing with himself so that we may stand before him without fear of condemnation.
- *Who is he that condemns?* (34). No one can condemn us if we will trust him. The truth is that Christ Jesus has died, has taken our sins upon himself and has been raised to life and is now at this very moment interceding for each one of us.
- *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* (35). The answer is no one and no-thing can separate us. Paul gives an outline of those things that we might think can separate us but in fact cannot, - hardship, persecution, danger and neither war nor battle separate us.

Paul finally states the victory that is ours in Christ when he affirms that no one or no-thing can come against us because *we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.* So he was able to finish this part of his letter to the Romans with; assurance, hope and confidence; *For I am convinced that neither death nor life,... will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Witness: questions to discuss



1. Take a few minutes to think and pray for those currently serving in our armed forces, and for the chaplains who minister to them.
2. As you reflect on the passage, consider what are the things which knock your confidence. How can we help one another to keep our feet on the rock?
3. Can you share about a time or situation where you could see God working to produce 'good' for you?
4. In your own experience what have been the things which separate you from the love of Christ? Have they been overcome?