

Encouraging. Exhilarating. Exalting. This passage sums up our position in Christ before God and the multitude of blessings that are ours in Him. His Security. His Safety. His Sufficiency. His Love. One feels almost sacrilegious to venture to comment on this passage. Comment is almost superfluous, for it speaks for itself to every born again heart and soul.

All is based upon Christ's finished work on the cross, His death, His resurrection and ascension to the right hand of God where He intercedes for us, His blood bought saints. Yet there are deep contrasts, almost contradictions here.

The following ★questions are not meant to be irreverent but to lead us into a deeper understanding of

▪ our life in Christ,
▪ our path, walk and mission on this earth,
▪ some inner relationships within the Godhead.

★ If He spared not His own Son, why do we still suffer here and now?

If He spared not His own Son, why should He feel bound to spare us of sufferings? In His wisdom and grace He does not deprive us of fellowship with His sufferings, sufferings we will only experience as a Christian here on earth,

ch. 5:3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations...

Philippians 3:10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

There are also sufferings that are common to all mankind.

1Corinthians 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Experiencing these in this body today, we gain a deeper sense of the consequences of Adam's fall and a deeper appreciation of the height and depth of God's grace in rescuing us.

★ If we stand complete in Christ before God, why does He have to intercede for us?

The Lord instructs us to pray directly to the Father, not to Him.

John 16:23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you

But the Lord remains involved interceding. The process of intercession is characteristic of God, being One God yet Three divine Persons. Scripture, I John 4, says "God is Love." For the Triune God to have one purpose and will and to act as One in Unity He (They/It) must be in continuous total and perpetual intercommunion amongst Themselves (within Itself). We get a peek into this when

we read that the Spirit intercedes for us and the Son receives the Spirit's intercession and intercedes to the Father for us. As the Father receives our prayers and in response initiates action on our behalf which the Son, now a glorified Man, receives. He directs the Spirit to implement God's response in us or for us on earth. All this might sound rather round about and rather inefficient, (and even faintly bureaucratic) but it is really Infinite Loving Unity in practice. Even in man's earthly organizations the key to effectiveness and success is communications, communications, communications – leading to cooperation, cooperation, cooperation. We become involved in total communion and cooperation with the Godhead.

★ If God will freely give us all things with His Son, why do we have to ask?

Now the believers are included in the communion, communication, and cooperation of the Godhead. This both in offering prayer, thanksgiving and praise to God and in preaching and prophesying and "pastoring" (shepherding) on God's behalf. That is why we are to ask. We are to ask according to His will, and to grow to know Him well enough to do that better and better.

Blessed THREE!

Blessed THREE in ONE!

Blessed ONE!

★ If nothing can separate us from the love of God, why does God allow the enemy to try to pry us away from Him?

If there are no struggles or trials there can be no casting of ourselves upon Him for help and patience in hardship, and no thanksgiving, enjoyment of victory, or rest from the battle. Back in chapter 5 we are taught tribulation (trouble) works patient endurance. The outcome is Christian maturity. The victory is over sin in the flesh, and it is obtained through reckoning ourselves dead to sin (6:13),
dead to the Law (7:6),
alive to God (6:14),
totally helpless (7:22-25),

instead relying on our partnership with the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (8:1-4).

★ Why does God do all through His Son? And why do we do all things through His Son?

His Son is the One who took the form of a servant and became a man, obedient unto the death of the cross, Philippians 2:1-10. He is a merciful high priest who has experienced our infirmities first hand, who intercedes for us,

Hebrews 4:15 For we have not an high priest which

cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

So, in conclusion, Paul cites:

No Condemnation for God's elect, i.e. chosen ones. (The Greek word translated "elect" here is plural, so this speaks of the eternal security of all believers.) It is based upon the fact that it is God that righteously justifies us. There is no higher authority than He. Our justification before Him is based upon the righteous substitutionary death of His Son. And He is risen, proof His death is accepted on our behalf and we are justified. So justified that He intercedes in heaven for us.

No Separation for any of us. Seven afflictions are named, some "natural," some humanly inflicted, some could be unrelated to our Christian testimony but in this context probably these come upon us because of our faithfulness to Christ in some way. "Sword" may be war or violent attacks or even injustices at the hands of governing officials.

More than Conquerors, not simply having overcome an enemy or invaded and spoiled an opposing power but basking in total and perpetual Security, Peace, Joy, Rest and Fellowship with God and with fellow creatures (both the redeemed and the unfallen).

I'm UP ON TOP. Not anything or anybody, shall be able to separate me from the love of God.

Paul names ten impossibilities, many beyond the natural knowledge, influence and power of human beings.

death, Only God takes life.

life, Only God decrees life.

angels, All creatures are under God's control.

principalities, An upper level of a powerful order of heavenly beings governing parts of the spiritual and physical creation.

powers, A lower level of heavenly beings, or perhaps human authorities.

things present, Despite appearances, all that is going on in this present world is under God's control.

things to come, Future events need not worry us.

height, Air travel? outer space? high thoughts? heaven?

Paradise?

depth, Caves? mines? ocean dives? deep thoughts? burial? drowning? hades? hell?
nor any other creature. Nothing else in God's physical or invisible creation, things or creatures now have no knowledge of.

Yes, thanks and praise be to God we are truly saved and safe and up on top with Him. No longer under the burden of sins or sin. Ready to live, serve and walk for the Lord. Let's go!

What's next? Given our redemption from our sins and our victory over sin in the flesh we are ready for instructions for our path and mission in this world and our walk in it with the Lord. Chapters 12 – 16 gives us needed personal guidance and encouragement for the way, both individually and in relation to other believers. Unfortunately many times believers start reading at chapter 12 skipping the sound foundation for success given in chapters 1-8. Doing so we may find ourselves out on our own in self confidence, and experiencing the resulting frustration and failure described in chapters 5:12-7. Or, we might even forget chapters 1-3 and forge ahead in self confidence forgetting what we are in the flesh, sinners who fall short of the glory of God (3:23), saved by grace, justified by faith and called to live by faith.

But before giving us our walking instructions the Spirit has one more issue to clarify. The faithfulness of God. If God called Israel and now apparently has abandoned His people, how can we be sure He won't abandon us sometime? Chapters 9-11 are a parenthesis to take up the stages of Israel's relationship to God, past, present and future, for our instruction and edification and peace of heart. He relates this so we will know and understand God's Purpose, His overall plan and how He, though Himself unchanging, works in different ways in different times. We are given His timetable and how we fit into it, the general sequence of events past, present and future. Hang on, it's quite a ride.

Ron Canner, November 14, 2007