

# Sermon Text for September 10, 2017

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I Samuel 17:41-50, Romans 8:31-32

## ***“God on our side”***

It is not really fair that there are so many life verses contained in Romans. I mean the type of verses that when you memorize them and steep your soul in them they can change your life when you live by them. We seem to get promise after glorious promise, verse after life verse that lifts us above the fray, the pain, the muck and the dirt of life and places us gently back in the hands of God. Poor Lamentations and Amos, and Joel, they're struggling and are lucky to have 1 or 2 in the whole book that we know by heart, while Romans is out there producing them time after time and offering up so many treasures.

Today we discover another verse in Roman that so many of us grew up memorizing, that so many of us have taken to heart and made a part of our life and it has given us confidence and assurance and has even changed our lives. It reminds us of who exactly is on our side as we go through life. It tells us, if God is for us, who can be against us? We discover today that God is on our side, that God is for us so no matter who is against us, it just doesn't matter.

### **READ SCRIPTURE**

What then are we to say about these things? As good Greek scholars the first question that should come to your mind is what things are these things that you are talking about? What should we say about what things? And then we have to go back to the previous verses where we find laid out for us the promises of Scripture for the Christian who is suffering and facing their bleakest, darkest, most difficult times. What then shall we say about the fact that when we are suffering we are able to stand on tippy-toe and see and taste the glory that is to come? What then shall we say about the fact that even if we are not able to physically ask for relief and help from our father in heaven, the Holy Spirit comes to our aid and with groans too deep for words intercedes on our behalf. What should we say then that all things work together for good for those who love God? What shall we say that in the midst of our suffering Paul tells us that we have been predestined as Christians who are facing suffering, we have been chosen by God, to be with God, we are assured of the glory that is to come?

Paul is saying, what more can I say about all of this. Let me try to say it another way. If God is for us, who is against us? IF God is for us, who would dare be against us? After high school I took a year off before going to college because I knew that I didn't know a thing about my faith and my love for God. I knew that if I went to college I would probably never make it through college without turning my back on my new love for Christ which I discovered my senior year in high school. I went to Philadelphia College of Bible and deferred from college for one year. PCB was not the most challenging academic institution so I had a lot of free time. We used to go out and play a lot of tackle football. Tackle was all we knew back then.

Across the hall from me was a guy named Charles Zebron. Charles was 6'6" and easily weighed 350 pounds. I made sure that Charles was always on my team and when he was we had one game plan. Get the ball to Charles and let him run. When that would happen everyone on the other team would pile on him and he would keep moving. People watching the game said that it looked like there were 6 people moving down the field with no visible locomotive power, but they figured it must have been Charles. With Charles on our side and on our time, we were unbeatable.

If Christ is for us, Paul states, who can be against us, and does it even matter who is against us? A great example of this in Scripture is the story of David and Goliath. Remember Goliath was a Philistine who had challenged the Israelites by saying send out someone to fight me, you can send the entire team against me if you want, and I will take them all on. The Israelites were terrified. It was like Charles Zebron in armor. And as they were contemplating their unfortunate predicament up walks David. David had been sent by his dad to bring by some cheese and crackers and wine to his brothers who were on the front line. HE sees Goliath and he says, what's the problem? IF God is for me duh, who can be against me? Youthful ignorance is great, it can take down so many barriers and walls that those of us who think we know best put up. Who is this Goliath when compared to God? He states in I Samuel: The Lord, who saved me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will save me from the hand of the Philistine." God is on our side, in case you have forgotten. When he faces Goliath instead of taking the mocking he says to Goliath, "This very day the Lord will deliver you into my hand." If God is for me, not even you Goliath, can be against me.

You do notice a couple of things about these verses. First of all Paul does not say that no one will come against you. NO we have all faced our Goliaths and we continue to

face them and often times we do ask a question that Paul asks but means it to be a statement. Most when we face these Goliaths instead of running up to them and saying I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me, we often hear ourselves ask: Is God really for us?

There are times we honestly ask that question. God are you for me, because I really am not sure. Jesus on the cross asked it. My God, my God why have you forsaken. Why God, have you gone on the others side, why did you sign up for the other team when I needed you most. We feel like that sometimes. If Jesus asked that question you can rest assured that we have at one time or another asked that same question. Those are the times that we feel like we need some proof of God's allegiance to us. Of course, in those times we forget the promises of Romans that we have just heard, we have also forgotten the Old Testament when time after time God bails us out of the trouble that we do get ourselves into.

But there are times that we feel like we need proof and Paul in the next verses gives us proof. Is God for us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else. The proof is found in the redemptive act of Jesus Christ. The proof of God's amazing love is this, that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. That's another promise and assurance from Romans, this time from Romans 5:8. God loves us so much that the sacrifice of his only son was not too much for us, he chose not to withhold his son from us. Do you know what that means?

This term withhold would have set off so many bells of familiarity for the readers in Rome. Where in the Bible, specifically in Genesis again, do we hear the term withhold in relation to the greatest of all sacrifices? Do you remember, if not let me help. God asks a father to sacrifice his son, his only son, his beloved son. They make their way up to the sacrificial sight with the boy carrying the wood. The son lays the wood out without knowing that he is to be the sacrifice. The father takes the son and binds him. He lifts up the dagger, with tears in his eyes and is about to plunge it into the breast of his son, the light of his life and to obliterate the promises that were given to him by God, when an angel stops him. Abraham hears the message from God, since you did not withhold your son, your only son from me, I will grant to you the promise that I gave to you that you will have more sons than you can count.

The proof that we have that God is on our side and that we do not have to fear, is seen in the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses us from all sin and allows us to know that as we go through the frailty of life, God is on our side and with God on our side, victory is guaranteed.

Amen.