

Fil-Am Community Church  
Pastor David Bennett  
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key Verse: Romans 8:31-32

## God is For You!

In football homes, Joe Namath or “Broadway Joe” is a household name, at least in my day it was.

Many know of him from his exploits in the NFL, however he was also a college star quarterback who played for Coach Paul Bear Bryant from 1962-1964 for the University of Alabama, winning the National Championship and multiple SEC championships. He went on to the NFL and played with the New York jets as quarterback.

As stated, his exploits both on and off the field with the New York Jets earned him a spot in the NFL Hall of Fame, and a Super Bowl ring after his underdog Jets beat the Colts in Super Bowl III.

Namath had the gall to "**Guarantee**" a victory in the championship game, and pull it off.

Pro football fans have never forgotten the way Namath ran off the field that night, holding up one index finger, silently reminding the world that he'd made the **Guarantee** good.

It's unlikely the Apostle Paul was holding up a single index finger when he finished writing his letter to the Romans, but maybe he could have.

After all, what we call Romans Chapter 8 is known today as one of the greatest chapters in all the Bible.

If Bible chapters had a "**Hall of Fame**," you can rest assured that Romans 8 would be enshrined there.

Charles Stanley tells the story of a professor who wanted to teach his students a lesson about grace. There is a great article that illustrates the **COPNCEPT of GRACE** written by Charles Stanley.

One of my more memorable seminary professors had a practical way of illustrating to his students the concept of grace.

At the end of his evangelism course he would distribute the exam, and caution the class to read it all the way through before beginning to answer it. This caution was written on the exam as well. As we read the test, it became unquestionably clear to each of us that we had not studied nearly enough.

The further we read, the worse it became. About halfway through, audible groans could be heard throughout the lecture hall.

On the last page, however, was a note that read, "**You have a choice.** You can either complete the exam as given or sign your name at the bottom and in so doing receive an A for this assignment."

We sat there stunned, Stanley said. Was he serious? Just sign it and get an A? Slowly, the point dawned on us, and one by one we turned in our tests and silently filed out of the room.

When I talked with the professor about it afterward, he shared some of the reactions he had received through the years.

Some students began to take the exam without reading it all the way through, and they would sweat it out for the entire two hours of class time before reaching the last page.

Others read the first two pages, became angry, turned the test in blank, and stormed out of the room without signing it.

They **never realized** what was available and as a result, they lost out totally.

One fellow, however, read the entire test, including the note at the end, but decided to take the exam anyway.

He did not want any gifts; he wanted to earn his grade, which he did, he made a C+, but he could easily have had an A like most of the class.

Romans Chapter 8 is just like the last line on the test of life.

All who read the words here and believe them **PASS** God's test with flying colors. They get an A, so to speak.

- Some hear about God's holiness, and **GIVE UP** ever trying to make the grade.
- Some of those spend an entire lifetime **ANGRY** at the God who desires to give them grace.
- And of course, a lot of people depend upon morality and **GOOD DEEDS** to get them into heaven, and they do their best to work their way into God's approval.

Unfortunately, nothing less than a **PERFECT SCORE** will do and only the by God's grace can any of us achieve a perfect score.

Like Charles Stanley's professor, God makes an offer that seems to be too good to be true.

But the truth is, it's the only question that ultimately matters.

**Would you take the grace of God, or reject it?**

When Billy Graham was driving through a small southern town, he was stopped by a policeman and charged with speeding. Graham admitted his guilt, but was told by the officer that he would have to appear in court.

The judge asked, "Guilty, or not guilty?" When Graham pleaded guilty, the judge replied, "That'll be ten dollars a dollar for every mile you went over the limit."

Suddenly the judge recognized the famous minister. "You have violated the law," he said. "The fine must be paid but I am going to pay it for you." He took a ten dollar bill from his own wallet, attached it to the ticket, and then

took Graham out and bought him a steak dinner! "That," said Billy Graham, "is how **God treats repentant sinners!**" Progress Magazine, December 14, 1992.

*Romans 8:31-32 (NASB)*

*<sup>31</sup> "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?"*

## **1. God is for you!**

On June 25, 1981, Eugene Lang returned to the elementary school he had attended 53 years earlier. Lang was a successful businessman by that time, a man worth millions, but the neighborhood he'd grown up in had changed drastically. East Harlem's children were poor, and the drop-out rate for the community schools were among the highest in the nation. As Lang made the standard, graduation-day speech about working hard, studying, and going to college, he noticed that hardly anyone was paying attention.

So that's when he changed his speech.

This is your first graduation, just the perfect time to dream, he says.

Dream of what you want to be, the kind of life you wish to build. And believe in that dream. Be prepared to work for it. Always remember, each dream is important because it is your dream, it is your future. And it is worth working for.

- You must study, he continues.
- You must learn.
- You must attend junior high school, high school, and then college.

The words are empty, no one really believing that these kids will make it.

The statistics, the history, argues against his speech. But he continues. Stay in school and I'll...

The speaker pauses, and then, as if suddenly inspired, he blurts out: I will give **each of you** a college scholarship.

After a second of silence, a wave of emotional cheering and applause and excited conversation rolled over the room.

It was the start of an amazing movement that has seen more than 12,000 students attend college with the help of more than 200 additional, generous sponsors.

In that first year of the promise, however, Lang did more than guarantee the money for 61 fidgety sixth-graders.

He helped school administrators prepare the students for college, even hiring tutors for the students, giving them the very best chance at making their way to and through college.

To say the least, those sixth graders and their families found out that Eugene Lang was for them!

Doesn't it make a difference if you know someone is for you?

Get ready for some great good news: God is for you!

The verse says, "If God is for us ..." The Greek word for "if," in this case, doesn't mean that God's being for us is a possibility.

Instead, it's a certainty. If the clock at work tells you it is 12:30 p.m...

You might say, if I'm going to eat lunch today, I'd better get going.

More than likely, that statement isn't about the possibility of lunch it's about eating lunch!

**No**, this statement isn't about the possibility of God's love for us it is about the certainty of God's love for each of us.

Take a moment, and savor every word. **God is for us!**

If God is for us who can be against us? Let me rephrase this, if God is for us **does it really matter** who is against us?

- Your family may have turned their backs on you,
- Your best friends may have disappointed you,
- Your job may have disappeared into the thin air...

However, the maker of the Heavens and Earth is for you.

- The One who laid the floor of the oceans is for you.
- The one who scattered the more than 100 billion stars over 100 billion galaxies, in what scientists say is a length of more than 30 million light years with a playful toss of his hand, is for you!

God is for you. Not **WAS**, not **WILL BE** or even **MIGHT BE**, but **IS**, right now.

- There is no waiting.
- There will be no probationary period.
- There is no small print to wade through.

**Right now**, God is for you.

His availability to you is not dependent on whether or not you've been good or bad, he's not some kind of Santa Claus deity, checking his list twice, and frowning at what you did last week. No, this God is for you, **right now!**

- God is for you.
- He's the one racing down the sideline, cheering your touchdown run.
- He's the one coming to the mound just before you pitch to the best player on the other team,
- He's encouraging you,
- telling you that he knows you can do it ...

When he heads back to the dugout, you really believe you can, because God is for you.

- He knows your favorite food,
- Your favorite way to spend an afternoon,
- And He wants to overwhelm you with good things.
- He is for you!

**God is for you.** He's got your photograph on His refrigerator.

That's your birthday on His calendar.

From Isaiah 49:16 comes this amazing statement: *"I have written your name on my hand!" Your name, your details, your heart.*

**God is for you!**

Psalm 46:1, (NASB), *"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble."*

Psalm 121:1-2, (NASB), *"I lift up my eyes to the hills—where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth."*

Truly, our help does come from the Lord whether we realize this or not.

If it hadn't been for His intervention and blessing we wouldn't be as well off today as we are.

We have been protected from evil and the evil one and we have been blessed with good things from God! **GOD IS FOR US!** He's not against us, **HE IS FOR US!**

The first point we discussed was God is for you!

The next point is....

## 2. God is for you, despite your failures

During quail season in Georgia, an Atlanta journalist met an old farmer hunting with an old pointer at his side.

Twice the dog ran ahead of both of the hunters and pointed.

Twice his master fired into the open air. When the journalist saw no birds rise, he asked the farmer for an explanation.

"Shucks," grinned the old man, "I knew there weren't no birds in that grass. Spot's nose ain't what it used to be but him and me have had some wonderful times together.

He's still doing the best he can, and it'd be mighty mean of me to call him a liar at this stage of the game!"

Do you have anyone on your side?

Someone who always backs you and believes in you like that old farmer backed his old dog?

The problem we have with Romans 8, and the idea that God is for us, is that we're so familiar with our failures.

And so, says the heart, God might be for other people, but I've done too much wrong.

I've made too many mistakes, made too many poor choices.

I can't really believe that God would be for me because God knows all about me.

I can't get **PAST** my **PAST!**

Take heart PAUL the man who wrote the words of Romans 8 also wrote the words of Romans 7.

*Romans 7:14-20 (NASB), the Conflict of Two Natures*

<sup>14</sup> “For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. <sup>15</sup> For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. <sup>16</sup> But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good. <sup>17</sup> So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. <sup>18</sup> For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. <sup>19</sup> For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. <sup>20</sup> But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.”

How had he sinned? For starters, he had persecuted the first generation of believers, and had watched Stephen's execution in the shadow of where the cross once stood.

Even as Paul became a great church planter, and a writer of letters that would soon make the New Testament, he battled the sinful urges of his own heart.

If Satan were a lawyer, he'd have an easy case.

"God," Satan says, "this one has harbored impure thoughts. This one has even acted upon those thoughts.

Here are the recorded, verifiable, certified, and notarized cases of..

- gossip,
- sexual sin,
- hatred,
- bitterness,
- cheating,
- lying,
- coveting,
- laziness,

- drunkenness ... "

The list goes on. It gets embarrassingly personal, and horribly public in the courtroom of heaven.

And the sad part about it is that we are guilty.

God knew about your sin then, and God knows it now.

And He is still for us! Roughly 2,000 years ago, Jesus died for every sin you'd commit before you'd accept him as your Savior.

He knew in advance how you'd blow it before you became a Christian.

And guess what, Jesus was also well aware that you wouldn't achieve perfection after you became a believer, either.

Paul never got there, "***I haven't achieved it yet. I'm still striving toward the goal,***" he'd write in Philippians, perhaps his last words.

And so we're sinners. And Satan reminds us of that **ALL THE TIME.**

Paul was smart, instead of listening to Satan's accusations of his own shortcomings, Paul listened once more to the message of Christ.

So he leaves the dark words of Romans 7 to make a startling statement as Chapter 8 begins. "*Therefore, there is now **NO** condemnation for those who are in **Christ Jesus!***"

Why? Because through Christ Jesus, the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death."

Is it any wonder that the early Christians simply referred to the New Testament as "The Good News?"

God is for you, **despite** all that you've ever done.

If you're in the seventh chapter of your own personal letter to the Romans, it's quite possible that the best chapter of your life is right around the corner.

If Satan is reminding you, **right now**, of the sins you've committed, it's possible that he's trying to get you to quit, to give up hope on a God that loves you, a God that is for you.

Maybe Satan knows more about your future than you do. He knows what the next chapter says...

**So, don't quit! God is for you!**

Saints God is not concerned with our failures, he is very aware of them.

He is just looking for someone to trust him and not let the enemy **STEAL** your joy because of your past.

Watching a trapeze show is breathtaking. We wonder at the dexterity and timing.

We gasp at near-misses. In most cases, there is a net underneath.

When they fall, they jump up and bounce back to the trapeze. In Christ, we live on the trapeze.

The whole world should be able to watch and say...

- Look how they live,
- Look how they love one another,
- Look how well the husbands treat their wives,
- Aren't they the best workers
- In the factories,
- In the offices,
- The best neighbors,
- The best students.

That is to live on the trapeze, being a show to the world.

What happens when we slip? The net is surely there.

The **BLOOD** of our Lord, Jesus Christ, has provided forgiveness for ALL our trespasses.

Both the net and the ability to stay on the trapeze are works of God's grace.  
Juan Carlos Ortiz.

Saints remember where Paul writes in Corinthians about how God chose us...

*1 Corinthians 1:27 (NASB), "But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong,"*

He cares for us, despite ourselves....

The first point we discussed was God is for you!  
The second point was God is for you, despite your failures  
The Last point we will discuss is....

### **3. The cross is proof that God is for us**

*2 Corinthians 8:9 (NASB), "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich."*

Jesus **GAVE UP** His riches in heaven to become poor for us!

Do you know of anyone else who would do that for you?

Would you be willing to give up all your material things and all your riches for my sake? And would I do it for you? This is what Jesus did for us.

*2 Corinthians 5:21 (NASB), "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."*

Jesus had **NO SIN**, meaning He never sinned like we do.

However, God allowed Him to trade places with us on the cross.

We deserved to be crucified for our sins.

We deserved to make a sacrifice of our lives for our sins, but instead, God allowed Jesus to do that for us.

He took our place on the cross and we took His place in the sense of being **declared righteous** before God.

Jesus is the **ONE** who did it or made it possible.

We had nothing to do with it, it's about Him and all because of Him!

John 3:16 is probably one of the most famous verses in the Bible.

We learned it in Sunday school or else VBS. I wonder if anyone is learning it today.

**GOD DID NOT SPARE HIS SON, BUT GAVE HIM UP FOR US ALL!**

It is said so quickly: "God did not spare His own Son." The words are too short to do justice for what happened.

You might sum up the sacrifice of another person's lifetime by saying simply: "Her son died in the war."

Mull it over for a moment. "Her son died in the war."

Only six words to sum up the sacrifice of a lifetime?

When she first discovered she was to be a mom, she felt the nausea for weeks.

She connected with this baby first through the morning sickness. Soon, when the nausea passed, she felt the child kick her in the side.

It was common for him to wake her in the middle of the night.

Toward the end of the pregnancy, she slept hardly at all. Eventually, she felt the labor pains, and screamed in agony, moments before she saw the most precious sight she'd ever laid eyes on.

She nursed this baby boy, she gave up sleep for this boy, and she held this fragile infant.

She changed the diapers, washed the diapers, dried the diapers, and folded the diapers.

She bounced him through the colic and rocked him through the fevers.

She cheered his first steps and wiped away the tears, and the blood, from his first scrape.

She provided the discipline, she read the books, and she took him to school.

She learned as many spelling words as he did, she explained math and history and the mystery of girls.

She watched him grow tall and strong and she provided socks and shoes for every step of the way.

She learned the rules of his favorite sport, and the favorite meal for his favorite girl.

She read the newspapers with the frightening headlines, she cried when he left for boot camp, she wrote the letters and prayed for miracles.

She provided the perfect weekend for that last Thanksgiving together, and

She answered the door when the officer came with the news that her baby boy had died in a ditch at the hands of an enemy who didn't give a moment's thought about the man he shot.

And so comes the sentence, "**Her son died in the war.**" Can a six-word sentence really tell the story? No way. So, too, comes the sentence Paul gives us.

**"God did not spare His own Son."**

Paul uses only seven words to describe the heartbreak of heaven.

We read them too quickly, in a matter of a second or two.

We must slow down, and realize that there is no way any of us would ever comprehend what it was like for Jesus to take off his robe of light, leave the halls of heaven, and make himself an organism buried in the darkness of a peasant girl's womb, so that one day, after all of the words, after all the teaching, after all the miracles, he could die the most horrible death known to man so that men might finally know God.

**God did not spare His own Son.**

God is for us. My, how God is for us. The cross is the unspeakable, indescribable proof that God is for you.

## **Conclusion**

Those who've never received the gift need to take action to do so, immediately.

Those who've received the gift, and yet forgotten the value of it, must recommit to a life that honors the gift giver.

Remember God is for you, and if so does it really matter who is against you?

God is for us despite our failures, God is for us and proved it by sacrificing his only son for us, while we were yet still Sinners!

What is keeping you from accepting his FREE grace today?