

## Linchpin pt5

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Ryan Abernathy / Linchpin / Romans 8:31–39

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There is a moment in every great concert where the music reaches its pinnacle and everything else after that is just adding to the moment of catharsis that has already occurred. It's different at each show and with each artist.

Y'all know I am a massive fan of the band U2, and one of their greatest hits is Where the Streets Have No Name- the opening track from their most famous album, The Joshua Tree. In 2017, U2 went on a tour to celebrate that album. After that tour, they toured again in 2019, and Streets wasn't played. for the entire tour.

U2 fans were dying for that song, THE song, and yet it was absent. The whole tour. Then the pandemic hit. And the band would not return to the stage until late last year in Las Vegas. And the question asked, over and over again by fans, will we hear Streets live again?

There is a moment in the Sphere shows where the visuals switch, and slowly, almost quietly, the opening notes of this song begin to seep out of the sound system...and in that moment, in every show, the audience- all over the Sphere- rises as one. People tear up. No one stands silent, as one voice, they scream out the words of this song, this anthem, that they have been longing to sing, for years.

That's [Romans 8:31-39](#). It's the pinnacle. It is, perhaps, the most powerful nine verses of the New Testament outside the Gospels.

Remember where we left off last week? Paul was telling this little persecuted church who they were. Well he ends this lynchpin passage telling them the implications of who they are. **He wants to remind them to incite them. To spur them on to dare great things for the Gospel...for the Kingdom...for Jesus.**

And today, I want to do the same thing. I want to incite you, to dare again, to dream again, to face the brokenness of the world and your own life, and to remember WHO YOU ARE and as a result WHO IS ON YOUR SIDE!

Turn with me there now and let's read.

Paul starts off with a rhetorical question. If God is for us, who can be against us? Who? Anyone? Anything? Church let me ask, who can step up against the enormity of the power of God?

### **Romans 3. Living in the Spirit (8:1–39)- Reminders!!!**

What, then, are we to conclude from all of this? As children of God we have been adopted into his family (v. 15). We are co-heirs with Christ (v. 17). We have received the Spirit as the guarantee of final redemption (v. 23). Our prayers are taken up by the Spirit and laid before God (v. 26). Though sinners by nature, through faith we have been acquitted of all wrong (v. 30). Our future glorification is so certain that God speaks of it as already having taken place (v. 30). Certainly if God is for us, "what does it matter who may be against us"

Church we live in a culture right now that tries to get us to be afraid of everything. It's garbage. **We have nothing to be frightened of when we belong to Jesus, because in Christ, we don't have an opposition who can win a permanent victory.**

So can I tell you something, STOP BEING AFRAID! When we are afraid, we engage with the world as something to be overcome- we have already overcome the world in Jesus, ([John 16:33](#)) **the world is people to be won to Jesus- and we cannot do that if we are afraid of the people we are called to win to the Gospel.**

We operate in faith, not fear.

How can we be assured that God is for us? We have the evidence of this in how we are saved. Look at verse 32.

God won us by His Son, why would He allow those who He has won at such a high cost to be defeated by the powers He put to shame on the cross?

(Gospel presentation here)

### **Romans 3. Living in the Spirit (8:1–39)**

A God who sacrificed his own Son on our behalf will certainly not withhold that which by comparison is merely trivial. The immeasurable greatness of God's love is seen in the infinite nature of his sacrifice on our behalf. God is by nature a giving God

We are operating not in a precarious assailable victory, but on ground so secure it cannot be shaken in any fashion. Jesus won. It is finished remember?!

So that puts us on secure ground. We are not able to be driven from that position. Look at verses 33-34.

We are not people who can be dragged back to sin, because we have been forgiven AND **it is God Himself who has pronounced us justified**-remember that word from the last 2 weeks? Made righteous.

Further, **we have an intercessor**- one who is right there in the throne room speaking for us! Jesus is there telling all, that we belong to Him!

So we don't have to walk around worried about our standing. Our sins are covered. Our position secure. And our future not in doubt.

### **Romans 3. Living in the Spirit (8:1–39)**

So it must be a question: "Will Christ? No! For he is the One who died for us" (TLB). If he is for us, he certainly will not condemn us. Far from condemning us, he is right now at the right hand of God interceding on our behalf. Not only does the Spirit intercede for us (8:26) but the glorified Christ as well.

So what should this produce? **CONFIDENCE.**

Now this isn't arrogance. We have enough arrogant "Christians" in our day and time going around making a big deal about themselves and telling everyone else to be like them in 7 easy steps for 29.99...that's not confidence. That's crap. We are following Jesus, not some self important influencer or some dried up old windbag trying to sell one last book so they can have a gold plated coffin when they die.

**We are confident in JESUS! And we are confident, because He is always there!**

Look at verses 35-36.

What are all the possible things that Paul names that some might think could separate us? Notice what they all have in common. They are all physical, not spiritual dangers.

Here is the truth, **when your spiritual future is secure, the physical threats are a lot less daunting.** We were separated from God by our sin. Jesus dealt with that. Nothing else has the power to separate us from God, **so when hardship shows up, it may be MASQUERADING as a spiritual judgement from God or an attack, but it's fake- the enemy trying to get into your head the only way he can- by implying that in facing opposition you have displeased God.** That's not true. God is there.

**Romans 3. Living in the Spirit (8:1-39)**

Then follows a litany of disasters, none of which can effect a separation between Christ and the believer. Far from weakening the bonds of love, trouble and hardship strengthen them. Persecution drives the true believer to the arms of the one who knows from experience the full range of suffering. Famine and nakedness (perhaps a metaphor for destitution) are powerless to affect the love of Christ. Danger and the sword (possibly that of the executioner) lose their terror in view of the presence of the one in whom we find ultimate safety

Now the crescendo...you ready? Look at verses 37...

**In all these things...ALL...not some, not a few, not most, ALL. In Jesus, you conqueror all the time.**

*“It means not just winning a battle, but being in complete control of the field.”* NT Wright, *Into the Heart of Romans*, p178)

It is not a future state. It is today. And you may say, “Have you seen my life. I don’t seem like a conqueror.” Have you been paying attention to who this letter is sent to? This isn’t to some mega church with gold lame curtains and a silver baptistry. This is a people under daily siege. **You are not a conqueror because of your present circumstance, you are one DESPITE your circumstances because you are in Christ and Jesus loves you.**

### **Romans 3. Living in the Spirit (8:1–39)**

Christians are not grim stoics who manage to muddle through somehow. They are victors who have found from experience that God is ever present in their trials and that the love of Christ will empower them to overcome all the obstacles of life.

Don’t believe me? Look at the rest of the crescendo...verses 38-39.

Nothing can separate us from Jesus...that means we always win- no matter our circumstances. We win, because we are in Christ.

### **Romans 3. Living in the Spirit (8:1–39)**

His list of ten terms **moves from physical danger through the hierarchy of superhuman powers**, those that now exist or ever will, powers from on high or from below, and culminates in the inclusive phrase “anything else in God’s whole world” (Phillips).<sup>213</sup> **There is absolutely nothing that can ever drive a wedge between the children of God and their Heavenly Father.**

Church when we operate in this reality, we can do the things God has called us to do. Share the Gospel. Lovingly confront sin in our brothers and sisters. Encourage one another. Survive the tragedy. Be set free from sin.

**Romans 3. Living in the Spirit (8:1–39)**

The process is God's. We are his workmanship (Eph 2:10). The process of sanctification is intended to bring us into conformity with the nature of our Creator

Who are you operating as today?