

Intelligent Obedience

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon teaches that true Christian obedience is an intelligent, heartfelt pursuit of God's commandments, grounded in sincere love, spiritual maturity, and guided solely by Scripture under the Holy Spirit's teaching.

Scripture: 1 Chronicles 28:8, Romans 3:20, John 4:24, Galatians 3:10, Galatians 5:22-23, Matthew 5:17-18, 2 Timothy 3:16

Topics: "Christian Obedience", "Spiritual Growth", "Scriptural Authority"

Description

In this powerful sermon, C.H. Spurgeon exhorts believers to pursue intelligent obedience by actively seeking and keeping all of God's commandments. He challenges Christians to move beyond mechanical religion toward sincere, heartfelt service motivated by love and guided solely by Scripture under the Holy Spirit. Spurgeon warns against relying on impressions or human traditions and calls for spiritual maturity that embraces personal responsibility in obeying God's Word. This teaching encourages believers to grow in grace and live faithfully as true disciples of Christ.

Transcript

"Keep and seek for all the commandments of the LORD your God." 1 Chronicles 28:8.

Is the Lord your God? I must put this question very pointedly to you at the onset, otherwise I shall not be speaking to you in expounding the words of my text. Were I to address the ungodly and the unconverted, and say to them, "Keep God's commandments," they would, perhaps, misunderstand such an exhortation and consider that I intend to set before them as the way of life a strict observance of the commandments. It is no such thing. "By the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified." So far as the sinner is concerned, by the Law comes the knowledge of sin! The Law can do nothing more for him than convince him that he needs a Savior and drive him out of himself to find in Christ what he cannot find in himself.

I am now about to address those who are saved—those who are saved through the merits of the Lord Jesus—those who have rested in Him and are now trusting in Him, and in Him, alone. These have taken God to be their God. They are in Covenant relationship with Him and now, being introduced into the family of God, they become like children under parental influence and parental discipline, bound to "keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord their God."

David says, first of all, "Keep the commandments," that is to say, such of them as you know, such as are clear from your reading of Scripture, such as have been pressed upon your conscience—keep these. Keep them always. Ask for more Grace to keep them better. Or when you feel that you have not kept

them, go with holy repentance to the foot of the Cross to get rid of past sin and look up for sanctifying Grace that through the Holy Spirit's power, you may keep them better for the future. For, "in the keeping of them there is great reward." The path of obedience is a path of safety and of happiness.

But David says more than that, and it is to this I call your attention. He says, "Keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord your God." There are precepts, the nature of which you have never understood, the obligation of which you have never felt—seek these out. Try to know all God's will concerning you. Keep what you do know, but wherein you are at fault through lack of knowledge, do not content yourself with ignorance any longer, but search out the matter. Read the King's proclamations. Study the code of the King's Laws. Ask Him to teach you and to make you wise in the way of His commandments, that in nothing you may be chargeable with indifference, or be guilty of neglecting the ordinances of the Most High.

It shall be my endeavor, then, for a little while, as God shall help me to command such an obedience and show you the excellence of that earnest pursuit which seeks out God's commandments.

I. Such AN OBEDIENCE IS DEEPLY SPIRITUAL.

Were I simply to do that part of the Divine will which everybody else does. If, being a member of a certain Christian Church, I take my cue from my fellow members, or pin myself to the sleeve of my pastor and act precisely according to the fashion which everybody else is setting, I may be merely conforming to religious usages in a mechanical, dreamy, unspiritual, unacceptable way. It may not be the worship of God at all! It may be but a physical exercise following in the rut as the cart that is dragged there by the horse. Does it profit my character that I make proof of nothing but these grooves through which I am drawn by custom? But you will see at once that when a man bestirs himself to find out what the will of the Lord is, there is an exercise of the mind at once! The spirit is then, even before any action is taken, in a state of obedience—it is bowing itself reverently before the Most High and saying to Him, "What would You have me to do?" The man who seeks to know the Lord's will is never likely to become a mere formalist. His mind will be aware. Why, some of

you, I dare say, have come here a good many times and you have sat through the service and have gone away again none the better because it has grown into a regular thing with you! I have sometimes noticed this in our worship. Dissenting worship is simple enough, but yet for all that there gets to be a formality about it. If it has been the habit of people to sit during the singing of the hymn, when they have been asked to stand up, they have felt that it was a dreadful innovation—quite a departure from the old mechanism! And should a verse be given out—have you not noticed it?—with a doxology or a chorus at the end, how many have dropped into their seats before we have got to the last line, and risen up again wondering what the preacher can be doing because their minds are not awake in the service of God! We are all prone to get into that kind of routine. Sitting in the same seat, or even standing on the same platform and going through the same form of worship produces in us mechanical service. But if we seek to know the Lord's will, it is evident that in that thing, at least, we have broken through the mechanical and got into that which is spiritual—worship which God says He will accept, for, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

II. The obedience which seeks to know the Lord's will also INDICATES THE TRUEST SINCERITY.

A man who is not sincere in his obedience may conform to the regular order of that which he knows to be prescribed, but only the sincere man will seek to find out matters he is not yet acquainted with. Which is

the better servant—the man who must always have his orders written for him every morning and who at night excuses himself for the neglect of many an obvious duty because, as he says, "It was not down on the paper, Sir. I have followed your instructions"—is he the better servant, or the other man who thinks after he has obeyed his orders, "What ought I to do for my master? Is there not this thing, or that thing which, though it may not be absolutely recorded or written down, yet is intended in the spirit of my instructions?" Do you not love the child who looks out for occasions and opportunities to please you? Do you not feel a satisfaction in accepting from a friend a kindness which may be almost unexpected and which manifests to you that he must have been thinking about you and has, perhaps, lain awake at night to consider how he could gratify or serve you? You feel that this is sincere friendship! So it is with your service for God. If you do only those duties which I stand here and write out to you so plainly that you cannot help seeing them, why, is there any great forwardness or fidelity of purpose in it? But if you go to that grand old Book and on your knees say to your Lord and Master, "I want to do all that I can to show how my heart loves You—teach me what You would have me do," this manifests a sincerity which is indisputable!

III. Again, is not the seeking out of the Divine commands A PROOF OF AN INTENSE AFFECTION?

Common affection will do what it must, but intense affection will do all it can. A vehement enthusiasm, a constraining love, such as that which Jesus Christ deserves of us, says—

"Oh, what can I do for my Savior to praise?" "Is there an alabaster box of precious ointment that I can break, that I may anoint His head? Wherein can I be of service to any members of His family? How can I show forth the Glory of His name?" The glow of affection would be always prompting us to seek here, there and everywhere to know what we can do! We are far from believing in works of supererogation. No man can ever do more than it was his duty to have done. When we have done all, we are but unprofitable servants! Still the earnest Christian, if he could, would do even more than he should. Instead of wishing to stand still and stop short on this side of the path, he would exceed both in service and in sacrifice, as Dr. Watts sings—

"Yet if I might make some reserve,

And duty did not call!

I love my God with zeal so great,

That I should give Him all!"

Diligent enquiry in seeking out the Divine will manifests that holy intensity of affection which becomes the disciple of such a Lord as our Savior, Jesus Christ, and which I trust and pray always gleams, and shall gleam in the bosoms of many of us who have been redeemed by His precious blood!

IV. Further, this searching after the Divine Commandments indicates THE MATURE MANHOOD OF GRACE. The babe in Grace does that which is simply and obediently plain, but it is not to be expected that he will begin to

search and pry into things which are not so clear until he has grown and had his senses exercised. At any rate, it is more excusable if the babe in Grace is more ready to be led by his fellow Christian than to be on his own account a deep searcher into the Divine Word. But the man who is a man in Christ, having grown in Grace, takes the Book and he says, "My Lord, I desire to serve You to the utmost stretch of my

manhood. You have been pleased to give me an understanding,

not that I may cringe at the foot of the priest and lower myself into a beast of burden to be driven wherever those incarnations of evil spirits may goad me on! No, but You have made me a man and given me mind, thought, capacity—and You have put into my hands a Book which I can understand, and here I am—assist me while I bow this judgment to Your sway, and teach me what Your mind is." God would have us all educated for the skies. We are here but minors. I trust, however, we have, many of us, passed our infancy! We are getting something beyond the mere first childhood of Grace and now we seek to know, and to practically know, the Lord's will and mind respecting us! If you would always be babes, then sit still and have this word and that put into your mouths, forms of prayer composed for your use and unintelligible creeds compiled for you to repeat! But if you would grow into men in Christ Jesus, come to the Book and keep and seek out the commands of God with full purpose of heart to obey them!

V. I KNOW THERE WILL BE A GREAT MANY EXCUSES MADE.

In these days, people do not read their Bibles much. One reason why Romanism is popular is because it allows a man to get a deputy to do his thinking for him—and to do his praying for him. But what a poor affair it is with the man who keeps his brains in somebody else's head and carries his heart in somebody else's bosom! Are there not many of you who do not read the Word of God? We stand up as Protestants and say, "The Bible, and the Bible, alone, is the religion of Protestants!" And yet what multitudes never think of reading it! They hear a Chapter read in public service and, perhaps now and then, read a chapter at home. But as to downright study of the Word and searching out the Divine meaning, I do believe that is an exercise to which many professors are totally unaccustomed! They do not engage in it regularly and constantly, nor come to it as a daily duty and a daily privilege. Indeed, their great theme is unsectarianism. Unsectarian-ism! That is the correct thing nowadays—unsectarianism! Which, being translated means—it does not signify which is which, whether it is right or wrong, it matters not one atom whether you obey God or obey man, whether you belong to a Church which is apostate from the Truth, or one that holds the Truth of God! Unsectarianism, my Friends, is treason

to God and to God's Word!

It is only the strong sectarian who can be true—I mean only the man who follows out the Divine Word in every jot and tittle and feels, "I must hold to this Truth even if I stand alone." I mean not that we are to say, "I cannot love the Christian Brother who does not see what I see." No, my Brothers and Sisters, I wish to push liberty of conscience further than that, so far as to feel that you have no right to judge your Brother about what he sees or does not see, but that you stand solely and wholly on your own feet before God! You have there to exercise your own mind and it does not matter to you whether you belong to any one section, or whether you are a sect to yourself, as long as you can but call Him Lord and Master and keep all His Word and all His way. But the giving up of this and that Truth of God—denying one ordinance and compromising another, shirking some Doctrines and dexterously turning the angles of other Doctrines, giving up any particular practice which is clearly of God's appointment and tolerating any other practice of human device with a vindication of its harmlessness—this is nothing but flat treason against the Majesty of Heaven in order to win the approbation of men!

The world points its finger at the rigid Puritan and declaims against him—but the rigid Puritan is the man whom God accepts! Nor can he be too rigid in everything in which he believes the Divine will is concerned. "How liberal," says one. Yes, but let a servant be liberal with his own money, not with his master's. I have

no right to liberality in principle. Principles and duties are things which I have no more right to touch than I have to take pains to alter the statute law of the realm! Yes, let the canons of law be altered and Acts of Parliament be burned in the fire, but let the Word of God stand fast forever! If any man preaches any other Gospel than that we have received, instead of saying, "No doubt he is an excellent, but a mistaken man," let us say with Paul, "Let him be accursed!" And until we get back the old spirit of following out the Master's mind in all things—personally, scrupulously, rigidly, our conscience keeping close to the Divine mind—we shall scarcely know what true obedience is! The Church greatly needs to be brought back to her true standing of obedience to her Lord and King!

VI. Taking this for granted, admitting that it is our duty to search out the Divine Command in all respects and to yield in nothing, whatever, you may ask, HOW ARE WE TO DISCOVER THE DIVINE MIND?

Let me say at once, only by searching the Word of God, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit. Brothers and Sisters, let me warn you against the many ways in which men have sought to discover God's will apart from His Word—all foolish and some of them wicked! I have known some who have opened the Book as if the passage on which they should alight at haphazard became their oracle, or if another passage of a different complexion, irrespective of the context, should open or turn up, that should guide them. Do you not know that this was an old heathen custom? The Romans, using Virgil or some other poet, as you use your Bible, did just the same thing. When you are so doing, you are simply guilty of idolatry and might just as well go to the shrine of Delphi and consult the Pythian oracle, as thus tempt the Lord your God! We have known some cast lots to know what they should do—as if the most precarious hazard could interpret God's will which is clear and plain! I marvel how any civilized man can be so besotted as to do such things—and yet I know that this is an evil pastime and practice which lingers among some Christians!

Others judge of the Divine Mind by Providence . But what do you mean by Providence? Is it the current of the wind, the drifting of the tides, the aspect of the clouds, or the fortuitous coincidences that have arrested your attention? Such Providence , you know, will guide you any way if you follow that. Jonah went to go to Tarshish and he found a ship—of course he did, but was it a Providence? Yes, he might have said, "I should never have gone, but the finger of Providence seemed so clear." Many people have got into prison through such Providence! Your rule is not to be Providence, but the command of God! Who are you that you should interpret Providence? Is that Providence, when a man means to rob another, that he finds the house neglected? If a man means to cheat, is it a Providence that he meets some easy customer in the course of business? Yet many talk so and try to lay their sins upon the Providence of God! My Brothers and Sisters, never do this—you will either be the victims of infatuation or the perpetrators of wicked folly if you do anything of the kind.

Others, too, judge of their duty by impressions. "If I feel it impressed upon my mind," says one, "I shall do it." Does God command you to do it? This is the proper question. If He does, you should make haste, whether it is impressed upon your mind or not! But if there is no command to that effect, or rather, if it diverges from the line of God's statutes and needs apology or explanation, hold your hand, for though you have ten thousand impressions, yet must you never dare to go by them! It is a dangerous thing for us to make the whims of our brain instead of the clear precepts of God, the guide of our moral actions. "To the Law and to the testimony"—this is the lamp that shows the Christian true light! Be this your chart! Be this your compass! But as to impressions, and whims, and fancies, and I know not what besides which some have taken—these are more wreckers' lights that will entice you on the rocks! Hold fast to the Word of God and nothing else! Whoever he shall be that shall guide you otherwise, close your ears to him! If at any time, through infirmity or weakness, I should teach you anything which is contrary to this Book, cast it from

you! Hurl it away as chaff is driven from the wheat—if it is mine and not my Master's, cast it away! Though you love me, though I may have been the means of your conversion to God, think no more of what I say than of the very strangers in the street if it is not consistent with the teachings of the Most High. Our guide is His written Word, let us keep to this.

VII. MANY ARGUMENTS MIGHT BE STATED FOR SUCH OBEDIENCE AS THIS, but we shall only mention

three or four of them.

Remember, Beloved in the Lord, that our duty as Christians is not to be measured by our sense of that duty or by our knowledge. What? Is it my duty to do anything that I do not know to be my duty? Certainly it is! Do you not know that even among men in the ordinary courts of law, if you break a law of which you were not cognizant, you are still amenable to punishment? Only last week a case in point occurred. In the new Act for Regulating the Traffic in the Streets, there are clauses which are quite unknown to some of the drivers. Some of these persons were prosecuted for breaking the law. They pleaded that they did not know it and, very rightly, they were dealt with leniently—but the magistrate told them that Parliament looked upon the law as binding upon men whether they knew it or not—it was their business to know it and they were to find it out! If it could be proved that a man did not try to know the law and went on breaking it through willful ignorance, he would soon learn that the judicature would not treat him with leniency, but would rather consider it a double offense, that the man who violated the law also persistently showed contempt for the law he violated and would not search it out! There are many such professing Christians. They do not know their duty because they do not want to know it. If they found out such-and-such a commandment of the Lord to be imperative, it would be very inconvenient, therefore they walk on the other side of the road rather than face the public notice! They take care to read some other passage of Scripture. I recollect a good man, a very good man, who, whenever he came to that passage in the Acts about Philip and the eunuch, took care not to read it, for it is a very awkward passage and reads so wonderfully like Believers' Baptism! As he could not bear that ordinance, and did not wish to trouble his conscience about it, he passed that

passage by! But was he therein excusable? Assuredly not! God's ordinances are not according to our notions of those ordinances. Either a thing is right or not! If it is right, it is right and cannot be wrong! And I sin in not being obedient to it. My conscience cannot excuse me. If my conscience errs, I therein commit two sins—first, the error of my conscience and secondly, the error against the law which I have not properly read, and have not understood as I ought to have done. The Fall spoiled our understanding so that we do not know the Divine Will as we should know it, but the flaw in our understanding is no excuse for the flaw in our life—otherwise all the corruptions of nature might be urged as an excuse for the corruptions of practice—which they certainly are not! Our rule, then, is not our sense of duty, nor what we think to be our duty, but this Book. There it is, the whole of it, and we must come to that and seek to set right our sense of duty and our conscience by the dictates of the Word of God!

And recollect, Christian, that sin is to you, if you really are what you say you are, evermore a thing of horror. Is it not, therefore, horrible even to suspect that you may be living constantly in sinful omission and every day engaged in the commission of some action hostile to God? Would you not be alarmed if it were whispered that there was a cancer somewhere in your body and you did not know where it was, but only that it was there somewhere? Would you ever rest till you had found out where it was? And if at night it should be said that somewhere in the house there was a thief, would you say, "Well, I do not know where

he is and, therefore, I am justified in going to sleep"? No, but you would search until you drove him out. If you were in a room where there was a deadly viper and you got just an inkling of its being there, would you say, "I do not know, but I am almost sorry that I ever heard about the viper. I wish somebody had left me alone"? No, but you would thank him for telling you it was there and you would never rest till you had got rid of it! So, each one of us may be doing what we think is right, but which may be wrong. We may be living each day in the neglect of something which we ought to be doing. Will we not, therefore, make it this very night one of our earnest prayers, "Lord, teach me Your commandments and give me Grace to keep them! Do not allow me even one solitary day to live willingly disobedient to the will of so kind and loving a Lord"?

Beloved, to the keeping of every command there is a reward appended, not of debt, but of Grace. In keeping His commandments there is great reward, while, on the other hand, he that knows his Master's will and does it not, shall be beaten with many stripes! He that knew not his Lord's will and, therefore, did not do it, was he therefore excused? No, he, too, was beaten—beaten with fewer stripes, but still beaten. There is a reward which God gives, not that we have any merit, but out of His own Grace and love to those who keep close to Himself. And, dear Friends, we never neglect a duty without at once suffering for it—whether we perceive the suffering or not, we are losers by the neglect. Oh, that we could walk after the perfect pattern of the life of our Lord Jesus, without flaw and in perfection! And if that is not possible, yet at any rate let us struggle after it, seeking each day for the power of the Holy Spirit to work in us that we may be conformed unto the mind of Christ. O Spirit of God, leave us not! Clay vessels as we are, You have made us vessels for honor—let us be fit for the Master's use!

The best argument, after all, that I can use with you is this— when our Lord Jesus became a Servant on earth, He did not wait for instructions, but He sought out what He could do for us. O my Brothers and Sisters, all that spontaneous service of affection which He rendered to us flowed from His inmost soul with a marvelous force! He did not say, "How little can I do for these poor sinners? How little can I suffer and yet let them be saved? How little can I give and yet bring them to Heaven?" No, but He emptied out the full treasure of His soul for us, bounding or limiting Himself in nothing! The Infinite Savior, Infinite in all that He did for us, in the boundless affection of His heart! Let us not serve Christ after a narrower sort than this, but let us ask Him to take our whole heart, to take us as disciples into His school, to teach us to write according to His copy, to amend the errors that we make, to correct the lines wherein we have been mistaken, that we may come, day by day, nearer and nearer to the perfect copy—and make up our minds to give up the dearest thing we have seen when we find it to be wrong and to follow out the hardest practice when we know it to be right! I think that, even with regard to our Doctrinal views, firmly established as we should be in the present Truth of God, we should always feel this when we are in prayer—that if there is something new that we do not know, but is quite contrary to what we do know, we are ready to learn it! And if some cherished opinion which we have held all our lives, should be found to be contrary to the mind of God, let us hold ourselves ready to give up that opinion at all costs and hazards as willing, obedient and true soldiers of our great Master and Captain!

I have thus tried to address the children of God. I have done it very, very feebly. The Lord forgive our weakness! To the ungodly there is this word. I have not spoken to you up to now because I could not lay down the actions of the living to the dead—but to you there is a word. We are bid to preach to everyone in all the world, "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believes not shall be damned." To believe is to trust the Lord Jesus. It is that which saves you! Faith alone saves. After you have believed, then come and declare your death and burial with Christ through Baptism, according to His Word. That will

not save you—you have no right to it until you are saved—but when you are saved, then that ordinance, and the ordinance of the Lord's Supper become instructive and useful to you, but they are of no service to you until you are completely saved through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ!

The Lord give you Grace to believe, and to follow in His ways, and to Him be the Glory! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: ROMANS8:23-39.

[Concluded from Sermon #3255, Volume 57—THE PEARL OF PATIENCE.]

Verse 23. And not only they, but ourselves, also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. That is what we are waiting for—"the redemption of our body"—and we shall not wait in vain for it, for Christ is the Savior of our body as well as of our soul, and the day shall come when even our bodies shall be free from pain, weakness, weariness, sin and death. Happy day! We may well look forward to it with the loftiest anticipations.

24, 25. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man sees, why does he yet hope for it? But if we hope for what we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. This is our present position—patiently waiting for "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ"—patiently waiting for "the manifestation of the sons of God," for "it does not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like He, for we shall see Him as He is."

26. Likewise the Spirit also helps our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought but the Spirit itself make intercession for us with groans which cannot be uttered. There is much in this Chapter about groaning and that is but natural, for it so largely concerns our present imperfect state. But, by-and-by, there will be—

"No groans to mingle with the songs Which warble from immortal tongues."

27. And He that searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit because He make intercession for the saints according to the will of God. This explains what to many is the mystery of prayer. The Holy Spirit, being Himself God, knows the secret purposes of the Divine Will and, therefore, moves the saints to pray in accordance with that will—and makes their supplications effectual through His own prevailing intercession. [See Sermons #788, Volume 14—creation's groans and

THE SAINTS' SIGHS and #1616, Volume 27—SAVED IN HOPE]

28. And we know—Paul, like John, was no Agnostic! He did not even say, "We think, we imagine, we suppose."

No—"we know"—

28. That all things work together for good—We must not stop there, otherwise the statement will not be true, for all things do not work together for good to all men, but only—

28. To them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. How are we to know who they are who are the called according to God's eternal purpose? The previous clause informs us, for both relate to the same individuals—"them that love God" are—"them who are the saved according to His purpose." We cannot peer into the pages of the Lamb's Book of Life, yet we can tell by this simple test

whether our names are recorded there—do we truly love the Lord? If so, all things are working for our present and eternal good—all things visible and invisible, all things friendly and unfriendly, all things in Providence and Grace!

29. For whom He did foreknow, He did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. "What an eternal honor for all Believers—that they might be among the "many brethren" of Christ, God's first-born and well-beloved Son! Here, too, we see the purpose of God's foreknowledge and predestination, that we should be "conformed to the image of His Son."

30. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified. You see that these great declarations relate to the same persons right through the whole series—"Whom He did foreknow, He did also predestinate...whom He did predestinate, them He also called... them He also justified...them He also glorified." There is not a single link missing from the eternal purpose and foreknowledge of God to the everlasting Glory in which the saints' bliss shall be consummated! The practical questions for each one of us to answer are just these—have I been "called" by Grace out of Nature's darkness into God's marvelous Light? Have I been "justified" by faith and have I peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ? Then, being called and justified, I may rest assured that I have been predestinated and that in due time I shall be glorified!—

"There, where my blessed Jesus reigns, In Heaven's unmeasured space, I'll spend a long eternity In pleasure and in praise."

31, 32. What shall we then say to these things? If God is for us who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also give us all things? After having given us His own Son, what is there that He can withhold from us if it is for our real good? No, He has already virtually given us all

things in giving Him to us! [See Sermons #159, Volume 3—THE TRUE CHRISTIAN'S BLESSEDNESS; #355, Volume 7—PORTRAITS OF CHRIST; #1043, Volume 18—GLORIOUS PREDESTINATION; #241, Volume 5—PREDESTINATION AND CALLING and #627, Volume 11—JUSTIFICATION AND GLORY]

33, 34. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies. Who is it that condemns? It is

Christ that died, yes rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also make intercession for us.

Well might the Apostle ring out these confident challenges to Heaven, earth and Hell! As it is God that justifies, who can

bring any charge against His elect? Who can condemn those for whom Christ died, for whom He has risen, and for whom

He is now making intercession at the right hand of God?

35-37. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or

nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for Your sake we are killed all the daylong, we are accounted as sheep for

the slaughter. No in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. "All these things" have

only made the saints cling the more closely to their Lord, instead of separating them from Him! Their persecutors

thought they were triumphing over them, but it was the martyrs who were the victors all the while!

38, 39. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things

present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of

God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Paul had good reason for being persuaded that there was no separation for those

for whom there was no condemnation! May we be among them by God's Grace! Amen. [See Sermons #256, Volume 5—the believer's CHALLENGE; #2240, Volume 38—A CHALLENGE AND A SHIELD; #751, Volume 13—MORE THAN CONQUERORS and #2492, Volume 42—PAUL'S PERSUASION.]

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