

# Who Is to Condemn?

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[ 0 : 00 ] As it pertains to the doctrine of eternal security of the true believer,! We have been examining five unanswerable questions.

! These questions relate to the perseverance or preservation of the saints which we Baptists like to refer to as eternal security.

Tradition among reformed believers used the word perseverance for generations. And there was nothing inherently wrong with that term, except it tended to imply that once a person was saved, he then had to fight his own fight to remain saved, to persevere.

And of course the reformers like Luther and Calvin and others did not believe that or teach that. The truth is we need God's grace every moment of every day.

Several passages in the Old Testament teach us that God holds our very breath in His hands. We can't take another breath unless God grants it by His grace.

[ 1 : 28 ] It is God who preserves us all the way to glory. Now in our present study of the unanswerable questions contained in Romans chapter 8, we have been examining things that God the Father has done on our behalf.

In the first three questions we read about these works by the Father as follows. If God the Father is for us, who can be against us?

God the Father did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us.

How will He not also along with Him graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God the Father has chosen?

We do see that God the Son is mentioned in the second question, but that is from the viewpoint of God the Father giving up His Son on the cross for our salvation.

[ 2 : 41 ] But this evening we come to question number four, and we see a shift in the Apostle Paul's message.

In this question, Paul brings to the table the work of Christ. Paul begins by asking this question, Who is to condemn?

Who can successfully condemn us once we are under the blood of Christ? There is no legitimate factual answer to that question.

No human can provide an answer. Neither can Satan or any one of his demons or all of them collectively.

Why not? The Apostle Paul, writing by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, provided the answer as to why no one can successfully condemn the true believer.

[ 3 : 46 ] And he does so in the next sentence, which is still all part of Romans 8.34. The only verse we are going to examine in detail tonight.

Christ Jesus is the one who died. More than that, who was raised. Who is at the right hand of God, who is indeed interceding for us.

Marvelous passage of Scripture. I don't know how many times I've told you during this three-year study, this may be the most important lesson we have. Well, I feel that way tonight. The Father justifies His people.

Justification comes from God the Father. But this begs a couple of questions. What are the grounds of our justification? And how can we be certain that we are forever free from condemnation?

All of the reasons the Holy Spirit provides in Romans 8.34 have to do with the work of Christ, both past and presently continuing.

[ 5 : 09 ] Part of this is a continuing work. Even as we are seated here tonight, He is seated in the heavenlies, working out our salvation.

In terms of eternal security or preservation or perseverance, this may be the single most important verse in all the Bible.

Let me present four facts, and I'm going to do so in brief. You're not off a hook though for tonight. In brief from this verse, And then we shall spend the remainder of the lesson examining them in more detail.

Here's what verse 34 talks about. Christ's death, Christ's resurrection, Christ's enthronement, and Christ's continuing intercession.

That's the four things that were covered in verse 34. Death, resurrection, enthronement, and intercession.

[ 6 : 24 ] If you've ever camped out in the works of Paul, in his 13 books, I'm not going to make eye contact over here, you know that he can compress much doctrine in an economy of words.

This is especially true concerning the book of Romans. The four statements we're going to examine embody that truth. We see that most clearly in the first of these four responses.

In the original language, the verse says, Christ Jesus who died. Jesus is the one who died. Jesus is the one who died. Why didn't Paul elaborate on that point a bit more?

Well, the answer may be that in the previous chapters, he covers the death of Christ and what it accomplished to a great extent.

Jesus died for sin and in doing so, he made atonement for all who would believe. He made the atonement.

[ 7 : 41 ] By means of his atonement, he propitiated, a word we don't use much anymore, he propitiated, meaning he turned aside or he appeased or satisfied the wrath of God.

God has a righteous wrath against sinners. And it was turned aside, appeased, satisfied by the atonement of Christ.

This is the wrath that all sinners deserved because of their sins. And Christ's death on the cross and resurrection turned that aside.

Turned it aside. Many years ago, a theologian long gone was asked what in his opinion was the single most important word in the Bible.

That would be an interesting challenge, wouldn't it? I've got two pastors over here. How do you come up with an answer for that? What is the single most important word in the Bible?

[ 8 : 50 ] And I'm quite certain that those asking the question were expecting an answer such as love, peace, mercy. We can come up with all kinds.

The theologian chose the word hyper. Hyper. Now, don't think in terms of the English word hyper, which means unusually energetic or high-strung.

you know, like the McNeil boys. Not this boy. The younger, the earlier generation.

Yeah, I know. He chose the Greek word hyper, which is a preposition meaning on behalf of or in place of another.

He said that's the most important word in the Bible. And that's the word he chose. He chose the word hyper because it signifies that the death of Jesus was in our place and for us.

[ 10 : 01 ] Christ died physically so we wouldn't die spiritually. That's the bottom line. The Apostle Paul spends a lot of time talking about the atonement in his epistles.

He is the apostle of assurance. That is a topic worth repeating and he does so through his writings. And this is especially true for Christians who fall into sins of various kinds. There are sins of commission. There are sins of omission. There are sins of the mind and sins of our spirit.

One can argue there's even subtle sins. Perhaps even sins of doubting God's word as to whether or not we are saved. The majority of Christians across denominational lines believed once saved you can forfeit that relationship through sin.

They believe that. We are in a minority in the SBC with our belief system. Although I think it's accurate biblically.

[ 11 : 21 ] I once heard expressed this way I feel as though I have send away the Savior. You ever felt that way? Don't be embarrassed if you have. I have. Surely I send him away this time.

And then he's still there. That is why hearing the old, old story of Jesus and what he accomplished at Calvary is so vital.

He bore the punishment of our sins to the satisfaction of the Father. He took the punishment of God in our place.

He didn't deserve to be up there on the cross. I deserve to be up there. We all deserve to be up there. He took our place.

He took our punishment. A lot of people say, well, suppose I sin. Never say that. Never say that.

[ 12 : 30 ] It's more accurate to say, well, I've sinned again and such sins continue in my life. That's a more accurate statement.

Dr. MacArthur, and I heard him say this, he once pointed out that he never joined promise keepers and never went to one of their programs and some of in here did. I know that.

I went to one. But Dr. MacArthur said, I never joined promise keepers because, he said, I was waiting for someone to form an organization called promise breakers and I was going to join that one.

He said, that's a more accurate description. That describes the human condition. Instead of using the word suppose, it would be far better to ask yourself this question.

Did Jesus die for my sins or did he not? And if any of you are in here tonight saying, I don't know or I don't think he did, you need to settle that issue and it can be settled.

[ 13 : 38 ] Pastor Michael will settle it with you. Any of us in here, deacons, elders, others, you need to settle that issue. And especially as we see the day approaching.

What do I mean by that? Return of Christ. It's coming guys. It's like a freight train and we can't slow it down. The world can't slow it down or stop it. Aren't you glad?

Did Jesus die for my sins or did he not? That's a form of saying am I in Christ or am I not in Christ? And when you walk out that door tonight, you can be in Christ if you're not. You can be in Christ for eternity. Everything turns on our answer to that fundamental question.

If Christ has done that in our lives, then the punishment for our sins, rightly deserved, has been taken from us by the Lord.

[ 14 : 42 ] The good news is that no one can condemn us because Jesus has taken our condemnation. He took it.

He was condemned on the cross. Though he was without sin. He took ours. He who knew no sin became sin that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

Again, we have a great beginning to the book of Romans chapter 8. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

And I'm always amazed when I read that in certain circles and they'll say, well, I think you could be condemned for the following. I say, well, wait a minute. What did that verse say? No condemnation. There are many churches across the world that seriously question just what that verse is saying. And this takes two forms.

[ 15 : 46 ] Some people sinfully doubt the truth of those great words. they just look at that and say, it can't be. Others intellectually ponder the statement.

It is okay to question, but it's not okay to doubt God's Word. It's His Word. It's His Word. I do need to inject a comment though at this point as we consider the extent of the atonement.

Nothing in the cross is a license to sin. Nothing in the cross is a license to sin. You don't get a, you know, get out of jail free deal like Monopoly.

I've had God so I can go out and live any way I want to. I know I'm going to go to heaven because I prayed a prayer. Really?

Find that in the Bible. Some sin with the attitude that I can live any way I want to because Jesus took away my punishment. That's antinomian behavior.

[ 16 : 57 ] We've talked about that. Anti against nomian the law that is a word that means against the moral law of God.

Well, I've been saved by grace. I don't have to live up to the Ten Commandments. I've had people say I can go out and murder. I can go out and do this. I can do that.

I have total freedom to do that. That's antinomianism. Paul fought that. John fought that. Peter fought that. Jesus died for me so I can adopt any lifestyle that I want.

That is never taught in Scripture. Dr. Adrian Rogers said unbelievers leap into sin and love it.

Christians lapse into sin and loathe it. If you can sin without conviction, you need to rethink and readdress your relationship.

God's No one is covered by Christ if they reject the atonement or ridicule it.

[ 18 : 06 ] That is a form of unbelief that belongs to those who have never known faith. They've never known faith. Such a person has never been regenerated.

He's not a new creature in Christ. but to those born again or born above more accurately who have doubts concerning their salvation, the Holy Spirit says, Christ died for you.

That's the Holy Spirit. That's what he's saying to you tonight. Christ died for you. And Jesus said on the cross, it is finished.

finished. It is finished. Tetelestai, if I even got close to the Greek on that. The debt is paid in full.

There is nothing that can be added or taken away from the atonement. The next one that is talked about in this verse is the resurrection.

[ 19 : 15 ] Christ's resurrection. It's Christ who died, Son of God, Eternal God, Very God of Very God, the unique God-man.

And he resurrected. In terms of our eternal security or perseverance or preservation, Christ died for us. In terms of our eternal security or perseverance or preservation, Christ also was resurrected for us.

Christ. This is the second reason why we can be assured of our salvation. It is on the basis of the resurrection of Jesus from the tomb.

Paul put it this way in Romans 8, 34b, more than that, who was raised. An economy of words.

Christ died for us, more than that, who was raised.

He didn't stay dead. He died. There was no brain waves. There was no blood coursing through his veins. There was no breathing. Never does the Holy Spirit separate the death of Christ from the resurrection of Christ.

[ 20 : 32 ] I always speak of the death, burial, and resurrection as one event because they're all linked. They're all part of one event. the central event in all of history.

The central event. Someone once said, no, creation was. No, without the resurrection, creation doesn't mean anything. It would be better not to even have it. We read this earlier in the book of Romans.

He was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification. He went to the cross for our trespasses, our sins, our transgressions, and raised for our justification.

There is a very special connection here between the word raised or resurrected and the word justification which we spent about 19 weeks on.

Obviously, the Lord being raised from the dead connects to His justification of the children of God.

This is extremely important and not necessarily easy to understand.

[ 21 : 41 ] the resurrection verifies the justification of the saved. If you want verification that you have been justified as a saved person, look to the resurrection.

That's your guarantee. key. The resurrection proves that the death of Christ was a real atonement and that all who believe on Him are justified from all sin.

There was a time going back day by day in history when resurrection morning arrived. If we had calendars and hang them on all the walls in this church and probably a bunch of others, we would come to a day that was resurrection Sunday.

The stone was rolled back and it's huge. By the way, that stone was not rolled back to let Jesus out. That stone was rolled back to let the world in to see that we follow and serve a risen Savior who is the Lord.

Who is the Lord. In the resurrection, God the Father, this is important, God the Father put His seal of approval on the uniqueness of His Son and the truth of His effectiveness as our Savior.

[ 23 : 23 ] The resurrection is the Father verifying that Jesus is who He says He is and came and accomplished what He said He accomplished.

And because it was true, He was raised from the dead as verification. The late Dr. R.A.

Torrey puts it much better than I. I look at the cross of Christ and I know that atonement has been made for my sins.

I look at the open sepulcher and the risen and ascended Lord and I know that the atonement has been accepted by the Father. There no longer remains a single sin on me no matter how many or how great my sins may have been.

My sins may have been as high as the mountains, but in the light of the resurrection the atonement that covers them is as high as heaven.

[ 24 : 29 ] My sins may have been as deep as the ocean but in the light of the resurrection the atonement that swallows them up is as deep as eternity.

Who is there that can condemn us? the death of Christ on the cross was the atoning sacrifice and the resurrection the proof positive that it did its job.

Christ has been raised proving our justification and providing our justification unto eternal life. In the words of Dr.

Boyce, we are ascending the grand staircase as we look at the saving work of Christ both past and present. We have gone up two levels and now we are going to climb the third one.

If we are not careful we could miss a step and if we do this, this following might be the step we would all miss. And this has to do with Christ enthronement.

[ 25 : 36 ] We don't use that word much anymore. Christ has been enthroned. I mean when is the last time you heard a sermon in church or on television or radio or the internet dealing with Christ's enthronement at the right hand of God the Father.

Now it is true that some liturgical churches such as Lutheran, Episcopal, and Roman Catholic set aside a special day called Ascension Day and discussed the doctrines associated with the return of Christ to heaven.

I don't remember us ever celebrating Ascension Day in Southern Baptist life. When it comes to the enthronement of Christ there are two principal teachings involved.

The first is the glorification of Christ. This was God the Father's answer to the prayer that Jesus uttered just prior to His arrest and crucifixion.

this is recorded in the great intercessory prayer of Christ in John chapter 17 verse 4 and 5 of that great chapter.

[ 26 : 47 ] I glorified you on earth. Jesus speaking to His Father. We're the fly on the wall. We get to listen in to this inner Trinitarian prayer. I glorified you on earth having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.

And now Father glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

He's asking a return to His glory. When Jesus came in the incarnation He laid aside His full glory in order to become a man and accomplish the work of redemption.

He was the unique God man. He was still God but He set it aside. Moved it in behind Him. Now we see Jesus contemplating the end of His earthly work and He's asking the Father to restore His full glory that He shared with Him for eternity.

Eternity past and we'll share with Him in eternity future. So He asked that His full glory be restored and guess what? It has been. It has been.

[ 28 : 12 ] Stephen often referred to as the first martyr of the church looked up when he was being killed, murdered and he saw the glorified Christ standing at the right hand of God in the midst of being killed.

There was a man named Saul who would later become Paul the apostle who was temporarily blinded by the glory of Christ on the road to Damascus.

That became his salvation experience. When he was on the island of Patmos the apostle John saw the glorified Christ and fell at his feet as if he were a dead man.

seeing the glory of Christ has an impact. I can't stand these guys that compete on television, televangelists. Well, you know, I got called up into heaven and I visited with Jesus this week.

As one of them said, Jesus was crying. I said, what's the matter? He said, I failed on earth. I said, no, we got it all. We're going to cover you. We got you covered. There's a word for that. Anybody know it? Starts with a B.

[ 29 : 28 ] Starts with a B. We see the glorified Christ. But Paul is also writing about the fact that Jesus is now seated at the right hand of God.

He stresses that. He's seated at the right hand of God. The right hand of the Father was considered a position of power and honor and it is reserved for one that is exalted.

That's what infuriates the high priest when Jesus stood before them when he was arrested. He said, henceforth you shall see me seated at the right hand of God the Father.

Oh, it infuriated them. They condemned him for blasphemy. That was the position of power and honor and is reserved for one that is exalted.

And that's very significant. when we think of our eternal security, it means that the one who has achieved it perfectly for us has been honored by God the Father for that achievement and since Jesus is at his right hand right now, he is still honoring that achievement and will so for eternity.

[ 30 : 49 ] another important aspect of being seated means that the work of redemption is a finished work. As long as a person is standing, there's work to be done.

There's work to be done. This point is developed more fully in the book of Hebrews. Listen to this passage, Hebrews 10, beginning in verse 11. And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices which can never take away sins.

But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God waiting from that time until his enemy should be made a footstool for his feet.

For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. Great passage of Scripture.

The Jewish temple, and you can read this in Leviticus around chapter 16 and other places, and in Exodus and other books. The Jewish temple had several articles of furniture, but it had no chairs.

[ 32 : 13 ] There were no chairs. That signified that the work of the priests were never done. They had no place to sit down because the work was never completed.

There was always another sin to sacrifice an animal for. The great sacrifice on the Day of Atonement had to be repeated year after year.

But when the Lord Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice, that sacrifice was the perfect fulfillment of all the prior types, a perfect sufficient atonement for the sin of God's people.

It did not have to be repeated. It cannot be repeated. It will not be repeated. Therefore, when Jesus had offered this sacrifice, it was accepted by God the Father, He showed that the work was completed by sitting down at God's right hand.

No further work of atonement needs to be done. It's sufficient for all time and eternity. So, where is Jesus right now?

[ 33 : 27 ] He is seated at God the Father's right hand. If doubts enter your mind, as to your security in Him, just look to Jesus at the right hand of the Father.

Just look to Jesus. Realize that the work of sacrifice is completed. Nothing can be added to it. Nothing need be added to it. And nothing can be taken away from it. If Christ atoned for your sins 2,000 years ago, you are secure.

Now, there's a final point to be made tonight. As we've seen thus far, Christ died for us. Christ was resurrected. Christ is enthroned next to the Father.

And finally, Christ is presently interceding for us. That's major. He is interceding for us.

[ 34 : 34 ] This serves as amazing confirmation of our security in Christ. The final reason why the true believer in Christ can be assured of his salvation is because of the present intercession of Christ for those for whom he died.

I have fun with my Arminian friends that believe they can lose their salvation when they spit their gum out the window and I tease them a little bit.

I said, what's Jesus doing right now? And they're kind of like my boys going, I don't know. Well, he's interceding for you. If he's interceding for you, how are you going to return to a state of lostness?

We're going to talk about that in the weeks ahead. The Holy Spirit recorded through the words of Paul that Jesus is interceding for us. We also, we could go back a few verses and find out the Holy Spirit's interceding for us as well.

I think in verse 27 of chapter 8. Now, I must be careful on this final point so as not to misquote it here. We know that Satan accuses the believers constantly in heaven.

[ 35 : 51 ] He's there by the permissive will of God. He lets him come in and out. It is natural to assume that Christ is there to make a response to those accusations before the Father.

It is as if the Son needs to convince the Father that even if Satan's accusations are true, those whom he accuses are under the protective care of the atonement of Christ.

As if he would say, they're one of mine. He's one of mine. I've taught that. And there's other more eloquent teachers in this very room than myself that have taught this as well.

But I really looked at this carefully. Is this the whole story of his intercessory prayers? To be saved, does Christ have to intercede for us to keep us saved?

See, perhaps not. I offer that with a measure of concern and even trepidation. What if I'm wrong? Well, as Mike would point out, Mike Dorsum, it would not be the first time.

[ 37 : 02 ] The truth is, Christ has died for us, has been raised, and is now seated at God's right hand. With that as the finished work, is it necessary for Christ to continually intercede for us to keep us saved?

I don't think the scriptures are teaching that. There is no one left to accuse us successfully. I want you to listen to the words of Dr.

Lloyd-Jones. There is no need for our Lord to defend the believer. He has already done so.

Hebrews says, once and forever.

But in any case, it is God the Father Himself who sent His Son to do the work. there can never be any query or question in God's mind with regard to any of His children.

Now, if Dr. Lloyd-Jones is correct, and I believe, I know that I would not want to debate him on the subject. What does intercession mean here? Perhaps the best answer is that it refers to the Lord's prayers for His people as He did in John 17.

[ 38 : 13 ] We even call that portion of Scripture the high priestly prayer. He prays there for the living of their Christian lives in light of His death for them.

So what does that mean? It means that there is no need you and I can possibly have to which the Lord Jesus Christ is indifferent.

Do you hear that? There's no need that you have as you sit here tonight and we all have needs, don't we? There's no need that we have individually which the Lord Jesus Christ is indifferent to.

It means there's no problem to which the Lord Jesus Christ turns a deaf ear or for which He will refuse to discuss our plight or problem with the Father on our behalf.

now we're starting to maybe expand our understanding of intercession. Let me close with this quote from Dr.

[ 39 : 24 ] Dollar Gray Barnhouse. You do not have a problem too great for the power of Christ. See, I thought I did.

I have some big problems, but not too great for Jesus. Jesus. You do not have a problem too complicated for the wisdom of Christ.

You do not have a problem too small for the love of Christ. You do not have a sin too deep for the atoning blood of Christ.

One of the most wonderful phrases ever spoken about Jesus is that which is found on several occasions in the gospel. It is that Jesus was moved with compassion.

He loved men and women. He loves you. Do you have a problem? He can meet it. It does not matter what it is. The moment that the problem comes to you in your life, He knows all about it.

[ 40 : 29 ] If there is a fear in your heart, it is immediately known to Him. If there is a sorrow in your heart, it is immediately a sorrow to His heart. If there is a grief in your heart, it is immediately a grief to His heart.

If there is a bereavement in your life or any other emotion that comes to any child of God, the same sorrow, grief, or bereavement is immediately written on the heart of Christ.

We find written in the Word of God, Isaiah 63, 9, in all their afflictions, He was afflicted. He was afflicted in all our afflictions.

Jesus ministers to us in all things. He ministers to us out of the inexhaustible treasure house of His glory.

That is why Paul was able to write to the Philippians this passage. and my God, don't you love that? You ever pray that? Start tonight.

[ 41 : 41 ] And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4, 19. His glorious riches. How rich is Jesus? He owns it all. He owns it all. He owns