



YOU: Connect. Grow. Serve. Go!
Summer 2018 Leader Commentary

Unit 2: No Doubt About It
Session 4: You Can't Lose (see pp. 132-135)

The Question: How safe am I?

The Point: God's got this!

Background Passage: Romans 8:1-39

Focal Passage: Romans 8:9-11, 35-39

This commentary is designed to help you think about the question, "How safe am I?" and drive home this one truth: God's got this!

Focus on These Points

You Can't Lose What You Never Had
(Rom. 8:9)

The first seventeen verses of Romans 8 detail the freedoms of believers who have died both to sin and to the law—the new way of life in the Spirit: freedom from condemnation, from control by the sinful disposition, and freedom from fear of separation from God.

Verses 18-39 then describe the three bases of the new life in the Spirit: the promises of God, the purposes of God, and the protection of God.

Paul says, if the Spirit of God lives in you, you will be controlled by the Spirit. That does not mean believers will not quench the Spirit, for they will (1 Thess. 5:19). Nor does it mean that believers will not grieve the Spirit, for they will (Eph. 4:30). Nor does it mean that one in whom the Holy Spirit dwells cannot sin, for he or she surely can. But it does mean that a person in whom the Holy Spirit dwells should be manifesting the control of the Spirit.

You Can't Lose What's Become a Part of You
(Rom. 8:10-11)

Beginning in verse 10, Paul presents an amazing set of contrasts concerning the body and the spirit of the believer. First, your body is dead because of sin. But, he continues, if Christ is in you, your spirit is alive because of righteousness. Finally, if your spirit has been made alive (you have been made righteous), "the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead" will also give life to your "mortal bodies" (which had previously died due to sin). The mortal body of the believer, in which dwells a quickened human spirit, will also be raised from the dead. The same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead will also raise those believers from the dead in whom the Spirit now dwells (see also 1 Cor. 6:14; 2 Cor. 4:14; 1 Thess. 4:14). The presence of the Spirit inside the believer is a critical factor. The Spirit's presence determines whether a person is a true believer. The Spirit's presence regenerates the human spirit. And the Spirit's presence will one day regenerate the believer's mortal body.

You Can't Lose What's Kept by Another

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(Rom. 8:35-39)

In this closing section of chapter 8, Paul asked perhaps the most important question a Christian can consider: Can anything separate us from the love of Christ? Paul's entire argument in Romans is based on the familiar term, "in Christ." Quite naturally, Paul needed to consider any possible separation from that love. The pronoun "who" is somewhat surprising because Paul had been listing things, however, much that threatens a Christian's peace comes through a person. Nothing and no one can separate us from Christ. Absolutely nothing.

Verse 36 is a quote from Psalm 44:22. It shows God's people have always faced great danger and survived, flourished, and witnessed a new chapter in God's work amid humanity. Paul responded to the psalm with powerful confidence. "In all these things" may be understood as "in spite of all these things" that were listed in verse 35 as well as the principle of persecution in verse 36.

Christians do not merely survive the onslaught of persecution but actually grow stronger in the process (see Rom. 8:28). Our victory is not through any of our strength but through Him who loved us. Christians who trust in their strength, cleverness, experience, or ego will soon fail. Our victory only comes through Christ.

In verse 38, "I am persuaded" means Paul put forth his experience as proof of the contention that nothing can ultimately defeat a Christian. The Greek word for *persuaded* means "a firm and settled conviction." Paul had no doubt about his confidence.

"Death nor life" is the first pair of challenges that could imperil a Christian's standing before God. Death appears the ultimate separator, the final end. But a Christian is raised with Christ and experiences life with Him.

The second pair, "angels nor rulers," could be classes of angelic beings. In light of the contrast between life and death, however, Paul may have meant "rulers above as well as rulers below." The contrast continued between "things present nor things to come." Nothing in the present day can sever our relationship with God, nor can any future circumstance.

In verse 39 Paul returned to the contrasting pairs with "height nor depth." Some ancient writers used these terms to indicate things above the heavens and beneath the earth. Paul probably meant that nothing from any realm can alter a Christian's security.