



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Romans 8: 35-39

Romans

“More Than Conquerors”

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] Romans 8 is a favorite chapter of most, if not all Christians. We don't single one chapter out as our favorite, usually, but certainly it is one that is ranked as such by most of us and this morning we come to the end of it and it is a magnificent conclusion to a magnificent chapter. We're going to look at verses 35-39. Paul writes, 'who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written, 'For your sake we are being put to death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.'” But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. May the Lord bless this reading of his word. Let's pray.

[Prayer] Father, it is a blessing to be together with the saints on a Sunday morning reading and studying your word. You have blessed us with the gift of the Bible. It reveals you, it gives revelation of the true God and the way to you and the way to life, the way of forgiveness, which is only through Jesus Christ and the way to fellowship with the Father and the son and the spirit. So Father, we thank you for this great gift and as we study it this morning, this wonderful passage, may we be given great understanding of it. We're reminded of a fundamental truth that is so important for the Christian to know and understand and that is our security in Christ. It is really a subject that deals with your love and the nature of your

love, that it can never fail and that it accomplishes its purpose always and that we are in the grip of it as your people and can never be loosed from it.

Help us to understand that, in order that we might be properly influenced by that great truth and that we might properly worship you for who you are. So we look to you to bless us, teach us this morning. We encountered a great privilege to be together, to be able to read the text together, to have it taught but ultimately, Lord, the teaching ministry is not that of an individual, a man, it is the work of the spirit of God and we pray that that ministry would go unhindered and that the hindrances that might be there and there's certainly hindrances within our hearts, we so easily are distracted in the details of life creep into our thinking at the wrong time and we begin to think about things that are unimportant or distracted. Lord, we look to you to bless us that that would not happen and where there are distractions, that the spirit of God would overcome them.

Draw our minds back to the truth that we would be taught of him, we would be built up in the faith. So bless us spiritually, bless us physically. We think of various needs we have, there are many of us who are ill, suffering from various difficulties, we pray that you would bless those of our congregation who are in physical difficulty and who are without employment or are discouraged by various things in life. We pray that you give them encouragement, that you'd give them healing, that you'd give them opportunity for employment. We pray that you bless them in those ways but we also pray, Lord, that through the difficulties you would bless them, draw them closer to yourself and enable them to know and experience your kindness and your mercy to them.

We pray for our nation that you'd bless it, bless our leaders with wisdom at this crucial time in our history. Bless our armed forces with protection and effectiveness. We pray for a speedy and victorious conclusion to the campaign abroad. Father, bless us this evening as we come back to this place and worship your son, worship our trying God as we remember his first coming and his death for us and remember that he's coming again. What a glorious day that will be. He's coming and he promises to come soon and he promises that his reward is with him. So may we live for that day and may our time together be in preparation for that.

Bless our final hymn, that it would prepare our hearts for a time of study together. We pray these things in Christ's name, Amen.

I have, at home, a plaque with the crest of the Duncan clan on it. A friend brought it to me from Scotland and on it is the family motto inscribed in Latin. When I first read the English translation, I confess I was disappointed. It is "Learn to suffer" and I thought, 'who came up with that?' A family motto ought to be something like 'forever vigilant' or 'always victorious' 'ever triumphant' not 'learn to suffer.' It sounds defeatist, fatalistic, like 'prepare to be miserable' but on reflection I thought, that motto must have come out of some real hard experience and life in Scotland was difficult with poverty and war and a harsh climate. King Duncan is famous only because he was murdered by Macbeth so the motto was probably good advice for the clan but it's also good advice for the church but it's also good advice for the church. We, too, must suffer. Paul stated in that in verse 17 of chapter 8, 'if we are children of God,' he says, 'we are heirs with Christ, if, indeed, we suffer with him.' There's nothing fatalistic or morbid about that.

Suffering for Christ leads to glory, Paul says and he and goes on to say in verse 37 that through it all, we are more than conquerors. That's the Christians' motto and it means always victorious, ever triumphant. That's what Paul is teaching in this last paragraph of chapter 8. The subject is security and Paul assures Christians that the believer in Jesus Christ is eternally secure. There are few lessons more necessary for the believer to learn in that one. Uncertainty about salvation, uncertainty about our security in Christ robs the Christian of joy and stunts spiritual growth. It is difficult to go forward in the race if we're not certain that we're in it. So we need to understand this issue and in no place does Paul make the truth of the Christian security clearer than he does here in Romans 8:35-39.

Verse 35 he asks the question, 'who will separate us from the love of Christ?' That is the climactic question in a series of questions that Paul has asked, beginning in verse 31. They have been described as a grand staircase that we have been climbing and with this last question, we arrive at the top stair. The point that Paul is making here is very clear and the point is that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ, which means that nothing can separate from

Christ's love for us, not our love for him. I think we would have very little confidence in Paul's statement if it were about our affection for the Lord because we know how weak we are. We know that we are all fickle. The assurance that Paul gives here is that Christ's love will never fail, Christ's love will always be there, nothing can break it, nothing can cause him to lose interest in us or lose his hold upon us and I think it's very important to understand that the nature of God's love for us is not merely a warm affection.

We think of love in terms of a warm affection, it's much more than that. It's no doubt a warm affection but it is a purposeful love. God's love has a goal and it always attains that goal. There is a purpose he has for us, we have a destiny due to his love. Paul has set that forth very clearly in verses 29 and 30. Every believer in Jesus Christ has been predestined to become conformed to the image of Christ. In fact, we believe because we have been predestined to be conformed to Christ's image and ultimately that purpose that God has for us is to be glorified. Now, there are difficulties along the way but nothing can prevent God's goal for us from being reached. We will be victorious because of Christ's love for us. A Christian's relationship to Christ has been likened to that of a mountain climber to his guide as they scale a cliff and ascend a steep precipitous. The two are joined by a strong rope and we are joined to Christ by his unbreakable love. We pass through rough terrain, we go through dangers, we slip along the way but Christ never slips and so we can never fall to destruction because we are held by him.

The love of God is immutable, the love of God is unchangeable and it guarantees that we will arrive at our destination, we will enter into the heavenly city. That's the point of Paul's question, who will separate us from the love of Christ? And to make it clear that nothing can separate us from his love, Paul gives a list of hardships and afflictions that might be thought of as being able to do just that. He lists seven of them, maybe to indicate completeness because Paul could certainly have listed more but he gives us seven. The first three that he asks about are affliction that come from a hostile world: tribulation, distress, persecution. These are graphic terms. The word tribulation means pressing, it's used of treading grapes, of breaking them under pressure, of crushing them under the heel and the church goes through that kind of experience from the world. That crushing, pressing experience, goes through distress and that

word has the idea of narrowness of space, of being in a tight spot, of being pressed in and if you've ever been in a tight spot and you don't like being in tight spots, like I don't like being in tight spots, you know the distress that that causes, the inner anguish that that causes. And so both of these are really all part of the third point, persecution but Paul continues with famine or nakedness or peril or sword and these things separate us from Christ's love for us.

Christians certainly suffer these as well, which are natural calamities as well as hostility from the world, Christians have experienced that and experienced it severely and Paul reinforces this with a quote from Psalm 44:22, which is a plea for God's deliverance in a time of persecution, just as it is written, 'For your sake we are being put to death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered.' Those who are speaking are Israelites and they're Godly people, they were not suffering because they had forgotten the Lord or because they had turned to false gods, they were suffering due to their loyalty to the Lord for his sake, as the Psalmist writes. So in the Psalm, these people are bewildered by what has happened to them, they're bewildered over their experience, they're trusting the Lord, why are they suffering? But the point is it's not uncommon for God's people to experience such things.

Now, we're tempted to think contrary to that, we're tempted to think that it is unusual and assume that because of God's love that we will escape hardship but that may not be the case. The Psalm makes that clearer and Paul cites this Psalm in order to show us that we should not be surprised if we should suffer. Perhaps, through this verse the Holy Spirit was preparing the church at Rome for its suffering because a few years later, there would be a reign of terror under the Emperor Nero. One historian called it a carnival of blood. For his sadistic entertainment, Nero made Christians into living torches to light his gardens at night. Most of us who have never suffered physical persecution of anything like that, such an event seems like an exotic page out of history, very unusual, the kind of thing you read about that happened long ago, but history's full of such episodes.

One of the greatest chapters of church history is that of the Huguenots, the 16th century French Calvinists. Many were noblemen and merchants who would embrace the reformation. In fact, it was a very large minority in France, but one that was terribly

persecuted. They were branded as Heretics by the Catholic church, they were put under very harsh, restrictive laws and thousands upon thousands were slaughtered. More than once the rivers of France ran red with the blood and bodies of the Huguenots and very naturally, very understandably, many of them wondered why that was happening. Why did God remain silent? They were believers in the truth. They were a Godly people, why was he silent? Had he rejected them? And some concluded that he had, they included that their hardships were proof that God was against what they had done and they returned to the Catholic church but most did not. Most remained faithful and confident that they had believed the truth, that they were believing in the truth and that God would vindicate them.

As one writer put it, they clung to the hope that the church never triumphs except under the cross. Now, that's true. Suffering is often surprising to us but it shouldn't be. The bible is clear, God's love is sure, it cannot be shaken, but trouble will also come. The Lord permits undeserved cruelty to happen to his saints, he permits unfair circumstances to overwhelm us. Christians are not protected from that. The church in Jerusalem suffered in a famine with the rest of Judea. Christians have suffered from wars and drops in the stock market. They've lost retirements also when big companies suddenly collapse and Christians may ask, 'what's happening? Why has this come upon me? Why has God remained silent? Has he rejected us?' The answer to that question lies here in Romans 8:35 'and these trials separate us from God's love; they mean that he has rejected us. Paul's answer is no, nothing can separate us from the love of Christ.

Paul said that, not as some ivory tower divine, Paul was a thinker with a first rate mind but he was also a man of action, out in the world experiencing everything that he wrote about and he suffered everything that he wrote about here and much more. You can read about in 2 Corinthians 11, where he gets a list of the experiences that he had as an apostle, jail, beatings, hunger, thirst, exposure and much more and not too many years after he wrote this letter to the Romans, he was brought to Rome and a sword was drawn across his neck. But even as he faced an unjust death, Paul never wavered in his faith, he never wavered in his confidence in the Lord and in the Lord's love for him and the certainty of his future. He told Timothy, very confidently, that he had fought the good fight and that a crown was laid up for him in heaven.

Does suffering mean that God doesn't love us? That will always be what we are tempted to ask and tempted to believe when suffering occurs but Paul's answer to that is no and he answers that emphatically. In fact, in verse 37, Paul goes further than that, not only can the difficulties of life not separate us from Christ's love for us, we are even victorious in them. He writes, 'but in all these things, we overwhelming conquer through him who loved us.' The King James version borrowed the translation of the Geneva bible, which is 'we are more than conquerors.' It seems like a contradiction to what Paul has just said, we are sheep to be slaughtered. Here, we are more than conquerors or it can be translated super conquerors, over conquerors. It emphasizes the complete victory that God gives us over adversity. The weakness and hardship hardly seem like victory to us, martyrdom. It seems to be defeat and it seems to be a victory for the persecutor, but not to Paul.

They are not defeat for God's people, they are victory and not just victory but a super victory, a conquest that is over and above normal victory. We are more than conquerors, that's what Paul says. We see it, we read it, but still, we can't help but wonder how can that be? How can it be attributed to us that through great affliction, through great suffering, through such terrible experiences in suffering and death and disease, we conquer. Paul explains that it is not because of us but because of Jesus Christ. We conquer, he says, through him who loved us. That last statement, loved us, is a past tense and it looks back to an event, it looks back to the cross, which is the greatest display of love that ever occurred, where Christ sealed the victory for his people by conquering sin and death in the devil.

Nothing can separate us from that act of love and nothing can undo Christ's work for us on the cross. His people will eternally be victors and forever be a reflection of his victory. So that great triumph, that conquest that is attributed to us is the cross. It goes back to the cross, it's what he did for us and so forever, we are conquerors. Paul isn't restricting God's love to the past and to one great act, the love that put Christ on the cross for us is still for us and for us daily and because it is for us and because God does act for us daily, we experience the victory of the cross in our lives, daily. God causes all things to work together for good, Paul has said and that includes affliction. I know we've said on more than one occasion since we studied Romans 8:28, that affliction and I think that is Paul's point particularly, affliction,

difficulties, serve God's purpose for our good, the good of those who love him and are called according to his purpose but we emphasize it again here because it is affliction of which Paul is speaking. It's for our good which means we triumph through it.

As the Psalmist put it in Psalm 119 in verse 71, 'it is good that I was afflicted, that I may learn your statutes.' Luther said that it was not understanding, reading or speculation that makes a theologian but living, nay, rather, dying and being damned, that's what makes a theologian. Now, Luther wasn't suggesting that study is unnecessary. Luther, himself, was a great student, he was a scholar, he studied and taught all of his life, he translated the bible into German, he was a great student but his point is that study alone is not what makes a theologian, it is study of God's word connected with life and the experiences of life and the hard experiences of life that give us a true, deep, lasting understanding of God and his ways. Affliction is necessary for growth and since we grow by it and learn from it, we triumph in it and over it. That's even true of martyrdom for the faith and death from disease. These are used by God. He uses them to teach us through the process and he teaches others by them. He teaches others by our experiences. Those experiences that we have, very often, are used by him to further the faith.

Paul speaks of that in Philippians 1, he was in Rome when he wrote to the Philippians and he was in prison but he wrote to them rejoicing. In fact, that seems to be the overriding theme of that epistle, joy in the Lord, rejoicing in the Lord, and here he is in prison rejoicing and rejoicing in his imprisonment because, as he explains, it had turned out for the greater progress of the gospel. His suffering for the faith had given the people in Rome the courage to go out and give the gospel. They were encouraged to do that, they were emboldened by Paul's suffering in prison and so they did that and things were happening, not always from the best of motives, as Paul explains, he didn't care about that, he didn't care about the motive, what he rejoiced in was whether the motives were pure or not, the gospel was being preached and being established in that city, spreading throughout. In fact, spreading through the soldiers, the Pretorian guard, in fact, even into Caesar's own household.

As a result of Paul's ministry, many of those people were brought to faith, so his imprisonment had been a victory and I'm sure his death was. I wonder what Paul must have said to his executioner and how his words and his conduct at death affected those who witnessed it. It's reasonable, it seems to me, to assume that they were all moved by Paul's calmness and his hope and his joy as he faced the sword and I think it's reasonable to think that some, as a result of that, became Christians. He was even, in death, a super conqueror. There are many spectators of our lives, people who see us in times of suffering and who are affected by what they see, what they witness in us. People you know, people you don't know, people you don't even know who are watching you. Our response has an influence and our response brings glory to God and there are spectators that we don't even see. We know that from the book of Job, that there is a whole other dimension to things from what we see and what we know, an angelic audience. Paul mentions that in Ephesians 3:10 that the wisdom of God is made known through the church to the angels, to rulers and authorities in heavenly places, they watch us, they watch our struggle and they see our faith and they marvel at God's grace in us because that is what gives us the strength to prevail over famine and sword and there is great reward in that for us. There is eternal reward, it is all of grace, we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. God rewards the good response that his grace produces in us.

Whatever good thing that you and I might do, whatever work or act of faith we perform that is pleasing to God is the consequence of his work of grace within us but still, he rewards it. Every aspect of our lives is therefore important, from the most minor, mundane thing in life to what is obviously the most glorious of climactic or however we want to put it. Everything in life is important so our love for him, our steadfastness toward him at every point in life is pleasing to him but even when our lives are not pleasing, even when our love for him and our faithfulness to him fail, and they do very often, even then his love for us and his faithfulness to us never fails, that's the assurance Paul gives and in verses 38 and 39, he describes God's love for us as undying and an inseparable love. He does that by considering every possible way that separation might occur. He gives 10 possibilities and he dismisses

each one of them. Nothing he says can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. He's absolutely convinced of that.

Verse 38, 'for I am convinced that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Most of these possibilities are put into pairs of opposites to show the completeness of the impossibility of separation from Christ. The first pair is death and life. Death can't separate us. Now that itself seems to say it all, that would seem to summarize the whole issue, death is the end. It separates from this world, from everything that we know and we love and death is permanent but Paul says it can't separate the believer in Jesus Christ from God's love. In fact, it is the very means of bringing us into his presence. By the grace of God, death is not a bar, it's a bridge. It doesn't prevent us from entering into glory, it is the very means of entering into glory, it's an enemy. Paul makes that very clear, 1 Corinthians 15, it's the last enemy, that's what death is. It won't do to modify it and speak well of it, but God takes that enemy and uses it for good and makes it the very means of bringing us into closer union with him, he cannot separate us and neither can life, he says.

Now we might wonder, why would he say life? How could life separate us from him? He's the source of life and it may be that Paul is just being rhetorical here and he's saying that nothing in the extreme and in between can separate us from the love of God, death can't and for the sake of illustration can't, nothing in between and so that may be his point, it may simply be a rhetorical way of saying it, but it also may be a very practical and real statement as well, that life, with all of its temptations and pleasures and diversions, which can make the heart grow cold, toward heaven, can't separate us from his love, neither can all the angels together. If the heavenly angels and the fallen angels were able to join forces, which is impossible, but if we could imagine them doing that and all of the angelic powers, all of the force of the heavenly host were able to come together against it, not even that could separate us from Christ. Nothing in the present can, nothing in the future can, no failure on our part today, no unseen failure tomorrow can overthrow God's love for us and break the tie that binds us to him.

Go as high up as you can and search the heavens. Go as far down as you can look into the abyss and you won't find anything great enough to separate us from the love of Christ. Now some have argued that Paul doesn't really mean that in the absolute, that he has focused on forces outside of the believer, outside of his or her own free and responsible choices and that we can choose to separate ourselves from him. No hostile force outside of us can take us away or break the love of Christ for us against our will but our will can do that. We can choose to separate ourselves from him. Paul answers that objection with his last category, which closes any possible loopholes by stating, 'nor any other created thing.' Are we created things? Well, yes and that means not even we can frustrate God's purpose of salvation for us and will ourselves out of his love, that's impossible, not that we would seek to do that.

A true believer perseveres in faith, he or she continues in it. That is how God's love keeps us. The God who gives saving faith continues to give it. The God who chose his people unconditionally in eternity past, knowing the kind of people we would become, once he created us, will not be shaken from his love for us when we behave exactly as he knew we would behave when he chose us. Paul puts it in 2 Timothy 2:13, 'if we are faithless,' and of course we are, we're faithless daily. I don't mean we apostatize, true believers do not apostatize from the faith, they do not deny Christ in their heart and turn from the truth and become unbelievers but we're faithless, we stumble along the way. Paul says if we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself. He's bound us with his word and his promise and it cannot be broken.

So after looking at this matter from every angle, from time and space and things, from powers both human and angelic, natural and supernatural, Paul assures believers of their eternal security, nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord and with that Paul comes full circle. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God. The two are the same, the love of the son and the love of the Father are the same love because the two are the same God, not the same person, but two persons of the one God. Nothing can separate us from the love of the triune God, which can only be known in Christ, through faith in him, which is precisely the teaching of Christ himself, it's what he taught his disciples in John 10, where he assured them

and assures us of the believers absolute security in him. In verses 27 through 29, he says that his sheep know him; he gives eternal life to them. We don't earn it, we don't seek it out, he gives it to us and they will never perish, he says and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My father, who has given them to me, that's election, that's divine election.

The son has sheep because the father gave them to him. The father who has given them to me is greater than all and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand, I and the father are one, a strong assurance. No one will snatch them. Who falls outside of that category? No one, it can't be more comprehensive than that, the devil can't, he can't prevail against the hand of God, bad teachers and bad friends can't, you can't, not unless you're stronger than the power of God. Are you stronger than the almighty? Does your rebellious will? Is it able to rise up and overcome the omnipotent God and his unfailing love? The believer in Jesus Christ, weak as we all are, the believer in Jesus Christ is kept by the almighty love of the triune God.

That was illustrated for me one summer when I was in college, I had a job in east Tennessee, I went door to door. When you do that you meet some interesting people. One that I met was a country preacher, his name was Rain Water, he was dressed in overalls and was plowing his fields when I met him. The church in which he preached was a small wooden church about 50 yards from his house. It was one of these one-room chapels and he invited me in, we sat down in one of the pews, he wasn't interested in what I was selling so we had a theological discussion and I found out that he loved Charles Spurgeon, he was a Calvinist who read diligently his Scofield Reference Bible and I remember it very clearly. He showed me his bible, it had been given to him a year before, by his church. It was one of these Moroccan leather editions that was red in color and certainly read by him because the red was worn off and the pages were worn. It was a bible that he had for about a year, it looked like he'd been reading it for 30 or 40 years.

And so I asked him the question, the question that I was convinced of, but I wanted to feel him out and see what he thought and I asked, 'do you think that a Christian can lose his salvation?' He stared back at me and he answered, 'no you couldn't take it from me if I gave it

to you.’ And I thought, ‘I like this guy.’ This country preacher has got more understanding than a lot of seminary professors, because he reads his bible seriously and he reads good theology and because he loved Spurgeon, he had probably read Spurgeon's defense of eternal security from John 10 and our position in Christ's hand. Believers in Christ are not only in Christ's hand but we are part of his hand. He is the head, we are the body. So Mr. Spurgeon asked, will Christ lose his members? How could Christ be perfect if he lost one member? How could he be perfect if he even lost his little finger? Are Christ's members to rot off or be cut off? Impossible, he said. We have faith in Jesus Christ, we are partakers of Christ's life and cannot perish.

‘Men were trying to drown me,’ he wrote. They could not drown my foot as long as I had my head above water and as long as our head is above water, up yonder in the eternal sunshine, the least limb of his body can never be destroyed. He that believeth in Jesus is united to him and he must live because Jesus lives, that's true. We are as secure as Christ is secure. We are in him, where is he? He is seated at the right hand of the father. Can anyone ascend to heaven and bring him down? Absolutely not. We're absolutely secure. Now that doesn't mean because we're secure, we won't have difficulties and challenges in this life. We will. We go through the waters, so there's good advice in that Scottish motto, ‘learn to suffer’ because the Christian must suffer with Christ but to learn well and suffer well, we must know that suffering doesn't separate us from Christ, does not separate us from God's love. Our progress is often slow, we're like a little boy who's climbing a snowy hill, he often slips. He may slide down a bit, but he always makes it to the top.

So we speak of eternal security as the perseverance of the saints. We will persevere to the end. We will struggle, we will strive, we will persevere to the end. Not because we produce the perseverance in ourselves, not because we muster the strength and the stamina and the stability to do it, our confidence, our strength is not in ourselves, it is not in our love for God, it is in God's love for us and that love is faithful. He is always steadfast and so really, the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints is better named the perseverance of God with the saints. That's what John Newton wrote about in his hymn, ‘Amazing Grace’ in the stanza ‘through many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come/’tis grace hath brought be safe

thus far and grace will lead me home.’ Our pilgrimage through this world is full of dangers and snares and temptations and we fall into those traps very often, don't we? We don't avoid the temptations of life, unfortunately but the Lord is with us, he's leading us, he's guiding us and he guides us out of those temptations and those failures. He keeps us safe and he will, assuredly, lead us all safely home. That's the promise of Romans 8.

A chapter that began with no condemnation ends with no separation. The assurance is for everyone who's in Christ, that's the assurance for the believer, but it is only for the believer. Everyone else stands condemned and separated and will be for all eternity. It's a sobering thought. So if you've not believed in Jesus Christ realize that you are a sinner, under God's just condemnation and the judgment will someday come, today may seem to be a day of peace, a day of pleasant security for you, just like yesterday was and you're convinced that tomorrow will be, but that day will someday end and judgment will come. Jesus Christ, God's eternal son, that became a perfect man to die in the place of sinners is the only way of escape. He calls himself the door and he is the door out of condemnation and into justification. He is the way out of this world that is condemned and into life that's eternal.

So if you're here without Christ, look to him and believe in him. Know that you're a sinner but know that there's life in him. Trust in him and receive from him the forgiveness of sins and life that is everlasting, that cannot be taken away. It is eternal life, not temporary life. If you're Christian, rejoice in that. If you're secure in him and live a life of confidence and boldness before this world. God help us to do that. Let's pray.

[Prayer] Father, we do thank you for your goodness and your grace, grace that saves sinners, grace that sent your son to die for us when we were sinners, when we were enemies, to pay for our sins and to bring us to yourself and make us your children, adopt us into your family. We thank you for that and that we can never be cast out. Thank you greatly and now we pray to him, that he's able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy to the only wise God, our savior, be glory and majesty dominion and power both now and forever, Amen.

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