

Christian Privilege

Romans 8:26-39

Introduction

Good morning Lighthouse! Are you ready for the Word of God? Christian privilege. Now that is a word that has become quite popular in today's time. It is often used in a negative way or a means insult and imply that a person did not truly work hard to be where they are at. The world sees it as the color of the skin is their reason the other is better off or oppressed. A definition from a dictionary defines privilege as "a special advantage or immunity or benefit not enjoyed by all." Most of the dictionaries online now are updated to throw ethnicity groups in there to what dictates privilege. But privilege is not something to be ashamed of neither does it mean the individual did not work hard to get there. In many cases what can be seen as privilege is because of the hard work and effort. There are privileges that transcends any of the earthly privileges out there. It is Christian privilege. This privilege has nothing to do with skin color, culture background, or any effort and hard work – in fact, just the opposite. These privileges are available only to them who are in Christ Jesus. Romans 8:26-39.

Background

Author: Paul – The Apostle Paul one who was also Roman citizen. Since he was a Roman citizen, he had a unique passion for those in the assembly of believers in Rome.

Date: A.D 56-58 – Paul had not yet visited Rome. God established he would be His witness in Rome and he eventually did make it there.

Purpose: To correct the false understanding of Jews looking down on Gentiles and demonstrate that there is no advantage to Jew or Gentile. Salvation is available for all.

This was a big problem and common theme Paul dealt with. Jewish Christians viewed themselves as more privileged and better than Gentiles based on their nationality. Many even extended this in trying to pressure Gentiles to become Jews and adopt the practicing of the Mosaic Law as part of getting favor with God. The book of Romans ought to be on the checklist of every believer. It is full of rich truths about God, and you cannot help but respond in worship to these great truths about Him. In Christ, there are great privileges both now, and future. We do not have time today to talk about every privilege a believer has in Jesus, the entire book of Romans is full of them and even the entire chapter of 8. Let us read our text this morning.

Scripture

Romans 8:26-39 (26) Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. (27) And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. (28) And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. (29) For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. (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. (31) What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? (32) He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? (33) Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. (34) Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. (35) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (36) As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. (37) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. (38) For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, (39) 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.

Outline

I. We have the privilege of the Holy Spirit making intercession for us when we pray, vv. 26-27.

A. The Spirit's help us in our infirmities (weakness), v. 26a.

(26) Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

1. Have you ever felt just puzzled when it comes to prayer and not knowing what to say?

2. A fundamental truth about ourselves, we often do not know what to pray as we ought.

a. When I was a new Christian, I had this mindset that I my prayers would not be taken seriously because they often did not make sense and I could not formulate words well. Often, I did not even know what to pray for.

b. I am sure many of us here can testify of something similar. The Holy Spirit takes our prayers in interprets them to God the Father to what we really need.

B. The Spirit makes intercession for the saints vv. 26.

1. He makes intercession for us – for His saints.

a. Saints are not classified as some separated Christian.

b. Saint in the Bible is talking about saved people. God does not look upon us as sinner, but as saints.

2. Some views out there have it backwards that specific Saints make intercession for us, it is the opposite. The Spirit makes intercession for the saints.

3. This means the Holy Spirit prays for us!

4. He does this with groans that the Christian cannot express in words.
 - a. And no this is not referring to praying or speaking in tongues – a spiritual gift that was already ceasing by the time Paul wrote this letter.
 - b. Some have taken this as the Spirit takes over your prayer and you cannot understand what you say.
 - c. This here is not referring to the person. It is the Spirit praying.
5. It is difficult at times for Christians to put in words the reality of their condition in relationship to God's will. The Holy Spirit intercedes for believers when they do not know how to pray in the will of God. The Holy Spirit prays on behalf of believers.

C. We have confidence that our prayers are heard by the Father, v. 27.

(27) And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

1. He that searches the hearts knows the mind of the Spirit. The "He" here is God the Father.
 - a. A great truth about God – He looks upon the heart and not the outward appearance.
 - b. 1 Samuel 16:7.

But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

2. The Holy Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the Father's will. No matter how dissatisfied we are with our prayer life, we can take comfort in the idea that the Spirit makes up for our lack of proper content in our prayers.

II. We have the privilege of a sovereign God working all things together for our good, vv. 28-30.

A. God working all things together for our good, v. 28.

(28) And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

1. A very familiar passage and one that can have some difficulties to cling to, especially when the present things in your life may not be good at all.
 - a. You can be left with questioning “how is this for my good? Or why?”
 - b. This where the Spirit making intercession for us really helps.
2. A key thing we do not want to miss about this passage is understanding that this promise is not for everyone in the world.
 - a. This promise is not for the unbeliever.
 - b. It is for those who love God and are the called according to His purpose. AKA a believer.
 - c. Those who do not know and reject God, all things are not working together for good.
3. Another key understanding on this verse is that it does not teach that everything is good – It teaches that God works all things together for good.
4. You may not understand presently how things are working together or our good, but in time it will be seen – that is the cool part.

Romans 8:18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

5. God’s sovereignty and ability to manage every aspect of our lives is demonstrated in the fact that all things work together for good to those who love God, though we must face the sufferings of this present time. God can

make even those sufferings work together for our good and His good.

B. Our assurance of God's work in His children, vv. 29-30.

(29) For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. (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.

1. Our ultimate good He is working out in our lives is God is conforming us into the image of His Son.
2. This verse often when turn to is either in defense of what is called Calvinism or how it is not talking about predestining to salvation, and we can often miss out on rejoicing in what it really means.
3. Verse 29 broken up: For whom he did foreknow,
 - a. This phrase is the basis of predestination. God's foreknowledge. The objective pronoun "whom" picks up from the same person "to them that love God and are the called according to His purpose from 28."
 - b. Foreknowledge does not mean God has to look into the future and learn. "Foreknowledge" is a term accommodated to human understanding. God understands the past, present, and future all at once. Furthermore, He is not bound by time. He already in the future. The finite mind cannot and never will completely understand the mind of God. Therefore, God's decree was simultaneous from His perspective. God foresees faith and He manages events, people, and situations so that the individual has maximum opportunity to believe.
 - c. he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. This is what God predestines. For the believer

to be conformed to the image of Son – to made like Jesus. It is our destiny to be made like Christ. It is God’s perfect plan.

4. “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.”
5. No Christian will miss out on this. There is a climax here that all things do indeed work together for good. This is the ultimate of all God’s five actions in verses 29 and 30. One day we will be glorified with our Lord.
6. If God has done all these things, there is no doubt He is for us and truly does work all things together for our God.

III. We have the privilege of a God who is for us and nothing can stand against us, vv. 31-34.

A. Our God is for us, v. 31.

(31) What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

1. What a profound statement. If God be for us, who can be against us?
 - a. Of course, Paul isn’t using the word “if” as uncertainty. There is no doubt God is for the one who is in Christ Jesus. – The only way to be in Christ Jesus is to have trusted in Him to save you from the penalty of sin.
 - b. Many have deceived themselves into thinking that God is for them when He is not (as do cultists and those like them). Yet it cannot be denied that for those who are in Jesus Christ, God is for them!
2. Because God is “for us,” no power—including Satan and all his hosts—can prevail against the believer. All our adversity is under God’s control. God will always interpose for us. God is resolved to bring us ultimately to glory, and so nothing can stop our future from happening. As long as we live, God is “for us.”

3. A terrifying viewpoint would be to flip and read “God is against us.”

a. There was a point in our lives where God was against us – we are dead in our sin and trespasses – we were enemies of the almighty. The same is true for those who do not know Him.

b. In His love, He has given you the way to know Him and be reconciled to Him. Our next verse:

B. The evidence of our God being for us, v. 32.

(32) He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

1. If you ever had a doubt whether God is for us, look back to the cross.

2. It was God the Father who delivered Jesus to be crucified. It was no accident.

God took His perfect and sinless Son and delivered him up for us all. God’s wrath was poured out on Him. The greatest gift God ever gave us, the greatest act of love – how could we doubt whether is God for us or not?

3. When God asked Abraham to kill his son, the son was not ultimately killed.

Isaac was spared from death. That was not true with God’s Son; He did not spare Him from death. God’s love to us was the greatest He could offer. This is true even with us being as wretched as we are. God’s unadulterated love toward us gives us assurance of an eternal future with Him. The gift of Christ encompasses all other gifts. We have assurance of salvation because of what God did, not what we do.

4. If God did this huge thing, how should he not with him also freely give us all things? – all things here is not saying everything in the world you've ever wanted, but all the things we read about in Romans that He promises and predestined us for.

C. No charge or accusation can stand ground against us, vv. 33-34.

(33) Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. (34) Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

1. No one will point a finger of accusation against Christians, because they stand justified before God. God throws Satan's accusations out of court because the sin issue was dealt with by the blood of Christ on the cross. Satan cannot impeach a believer. It is God with whom we have to deal, not Satan.

a. The accusations of our sin may even be true. Satan – the accuser of saints his name means will try bringing every accusation. God says – I took care of that.

b. One thing is for certain, we will never be deserving of this truth and privilege we have.

2. God is now free to declare a believer as right as He is right because the sin matter is no longer a problem. The Father prosecuted the Son on the cross for our sins. Therefore, no accusation against Christians will stick. Christians possess eternal security because of something God did—justify. When we stand before God, we will claim what He did for us, not what we did for ourselves.

a. We read at beginning of chapter 8.

(1) There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

b. Condemnation is no longer possible for the believer.

3. All of it depends on what Jesus did – who died, rose again – is at the right hand of the Father and makes intercession for us.

a. We read earlier about the Holy Spirit making intercession for us, the same is said of Jesus.

b. Someone once said if I knew Christ was in the next room praying for me, I would not fear a thousand of my enemies.

4. These are all the more reasons to be assured that God is for us.

IV. We have the privilege of the impossibility of being separated from God's love, vv. 35-39.

A. Believers can expect hardships, but can expect eternal triumph, vv. 35-37.

(35) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (36) As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. (37) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

1. Paul shifts again to another rhetorical question: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

a. Tribulation? – Hardships, troubled times.

b. Distress? Life's pressure.

c. Persecution? Paul experienced plenty of this.

d. Famine, nakedness or peril?

e. Sword? This is referring to execution. Paul when he wrote Romans had already experienced all these things except this one. He would eventually be executed for his faith.

2. Paul then quotes from Psalm 44:22 to show there is no doubt God's people should experience hardships.
3. Yet, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.
 - a. Christians will ultimately prevail over all evil in the eternal state.
 - b. Jesus' love for believers enables them to triumph eternally. Christian triumph does not pertain to inherent Christian power but to the love of Christ. Christ's love, which provides eternal life that the believer cannot lose, makes believers more than conquerors; that is our ultimate victory. No matter what might happen to us in this life, we know we have before us eternal fellowship with the Lord.

B. Believers can rejoice in the truth that they can never be separated from God's love, vv. 38-39.

(38) For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, (39) 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.

1. Whether appearing good or bad, there is absolutely nothing that can separate you from the love of God.
2. Earlier in 35 we read who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Love of Christ and love God is the same thing.
3. Those who champion the position that salvation can be lost ought to have a struggle with this entire chapter especially these verses here.
 - a. I've heard a response saying "only you can separate yourself from God's love, not anything else.

b. However, this verse says nothing in creation – Are you part of creation?

If so, not even you can separate yourself from God's love in Christ

Jesus. If you are one of His, you cannot lose it.

Conclusion/Application

So, how do you like your Christian privilege? I can testify that my life is never where I imagined it would be. I have hardships, I have troubles, just about everyone does. But I have God who is far too good to me. I am tremendously privileged. If you have never had a real salvation experience. You are truly missing out. Furthermore, you are also not in neutral position with God. He is a just God, and He will not leave sin unpunished. By His love and grace He gave the solution – Jesus. He paid your debt. The sin was laid on Him at the cross. All your responsible to do for is to simply put your trust in Him to save you on that basis. His death, his burial and resurrection for our sins. Not only will you be saved from hell and wrath to come. You will be privileged beyond salvation. We have classes here at Lighthouse to help you be 100% where you will spend after you leave this world. This is some of many Christian privileges we have:

I. We have the privilege of the Holy Spirit making intercession for us when we pray, vv. 26-27.

II. We have the privilege of a sovereign God working all things together for our good, vv. 28-30.

III. We have the privilege of a God who is for us and nothing can stand against us, vv. 31-34.

IV. We have the privilege of the impossibility of being separated from God's love, vv. 35-39.