**Romans 8:31**

Introduction

I. Romans 8:31-39 contains 7 rhetorical questions designed to fill us with great confidence and security in who God is for us.

II. Many of us operate from a place of material fullness but spiritual emptiness, so let’s fill ourselves with these great spiritual realities at the start of the new year.

The Passage

I. If God is for us, who can be against us? (v. 31)

A. Lots of people and things can be against us

B. But ultimately no one of any consequence can defeat us because GOD is for us (the all-powerful creator and sustainer of all things)

II. Consider this truth that God is FOR you

A. Consider a person in your life who is unreservedly for you (they enjoy you, love you, want what’s best for you, have your back, etc.)

 B. Consider that that’s God’s posture towards you if you have put your faith in Jesus

C. Many of us don’t believe that God is for us at the heart level

1. Evidence that we don’t believe this

a. We are plagued by fear and anxiety about the future

b. We are plagued by guilt and shame about the past

c. We are control freaks

d. We are still trying so hard to perform for God to earn his favor

c. We are full of bitterness about how our lives have gone

2. What God do we believe in at the heart level?

a. The Santa Claus God: “He knows when you’re sleeping, when you’re awake, he knows if you’ve been bad or good.” This is the God who is always watching us with a critical eye, so we feel like we always have to perform to keep his favor

b. The CEO God: God is in charge of the universe and is fairly disinterested with our small little lives

c. The Smile-and-say-Cheese God: God’s love for us is obligatory. He doesn’t really like us or enjoy us, but he has to love us because he’s God.

d. The Dr.-Jeckle-Mr.-Hyde God: God’s favor is fickle. We project however our life circumstances are going onto God. So life going well is a sign of his favor and life going badly is a sign of his disapproval or punishment.

e. The Parent God: We project whatever our parents felt about us onto God.

III. Paul’s great evidence that God is for us

A. He did not spare his own son (v. 32)

 B. He works all things for our good (v. 28-30)

1. This means that God is working in every single event in our lives (the good, bad, ugly) to bring about our ultimate good

2. The “good” that God is bringing about is defined by v. 28 as our ultimate good of becoming more and more like Jesus so that we can spend eternity with him

 a. God “foreknew” us before he created us

b. God predestined us: he had a “destiny” in mind for us before he created us. That destiny was to be conformed to the image of his Son (= to become like Jesus with all his love, joy, peace, patience in us)

c. God will make sure that we reach our destiny (he will “call” us, “justify” us, and “glorify” us (v. 30)

3. “It’s rigged — everything, in your favor. So there is nothing to worry about.” –Rumi

4. “We have no reason ever to be anxious. This world is a perfectly safe place for us to be.” --Dallas Willard

5. We are more than conquerors through all these challenges (v. 37)

6. Image the freedom and confidence we’d live with if we actually believed this!

Conclusion

I. What is a current challenge you are going through?

II. What would it be like to have God speak his truth into your heart: “I am for you in this.”

**Discussion Questions**

1. On Sunday it was said that many of us live not from a place of spiritual fullness but spiritual dryness or emptiness. How do you experience your own spiritual life at this time along those lines?

2. On Sunday it was suggested that many of us don’t really believe God is for us at the heart level. Evidence of that reality were given and different examples of what we really believe about God were given. As you consider those examples from the notes above, do you relate to any of those?

3. Consider v. 28-30 that were discussed on Sunday. It was argued that v. 29-30 define what Paul means by the “good” that God is working in every event of our lives. How did Sunday’s explanation change or add to your understanding of those familiar verses?

4. Do you think it’s actually possible that God is working every single event in our lives for our good?

5. As you consider a specific challenge in your life, how does the truth that God is 100% for you even in that circumstance change the way you approach things?