**Romans 8:32**

Introduction

I. Are you an optimist or a pessimist?

II. Do you have a theology of abundance or scarcity?

The Passage

I. The greater thing God did in the past: hand over his son

A. Paul uses language that echoes the story of Abraham and Isaac

1. “He who did not spare his only Son” echoes “you did not spare your son, your only son” (Gen 22:12)

2. Abraham must have loved Isaac so much, and it must have been such a sacrifice to consider giving him up

3. God the father went through a similar experience in having to give up his own son

B. So God gave us his most precious and treasured son

1. God loves Jesus so much (see Matthew 3:17, 17:5)

2. Like any loving parent, God would have wanted to spare his son the suffering and disgrace of the cross

3. So the cross shows us the extravagant generosity of God the Father in giving us the one who was most treasured and precious in his heart

C. Satan’s lie at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was: God is a withholder who keeps good things from his children. So the cross is the 2nd tree that counteracts Satan’s lie and proves that God is in fact an extravagantly generous Father

II. The lesser, easier thing for God to do in the future: give us all things

A. A contemporary example of the greater-to-lesser logic would be like this: if someone invited you to stay at their house over night (the greater thing), surely they would also give you a blanket from their closet to keep you warm that night if you asked for one (the lesser thing)

B. What does Paul mean by “all things”?

1. This connects with v. 28 where Paul says that all things will work together for our “good.” The good there is defined in terms of the journey God has us on of becoming more like Jesus and eventually being with Jesus in eternity.

2. So the “all things” is defined by all things we need on that journey of becoming more like Jesus and reaching our eternal home. This means we’ll need to distinguish between our needs and our wants.

C. We can have utter confidence that God will give us everything we need on this journey. The Bible has a theology of abundance when it comes to God’s provision and blessings (See Ephesians 1:3, 2 Peter 1:3, Philippians 4:19, 2 Corinthians 9:8)

D. Our response should be one of confidence about our future

e.g. Ps 23: surely and goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life

E. We are called to have “faith in future grace” (John Piper)

1. In the Old Testament, the nation of Israel often had a hard time putting their faith in future grace. Each new challenge found them doubting God’s ability to provide.

2. Likewise, we often experience God’s faithfulness in the past but have a hard time translating that into trusting him in our present circumstances

Conclusion

What if we had a deep trust in God’s desire and ability to provide us with everything we need? How would we live differently?

A. Lives of contentment

There are many “wants” in life we don’t have, and we often respond by being discontent and restless, but if God is always providing for our needs, we can be content and happy with what he’s providing (see Paul’s secret in Philippians 4:12-13)

B. Lives of generosity

Fear and insecurity keep us from giving more generously as we want to make sure we’re protected and covered, but if we truly believe that God will always provide everything we need, that frees us to be incredibly generous with our money, time, etc. (see the widow’s example of radical generosity in Luke 21:1-4)

C. Lives of risk and adventure for God’s kingdom

Fear and anxiety hold us back and keep us living safe lives, but if we truly trust in God’s provision, we can take risks and dream big for God’s kingdom, knowing he will be there for us no matter what happens (see Jonathan’s example of bold faith in 1 Samuel 14)

**Discussion Question**

1. In general, is your view of God more a glass-half-full or glass-half-empty view? That is, do you live with a “theology of abundance” (expecting God to provide and give generously to you) or a “theology of scarcity?

2. Consider the parallel Paul makes between God’s experience and Abraham’s experience in v. 32 (“he who did not spare his own son”). How does that parallel strike you, if at all?

3. Many passages in Scripture say that God promises to always provide for his children (for example, see Philippians 4:19, 2 Corinthians 9:8). How would you reconcile those wonderful promises with some of the desperate and challenging situations some believers find themselves in today?

4. What if you had a deep down confidence in God’s desire and plan to richly provide you with everything you need at all times? How would you live differently? Try to be as specific as possible.