

April 28, 2019

Session 1: Introduction to Romans 12

Romans 12 begins our education proper and it is what we should have been looking forward to from the time we made the cry of Abba, Father back in Romans 8. We should have a measure of enthusiasm for getting the education underway and we should be going over our notes on prayer as it pertains to the education because we are going to need them.

Before we begin the education proper, or even before we delve into Romans 12:1, there are some things sitting back in our establishment that we need to make sure are in our memory. Most of these we have covered in some form or other, but there is a component to our establishment that we need to make sure it has worked in us and that we remember it. I am referring to the Five Questions in Romans 8:31-39.

As we look at these questions, let me remind you:

1. These questions are not meant to be answered purely on the basis of logic or natural human reasoning. If you do, you may come up with the correct answer to the questions, but you will miss the effectual working they are intended to produce.
2. The intended result of the effectual working of these questions to nail down, once and for all, (unwavering confidence) that this education will produce in you what your Father says it will produce – no matter what.

No matter what things you may have listed as potential hindrances to the sonship education, the five questions are designed to handle all of those things. That may not be apparent to you because as you read verses 31-37 it is obvious that they do not address every single scenario that may arise to stop your sonship education. How is it then that they can address those things which they do not mention?

The five questions are ingenious in that, while they do not address every circumstance that may arise to thwart the sonship education, they do address every source from which those circumstances may arise. In other words, every threat to your sonship education is brought up and addressed in verses 31-37. By addressing the potential problems at their source, you will see that there is absolutely nothing that your Father has not taken into account and that His curriculum has accounted for all of them. There is the unwavering confidence that this curriculum can do its job!

Can you see what this is doing? Every time you ask questions that reflect some measure of doubt, such as: “what about this?” or “what about if that happens?” or “what such and such...?” - you can go back to what has been written in Romans 8:28-39 and know that it has been accounted for so that it cannot stop your sonship education. You can “what if”

until you are exhausted and you will not be able to find a single issue that has not been anticipated by the curriculum.

So the issue at hand is not to get carried away trying to handle every single problem, but to deal with many problems at their common source. Is that not the thing to do anyway? If you are sick, do you want to continually deal with all the symptoms or do you want to deal with the source of the problem and be done with it? Once you know that the curriculum has identified every possible source of a problem and that it also has what you need to overcome every threat, how much confidence can you have in your Father and His curriculum? Complete confidence!

Probing Question #1

Romans 8:31 What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

This question is not asking “if” anyone can be against us, of course they can. What it is asking is “who” can prevail against us with respect to what God has done “for us.”

Verse 31’s “for us” is in the sense of the success of our sonship education. God is not just “for us” in the sense that He is rooting for us. He is “for us” in the sense that He has provided something that meets and remedies everything that is “against us.” Therefore, this question is meant to turn our attention to the issue of power. (If God be for us...)

But we are not to just see God’s power in general, but the power of God’s word to produce an all-sufficient grace whereby we will deal with and overcome any situation or circumstance we could ever encounter. This is the “power” that puts on display that God is “for us” in the success of our sonship lives.

We realize that every form of doctrine has power to transform us, power to establish us, power to stabilize us and power to make us stand fast in the face of those things which are designed to make us quit.

Where is this power? It is in the curriculum; specifically the forms of doctrine we are about to study. The words of God are the receptacle for the power of God which will work in us.

Ephesians 3:20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

As we progress through the education, we will encounter some things which, if we are not thinking about them after a godly fashion, our flesh will convince us we will not be able to handle.

We have talked before about the greatest power God possesses is the power of His grace; and that is true. Now, we need to sharpen our understanding of the power of His grace. The power

of God's grace is at work when God's words are living in us! In other words, the forms of doctrine which make up our education are the most powerful things we will ever possess.

When God intervened in miraculous ways for Israel in the outward issues of life (weather, victory, etc.) they were only seeing limited power in their lives. Why? Because the power Israel saw was only manifested in the outside world. The "excellency of God's power" is manifested in the inward man. Only God's word can manifest that power within us.

Thanks be to God that we, as adopted sons and daughters, have the excellency of God's power available to us; a power we can possess and operate upon every day. This is how God "writes His laws in the mind and on the heart." This is how God's words live in us, producing the life of Jesus Christ in us. Children only see the outward miracles as the power of God manifested, but God desperately wants to put the excellency of His power on display in us!

Think about it, we have the opportunity for the words of God to live in us to the same degree that God's words lived in His Son! Those words can produce the same power as they did in Jesus Christ. In fact, those words working in us produce the life of God's Son in us, even though we are still living in an unredeemed body.

Understanding what the curriculum is for and the power it possesses should make us answer the question, "If God be for us, who can be against us," "No one can!"

Do not underestimate the power of God's word to succeed in you. Do not underestimate the power of God's word to deal with every situation. This is the first issue you are being probed about!

God will give us, from His word, all the wisdom, knowledge and understanding we will need. If all of God's wisdom is available to me, who can be against me? Answer: No one.

Probing Question #2

Romans 8:32 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?

When vs. 32 says God "spared not His own Son," what is it referring to? It is referring to His death on the Cross and all of the circumstances surrounding it. Was Jesus ridiculed? Was He beaten? Was He mocked? Was He scourged? Was He humiliated? Was He tortured to death? He was all of those things.

God certainly had the power to "spare" His Son all of those things and more, but He did not. Why? The primary answer is that if God had spared His Son from the Cross, then we would never be able to be the sons and daughters God has designed for us to be. We needed the finished work of Christ to have eternal life. We needed a Redeemer to provide a perfect

redemption. Without that, there would be no forgiveness, no imputed righteousness and no atonement. No justification and no sanctification. No adoption and no glorification.

So why is that important to know? Here is probing issue #2: When it comes to what God has provided for our success as His sons, He has withheld NOTHING from us!

To what degree is God committed to us? He is so committed that He did not even spare His own Son. And if He did not spare His own Son, then what would He possibly withhold from us that would keep us from being successful sons? Answer: Nothing! He gives us everything we need to be successful in our sonship lives.

The answer to the question of vs. 32 is: In view of not sparing His own Son, God shall also freely give us all things which are necessary to our success!

Now, let's carry this back to the first question; Do not ever think that His sonship curriculum does not possess the power or the provision for our success no matter what happens. Why? Because God has spared nothing, absolutely nothing to ensure our success.

Are you impressed with your Father yet? Are you impressed with the power of His word yet? Are you impressed with what His word can do yet? Are you impressed with His commitment to you yet? You should be, because in order to provide for our success, God did not spare even that which is most precious to Him; His Son. And God spared not His own Son so that we might be justified, sanctified, adopted sons of the living God who have His wisdom installed in them so that the life of His Son is made manifest for the whole creation to see.

Romans 8:32 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?

The fact that Jesus was “delivered up” means that this was done on purpose. God did not just not spare His Son, He delivered Him up!

The “all” in vs. 32 is not talking about the whole world, but it is talking about adopted sons and daughters; saints. Yes, it is true that Jesus died for all, but when it comes to the issue of the success of our sonship lives, that is an issue that applies only to the saved.

Romans 8:32 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?

That expression “how shall he not” is saying, “in light of God sparing not His own Son, but delivering him up for us all, it would be ridiculous to think that anything was being withheld from us.

Romans 8:32 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**?

The “all things” are not a blank check for whatever comes into your imagination. These are all the things necessary for our success as sons.

Probing Question #3

Romans 8:33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth.

The final 3 Probing Questions of Romans 8:33, 34, & 35 all address the kind of stiff opposition that we will face in our sonship lives; the enemies to sonship edification. And that stiff opposition will come in 3 major ways or in 3 Phases.

If we properly understand this third question, then we should also understand why the remedy to the question is “it is God that justifieth.”

The first form of opposition is going to be sin in our members. And that’s the very thing we are taught in Romans 6, 7, and the first 13 verses of chapter 8.

Sins mastership in our members has been broken, but that did not do away with sin; it is still there. It is still in our members. Sin still has lust and it makes its appeal. No, we do not have to obey it, but it’s still there. It is constant and relentless. It will be a lifelong opposition to us in our sonship life.

The issue here is that sin has gotten the upper hand. The son feels guilty and unworthy and considers quitting. This third question raises this issue so God can put this to rest. Sin need not result in us quitting our sonship life. I think it almost goes without saying that God is not happy about us yielding our members to sin; He expects better than a lackadaisical attitude when it comes to yielding to sin.

Make no mistake, continuing in sin will negatively impact your sonship life and hamper your ability to live out of the doctrine. It will eventually take over to the degree that your zeal for sonship will fade. Left unchecked, it will result in you quitting your sonship life.

In the end, you are not only permanently justified unto eternal life, but you are also permanently an heir of God, and nothing can change that. You are still an adopted son and nothing can change that. You are still in Christ and nothing can change that. You are still a part of the body of Christ and nothing can change that.

Therefore, if we sin, we have not lost everything. There is permanence to what God has done for us when He put us in Christ. God made us to be righteous in response to our faith in Christ. That is who we are, even when we foolishly act like we are still in Adam.

Sin has lost its power. All it can do is plead for us to cooperate. We do not have to give in to sin because that old relationship has been severed. But if we do fail, if we do sin, then the thing to

do is to wise up, stop feeling guilty and discouraged and get up; start moving forward again. We need to know that God has wisely made a provision just for this scenario.

GOD HAS DESIGNED (IN ADVANCE) FOR HIS SON’S OWN FAILURES. God has designed for our failures NOT to be a devastating thing (something that so overwhelms us that it becomes a fatal blow to our sonship life!)