

Double Jeopardy

I. Prayer

A. Billy Graham Quotes

- ❖ You may have heard, Evangelist Billy Graham died this week, he was 99 years old
 - ❖ I ran across some of his quotes and thought you might enjoy some of them
 - ❖ Quotes:
 1. Being a Christian is more than just an instantaneous conversion – it’s a daily process whereby you grow to be more and more like Christ.
 2. When wealth is lost, nothing is lost; when health is lost, something is lost; when character is lost, all is lost.
 3. Courage is contagious. When a brave man takes a stand, the spines of others are often stiffened.
 4. God has given us two hands, one to receive with and the other to give with.
 5. A child who is allowed to be disrespectful to his parents will not have true respect for anyone.
 6. God proved His love on the Cross. When Christ hung, and bled, and died, it was God saying to the world, “I love you.”
 7. I’ve read the last page of the Bible. It’s all going to turn out all right.
 8. Believers, look up—take courage. The angels are nearer than you think.
 9. The only time my prayers are never answered is on the golf course.
 10. A real Christian is a person who can give his pet parrot to the town gossip.
 11. It’s not the body’s posture, but the heart’s attitude that counts when we pray.
 12. God will prepare everything for our perfect happiness in heaven, and if it takes my dog being there, I believe he’ll be there.
- B. Prayer** – Merciful and gracious Father, once again we turn our faces towards You. We come by way of Your Son and through Your Holy Spirit. Gift us each afresh with Your Holy Spirit as we sit at Your feet and receive from Your hand this day. AMEN

II. Message

C. Facing Triumph & Defeat

- ❖ Every person in life must learn to face two moments bravely
- ❖ The ecstasy of victory and the agony of defeat
- ❖ Why the 2018 Women’s U.S. Hockey team’s experience this past Wednesday is a good example
- ❖ Four years ago at Sochi there was an agonizing defeat in the gold medal final
- ❖ Here in 2018, the ecstasy of victory
- ❖ Turn your attention with me for a moment to the screen...
- ❖ Every tennis legend who has played on Centre Court at Wimbledon
- ❖ Has walked under an inscription on the players entrance

- ❖ And those somewhat prophetic words deliver a message to each one

“If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster and treat those two imposters just the same.”

- ❖ Those two imposters?
- ❖ How can Triumph be counted with Disaster as an imposter?
- ❖ Well, that’s just it—this incomplete but powerful thought, has been cut and inscribed from a poem by British Nobel Laureate, Rudyard Kipling
- ❖ The poem which has a ‘one word’ title—“If—
- ❖ It’s an ode or passionate poem that appeals to self-discipline
- ❖ The BBC named it Britain’s favorite poem a century later
- ❖ It’s enduring attraction is a testimony to the power of that two-letter word, “if”

D. Another enduring inscription

- ❖ It reminds me of another *inscription* that hangs over the entrance to one of the Bible’s clearest chapters that presents the Good News or the Gospel of Jesus Christ
- ❖ TEXT: Romans 8:1

“There is now no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.”

- ❖ For those here last Sabbath, you’ll see right away, the sermon, “I Can’t, God Does” had this as the key passage in that message
- ❖ Well, I feel this verse deserves a double take
- ❖ This first verse of Romans ought to be our first thought every morning we wake up—what a way to start your day
- ❖ We could easily call it the runaway ramp from *if only’s* in our lives, and the entrance ramp to the *what ifs* presenting themselves to each one of us
- ❖ If you want to the other truths in Romans 8, you have to walk under this inscription on your way in and when exiting

E. Romans 8

- ❖ When it comes to the 8th chapter of Romans, even wordsmiths struggle to find words
- ❖ There are not many adjectives that can do it justice when trying to describe its mystery and majesty
- ❖ Theologian and pastor, John Piper, calls the eighth chapter of Romans the greatest chapter in the Bible
- ❖ Perhaps we could use shorthand and call it the “Great Eight”
- ❖ Martin Luther called it, “the clearest gospel of them all.”
- ❖ William Tyndale, who was martyred for translating the Bible to English, called it “the most excellent part of the New Testament.”
- ❖ As I have studied it though, it becomes clear that it is “The *if* chapter”
- ❖ The ten *ifs* in Romans 8 simply add up to infinite potential and possibilities
- ❖ One could even try the label—“Super 8”
- ❖ Like a good film, Romans 8 has it all—immediate action, adventure, continuous story line, even some special effects

- ❖ Thrill is this—you and I are part of the cast

F. 8:1—The Big Bang

- ❖ The Great Eight leaps out of the gate with a Big Bang

“There is now no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.”

- ❖ It has a running plot that concludes with a thrilling rush in verses 38, 39

“And I am convinced that nothing can separate us from God’s love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God’s love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

- ❖ Right in the middle, it crosses Golden Gate Bridge of the Bible in verse 28

“And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.”

- ❖ Then there’s a sub-plot boiling up almost every time we turn around in verses 35-37

“No, despite all these things (trouble or calamity, persecuted, hungry or destitute, in danger or threatened by death) overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.”

- ❖ We’ll roll the tape on these in subsequent messages, but let me remind you of a little two letter word that raises itself up at least 8 and in some translations, 10 times
- ❖ It’s the linchpin, or should we say, the kingpin
- ❖ It’s the very hinge upon which the greatest chapter turns
- ❖ Verses 30, 31

“(Having chosen, having called, he gave them right standing, and given right standing, he gave them his glory.) What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us.”

- ❖ That little word *if* signals a huge shift, a game changer action has occurred
- ❖ A life-altering moment is when you and I see God has chosen us, called us to be on his side
- ❖ Given us right standing, and reinstating us in His glory
- ❖ Sounds like a Triumphant Moment
- ❖ Where’s the catch, Pastor, if triumph and disaster are two impostors?
- ❖ Well watch closely
- ❖ Here comes the application of the message today

III. Application

A. Who do you belong to?

- ❖ As the Great Eight, Romans 8 opens we need to read and assimilate the entire verse

“So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.”

- ❖ Herein lies the double risk, or double jeopardy
- ❖ We must make a very critical distinction

Point #1: Condemnation is feeling guilty over sins we have confessed

- ❖ We have sins that we have laid before Jesus
- ❖ Asked his forgiveness
- ❖ And now we belong to Jesus
- ❖ Condemnation is gone—we've said no to sin and yes to Jesus
- ❖ But our carnal, fleshly nature will seek to raise its head
- ❖ Resorting to sinning can happen in a flash
- ❖ What keeps you and me from sinning?
- ❖ Answer lies in the Great Eight
- ❖ TEXT: Romans 8:2 READ

“And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit freed you from the power of sin that leads to death.”

- ❖ What keeps you and me from sinning?
- ❖ Belonging to Jesus
- ❖ How do we keep in that relationship with Jesus—belonging to Him?

Point #2: Conviction is feeling guilty over sins we have not yet confessed

- ❖ As new sins are committed on our part, what do we do?
- ❖ Do we feel condemned?
- ❖ Yes or No?
- ❖ Careful here!
- ❖ Answer is No! What you're feeling is not condemnation at this moment, rather, conviction
- ❖ Conviction is healthy and holy—it's brought about by the Holy Spirit
- ❖ It's our way of getting right with God, getting back to belonging in freedom with Christ
- ❖ But here's the catch—
 - a. If you don't listen to his convicting voice
 - b. You won't hear his comforting voice of no condemnation
 - c. You won't hear his wise, GPS-like guiding voice either
- ❖ Hearing the voice of God comes as a package deal—
- ❖ If you don't hear *everything* the Holy Spirit has to say, it will be difficult to hear *anything* He has to say
- ❖ Remember, the Holy Spirit will not convict you and condemn you at the same time
- ❖ The condemnation with unconfessed sin is the Devil's game—meant to bring discouragement and to disorient us
- ❖ You need to turn the dial to Roman 8:1 and stay tuned in

❖ Last week we established these four lessons:

1. **I can't forget, God does**
2. **I can't defeat sin, God has**
3. **I can't free myself, God has**
4. **I can be free, God the Spirit does it in me**

❖ To experience this means we have responded to the conviction about our sin

B. Jesus' Example on the Cross

❖ Q-How can we tell the difference between being condemn by Satan and convicted by the Holy Spirit?

❖ I'd like for Jesus to answer that question by telling his story when on the Cross

❖ **TEXT: Luke 23:35-37 REFER**

❖ The scene is a brutal one—Jesus has been crucified and He is just trying to breath and not suffocate

❖ As He hangs there—the crowd watches, but watch, more than that is happening

C. TEXT: Luke 23:35-37 READ

❖ Loser, imposter, fraud! Did you notice the *ifs* used here?

❖ If he is really God's Messiah, if you are the King of the Jews—save yourself

❖ You see, the double jeopardy is this, Jesus can't save us and save himself too

❖ To come off the cross and save himself would have nullified our own salvation

❖ So, when the devil comes to tempt with condemnation and you've already come to Jesus

❖ What's your next step?

❖ Writhe in condemnation? Please don't, stop! Lean into the promises in the Great Eight!

❖ **TEXT: Romans 8:3, 4 READ**

“The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit.”

D. 2,232 Lifetimes

❖ There's an old saying born of baseball—three strikes and you're out

❖ Such a saying has become so ingrained in us that we play life the same way

❖ We give people three chances and that's it

❖ Thankfully our God does not give up on us—it's not in His nature

❖ Peter asked one day how many times he should forgive his brother

❖ Jesus established the gold standard—but Peter took his own stab at the answer, saying “seven”

❖ But Jesus upped the ante—in a heavenly league fashion to “seventy times seven”

- ❖ That's 490 times by my proficiency with math
- ❖ But Jesus upped the ante *far more* with the telling of a story about a master who forgave a servant a "ten-thousand-talent debt"
- ❖ That's right! Let's do the currency exchange
 - a. One talent equals 60 minas
 - b. One mina equals three months wages
 - c. So one talent totaled 180 months wages = 15 years!
 - d. And that's just one talent
 - e. A ten-thousand-talent debt would total 150,000 years of wages!
- ❖ That would have taken the servant 2,232 lifetimes to pay off the debt
- ❖ Life expectancy in those days is about half of what it is today, so you'd have double the total of lifetimes!
- ❖ Here's the good news: Jesus paid the debt and fully satisfied the laws claims with *one perfect* lifetime!
- ❖ Think about it this way—
 - a. The California minimum wage average is \$10.25
 - b. Working 9-5, M-F, your annual income would be \$21,230
 - c. So, multiply that times 150,000 years and you get \$3,184,000,000 debt
- ❖ Here's the amazing thing—by virtue of what Christ accomplished on the cross
- ❖ Your debt and mine, of \$3,184,000,000 for each one of us, is paid in full.
- ❖ Not just down to the dollar, but to the very last cent

E. Think of it this way!

- ❖ So think of the cross of Jesus in a completely new way
- ❖ When Jesus cried out, "It is finished"
- ❖ His words were the very words written on a statement of debt in A.D. 31 that simply meant, "Paid in Full"
- ❖ So when sin rises up and attacks, push the conviction button, not the condemnation button
- ❖ For conviction enables us to focus on "belonging to Jesus Christ" and not "belonging to sin"

F. TEXT: Romans 5:21 NLT

"So just as sin ruled over all people and brought them to death, now God's wonderful grace rules instead, giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

- ❖ Do you know what this means?
- ❖ The mercy bank is always open, and there are no charges for making an overdraft or a case of insufficient funds
- ❖ Verse 20 of Romans 5 says this, "Where sin abounds, grace did *much more* abound."
- ❖ How much? Much more!

IV. Prayer – Lord Jesus, thank you for your unfailing love and mercy. Jesus I come, Jesus I come! Leaving behind the sinful nature and entering the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. AMEN