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Witness Protection

Romans 8.33-34

Series: The Pure Gospel

Rev. Andrew Hawkins, Ph.D.

The Village Church

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- I. Introduction
 - A. I have a confession to make
 - 1. Yes, and I'm going to reveal something that no one else knows
 - B. I am in the witness protection program
 - 1. That's right
 - a. I'm a criminal and I've committed crimes against humanity
 - b. In fact, I'm guilty of a capital offense; I deserve to be put to death for my crimes
 - 2. Worse yet, my crimes were exacted against a Judge
 - a. I didn't realize it at the time, but as it turns out, it was the same Judge in whose courtroom I was sentenced
 - 3. Now that was a terrifying situation
 - a. For me to walk into a courtroom and learn that the object of my hatred and the recipient of my insults and injuries was going to be the one who would ultimately pass sentence on me
 - b. And consign me to judgment
 - c. Would condemn me to death
 - C. But in an amazing twist of fate, the Judge gave me an option
 - 1. I could avoid the death penalty
 - a. And in fact, avoid any penalty altogether
 - 2. If I were to cast myself on His mercy
 - 3. He told me that there was a Way
 - a. A Way out of my awful predicament
 - b. A Way that would grant me life instead of death
 - 4. All I would need to do was to trust in this Way
 - a. And become a witness for Him in His courtroom
 - D. Something happened to me in those moments
 - 1. Faced with the truth about my transgressions
 - a. And the reality of my impending judgment
 - 2. And yet hearing about this Judge's merciful offer
 - a. My heart melted
 - 3. I discovered that while I used to hate this Judge
 - a. And would do almost anything to rail against Him and His rules
 - b. I did indeed cast myself on His mercy
 - 4. And I told Him I would do whatever He wanted

- E. Now of course, the witness protection program that I'm in is not the same witness protection program that the federal government operates
 - 1. That came out of the Organized Crime Control Act of 1970
 - a. Which is operated by the U.S. Marshals Service
 - 2. It's actually a much better witness protection program than that
- F. There are a number of similarities and differences when one compares the two programs – the one run by the U.S. Marshals Service and the one I'm in
- G. First, both programs are for criminals
 - 1. That's right – you can't be in witness protection in either program unless you are a criminal
 - a. You have to be declared guilty
- H. Second, both programs provide new identities
 - 1. You even get new names in each of those programs
- I. But there are some differences
 - 1. The U.S. Marshals Program is not perfect
 - a. Not everyone in the U.S. Marshals Program fulfills their responsibilities or follows the rules of the program
 - 2. But the program I'm in is perfect
 - a. Everyone in this program is successful
 - 3. For you see, everyone whom this Judge foreknew was predestined
 - a. Predestined to be conformed to image of the One in whom there was no transgression
 - b. And everyone who was predestined was called
 - c. And everyone who was called was justified – declared not guilty
 - d. And everyone who was justified will be glorified
 - 4. This witness protection program is perfect
- J. Additionally, the U.S. Marshals Program is for those criminals who will be a witness against other criminals
 - 1. That's not at all what my witness protection program is about
 - 2. My witness protection program requires me to be a witness too
 - 3. But I'm called on to be a witness, not *against* anyone, but *for* the administrator of the program
- K. And those in the U.S. Marshals Program, once they have testified against other criminals, they are supposed to lie low
 - 1. Stay under the radar
 - a. Run on the down-low
 - b. Keep their mouths shut
- L. The program I'm in, on the other hand, involves my continuing to be a witness for the program
 - 1. I'm not to go under the radar
 - 2. Far from it!
 - a. I'm supposed to be testifying for the rest of my life
 - b. I'm supposed to never shut up about it!
- M. And the promise from my Judge is that I will be preserved
 - 1. Preserved perfectly! Absolutely secure!

- a. That I will never have to worry about any criminal coming after me
- b. That I will never have to keep looking over my shoulder, which is what a lot of those people do who are in the U.S. Marshals Program
- 2. I'm secure in my witness protection program

II. Who is For Us?

- A. In our series The Pure Gospel – which is our study of Romans – we have been exploring Romans 8
 - 1. Romans 8 – the climax of Paul's explanation and defense of the gospel
 - 2. And Romans 8 is all about witness protection
 - a. That if you've been saved by grace alone through faith alone by Christ alone
 - b. That you're secure – protected
- B. That's the way Romans 8 begins
 - 1. **Romans 8:1** (ESV) — 1 There is therefore now **no condemnation** for those who are in Christ Jesus.
 - a. No punishment commensurate with our crimes
 - b. No incarceration or execution
- C. And Paul uses an entire series of arguments to prove that there is truly no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus
 - 1. Those who are in Christ Jesus being, of course, His witnesses
- D. One of those arguments is the indwelling Spirit of God
 - 1. The Holy Spirit dwells in those who belong to Christ
 - 2. **Romans 8:9** (ESV) —
 - a. 9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you....
- E. And then, having the Spirit of God dwell in you means that you belong to God's family
 - 1. **Romans 8:14** (ESV) —
 - a. 14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.
 - 2. **Romans 8:16–17** (ESV) —
 - a. 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,
 - b. 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.
 - 3. Even in our suffering – the Spirit of God protects us
 - a. And our suffering pales in comparison with the glory that awaits us
 - 4. **Romans 8:18** (ESV) —
 - a. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.
- F. The ministry of the Holy Spirit in us also helps us in our weaknesses
 - 1. **Romans 8:26** (ESV) —
 - a. 26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness.

- b. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.
 - 2. And: **Romans 8:27** (ESV) —
 - a. 27 ... he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.
- G. And this leads us to yet another confirmation of God's wonderful protection for His witnesses
 - 1. **Romans 8:28** (ESV) —
 - a. 28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.
 - 2. In other words – whatever happens to us, God will use it *for our good!*
 - a. That for the believer – for the witness – there are no real tragedies
 - b. That even what we all would consider tragedies, God works them together for our good
- H. Which then leads us to that wonderful Golden Chain of Salvation – one of the greatest affirmations of this security that we witnesses have in Jesus
 - 1. **Romans 8:29–30** (ESV) —
 - a. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.
 - b. 30 And those whom he predestined he also called,
 - c. and those whom he called he also justified,
 - d. and those whom he justified he also glorified.
 - 2. That's our perfect witness protection program
 - a. Everyone whom God loved – foreknew, for as we studied that word we learned how that word is a relational word –
 - b. He predestined to be conformed to Christ – who had no sin
 - 3. And everyone whom God predestined He called –
 - a. That is, the Spirit of God melted their hearts, gave them a heart of flesh to replace their heart of stone, regenerated them, made them born again
 - 4. And everyone whom God called, He justified
 - a. Declared righteous, not guilty!
 - b. Even though we were guilty
 - c. Even though we all deserved the full extent of eternal punishment
 - d. No! He declared us not guilty in Jesus Christ
 - 5. And everyone whom God justified, He glorified
 - a. Glorified – spoken in the past tense in order to establish the assurance that it's as good as done
 - b. A perfect redemption
 - c. Perfect witness protection
- I. So that led us to last week's text – a response from everyone who is in God's witness protection program is compelled to give

1. **Romans 8:31** (ESV) —
 - a. 31 What then shall we say to these things?
 - b. If God is for us, who can be against us?
 2. **God is for us!**
 - a. That is amazing, isn't it?
 - b. If you don't think so, you're no Christian!
 3. God is for us – even when it seems everyone and everything is against us
 - a. God doesn't just tip the scales on our behalf
 - b. He obliterates any pretense of opposition
 - c. Because if God is for us, even though everyone against us, no one is against us!
- J. So God is for us, who have trusted Jesus Christ as Savior
1. And Paul proves to us that God is for us
 2. **Romans 8:32** (ESV) —
 - a. 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?
 3. How do we know God loves us?
 - a. He gave us His Son to die for us!
 4. And if He did that – how will He not also take us the distance
 - a. Lead us all the way to glory
 - b. Graciously give us all things

III. **God's Courtroom**

- A. And now the scene shifts to the God's courtroom
- B. Text
 1. **Romans 8:33–34** (ESV) —
 - a. 33 **Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.**
 - b. 34 **Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—**
 - c. **more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.**
- C. The true Supreme Court
 1. Surely you understand the issue of jurisdiction
 - a. We have all kinds of courts in our land
 2. There are circuit courts
 - a. There are district courts
 - b. There are county courts
 - c. There are state courts
 - d. There are appeals courts
 - e. There are superior courts
 3. And each court has its own jurisdiction
 - a. And if errors are made at one level of court, it is common to appeal to a higher court
 - b. And then a higher court yet
 4. And in our nation, ultimately, to the U.S. Supreme Court

- a. And that's usually where the issue is finally adjudicated
- D. But none of those courts has ultimate jurisdiction
 - 1. Only God's court has ultimate jurisdiction
 - 2. Now you may think the U.S. Supreme Court has ultimate jurisdiction
 - a. And while that may be true regarding the laws of the United States of America
 - b. There is yet a higher court still
 - 3. That's God's court
 - a. Things can get by any human court
 - b. But ultimately, nothing gets by God court
- E. And one thing's for sure
 - 1. You may or may not have broken the laws of the state, say, of Florida
 - a. Or you may or may not have broken the laws of the United States
 - 2. But you have certainly broken the Law of God
 - a. It's called sin
 - b. And other biblical names reinforce our guilty position before the Judge of all the earth
 - c. Transgression
 - d. Iniquity
 - e. Wickedness
 - 3. And here you stand before the Judge of all the earth
 - a. And there are no reversible errors in this Judge's decisions
 - 4. **Genesis 18:25** (ESV) —
 - a. 25 ... Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?"
 - 5. **1 Chronicles 16:14** (ESV) —
 - a. 14 He is the LORD our God; his judgments are in all the earth.
 - 6. **Psalms 98:9** (ESV) — 9 ... he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.
- F. And once you discover that the One against whom you have committed all your transgressions, in the final analysis, is the very one who is seated on the bench
 - 1. The very Judge who will adjudicate your case
 - a. It's a terrifying prospect
- G. But if you belong to Christ, your encounter with this Judge will be the most amazing reversal imaginable
 - 1. Let's look at it

IV. **The Prosecutor**

- A. First, there is the prosecutor
 - 1. **Romans 8:33** (ESV) —
 - a. 33 Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? ...
 - 2. The prosecutor brings the charges
- B. Now we know that Satan, the enemy of our souls, is the prosecutor
 - 1. That's the testimony of scripture
 - 2. **Zechariah 3:1** (ESV) —

- a. 1 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.
3. The very name Satan means Accuser
- C. **The Justifier**
 1. Now, I don't normally feel sorry for Satan
 - a. His wickedness overwhelms any possibility of sympathy for this pinnacle of all wickedness
 2. But there's something about this text that makes me – at least for an instant – feel sorry for him
 3. So he comes accusing this believer
 - a. But you know what?
 - b. God – the Judge – has already rendered His verdict
 - c. And it's not guilty!
 4. **Romans 8:33** (ESV) —
 - a. 33 Who shall bring any charge against God's elect?
 - b. It is God who justifies.
 5. God – the Judge – justifies
 - a. Justifies – declares the verdict of not guilty
 6. So Satan – the prosecutor, the accuser, is wasting his time
 - a. He's trying to accuse someone who is already off the hook
 - b. Already been acquitted
 - c. Already been declared not guilty
 7. He can't appeal to the Judge
 - a. The Judge has acquitted the defendant!
 - b. And the Judge of all the earth won't even listen to Satan when he tries to accuse His elect
 8. Now, I don't feel sorry for Satan for more than a nanosecond
 - a. Because there are plenty of people for him to accuse
 - b. If you're not the God's witness protection program, you're fair game for Satan to accuse
 - c. And God will listen to Satan then!
 - d. If you haven't cast yourself on the mercy of God, the Judge of all the earth, then you have no security, no protection
 9. But “who shall bring any charge against God's elect?”
 - a. Yes – it's the elect of God who are protected
 - b. We've already seen it
 - c. Those whom God foreknew
 - d. Those whom God predestined
 - e. Those whom God called
 - f. Those whom God justified
 - g. Those whom God glorified
 10. Yes! Them!
 - a. God's elect
 11. Who shall bring any charge against God's elect?

- a. No one!
 - b. Why not?
 - c. It is God – the Judge of all the earth – who justifies the elect
12. Now that's real witness protection!

V. **The Judge**

- A. Now up to this point in time the primary actor, the main agent, has been God
 - 1. God works all things together for good for those who love God
 - 2. God foreknew His people
 - 3. God predestined His people
 - 4. God called His people
 - 5. God justified His people
 - 6. God glorified His people
 - 7. God is for us
 - 8. God did not spare His own Son
 - 9. God gave up His Son for us all
 - 10. God will graciously give us all things
 - 11. God will not hear any accusation because God justifies
 - 12. It's all about God
- B. But now it changes
 - 1. Now the key actor, the One through whom God has been able to do all these amazing things for us all
 - a. Is the defense attorney
 - b. Is our Advocate
 - c. The One who stands in our place and makes our case for us
- C. Now for those who are not in God's witness protection program, this One is not a defense attorney
 - 1. He's only the defense attorney for those who have cast themselves on the mercy of God
 - a. And believe on the name of His only Son, our Savior
 - 2. **Romans 8:34** (ESV) —
 - a. 34 Who is to condemn?
 - b. Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.
 - 3. So God is the Judge
 - a. He's the One who could condemn us
 - b. But He won't!
 - c. Why not?
 - d. Because of what Jesus Christ has done!
 - 4. "Who is to condemn?"
 - a. Well, how could God condemn if Christ Jesus – His very Son – died
 - b. And was raised
 - c. And who sits at the right hand of God

- d. And who is interceding for us!
- 5. God's not going to condemn anyone for whom His only Son Christ did these things!

D. **His Death**

- 1. First – Christ Jesus is the One who died
- 2. Now it doesn't say much about his death here
 - a. But that's because you're supposed to remember that Paul has said a lot about Christ's death already in Romans
- 3. **Romans 3:22–25** (ESV) —
 - a. 22 ... For there is no distinction:
 - b. 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
 - c. 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,
 - d. 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. ...
 - e. Christ's death was our propitiation – our wrath-removing sacrifice
- 4. **Romans 5:10** (ESV) —
 - a. 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.
 - b. We have been reconciled to God by the death of His Son
- 5. **Romans 6:5** (ESV) —
 - a. 5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.
 - b. We are united to God through the death of Christ
- 6. **Romans 8:32** (ESV) —
 - a. 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?
 - b. Christ's death was for us all – a substitutionary death
- 7. Who is to condemn?
 - a. Christ Jesus is the One who died
 - b. Who died for us
 - c. As our propitiation – He satisfied the just wrath of God
 - d. Who reconciled us to God
 - e. Who united us to God by His death
- 8. But Paul doesn't stop there

E. **His Resurrection**

- 1. **Romans 8:34** (ESV) —
 - a. 34 Who is to condemn?
 - b. Christ Jesus is the one who died—
 - c. more than that, who was raised...
- 2. The One who died was raised
 - a. If He hadn't been raised we would never have known if His death actually accomplished its purpose
 - b. Christ died so that we would be redeemed

- c. And His resurrection vindicated His life
 - d. Affirmed He was who He said He was
 - e. And proved that His death satisfied God
3. But there's more!
- F. **His Ascension**
- 1. **Romans 8:34** (ESV) —
 - a. 34 Who is to condemn?
 - b. Christ Jesus is the one who died—
 - c. more than that, who was raised—
 - d. who is at the right hand of God...
 - 2. Christ ascended and now sits at the right hand of God
 - a. The ascension of Christ is not often observed by a lot of churches
 - b. Although the more liturgical churches celebrate Ascension Day
 - c. It's a shame we don't make more of it
 - 3. But in the ascension of Christ, God confirms that Christ's work of atonement is finished
 - 4. You know how it works in a courtroom
 - a. When the defense has made its case, and all the evidence has been presented, all the testimony has been heard
 - b. What does the defense attorney do?
 - c. He sits down!
 - d. That's what Christ has done!
 - e. His case is finished
 - f. His atonement has been made
 - g. The price has been finally paid
 - 5. And more than that, from Christ's position at the right hand of God, He is in a position to orchestrate the events of human history
 - a. And accomplish His purposes for His glory
 - 6. He is able to "work all things together for those who love God and who are called according to His purpose"
 - 7. In other words – He alone is able to execute witness protection perfectly!
- G. **His Intercession**
- 1. Finally, there is His intercession on behalf of those in witness protection
 - 2. **Romans 8:34** (ESV) —
 - a. 34 Who is to condemn?
 - b. Christ Jesus is the one who died—
 - c. more than that, who was raised—
 - d. who is at the right hand of God,
 - e. who indeed is interceding for us.
 - 3. Christ is praying for you – right now!
 - a. The scriptures tell us that the prayers of a righteous man avails much
 - b. Christ is the only completely righteous human who has ever lived
 - c. And His prayers are perfect

- d. And the Father will always respond to the prayers of His Son on behalf of those who belong to Him
 - e. And if you have cast yourself on the mercy of God in Christ, He's praying for you!
- H. That is why God's witness protection program never fails

VI. **The Case**

- A. Dear friends – your case, if you are a believer, is closed
 - 1. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus
 - 2. If God is for us, who can be against us?
 - 3. He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things
 - 4. Who shall bring any charge against God's elect?
 - a. No one!
 - b. Because God has already declared us not guilty!
 - 5. Who is there to condemn?
 - a. No one!
 - b. Because of Christ's death
 - c. And His resurrection
 - d. And His ascension
 - e. And His intercession
- B. Dear believer, you are secure in Him!
 - 1. For you to not be secure Christ would have had to fail
 - 2. His death would not have been sufficient
 - 3. His resurrection a mere fabrication of someone's fanciful imagination
 - 4. His ascension a mirage
 - 5. And He would have failed in His prayers for you
- C. All of which are unthinkable!
- D. That's how secure you are in Christ Jesus!
 - 1. But if you want to be assured of your salvation, you simply must cast yourself on the Lord Jesus!
 - 2. Only then can you receive these same benefits of assurance