



More Than Conquerors

Romans 8:26-39

Welcome to 'Together Apart', free intergenerational resources to help us be church together while we are apart.

All the sections explore the same Bible passage in a range of creative ways. Choose whichever parts work best for you, and remember that 'All Age' does not mean 'only for the kiddies'!

You can find lots more free resources like this at www.reflectionary.org

Here is what you will find in each resource pack:



A Word in Your Ear

A Bible passage that we can all learn from together, whatever our age.



Food for Thought

Aimed at adults and teens, some thoughts and questions on the passage.



Inner Space

A blank space for you to record your thoughts, whether that is worries, dreams or a shopping list.



Looking Closer

A creative and interactive look at the Bible passage. Great for older children and anyone who likes a creative approach.



I Wonder...

An imaginative style of Bible study, perfect for younger children and those who like to immerse themselves in the Bible world.



Take a Break

A chill-out zone, with meditative colouring for adults and children, and links to audio recordings of the passage so that you can listen while resting your eyes.



Creation Station

A craft for children (or young-at-heart adults!)



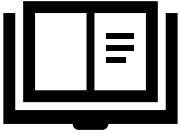
All Together Now

Suggestions for activities throughout the week that link with the Bible passage.



High 5

Suggestions for spending time with God.



A Word in Your Ear

Take your time reading this extract from our Bible passage. Ask God to help you hear. You can decorate the space around the words if you like.

from Romans 8

Who shall separate us from the love of
Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or
persecution or famine or nakedness or
danger or sword?

No, in all these things we are more than
conquerors through him who loved us.

For I am convinced that neither death nor
life, neither angels nor demons, neither the
present nor the future, nor any powers,
neither height nor depth, nor anything else
in all creation, will be able to separate us
from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus
our Lord.

(NIV)



Food for Thought

What an amazing passage! There's so much to think about that we'll hardly have room to skim the surface here, but that's Paul for you!

I'm grateful for Paul's words that the Spirit "intercedes with sighs too deep for words". When stuff is really important, words often seem to small, and it's comforting to know that God is on hand when all we have are raw emotions and inarticulate cries. Even Paul had trouble praying sometimes, so we're in good company.

Q: What do you find it hardest to pray about? What practical steps can you take to help?

One passage that may provoke some thought is "*For those whom he foreknew he also predestined ... those whom he predestined he also in order called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.*"

For some, this is the basis of the doctrines of 'irresistible grace', 'limited atonement' and 'unconditional election'. These state that before the world began, God chose some (the elect) to be saved and others not, based solely on his choice (unconditional election); that Jesus' saving death was for these elect alone, not for everyone (limited atonement); and that God's election is absolute, we cannot refuse it (irresistible grace).

Others find this to be at odds with other parts of the Bible and follow Wesley rather than Calvin: that God chooses for salvation those he knows beforehand will come to faith in Christ (conditional election); that Christ's saving death was for all (unlimited atonement); and that God's grace enables, rather than compels, salvation (enabling grace).

Q: It's quite a lot to think about, I know, but what do you think fits best with what you read in the Bible? What does your church teach? Is it important for our relationship with God?

If all this talk of foreknowledge makes your head spin (it does mine!) perhaps thinking about a river might help. Imagine you are on a paper boat in a river. There is upstream, there is downstream and there is here. You can remember upstream, you can watch the ever-changing 'here' as the banks slip by, and you can guess at what might be downstream. However, you cannot go back upstream, nor can you jump ahead further downstream, and you certainly cannot leave the river. You must travel in the river, at the river's pace, and see what comes when it comes. We are like that in time. We reach the future at the rate of one second per second, and there is nothing we can do to change that.

Now imagine a bird on the bank, watching the boat. The bird can move up or downstream at any pace. It can move away from the river over the fields, and even soar in the sky to see the whole river from source to mouth. The bird is not tied to the upstream-downstream single dimension of the boat, but can freely move beyond that. Similarly, God is not tied to our monotonous time, and so notions of past, present and future, of cause and effect, are rather meaningless for God - the one who *was*, and *is*, and *is to come*. All at once.

Q: What do you think of this analogy? Does it help your thoughts on predestination? Can you think of another analogy that explains your thoughts?



Inner Space

What's going round your head? Here is a space for you to put your thoughts on paper. You can write, draw ... whatever you like. What will you put here?

A large, empty, rounded rectangular frame with a double-line border, intended for writing or drawing.



Looking Closer

This is part of a letter written by Paul to the Christians in Rome. It was rough being a

Christian at that time. Romans were supposed to worship a whole load of different gods, including the emperor! So when Christians insisted that Jesus, a backwater carpenter whom the Romans thought they had executed, was Lord instead of Caesar ... well, let's say it was not a fashionable opinion.

What would you have done, if you were a Christian in Rome back then? Is it better to defy the Romans and get arrested, or work quietly?

A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a double-line border, intended for a student's reflection on the text.A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a double-line border, intended for a student's reflection on the text.

"If God is for us, who is against us?", asks Paul. In earthly terms, quite a lot of people! Later in life, Paul was thrown in prison and even had people trying to kill him! But Paul is saying here that with Jesus Christ on our side, we are always winners. No matter what.

Paul gives a list of things that both he and his readers had come up against. It starts "Who will separate us from the love of Christ?"

Can you find the list? What do you think was happening to the Christians in Rome? What would be the equivalent now?

Paul tells his friends that nothing can separate them from God's love, and he lists pairs of opposites of things that cannot stop God's love, (including everything between as well): neither height nor depth, neither things present nor things to come, neither life nor death or anything else in all creation. "No", he says, "we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."

What other pairs can you think of to describe what cannot keep us from God's love?

A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a double-line border, intended for a student's reflection on the text.



I Wonder...

Read or listen to the passage a few times and let it sit in your mind.

Which words, phrases or ideas do you notice? Does anything stand out for you? Hold that in your heart and listen to what God might be saying.

I wonder what words you think are the most important.

I wonder what you will carry with you today.

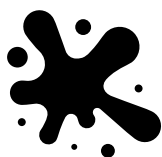


Take a Break

Put on some music, or listen to the passage being read out while you simply sit and be. You can colour the picture below, or fill it with zentangles, or you can just spend the time breathing.

Romans 8 139 on Bible Gateway audio [ESV](#) – [Message](#) – [NIV \(Dramatised\)](#) – [NIV \(Suchet\)](#)





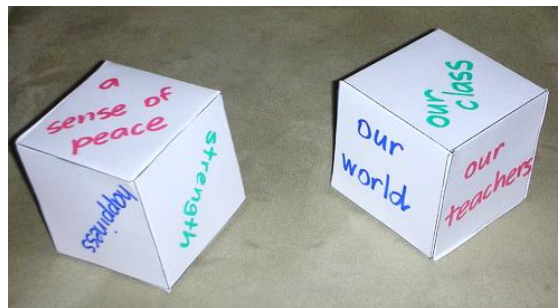
Creation Station – God helps us to pray

I love that bit where the Bible says “ the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.”

In other words, God helps us to pray. Here is a great craft to give us some ideas for praying when our minds might be a bit empty or distracted.

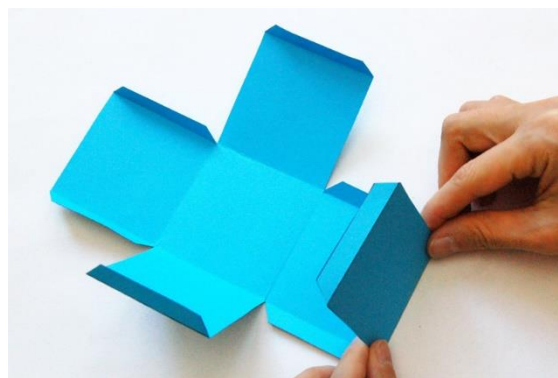
You will need:

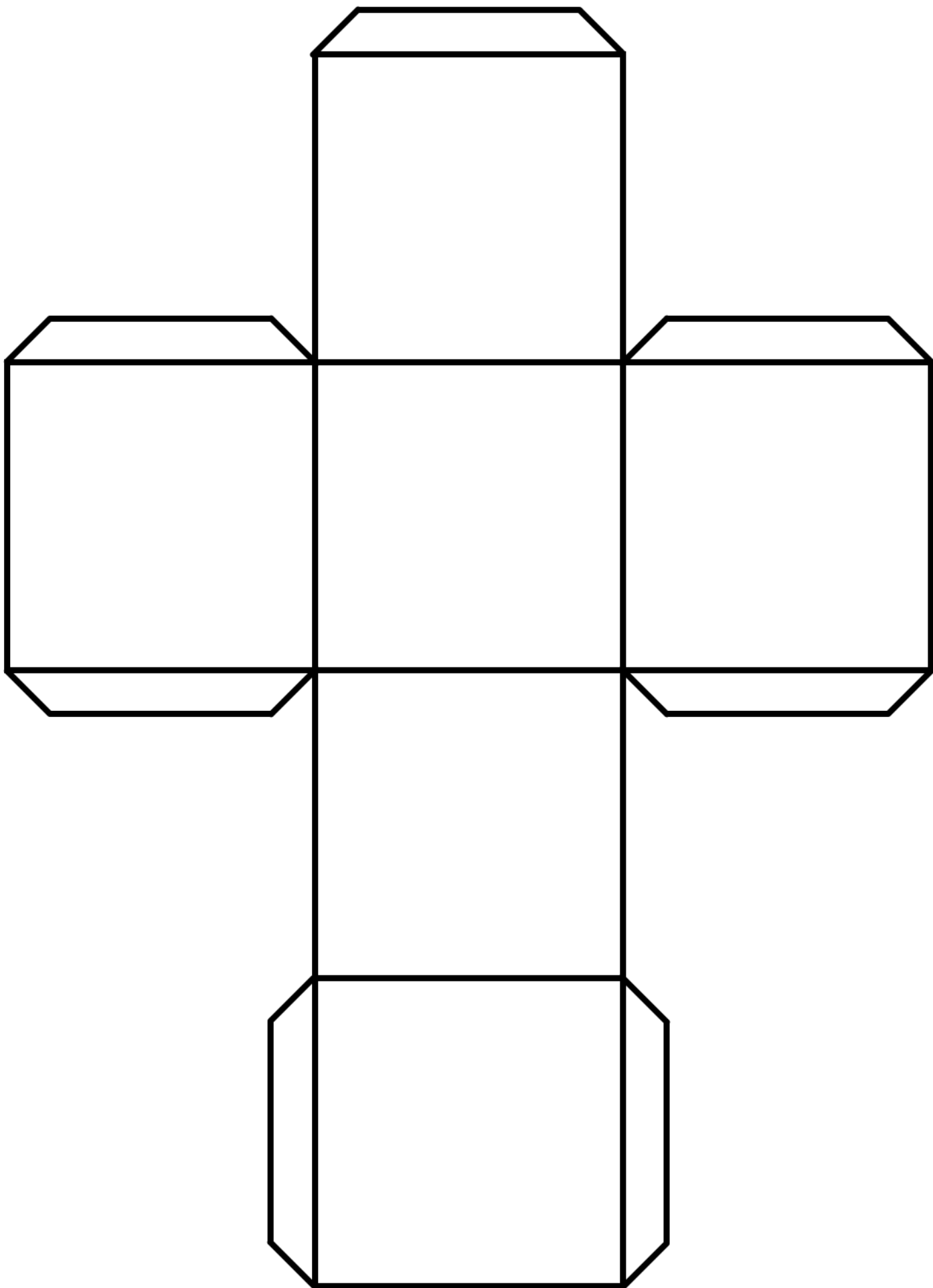
- Paper or thin card
- Cube template (on the next page)
- Colouring pens
- Glue stick



What to Do

1. Print out three copies of the cube template on paper or thin card (or glue the paper to card).
2. Cut out the templates and fold along all the lines.
3. One cube will be prayer starters. Write an opening in each square. You could have:
 - Dear Father God ...
 - Lord Jesus ...
 - Guiding Spirit ...
4. The second cube is for the middle of the prayer. Choose six things that you could pray about and write or draw them in the six squares. You could have:
 - I am sorry for ...
 - Please help people who ...
 - I am worried about ...
 - Please look after ...
5. The last cube is for endings. You could have:
 - Lots of love from ...
 - For Jesus' sake, Amen.
 - Thank you for all you give us. Amen.
6. Now decorate your cubes (making sure you can still see the writing!)
7. Roll your cubes and arrange them in order to see what prayer they make.
8. You could make a cube of graces for mealtimes as well if you like. What about a cube of thank you prayers, or a cube of countries around the world? You could make a cube of members of your family to pray for. What else can you think of?







High 5

Spend five minutes talking and listening with God. Here is one way:

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Hardship

Pray for those who have lost their jobs because of coronavirus or who are struggling to make ends meet for other reasons. Ask God for fair and merciful government decisions to help people who do not have enough money.

Distress

Pray for people who are ill or are worried about the health of loved ones. Remember to pray for those with mental illnesses as well as physical. Ask God to comfort those who have friends or relatives who have died. Pray for a swift and safe vaccine for coronavirus.

Persecution

Pray for our sisters and brothers who are treated unfairly because of the colour of their skin, or the way they talk, or because they are girls and women, or because they look different, are members of different religions or come from a different country. Pray that we may be part of the solution and never part of the problem.

Famine

Pray for people who do not have enough healthy food to eat, or no access to clean drinking water. Some of those people will be in other countries, some in our own. Pray for the leaders of countries who make decisions that affect climate change, that we may act urgently to prevent further harm to our planet.

Nakedness

Not many people have *no* clothes(!), but some may not have enough. Pray for homeless people and those who have had to leave their homes suddenly. Pray for people who work in the clothing industry, some of whom work in dangerous conditions for low pay. Pray that we buy clothes and food wisely, considering the welfare of those who produce them.

Peril

Thank God for the wonderful work of our emergency services: the police, ambulance, fire and lifeboat services, and for our healthcare workers. Pray for protection for all who risk their lives for the well-being of others. Pray that they would have all that they need to do their jobs safely and well.

Sword

Pray for parts of the world where there is conflict. Pray for the safety of civilians especially, and for an end to long-standing mistrust. Pray for the leaders of the countries, that they would have wise advisors who will guide them towards peace.

Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.