**God’s Inseparable Love**

**Romans 8:34-39 (ESV)**

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***31*** *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?* ***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?* ***33*** *Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.* ***34*** *Who is to condemn? 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.* ***35*** *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?* ***36*** *As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”****37*** *No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.* ***38*** *For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,* ***39*** *nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

What deep pain pierces our hearts when someone we love decides to stop loving us! I don’t think that there is a person who lives past the age of six who hasn’t experienced the wound of rejection, rejection from someone who previously accepted them. Inexplicably, a friend doesn’t invite us to his birthday party. A girlfriend hands us a “Dear John” note. A couple with whom we celebrated the holidays and anniversary’s and vacations don’t accept invitations anymore to get together. A son or daughter refuses to accept phone calls. A Christian co-laborer in the Gospel decides to sever fellowship. A trusted confidant suddenly has no time for us. A beloved sister refuses to come to family gatherings. Even Jesus was not immune to this sorrowas He asked His disciple, “Judas, do you betray me with a kiss?” There are few cuts that wound us as deeply as the cuts of unreciprocated love. Sometimes we can point to a specific event where resentment and bitterness started to kill love. Other times we are left bewildered as to what has happened. Regardless of the cause, we sometimes hurt so badly that we can hardly talk about it.

Theologian Billy Ray Cyrus {Laughter!} became famous in 1992 when he recorded a song about this very theme. It was entitled, “Achy Breaky Heart.” The song was light-hearted in its melody, but it gives words to the despair that a separation from love can bring to a person. In the song, a girl has decided to love her boyfriend no more and has broken up with him. The poor young man pleads for mercy as he sings.

“You can tell the world you never was my girl

You can burn my clothes up when I'm gone

You can tell your friends just what a fool I've been

And laugh and joke about me on the phone

But don't tell my heart

My achy breaky heart

I just don't think he'd understand

And if you tell my heart

My achy breaky heart

He might blow up and kill this man”

In other words, he’s saying, “If you talk to my heart, I think it’s going to break and just kill me. That’s the way I feel. I love you and you once loved me and accepted me. And now you don’t accept me and don’t love me and I just can’t even allow my heart to think about that.”

The lyric is whimsical and silly as it continues to go on, but the message I think is sincere and profound. I think that’s one of the reasons why it became such a popular hit. It’s not just because it was a great, jazzy tune to do a funny dance to. When I’ve had friends whom I love decide not to love me in return, I don’t try to let my heart think about it very much. It’s too sore. It’s too discouraging. It’s too depressing. Thinking about it emotionally brings a dark cloud of gloom upon my soul, so I try not to tell my heart about it. Instead, and I think in a healthy way, I tell my heart about the hope and joy God offers me in His gospel. I find my solace in God’s inseparable love for me.

One of the damages that personal rejection brings to us is a loss of confidence in the stability and permanence of other relationships in our lives. Wewonder, “Well, if this person who at one time loved me pretty deeply and accepted me pretty wholly, decided to stop loving me, will others around my life begin to abandon me too?” This fear of rejection often tempts us toward a performance mentality in our relationships with others. Instead of enjoying the love we receive from others, we feel like we have to work to maintain their love, and it changes the relationship from something that is joyful and full of peace, to something that is fraught with anxiety.

It’s tragic because first, it’s impossible to really enjoy a relationship on a performance basis where there’s an anxiety about whether the person will continue to love. And secondly, the harder we work to maintain another person’s love, the more insecure we become. So, that insecurity keeps that relationship from growing in a healthy direction.

The answer to all of our insecurities and fears and hurts from rejection really is found in the Gospel. For our insecurities in our relationship with God and our insecurities in our relationship with one another, in the Gospel, God gives us a relationship with Him that supplies our every need. So while we still hurt at the rejection of others when they withdraw love, we are not despairing because we know we have a fountain of love that ever provides our needs. So while we still hurt when others withdraw love, don’t despair when we find God’s love being sufficient for our soul. And that’s the beauty of the blessing of the Gospel.

But then we step back and we ask the question: But what if God Himself withdraws His love from us? And many Christians go throughout their entire lives asking this question. They are anxious about God’s attitude, the security that they have in God’s love. To lose God’s love would be truly, completely devastating. No rejection would be as damaging to our soul as the rejection of God. And that’s why Romans 8 is such good news for us Christians. Romans 8 is written to obliterate any insecurity we may have regarding God’s love for us.

Natural fears and insecurities plague many of God’s children. Many think, “I love God, but will God continue to love me? After all, I’ve disobeyed Him often. I have asked Him to forgive me so many times. Is He tiring of forgiving me over and over again? I feel so weak in the face of some temptations. I don’t know what ways I will fail God in the future. And if I fail Him in those ways, will He continue to love me? I wouldn’t blame Him if He didn’t because I see some of the ugliness of my own soul. Will God ever tire of loving me?” Romans 8 declares the unconditional, unending, unhindered love of God toward all those who are in Christ Jesus. That’s good news! God will never, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever stop loving us. To build our confidence in His love, God asks five questions in Romans 8:31-39. We’ve looked at three of those already, but we’ll just read them.

In verse 31, the first question appears.

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

And the answer is, no one! God is for us because He redeemed us through His Son. He foreknew us, He predestined us, He called us, He justified us, and He glorified us. God is for us and if God is for us, who can be against us?

The second question then is in verse 32.

***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?*

If God gave the greatest treasure, won’t He give us the continued treasure that is much smaller in its cost to Him, to keep us in His family? The answer is, of course He will.

And then the third question appears in verse 33.

***33*** *Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies.*

In other words, if God has already declared us who are in Christ through faith innocent of all charges of sin or disobedience, how could He possibly then go back on His declaration upon our lives and say, “I condemn you!” after He’s already justified us? The answer is, He can’t because that would be to deny Himself and deny His work.

Now the fourth question. We want to take some moments here. This fourth question is found in verse 34. And I’ve posed this in your outline this way:

**Question #4:  Is it possible that those who died with Christ could be condemned?**

***34*** *Who is to condemn? 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.*

Up to this point, God has rooted our security in the Father’s actions of saving His children. And now He moves from that base of security, which is secure enough, by the way. If there were only three questions, we wouldn’t have any doubts about our security. But God continues to lay question after question after question so that we would continue to move away from these anxious fears that often keep us from our joy in God, keep us from worship, keep us even from obedience and transformation in Christ. And He lays down one more question. It doesn’t have to do with the Father’s working, but this question wholly has to do with the Son’s working, what the Son, Jesus, has done for us.

***34*** *Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died…*

If it just simply stopped with “Who is to condemn?” there would be many answers that we could give to that question. We might mention a number of people who condemn us. Some of you grew up in difficult homes and some of you would say, “My parents condemned me all my life.” Who is to condemn? “Well, that’s what my parents did to me. In fact, they still do. I can’t do anything to please them.” Others might say, “My spouse condemns me. I never hear an encouraging word. I just hear criticism after criticism and it’s wearing me down. My spouse condemns me. I can do nothing right in their eyes.” Others would say, “My boss condemns me.” All believers can say, “Well, Satan condemns me.” Satan accuses us before God’s throne day and night, the Scripture says. He’s constantly condemning us. Some of us might even answer, “My own heart condemns me. I’m aware of my sins and I’m aware that they are worthy of God’s condemnation and judgment. I know that I’ve done some things in my life and I just cannot scratch them out of my memory. They’re ever in front of me.”

Who is he who condemns? God answers this question so that we don’t let these accusers press us down under the weight of guilt and shame. So, He answers it for us. Who is to condemn? He says, “Jesus Christ.” The truth that we learn from Scripture is that all judgment is given by the Father to God’s eternal Son. So who will judge and who will condemn? Well, it is Jesus Christ. The One who has provided the way of escape from judgment is also the one who judges. Listen to what John 5 says about Jesus’ judgment.

**John 5:22-24** For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

This is Jesus speaking. Only Jesus can condemn because all judgment has been given to the Son.Yet what is Jesus’ posture toward those who have been washed by His blood? It’s not one of condemnation. In order to condemn, Jesus Himself would have to deny the efficacy of His own sacrifice for our sin.He’d have to say, “Well, I tried to wash you clean, but I wasn’t able to. My blood only sort of washed you clean, but here are some sins that I must condemn you for because they’ve stuck to your soul like stains that couldn’t be washed.” Jesus would never do that because His blood is effective for every stain of sin. There is no punishment left for our sins to experience because all the punishment that our sins needed to experience for justice and righteousness to be accomplished have been met in Jesus.

Verse 34points our attention to four specific works of Jesus. You probably noticed these as you read them. They’re right there in front of us. These help us to know that Jesus would never condemn us. He’s the only one who could condemn us, and what has He done?

Work #1: Jesus died for our sins.

In Romans 5:8 it says He died for us. In other words, Paul is presenting, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the truth that Jesus died as our substitute. He died in our place. That’s what it means when it says “He died for us.” Instead of us being condemned by God as a result of our sins, that would have been just for that to happen, Jesus says, “I’m the perfect, sinless Son of God, and I’m willing to come down and be your substitute, to experience the punishment that your sins deserve so that you would never have to experience that punishment for yourselves, that condemnation.” So Jesus died for us.

Theologian Karl Barth was asked, “What is the most precious word in the whole Bible?” And of course, he’s a Greek scholar as well as a theologian, and so he used a Greek word. He said the word “Huper.” That word “huper” simply appears in Romans 5:8 when it says, “Christ died *for* our sins.” In the English translation, what’s the most important word in all of the Bible? He said, “The word “for”, huper.” It just simply means, “in our place.” That is the most important word in all the Bible because it connects me to freedom. It connects me to freedom from condemnation and to reconciliation with God.

In his book *Written in Blood*, Robert Coleman tells the story of a little boy whose sister needed a blood transfusion. The doctor explained to this little boy that his sister had this disease and her only chance of recovery was a transfusion from someone who had the same blood type. They’d tested his blood and he had the same blood type and he would be the ideal donor. He was asked, “Would you be willing to donate your blood for your sister?” As this little boy was asked the question, his lip began to tremble. He had fear well up in his heart. But then he smiled. "Sure, for my sister. I love her."

Well, these two children were wheeled into the hospital room--Mary, pale and thin; Johnny, robust and healthy. Neither spoke, but their eyes met and Johnny grinned. The nurse inserted the needle into Johnny’s arm and as she did, his smile kind of faded. He watched the blood flow through the tube. When the ordeal was almost over, his voice was very shaky. He looked at the doctor and said, "Doctor, when do I die?” The doctor realized that he didn’t give a very good explanation to Johnny of what was going to happen. Johnny thought he was going to give all of his blood to his sister. He thought he was going to lay down his life for his sister. And he said, “Sure, I’ll do it.” Now Johnny didn’t have to give all his blood. He didn’t have to die for his sister, thankfully. But Jesus did! Who is he who condemns? Well, Jesus. He died and gave all of His blood so that we could be forgiven.

Work #2: Jesus was raised to life.

God the Father raised His Son to life because He accepted Jesus’ death as a just, right, and perfect sacrifice for sin. The resurrection proves that the curse of sin was lifted from Jesus. And if the curse of sin is lifted from Him, if the condemnation for sin is lifted from Christ as evidenced by His resurrection, then it is certainly lifted from all those who are in Him. We have died with Him and we have been raised to newness of life with Him. Jesus was raised to life.

Work #3: Jesus is at the right hand of the Father.

The idea is that Jesus, having finished His work, is now at the place of highest honor. He has nothing left to do to accomplish redemption for His people. There’s nothing that is undone.

**Hebrews 10:11-12** And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God…

Jesus did something that no priest in all Old Testament history ever did. And that is, He sat down in the presence of God. You see, in the Temple in the Old Testament, there are no benches. There are no seats for priests to sit down. Because if a priest is in the presence of God in the Temple, he’s not sitting, he’s working. And the work is never done for the priest in the Old Testament. So this is startling and this is what the writer of the Hebrews is commenting on. He’s saying, “This priest is different from all the other priests. After He got done sacrificing for sin, He didn’t keep moving because He has another sacrifice to give, another sacrifice to make, another offering to God. No, He sat down because there didn’t need to be any other sacrifice ever, ever again. And now He is

**Hebrews 10:13-14** …waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

Who is he who condemns? Jesus Christ. And where is He? He’s seated at the right hand of the Father.

Work #4: Jesus is interceding for us.

He is seated at the right hand of the Father and He’s ever praying for us. While the finished work of Jesus on the cross secures us wholly, there is one more added layer of confidence Jesus brings to us. And that is that He continues to live to this day to pray for us, His people.

Do you remember that beautiful story around the Upper Room when Jesus had told them that one of them was going to betray Him? And “Is it I Lord, Is it I?” Peter makes this bold declaration. “Even if I die for you, I won’t betray you.” And Jesus said to Peter:

**Luke 22:31-32** Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you,that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.

There’s a spiritual warfare going on. Jesus told Peter that Satan wants to devour his soul. What would protect feeble Peter from being devoured by this strong enemy, much stronger than Peter, and devouring him and crushing his soul and destroying his life with God forever and ever? Jesus says, “I’m your advocate, Peter, and I’ve prayed for you. I’m making intercession for you.” What do you think made Peter turn out better than Judas? What really was happening there? Was it that Peter was simply more faithful? Did he have more natural goodness in his own heart? No. It is that Jesus set grace upon Peter in prayer. And that’s why Peter didn’t end up being condemned. It is because Jesus was interceding for him. Hebrews chapter 7 says this about Jesus’ continued work for us:

**Hebrews 7:25** Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermostthose who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

Why is He able to save to the uttermost all the way to the end of life? Save, save, save, save all the way, and keep us all the way to the end? Why? It says, “since he always lives to make intercession for them.” That’s the argument. Our security is based on the fact that Jesus died, that He was raised, that He is seated at the right hand of the Father and that He always lives to make intercession for us. In other words, Jesus never takes His saving eyes off of us. He rescues us and then He keeps His eyes upon us. Jesus is preoccupied with the security of His own people. He secures us to future glory through constant intercession.

I remember when my children were little and we would go to the beach. It was never a relaxing day for me. I’m kind of a bit of a worrier about kid’s safety anyway. And it was just kind of a miserable day. I’m here for them, but I just know the whole day I’m going to be darting back and forth. I’ve got three little boys and they’re all active and they all want to be in the water, and they want to get into the deepest part of it with the waves in Lake Michigan. And so I’m just sitting there and I’m just looking, looking, looking, looking, looking, looking, looking. And Jesus says, “That’s what I’m doing for you. I never take My eye off you. Never! And I’m omnipotent. I’m all-powerful. I’m actually able to keep My eye on you. You never wander out of eyesight.” Through intersession, Jesus continues to secure our freedom from condemnation.

So when we begin to wonder whether God will condemn us, whether our future sins will someday catch up with us, the call of God is to look to Jesus. Don’t look to yourself to build yourself a better life, a more secure position. Don’t get on a performance basis with God. It’s only a grace basis. Look to Jesus and look to the fact that He died. Look at the cross. Look at what He did. And look to the fact that He rose again. And then look where He is now. He’s seated at the right hand of God because He’s completed the work and He’s at the place of highest honor now. And this Person who is at the place of highest honor with the Father is interceding for us constantly. Who would condemn us when Jesus has done all that for us?

**Question #5: What could possibly cause God to stop loving the people whom He has chosen to love?**

***35*** *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?*

He lists seven possible hardships that might come into our lives and tempt us to think that God has stopped loving us.

Tribulation is sort of sudden adversity that places great pressure upon our life. It’s that rough patch where we feel like nothing is going right and life is turning sour. And we say, “God, since my life is turning sour, does that mean that you’ve turned sour on me?” And we often interpret unpleasant days as God’s displeasure. And then we interpret pleasant days as God’s pleasure, which is an entirely false idea. It’s a false idea that Job’s friends had, that made them such miserable counselors. And we need to rid that of our lives. Tribulation is the kind of distress where nothing is going right in our life. Should that cause us to question, “God, do you really love me?” “No,” is what Paul is going to argue.

Distress is sort of the daily grind of life sort of breaking us down. It’s pressures from our work and from our marriage and from our children and from our health. These pressures become too great for us to bear. We feel like all is lost. We can hardly live under the weight of a single more day. We say, “God, do you really love me?” And the answer comes back, “Yes, Jesus loves me.”

What about persecution? We’re trying to live a life of faithfulness to the Lord and then there’s people around us who hate the Lord Jesus and they oppose us. They oppose us often in painful ways. They oppose the Gospel. They oppose the righteousness of God. They oppose His majesty and His sovereign authority over life. And so as we represent Him, we find ourselves ridiculed. We find ourselves losing status and losing friendships. And so in the midst of persecution we ask, “God, where are you?” And the answer is “Yes, Jesus loves me.”

What about famine and nakedness, when we’re deprived of the basic essentials of life? The answer is, “Yes, Jesus loves me.”

What about dangers, when we’re exposed to dangers in our health? We’re very concerned about what the days ahead are. We’re exposed to dangers for our happiness, our emotional well-being? The answer is “Yes, Jesus loves me.”

What about sword, when people are so angry with me they want to really hurt me? Maybe even to the point of taking my life, but certainly hurt me emotionally in some way. We have some people who just want to make our life hard. What happens then? The answer is “Yes, Jesus loves me.”

Christ’s sovereign, securing and sure love doesn’t spare us from severe hardships in this world. That’s what this list is teaching us. God doesn’t promise to spare us from any of these seven things, but He does make certain that His love abides with us in them so that our joy, our future unending joy in Him is absolutely secured.

Paul is not speaking sort of philosophically here. He is writing from experience. Listen to what he writes in 2 Corinthians 11 of his own experiences as he sought to serve the Lord. He says:

**2 Corinthians 11:23-27** with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.

Five times he received thirty lashes. Think of that! About the fifth time you’re saying, “Oh, not again!” Think about Paul’s life for a moment. Anytime we’ve had this thought that has nagged us, “God, do you really love me?” think about entering into his life. Think about being all alone. All you’ve done is preach the Gospel, and it’s the fifth time you’re being taken and fastened to a pole where some guy with a whip lays thirty-nine stripes against your back. Or at least you think that the weather is going to be nice when you get into the sea to take the Gospel. This isn’t even the evil of man. You can kind of understand the evil of man. They are opposed to the Gospel. But Lord, why do I have to end up floating around in this sea wondering whether I’m going to survive this thing? Do you love me? Where are you? Think about that for a moment! And here’s Paul saying, “I’m going to tell you that none of these separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.”

And then verse 36. I love this! He quotes Isaiah 44. This is a very real chapter. In other words, it’s not this Pollyanna idea that our life is going to be full of jellybeans and candy. He says here’s what we should expect. Don’t let these things confuse us or cause us to wonder whether God loves us because we should expect it. Here’s what Isaiah said.

***36*** *As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”*

Paul wants us to know that the troubles and tribulations of this world are not strange things for the Christian, for the follower of Christ, for the worshiper of God. Suffering for Christ is the norm. It was the norm in the Old Testament. It’s the norm in the New Testament. It’s not anexception. This hardship and persecution and suffering is an experience that God’s people have endured from the beginning of time. This world is not our home. We’re exiles. We’re strangers here. We’re on a journey toward home. So expect to be mistreated. Jesus said:

**Luke 21:16-18** You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and some of you they will put to death. You will be hated by all for my name’s sake. But not a hair of your head will perish.

But don’t let you think for one moment that He doesn’t love you and He’s not caring for you constantly. There’s not a hair that they’re going to touch that is going to perish.

As an aside, Christian parents, I want to urge you to fulfill your calling from God, and in this particular direction. Help your children learn to expect rejection for the cause of Christ. Help them learn to rejoice in it. Too many parents are just so hopeful that all the friends at school are going to like their children. You can’t raise a Christian boy or girl with that expectation. You just simply can’t. It’s not going to happen. And so, teach them how to have faith from the time that they are little. If our children are accepted by the world it is because they have become like the world and they love the world. This would destroy their soul.

I remember very distinctly my parents raised me this way. And I don’t even know of a specific conversation. I just knew the Gospel set me at odds with everyone else around me. It was not in a snarky way or not in kind of an arrogant way. But I just knew from the time I was really, really little that if I just simply loved Jesus in front of other people, other people wouldn’t like me. So I went to Kindergarten and they had snack time and I bowed my head to pray. And I heard a whole bunch of other kids poking fun. I did have a couple other friends say, “I want to pray with you.” So we started a little prayer group in Kindergarten class. But that’s what real faith is. I don’t know where that came from except it was a gift from the Lord. It wasn’t something that I thought, “Okay, I’m going to show myself spiritual.” I just thought you pray to give thanks when God has given you a gift. And if people make fun of you, then they make fun of you. Jesus is more important than popularity.

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

I like that “more than conquerors.” It really can be translated “Super Victors.” It’s not just that we squeak by with the last second shot to win the game or we happen to hit the home run with two outs in the 9th inning to win the game. No! This is the kind of victory that we have in Christ that just kind of obliterates the opponent. That’s what he’s saying. You’re more than a conqueror. Don’t worry about whether you’re just going to barely sneak across the finish line. No, you’re more than a conqueror if you have Christ.

Sheep that are being slaughtered don’t look like conquerors, do they? He just said we are like sheep that are being led to the slaughter. So we don’t look like we’re conquerors when they’re about ready to put the knife up against the throat of a sheep. It doesn’t look like they’re going to win. But he says, no, that’s really what is happening. So don’t evaluate life by what we see, feel, taste and touch. Evaluate life on the basis of God’s promises. Because though we are like sheep about to be slaughtered, we are more than conquerors. That’s the reality. One day we’ll experience it. One day it will be evident. For now, we live by faith.

We’re more than conquerors through him that loved us. This was true when Noah stood before the mockers of his day. This was true when Joseph was sold by his brothers as a slave into Egypt. This was true when Moses stood before Pharaoh. This was true when David picked up five smooth stones to face Goliath. This was true when Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were thrown into the fiery furnace. This was true when Daniel was lowered down into the lion’s den. This was true when John the Baptist was awaiting beheading in jail. This was true when Stephen was being stoned. This was true when Paul and Silas were beaten and locked in stocks in Philippi. They didn’t look like conquerors, but they were, and they are and they forever will be. They are more than conquerors.

And then he closes with this. And I love this because this is a musical score reaching its crescendo.

***38*** *For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,* ***39*** *nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

He saying, “I’m going to speak in language so that nothing other than God Himself, and we’ve already settled God’s attitude about His love for us. Nothing nowhere, no how, no way, not ever will stand between us and God’s love for us in Christ. That includes ourselves. We can’t even keep ourselves from experiencing the love of God in Christ Jesus because God has a hold of us.”

Let me share some applications:

1. Whatever circumstances or persons that suggest to you that God has stopped loving you, reject those thoughts as unworthy of God and reject those emotions as unworthy of the Gospel. Whatever those circumstances may be, reject them if you are in Jesus Christ. They are not valid. Let God’s Word persuade you of His love. God’s love for us is not diminished or lost by our performance or lack thereof. God has set His love upon us in eternity past and nothing in time will separate us from Him.

2. Rejoice in God’s love daily. Don’t let the truth of God’s love stray from your consciousness. It’s a good thing to press into our joy in God’s love for us. That’s not arrogant. That’s humble. That’s what it means to have faith. Martyn Lloyd-Jones said, “Indeed, our chief defect as Christians is that we fail to realize Christ’s love to us.” How important it is that we would meditate often and frequently upon the love of God in Christ Jesus.

3. Expect hardships and trials and persecutions. Prepare your soul for them so that you would enjoy God’s love in the midst of them, that you’d be transformed by them as God’s purpose and intention. Seek for God’s love and wisdom to quiet you in those troubled times. “He will quiet you by His love,” Zephaniah 3 says. You will come out through your hardships and trials as more than a conqueror. The trial that seems to be destroying your life will not be ultimate. God’s loving purpose is ultimate!

4. Don’t let hardships, pain and trials keep you from enjoying God’s love. God’s love does not change with changing circumstances. So let’s be careful not to grumble or grow frustrated in our changing circumstances. Instead, let us set our eyes upon Jesus, upon God as we listen to Him communicate His love to us through the Gospel.

5. Brothers and sisters, let us love others like God in Christ loves us. Let us not sever our love from another when they hurt us. And the church needs to hear this. I think this is the only way that the church will be able to really have a witness to the world. It is if we stop severing our love from brothers and sisters because they hurt us at some point. The Gospel is denied when we sever our love from another brother and sister. So, be patient to work through problems and hurts. Be humble and transparent. Do not be the one who is the obstacle to love, reconciliation and peace. It’s not always possible to be at peace if a brother is just obstinate and refusing to come to the table and talk and want to be reconciled. But do not be the one that is the obstacle to such reconciliation. Be faithful in your love for others even if they are not faithful in their love for you. That’s what God does for us. Fight the temptation to sever our love from others with the Gospel, with the love of God poured out in your hearts.

6. Look forward to that future day when God’s love for us completes its work. We cannot think too much of God’s glory and our participation in it on that future Day. Then we will be transformed into the likeness of Jesus and then we will absolutely know by experience that nothing could ever have separated us from the love of God in Christ!