

Love So Secure

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【Romans 8:38-39】 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 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.

And this chapter began with a declaration of no condemnation in verse 1, and it now concludes with a declaration of no separation in verses 38 and 39. So, these two pronouncements are really the bookends around Romans chapter 8, “no condemnation” and “no separation.” It is one sentence and there are ten designations that all begin with the negative either “neither” or the word “nor,” and Paul uses the negative so that it has a certain sharp edge about it. He could have put it in the positive, but he puts it in the negative, so that it has a strong impact as it hits us. Now, these ten designations, neither death, life, angels, principalities, etc., they lay out this way. There are four pairs of two, four pairs of two, and then there are two single items that are standalone items. So, eight of these matches up in pairs of two, four pairs of two. And then there are two single items. And when they match up in two’s, they are intentionally what we would call “contrasting pairs.” They are on the opposite ends of the spectrum. So, he goes “death, life,” I mean those are opposite extremes. “Height, depth,” opposite extremes. “Things present, things to come.” And what he is communicating here is that these are all inclusive, all encompassing, statements that he is making. There is nothing outside of them. So, this covers the span of anything and everything that could possibly remove us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus.

Conviction

I want to break out these two verses, and the first thing that I want you to note is the strong conviction, the strong conviction. And that is at the beginning of verse 38, Paul begins, “For I am convinced.” The word “for” indicates to us it’s a continuation of thought from the previous verses, and it’s really he is now giving us an extended explanation that we are

eternally secure in Christ. So, when he says, “I am convinced,” it is a very strong Greek word, the verb there, and it is translated in the ESV, “I am sure.” It’s translated in the King James, “I am persuaded.” And the idea is that “I am absolutely convinced of this.” Paul has deep roots of conviction about this. And this is very important for us to see this because you need to be able to say the very same thing, that “I am convinced.” And the idea is Paul is saying, “I have become convinced and I remain convinced.” So, the idea is this isn’t just a mere passing emotion of the moment. This isn’t just a temporal feeling that he has about this. Paul is saying, “I have been anchored to this and I remain anchored to this.” So, this is important in our Christian life; the strong conviction. May God give you strong convictions in the truth.

God’s Love

Now let’s look at the specific details, and I want to begin now to walk through this and peel this back a layer at a time. So, the first pair is in the middle of verse 38, “For I am convinced that,” and here’s the first pair, “that neither death nor life,” neither death nor life, “shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus.” Now, just understand, this is an all-inclusive statement. There is nothing outside of life or death for you, okay? That covers your present, your future. That covers time. That covers eternity. That covers everything in your life. There is nothing outside of life and death. But Paul also covers principalities. Now, principalities refer to the third of the angels that fell with Lucifer when he sinned and became demon spirits. Nothing that a demon can do can separate the love of God in Christ from us. So, no deception that a demon can create, no temptation that a demon can incite or send, no false doctrine, no persecution, no pressure that a demon can bring to bear upon our life can ever drive a wedge between the love of God and us.

Christ: manifestation of God’s Love

I know people who have said: ‘I would follow Christ, but I do not think I can keep it up. I do not trust myself. I think he’d get tired of my failures.’ Please look at him in the garden. Look what his love for you has already enabled him to endure for you. If he had turned away from suffering and the cross, we would have been lost, but he didn’t do that. Hell came down on him, and he would not let go of us. His love for us has already taken everything that the universe could throw at it and it held fast— and you think that you are somehow going to

upset him? Is Jesus going to look at you and say, 'Well, that does it! Infinite existential torment was one thing, but I can only take so much!'? If this suffering did not make him give up on us, nothing will. So Paul can essentially say, 'Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ' (Romans 8: 38– 39). The Lord says, 'I will never leave you; never will I forsake you' (Hebrews 13: 5).

This is the love you have been looking for all of your life. This is the only love that can't let you down. This is bombproof love. Not friend-love, not personal acclaim, not married love, and not even romantic love – it is this love that you are after, underneath all your pursuit of those others. We may feel at times that God has departed from us, but that is when we have to believe his Word rather than our feelings.

And if this love of active obedience is an active reality in your life, you will be a person of integrity; you will be a person of prayer; you will be kind to people who mistreat you. If you have this love you will be a little more like him. Look at him dying in the dark for you. Let it melt you into his likeness.