

~Lesson Seven~

God's Love Will Never End

No matter what you have done or who you are, God's love for you will never stop because His love doesn't depend on your actions, but on His character. Paul, who wrote the book of Romans, knew this without a shadow of a doubt! This was because, before he was a Christian, he would hunt down Christians to imprison them or have them put to death. Then one day as Paul was on a journey to round up some more Christians to persecute, Jesus appeared to him and forgave him! Thus, Paul became God's because of His love and grace. (1 Timothy 1:12-15)

Romans 5:8 teaches us how Paul felt about God's love, and God's ability to save and change the worst of sinners.

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (NASB)

This week we are going to look at God's everlasting and relentless love for us.

Day One Why Does God Love Us so Very Much?

God's love has nothing to do with our performance, but everything to do with God! We could say that He loves you just because you are you. You don't need to do anything to be loved by God. He created you to love you, to have an eternal love relationship with you!

Yet from a human perspective, God had every right not to love us, because we aren't very lovable! Remember in Genesis, God created the world, the universe and everything in it for us, but that wasn't enough for Adam and Eve. God wasn't enough. They allowed His arch-enemy, the Devil, to deceive them into loving a tree and its fruit more than loving God their Creator. Thus, we all became His enemy and have been in rebellion against Him ever since (Ephesians 2:1-3).

Nevertheless God has relentlessly pursued us with His sacrificial love throughout the ages. When He came to live on this earth, in order that He might show us His love in a more personal and intimate manner, hardly anyone seemed to care (Isaiah 53:3). When He was in pain beyond description on a cross (for us), almost everyone around Him could have cared less. When He draws us to Himself by His Spirit's gentle whisper, most of us don't bother to listen (Acts 7:51). When we finally become His child by believing in His story of love and redemption, we still tend to love others and ourselves more than Him. Why, oh why, does God love us so very

much? I don't know about you, but that is a question I can't seem to reasonably answer.

- 1. Read Hosea 2:19-20 & 3:1 also Hosea 11.** The book of Hosea was written to the nation of Israel when they were in great sin. Their main sin was that they loved false gods instead of God. He called them adulterers since they were in a covenant relationship with Him that was very much like a marriage. Many times, God's Word uses the parent-child relationship and husband-wife relationship to explain His desire for a relationship with us. Hosea uses both of these relationships to allow us to understand God's heart desire for intimacy with us. Write down any insights and applications the Spirit is giving you from these verses.

- 2. Read Isaiah 65:1-3** and personalize what those verses are saying to you. (Example: God is telling me He sought me when I wasn't even seeking for Him. This is one of those, "wow" principles to me. How about for you?) I need to remind you here - God's love comes from His very nature and character but His love only lives inside of you through His Spirit, if you are a Christian. Are you a Christian?

- 3. Why does God love us so very much and keep relentlessly pursuing us to be His?**

Days Two and Three **Nothing Can Separate Us from the Love of God through Jesus Christ**

Have you ever mistakenly put super glue on two of your fingers and gotten them stuck together? If you have, you understand how well super glue sticks. God's love through Jesus Christ, just doesn't stick to you. It permeates your whole being if you are a Christian, so you won't be able to separate yourself from it!

The Bible passage Romans 8:28-39 explains how committed and everlasting God's love is towards us through Jesus Christ. Romans 8:18, 26-39 is printed out for you below, so you can easily read the appropriate verses along with my commentary. Then thoughtfully answer the questions that follow the verses. This passage is one of my favorites on God's love, so I hope this time of learning and prayerful soul-searching will bless you like it has me. (If you want to use your own translation of the Bible feel free to do so.)

Romans 8:18, 26-30

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us...And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. (NASB)

As Christians we still suffer just like others do, because we live in a world that is saturated with the repercussions of sin. There are the general effects of sin in our world, such as cancer. There are the effects of other people's sin on us. And, there are the effects of our own sin on our lives. Yet, we do have hope as Christians, no matter where our suffering has come from. This hope is, our sufferings are temporary, and will one day give way to eternal glory. **Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18.**

As Christians, God in His abundant love for us has given us two promises to give us hope and strength. The first one is, of course, the Holy Spirit, who is living within us. God's Spirit keeps on helping with our weakness. (Our weaknesses can include the physical, emotional, and the spiritual struggles of life. Our weaknesses are not just from suffering, but can come from all sorts of life's circumstances.) The Spirit also keeps on interceding for us concerning these things. This is because our

weaknesses make it difficult for us to pray according to His will, or even pray at all! What does it mean to you that God loves you so much that He sent the Holy Spirit to help you through all things?

The second promise is, God will work all things together for our good. God promises to work all things together for our good - by using every strength and weakness (including our sins), every joy and sorrow, every disappointment and pleasure, every failure and success, every painful thing and every comforting thing and so on. What does God's Word mean by "our good" here? It means that He is working everything together so our character will become more and more like Jesus. That is our good! **Read Philippians 1:6 & 2:13.**

Did you know Romans 3:23 tells us, before we are Christians we all fall short of the glory of God? (Glory generally means honor, reputation, perfection, and recognition. It is not merely outward appearance but inner glory outwardly manifested.) However when we become Christians, Jesus' character progressively grows within us, enabling His glory to shine brighter and brighter in our lives. We also have the hope of fully gaining His glory in eternity. **Read 2 Corinthians 3:18 and Colossians 1:27 & 3:4.** How do you feel about gaining Jesus' glory? How does it show God's love for you?

Romans 8:31-32

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?(NASB)

Take some time and let your heart truly feel the answer to these questions. Would you let your child take someone else's punishment when he was completely innocent? Would you allow your child to die for someone who is your enemy? Would you want your son to die for someone else's sins?

Because God didn't spare His own Son for us, we can know for sure that He is never against us! At times, you may feel as though God is against you. When you feel that way, remind yourself that God didn't spare His own Son, Jesus Christ, from death because of you! How does God not sparing His Son for you, show you He loves you and is not against you? (I have two sons, and I honestly would never want either of them to die for you or me or anyone!)

PS - I need to jog your spiritual sensitivity. If you are feeling like God is against you, *maybe* the problem is sin in your life. If that is the case, it's a good

thing you are feeling, because you are hearing the Holy Spirit's voice telling you something is sin so you can confess it.

Romans 8:33-34

Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. (NASB)

Do you feel condemned at times because of your past sins, the sins you have committed recently, or are committing now? You do not need to feel condemned as a Christian! This is because Jesus Christ was condemned for you when He took the punishment for your sins upon Himself on the cross. Since Jesus died for you, God has forgiven you and made you just right, or justified before Him. You literally have God's righteousness because of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21). God sees you and me as His beloved daughters, not as condemned women. **Read Romans 8:1-2, 15-17.**

PS - You aren't going to be condemned for your sins because of Jesus, but you do have the *responsibility* to agree with God about your sin! Don't make excuses for your disobedience against Him when He shows you a sin. Confess it to Him and truly desire Him to get it out of your life. Remember what He had to do and suffer because of that sin!

What does it mean that Jesus is interceding for us? The word intercession means what you think it would - pray for, intervene, support, talk to, decide for, ask on behalf of and act as a go-between. Jesus is praying to God on your behalf. He is waiting and wanting you to talk to Him. He is supporting you constantly as you live life. He is also deciding if anything you will go through is what you need for your absolute good, for the present as well as for your future here and in eternity. (His decisions are being made from an eternal perspective and are made by knowing what everything you experience will do to you and for you!) **Read Hebrews 7:25.** What does the knowledge that Jesus is interceding for you right now, mean to you?

Romans 8:35, 37

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ...But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. (NASB)

It is very important to have a mindset that God loves us, as Paul is teaching in this passage. If we don't have this mindset, then we will tend to default to trusting our own ways to get us through the trial. This is because when we don't think God really loves us, we can struggle with whether God will do what is good for us; so of course this can lead us to not trusting Him.

We also need to have the attitude Paul had, which is nothing can separate you from Jesus love! However, life can be very hard so it is certainly possible to go through a trial that makes you *think* God doesn't love you. (I have certainly gone through some.) Yet, whether you feel God loves you or not, the fact is He does! (Be aware – feelings aren't necessarily truth. They are just feelings, but God is our truth.) Jesus' love for you, will grab a hold of you, if you allow it to by having faith in Him, and it will carry you through the worst trials imaginable. This will enable you to overwhelmingly be victorious through the trial. (What comes to my mind is the short popular narrative about a person wondering out loud, where Jesus was in the hardest times in her life (Psalm 139:1-16). The woman is wondering this because when she looks back through her life during her most difficult struggles, she only sees one person's footprints. Jesus says to her, something like, "My child, during those times I was carrying you.") **Read quickly Hebrews 11:1-12:2.** How has Jesus carried you through a trial?

The hard truth is, God's love doesn't allow our lives to be without trials, because He loves us too much to allow us to stay undisciplined and ungodly. **Read Hebrews 12:5-11.** When you look at trials as one of God's ways of loving you, in reality you are trusting in Him. This will give you the strength and perseverance you need to conquer whatever life brings! Write out how God's love has overwhelmingly made you a conqueror through your life.

Romans 8:38-39

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (NASB)

Why are these verses true? First of all, God's love lives within us, if we are a Christian, so we can't get away from His love. Remember Romans 5:5 tells us God has poured His love within us through His Spirit and that He keeps flooding our hearts with His love. Second, God sacrificed His Son for us, so He could be in a love relationship with us. So of course He won't take His love away from us. Remember in Romans 5:8 we are told that God the Father did not spare His own Son when it came to demonstrating His love for us. Third, Jesus died so He could show us His love. In Ephesians 5:2 we are told that Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us, as an offering and sacrifice to God. No wonder nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. When you are going through horrendous trials or wonderful life experiences or the ordinary times of living, remember God's love is right there with you!

Day Four God's Love Took Care of our Sin Giving us Eternal Life

We are going to do a lot of reviewing in day 4. Yes, I know some of you don't enjoy it, but from a teaching perspective reviewing is a must. Please, just hang in there, and I am sure you will be blessed, since what I am reviewing is why you are God's, and bound for heaven instead of hell.

Why did God want to take care of sin? First reason, sin separates us from God! Before you were a Christian, you were, yes, loved by God, but you were separated from Him because of your sin. As you can see God had a problem. He loved us but could not have a relationship with us because of our enslaved relationship to sin.

Why does sin separate us from God? Remember God is holy, so His holiness plays a huge part in us being separated from Him. Holiness is only found in God or in what has been sanctified by Him. It isn't just a characteristic of God, but it represents His essential nature. Holiness means being set apart or separated completely from sin. The idea of holiness also embodies abomination of sin, which means God can do no less than punish it

Frankly, from the Old Testament, if anyone got near God's holiness with any sin, even a sin we might think is just an itsy bitsy one, that person in most cases would die. Even Moses, who God said in Numbers 12 was faithful in all God's household, didn't escape punishment because of his sin. In Numbers 20, God said to Moses that since he didn't treat God as holy, he would not live to go into the land that God promised to his countrymen, the sons of Israel. From scripture, it is very clear that our sin brought a huge "gap" between Him and the people He loves. So God sent the embodiment of His love to this earth in the form of His Son, to bridge the separation between us and Him. This one act of love set us free from enslavement to sin, so we could have an eternal marriage relationship with Jesus.

1. **Read Isaiah 54:5-8 & Ephesians 5:23-33.** Have you ever thought about, as a Christian, that you are married to Jesus Christ? Some of you have, or have had a husband who has done anything but love you, so having a loving husband is hard to imagine. The rest of us, who are married, might have loving husbands, but as life is, no one can love us totally. Jesus is our loving husband, who loves us like no human can. Think of what you have learned about His love from this study and make a list of the ways Jesus has loved you. (Example: I know Jesus loves me, because He died for me, so He could marry me.) The list should help your mind envision His love, which will help you feel His love, and get closer to your heavenly husband.

Secondly, sin brought death to all of us! The essence of death is separation from God, not extinction. The introduction of death into our world brought awful consequences to our earthly bodies, as you very well know. It also made us spiritually dead to God which wrecked the relationship we were created to have with God. Death changed our eternality - instead of having an eternal existence with God, we would live separated from Him bound for eternal punishment (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9). Nevertheless, God loved us and loves us and created us to be with Him, instead of being dead to Him and bound to hell. No wonder He did something about sin.

Third, sin brings evil (or bad) to all of us! God doesn't look at the suffering, the pain, or the distress sin brings to us with glee. He mourns over the devastation that sin has caused. Remember, God created a world full of everything good for us. He created us to love us. Yet, Adam and Eve wanted something more than the goodness and love that God offered, so evil came into the world. Yes God is angry at sin and took care of it.

For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life...in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago, Titus 1:2 & 3:3-7 (NASB)

What did God do to take care of our sin? Have you ever realized scripture tells us, God spoke the world and the whole universe into existence, but it took Him baring His holy arm to bring salvation to us? The metaphor of baring your arm is taken from war. Warriors would bare their right arm for battle. He spoke everything into being! Yet, He needed to battle for our deliverance from sin, and He did just that! The weapon He used was His sacrificial love flowing through the sacrifice of His Son. Since Jesus Christ took care of our sins, we will live in a state of eternal love instead of eternal punishment!

- 1. Read Isaiah 52:10 & 53:1-12, and Revelations 1:5b.** Since God did whatever He needed to do to save you from the consequences of sin, prayerfully ask Him what you can do for Him to show Him you love Him.

As Christians, we are never separated from God because of sin! This is because Jesus' death erased our sins like we had never committed them. His death literally cleansed us from any and every sin we have and will commit. Yet, sin affects our relationship with God, like when a child disobeys his parent. So since we are so loved and forgiven by God (Who is Holy and hates sin.) shouldn't we agree with Him about our sins, because we love Him? Think about confession this way - confessing your sins is the grandest and easiest way God could give you to be so quickly close to Him again!

2. **Read 1 John 1:5-10** and quickly summarize what these verses are saying to you about confessing or agreeing with God about your sin.

Day Five Doubting God's love

God got me up early today, as He often does. I am at that age where menopause seems to call to me about 4 am. With God all things work together, so He uses my "wide awake" state to spend more time with me. As I was praying, I felt that the Spirit was saying to me to add one more thing before ending this lesson on "God will never stop loving us." God wants me to remind all of you that Satan does his best to convince us that God doesn't love us.

Let's look at an example from scripture: How about the one from the Garden of *Eating*, in Genesis 2 and 3? Remember how Satan convinced Eve and Adam that God, their Creator, was withholding the best from them by forbidding them to eat from one tree? Let me remind you, God had just created everything for them and told them to enjoy doing and eating everything else. Yet sadly, we can see from Eve's willingness to listen to Satan's words, and *her and her husband's* immediate trust in those words, that the Serpent had certainly convinced them God didn't love them very much. If you doubt God's love for you, remember that you believe a lie from Satan.

1. **Read Genesis 3:1-6, John 8:44, 2 Corinthians 11:3 and Revelations 12:9.** I know we all struggle with doubting God's love for us at times. I know I do. I feel that is why God put it on my heart to emphasize the fact that Satan has a big part in our doubt about God's love. How does Satan convince you that God doesn't love you?

2. Doubt is the main reason our faith in God becomes weak. Doubt started when Adam and Eve listened to Satan, which led to doubting God's love and care. As you know, their lack of trust in God brought awful consequences! Our own lack of trust can bring dreadful consequences too. When our faith in God isn't very strong, I think in most cases, it is because we doubt His love and care for us. What you need to do when you doubt God's love and care is, tell Him you have doubt (He knows it anyway), and ask Him to show you in life-changing ways His love for you. (I keep a journal of all that God has done for me, so I can keep His love and care for me alive in my mind.) One of the reasons I did this study was so you (and me) would have clear understanding and knowledge about the basic principles in scripture that show us that God loves us... so when we doubt we can review those concrete principles.

3. **End of the lesson application:** Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to your mind one thing you learned from this lesson that He wants you to remember and make a part of your life. Be quiet before God and wait on Him to tell you. Write it down and ask Him to help you to do it!

Read Romans 8:18, 26-39 and write out a few examples on what these verses personally meant to you. (Example: When I feel God is against me, I need to remember what He gave up for me.) If you are doing this in a group share your answer.

Bibliography

My ideas on the following topics come from the following sources.

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Holiness

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