

Monday 9th November Andrew Baddeley Who shall separate us from the love of Christ

Good morning, everyone. Welcome again to Monday's devotion, the ninth of November. I hope you're all doing well this morning.

Let's pray shall we before we start. So Father, we just want to say thank you for this new day, for this new week. We welcome Your mercies Father, we thank you that Your mercies are new every morning. And we welcome You Lord Jesus, we welcome what you want to do in our lives, in our hearts, in our communities and our families Father, we welcome You, we welcome You this morning. And we just welcome Your love to fall upon us afresh, as we share the Word this morning. So Lord, we just pray, come by Your Holy Spirit, let Your fresh mercies fall on us this week, as we look at your word this morning, as we start our day this morning.

So good morning to you! If you've joined us, it's good to see you, I hope you're all doing well. I've got a question I want to start with this morning. I've been stirring around the whole theme of the love of God over this last week. So my question is, when you think of the love of God, what do you think of? What reminds you, what are your go to verses, what are the stories? What are the experiences that you have, when you think of the love of God?

And for me, when I think of the love of God, I think of this, the famous scripture of John 3:16, 'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only son that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life'. And I remember, as a young Christian, as a student, having this scripture, just so in my heart and just thinking of the love of God, that He sent His only Son into the world, that we may have this relationship with Him. And I remember around my college campus at the time just sharing the gospel with people and sharing about this scripture, For God so loved the world, for God so loved you and me. And the very foundation of our faith, the very foundation of who we are today, is that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.

And then another scripture, Jeremiah 31. And it speaks very much of the heart of God, the heart of His love for you and me, 'That I have loved you with an everlasting love. I have drawn you with unfailing kindness'. And obviously, he's speaking this, really, if you've read this Old Testament scripture, you read the heart of God; that He's speaking His heart for His children, and for His people, for His sons and daughters, that He loves us with an everlasting love. And that is a true scripture for us to hold on to this week, whatever you're facing, whatever you're going through, that He has loved you with an everlasting love and He draws you with unfailing kindness. And the love of God is a tangible experience for us to enjoy, for us to receive, for us to engage in when we worship Him.

I know for me that when I just worship Him, when I put on worship music, when I just get on my knees, I turn myself aside to look to Him, it's just this tangible love that comes and overwhelms us. And that is His heart for us, that we engage in His love. It's not a historic thing. It's not something that we read 'Oh, God is Love'. It's not something that we theorise, it's not a theology, although it is a theology as well. But it's a real tangible experience that we engage in; we partake in the love of God, we experience the love of God. Another scripture, which I love reading is in one John chapter three, and where it's writing to the church there and he's saying, 'See what great love the Father has lavished on us'. I love that word lavished, that He has lavished. Lavish speaks of extravagance, it speaks of so much, 'and see what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God and that is who we are'. Why don't we just stop right there and just meditate on that for the rest of the day? See what great love the Father has poured out upon you this morning, upon your life, upon your home, upon your family, upon everything you are. Just receive that, just stop right there and say, Father, I thank you for the love that you poured out on me today. God is... you know, we will never be able to understand or experience the amount of love that He has for you and me this morning.

But today I just want to bring a few minutes' focus on Romans 8 because Paul, he asked the question here, and he asked many questions towards the end of Romans eight. And he poses this question and I love it. And as I was reading that, I was just thinking, man, this is so encouraging. And he says, In verse 31, and I'm just going to read a couple of verses, because we haven't got time to really go into it all. And he says, 'What shall we say, in response to all these things?' You know, if you think of the whole first eight chapters of Romans, he's talking about salvation, he's talking about grace, he's talking about law. And he's talking about our very need for grace in this life, hmm, that we are saved by grace, and all of that. So you know, all of that. And then he says, 'If God is for us, who can be against us?' This question, 'who can be against us today?' In verse 32: 'He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how will He not also, along with Him graciously give us all things?'

What a beautiful promise that is, isn't it? And then this is the one I wanted to sort of bring today. For us to hold on to this week and to meditate on and to just let the love of God and let the truth of God sink into our spirits. And in verse 35, he says this, 'Who shall separate us?' Who shall separate you this morning? 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?' Wow, what a question. And then he goes into all these areas, he says, 'Shall trouble' and then I've just got a few other translations that say 'hardship, persecution. Shall famine, or nakedness, or dangerous sword'. Some other translations say hunger, or even shame hiding yourself away; you know, sometimes we hide ourselves away, don't we? We're ashamed of what we've been through, we hide ourselves away, just because of what life has done to us. The threats, backstabbing, dangers, all situations that you know, you may be even facing this morning, you may be facing trouble, you may be facing situations where you know what, I'm not sure if I can carry on anymore. I'm not sure if I can handle this situation that I'm having to face, whatever it may be. It may be relational, it may be financial, it may be persecution that you're undergoing.

But Paul is posing this question: 'Can any of these things separate you from the love of Christ?' I was reading about Jim Elliot this morning. Jim Elliot was a missionary in some distant lands with his wife, Elizabeth. And he died preaching the gospel to some tribes, with a few other people. And he said this one quote: 'He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep, to gain that which he cannot lose'. Such an amazing quote, isn't it? And these people who gave their lives for the kingdom of God, who gave their lives to preach the gospel, and give everything to him, how the conviction of actually 'who can separate us from the love of Christ' there's nothing in this world that can separate me from the love of Christ whatever I do, because Christ's love is unending.

And then Paul poses the question in verse 28: He says, 'And we know that in all things, God works for the good of those who love Him'. So for the good, He works for those who love Him, who have been called, according to His purpose. This is not a universal love that Paul is talking about here. This is not a love, although He loves the whole world and He wants, His desire is that everyone should be saved. But He's talking about here, about those who have chosen to make the Lord their Saviour, he's talking about the elect. He's talking about those who have given their lives to Christ, those who have been called according to His purpose. You know, this morning, if you've given your life to Christ, if you are His this morning, that you know that you are sealed in His love, that you are sealed in the very love of Christ, and that is who you are. And then Paul finishes this chapter and this is something we just need to hold on to today; he says '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'.

What a beautiful way to start the week, that nothing can separate you from the love of Christ. Whatever thought you have in your heart today, wherever, as we just talked about, whatever you're facing, whatever you're going through, whatever joys you're feeling, that nothing can separate you from the love of Christ. We are held in His arms, He has sealed His love into our hearts. And though sometimes life happens, and our hearts get hard, and we don't know the love of God, we can't feel the love of God, I know for me, I just need to go and sit in His arms, I just need to put some worship music on, I just need to ask the Lord to come and heal my heart and to wash over me and to just soften my heart again. You remember that picture that

Helen brought on Friday of the clay and how hard the clay gets, but then it does become soft as it soaks in water. And it's like that with our very hearts. As we soak ourselves in the love of God, our hearts become soft again. And those hard edges go and we're able to forgive, we're able to release those judgments that we may have, all those own godly beliefs, all the things that we know that we have to deal with. But it's allowing the love of God to come into our hearts today.

And just to hold on to that truth, that nothing can separate you, this morning, from the love of Christ. So I just want to decree that, I speak that over your lives today, I speak over my life and my family, that nothing in this whole world can separate you from the love of Christ, whatever we are facing in this whole world with COVID and all the stuff that is happening, in all things, nothing can separate you from the love of Christ. So why don't you hold on to that this morning, I just want to bless you, I pray the favour and the love of God to rest on you powerfully as you go about your business. And I pray that God's Spirit will powerfully rest upon you. And that you would allow the Holy Spirit to pour through you and the love of Christ to spread abroad in your heart.

You know, it says in Romans 5. So I'm just going to digress a bit, it says, 'And hope does not put us to shame because God love God's love has poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us'. Through the Holy Spirit, we receive His love. When the power of the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you receive the power of His love, and just allow the Holy Spirit come upon you this morning, just receive the love of Christ again, just let His love pour out into your heart.

You know, if you need to let go of stuff, then just let it go this morning and just say God, I'm not designed to carry this, I'm not designed to carry the burdens of this world. When Jesus says, 'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest', you know, the weary and burdeness is not something that we are designed to carry. You know, when Jesus said that, He's saying that there is an exchange that happens in heaven. When you come and sit at the foot of the cross. When you come to him, there is an exchange that happens. And if we haven't had that exchange, then we need to stay there until we do, because God wants to pour out His love in you and through you, into this world. You know, we are the vessels of His love. He says that God so loved the world. Yeah. And He loved us so He can pour out His love through you into this world in this time.

So, time's moving on. I'm going to say bless you, have a great week and be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, be filled with the love of God. And just remember Romans, chapter 8, verse 37, to 39, in all things, we are more than conquerors and I'm convinced that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ that is in Christ Jesus. So God bless you, have a great week. Amen.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai> Ed Perrys

