Romans 8:38-39

Town North Presbyterian Church – Rev. David J. Rogers June 30, 2024

God has given us these words in Romans 8 to assure us His LOVE for us.

God gives us this assurance of His LOVE to give us STRENGTH in our times of need.

The story is told of a well-known preacher in Scotland who found strength on his deathbed from these words from GOD.

The preacher was named **Hugh Kennedy**. When Reverand Kennedy was dying, he called for a Bible. But, finding that his sight was gone, he said,

"Turn me to the eighth chapter of Romans, and set my finger at these words, "*I am persuaded that neither death nor life,*" &c."

So they did. Then he said:

"Now, is my finger upon them?"

When they told him it was, he said,

"Now, God be with you, my children; I have breakfasted with you, and shall sup with my Lord Jesus Christ this night."

And with that he died.

God gave us these words for the very reason. God intended these words to give us a SURE and GUARANTEED foundation for our lives and eternity.

These words from God give us the SURE foundation that God LOVES US.

God tells us there is NOTHING that can separate His people from His LOVE.

And that is the most important thing we WANT and NEED as God's people. What we WANT and NEED most is to know that GOD LOVES US. What we want most is to know God LOVES us – and His face shines upon us and is gracious to us.

To know GOD LOVES YOU – can bring you through even the fiercest trials and storms in life. We see this in God's people throughout the Bible. We hear these words continually in the songs of God's people – and we said it in our Call to Worship today (**2 Chronicles 16; Psalm 118**):

"Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;

for his steadfast love endures forever!"

The great blessing God told His priests to give to His people was this (**Numbers 6**):

"The LORD bless you and keep you;

the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn His face toward you and give you peace."

God's LOVE is what we want MOST. And we need to <u>KNOW</u> God's LOVE for us.

As I mentioned, when you KNOW God LOVES you – and WITH YOU – you can persevere through even the most HORRIBLE trials.

Many Christians went to the lions – or went to be burned at the stake – with great courage and boldness – because they KNEW that God LOVED them and was WITH THEM.

And – by contrast – what we <u>fear the most</u> is to have <u>God turn His face</u> <u>AWAY from us</u> – and <u>for GOD to be against us</u>. We hear this from God's people in the Bible as well.

King David said in the Psalms (Psalm 27):

"<u>Hide not your face from me</u>.

Turn not your servant away in anger,

O you who have been my help.

Cast me not off; forsake me not,

O God of my salvation!"

And when dedicating the Temple – David's son **Solomon** said (**2 Chronicles 6**):

"O LORD God, <u>do not turn away the face of your anointed one</u>! Remember your steadfast love for David your servant."

In order to be STRONG – and PERSEVERE through trials – as a Christian – you NEED to KNOW God LOVES YOU. God has designed to give you STRENGTH and VITALITY and ENERGY to PERSEVERS and DO the tasks He has called you to do – by KNOWING He LOVES YOU.

As a matter of fact, when you feel WEAK – and UNABLE to STAND against the trials and temptations you are facing as a believer this is one thing to check. Do you KNOW GOD LOVES YOU?

Do you KNOW what that means for your whole life and purpose in this world?

Do you KNOW what it means for your future - and eternity?

KNOWING God's LOVE – only INFLAMES your LOVE for Him – and renews your STRENGTH and VITALITY for serving Christ in whatever TRIAL or TEMPTATION you face in this world.

That is why God gave us these words in Romans 8:38-39.

God gave us these words so that we can <u>KNOW that He LOVES us</u> – and so that we can KNOW that it is a SURE and SOLID LOVE that WILL NOT CHANGE. We don't need to QUESTION IT because of our sins, weaknesses, and failures.

And it is knowing HIS SURE LOVE for you that will give you the strength to persevere through the even the most DIFFICULT opposition, trials, temptations and storms in this life.

It is CLEAR that God is telling believers of His SURE and CERTAIN LOVE for them.

Notice that Paul – the messenger of Jesus Christ – is telling us <u>He is</u> <u>SURE of something</u>.

Look at the beginning of verse 38:

"For I am sure..."

There are some things you may be "*fairly confident*" about.

There are other things you "*confident*" about.

And there are a few things you are "<u>SURE</u>" about.

In other words, you are ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN about. And there are some people who are more confident than others. There are some people that are SURE about a lot of things. But they may sometimes be OVER-CONFIDENT people. They may be SURE – when they really CANNOT be SURE.

But when Jesus Christ's Apostle Paul says there is one thing of which he is <u>SURE</u> – we need to stand up and take notice because it carries a lot of weight. We must listen carefully because we know who Paul is. We were told us at the beginning of this letter that he is a "…*servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle*…"

In other words, he is a messenger of Jesus Christ – just like the other 12 Apostles.

And Apostle is one designated by Jesus Christ to be His messenger. So when the Apostle speaks – it is a message from Jesus Christ to us. That is why Paul could say at the beginning of t his letter:

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

GRACE to you – FROM GOD – and the Lord JESUS CHRIST. Paul is speaking as a messenger on God's behalf.

And so, Paul tells us here there is something of which he is SURE – and YOU can be SURE. He is absolutely SURE and CERTAIN about this.

OF WHAT is he SURE?

Look at the rest of verses 38-39.

"<u>For I am sure</u> 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, <u>will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ</u> <u>Jesus our Lord</u>." He is SURE – and WE can be SURE that NOTHING "...<u>will be able to</u> <u>separate us from the LOVE OF GOD in Christ Jesus our Lord</u>."

Paul is giving God's people a message from God telling us NOTHING will be able to SEPARATE US from the <u>LOVE OF GOD</u>.

And the <u>LOVE OF GOD</u> – means <u>GOD'S LOVE</u>. It is <u>GOD'S LOVE for us</u>. In other words, NOTHING will ever <u>TAKE AWAY God's LOVE</u> from us. NOTHING will ever be able <u>CHANGE God's LOVE</u> for us.

It is SURE and CERTAIN that God LOVES you and nothing can change it. God tells you His LOVE is SURE and we need to build our lives on that every day.

And there are TWO THINGS we are told about God's SURE and CERTAIN LOVE that are meant to help us KNOW that it is SURE and CERTAIN. FIRST, we are told <u>WHY God's LOVE is SURE</u>. SECOND, we are told <u>WHEN God's LOVE is SURE</u>.

MP1: WHY is God's LOVE sure? (39 – in Christ)

FIRST, notice God tells us WHY His LOVE is SURE.

We see this at the end of verse 39:

"...nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from <u>the love of God IN CHRIST JESUS our Lord</u>."

Notice closely what those words are saying.

Nothing will be able to separate us (as believers) from "...<u>the love of God</u> in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Notice you have the SURE LOVE of GOD. But you are also <u>told WHY</u> you have this LOVE.

WHY do you have God's SURE LOVE?

It is because you are "IN CHRIST JESUS."

This LOVE of God is said to be IN CHRIST JESUS.

What does that mean?

By these words God is telling us it is NOT simply His LOVE "<u>in general</u>" that He is talking about. But it is that <u>COVENANT LOVE</u> with which God LOVES us as His children.

It is a SPECIAL LOVE that God has for His children. It is that SPECIAL BOND OF LOVE in which God places His AFFECTION on us – and promises to PROVIDE for us – and have COMPASSION on us – and to CARE for us.

It is that SPECIAL LOVE that a parent has for HIS or HER CHILD.

There are many other children. But a father has a SPECIAL BOND of LOVE and concern for <u>HIS CHILD</u>. A mother has a SPECIAL BOND of LOVE and concern for <u>HER CHILD</u>.

The LOVE GOD gives IN CHRIST JESUS is this SPECIAL <u>COVENANT</u> LOVE.

This LOVE comes to us – and is given to us – through God's only begotten SON JESUS.

Jesus is the unique – ONLY BEGOTTEN SON – and when we put our trust in Jesus Christ we are <u>UNITED to Him</u>. We are BONDED to Him in such a way that <u>ALL that is HIS becomes OURS</u>. We become BONDED to Him as CO-HEIRS with Him.

And God's LOVE is poured on us just as God's LOVE is poured on His own SON Jesus.

This is what happened when you first REPENTED and put your FAITH in Jesus Christ.

You RAN to Him for REFUGE – and God UNITED you to Him by faith.

So ALL that is <u>YOURS became HIS</u> – and all that is <u>HIS becomes</u> <u>YOURS</u>!

<u>ALL of YOUR SINS became HIS</u> – and He SUFFERED their penalty on the CROSS.

And ALL of HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS and GOODNESS became YOURS. GOD now LOVES YOU as He LOVES His own SON – because you are now IN HIM!

THIS is what makes GOD'S LOVE for you SURE and CERTAIN.

If you were simply told GOD LOVES YOU – you might look at all the sin and rebellion in your heart and say:

"Yes, but how can He KEEP LOVING me?

How can I be assured He will KEEP LOVING me when I daily provoke Him?"

To those questions God shows us <u>His Son JESUS CHRIST</u> – as the one <u>THROUGH WHOM His LOVE is GIVEN and SECURED to us</u>!

God's LOVE COMES to us – and is SECURED to us – THROUGH Jessus Christ.

As you look at yourself – and SEE yourself – on your own (as you are) – you ARE guilty – and you DO NOT DESERVE God's LOVE.

But IN Jesus Christ – you were CLEANSED from your SINS.

Your relationship with God was RECONCILED.

Jesus Christ's LOVE for the Father – and His OBEDIENCE to the Father – has been GIVEN to you – so that God the Father LOVES YOU – AS He LOVES His own SON Jesus!

God the Father TRULY and SURELY LOVES His Son Jesus Christ.

God made that clear at the baptism of Jesus – and on the mountain with Peter, James & John. God SPOKE with a voice from heaven (for EVERYONE to hear) (Matthew 3 & 17):

"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

God the Father SURELY LOVES Jesus Christ His own SON.

And GOD LOVES all who are IN HIM. God LOVES all those who are inseparably UNITED to His SON Jesus. And that is what is TRUE of you as a believer. That is why Jesus Christ is ROCK and REFUGE as sinful people. HE is the "*strong tower*" we run to for SAFETY and the SECURITY of God's LOVE.

God has planned to FREELY GIVE US <u>His LOVE **THROUGH** His Son</u> <u>Jesus Christ</u>.

All of God's LOVE is POURED OUT to us as NEEDY and SINFUL people – THROUGH Jesus Christ.

God LOVES NO PERSON in this world as a Father who is OUTSIDE of Jesus Christ.

Our sins make us ENEMIES of God. Our sins DISHONOR God.

After man's first SIN – God FREELY OFFERED to restore His fatherly LOVE to us. But that fatherly LOVE comes to us ONLY THROUGH Jesus Christ. THAT is why we are told here:

Nothing will be able to separate us from "...the love of God IN Christ

Jesus our Lord."

God's LOVE FLOWS to us THROUGH His Son JESUS CHRIST.

Illus: I've mentioned before the Roman slave Marcellus.

The story is told that long ago in the ancient Roman world a wealthy Roman had a REBELLIOUS SON – and an HONORABLE SLAVE named Marcellus who was about the same age as his son.

The REBELLIOUS SON made the man's life miserable. The son rejected his father – and everything that his father stood for as a noble man.

By contrast, the HONORABLE SLAVE, Marcellus, was a great help to the man's life. Marcellus willingly and joyfully did everything his master asked. He was faithful and a delight to have in the household.

So on his deathbed the father decided to disinherit his son and leave everything to his slave, Marcellus. He drew up the papers and called in his son to tell him what he had done: "Son, I have deeded everything to the slave Marcellus. However, you may choose ONE ITEM from my entire estate for yourself."

The son thought for a moment and replied:

"I'll take Marcellus!"

Obviously, that son knew he had NOTHING – and knew Marcellus had EVERYTHING. But if he had Marcellus, he had EVERYTHING!

A similar thing is true for all of us in Jesus Christ.

God has given us His LOVE – and everything we so desperately need – \underline{IN} <u>HIM</u>.

ALL of God's LOVE is POURED OUT to us IN HIM!

We are EMPTY and our souls are HUNGRY for God's LOVE – and God gives all of His LOVE to us IN Jesus CHRIST!.

Paul began his letter to the **Ephesians** (chapter 1) in this way:

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has

blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ."

EVERY spiritual blessing – including GOD'S never-ending LOVE – <u>given</u> IN CHRIST!

App: So WHY is God's LOVE for you SURE and SECURE?

It is SURE and SECURE – because YOU are not the one who SECURES it.

It is SURE and SECURE – because of JESUS CHRIST. God's LOVE comes to you THROUGH JESUS CHRIST. When Jesus Christ FAILS – God's LOVE for you will FAIL.

But that will NEVER HAPPEN – because Jesus Christ is the same YESTERDAY, TODAY, and FOREVER. He is the Father's ETERNALLY LOVED SON – and He always will be. And YOU are IN HIM.

This is where you must look to find the SECURITY of God's LOVE for you. Your CERTAINTY of God's LOVE for you is <u>NOT found IN YOU</u>. Your CERTAINTY of God's LOVE for you is NOT based on <u>your</u> <u>FAITHFULNESS</u> or <u>your KINDNESS</u>, or <u>your OBEDIENCE</u>.

God DOESN'T LOVE you because you are KIND.

God DOESN'T LOVE you because you are FAITHFUL.

God's LOVE FOR YOU is SURE and SECURE because of what Jesus Christ has done. God's LOVE for YOU is SURE – because of what JESUS CHRIST has DONE – NOT what YOU have done.

And that's why it is SURE and SECURE.

It is SURE and SECURE – because it is found OUTSIDE of you. That's what we NEED – because if we look for OBEDIENCE and GOODNESS and FAITHFULNESS within ourselves it will always be SHAKY and INCONSISTENT. So your assurance of God's LOVE for you will always be SHAKY and INCONSISTENT as well!

So our assurance and CERTAINTY of God's LOVE as believers is because of Christ.

You can be SURE of God's LOVE for you because you are IN CHRIST. All of God's LOVE and BLESSINGS come to us THROUGH Jesus Christ.

That is why you RUN to HIM for REFUGE. GOD give you the SURE and CERTAIN promise of His LOVE through Jesus Christ.

You may be an "overwhelmed" follower of Christ here today. Maybe you are overwhelmed with pressures, trials, and difficulties. You don't have the strength to press on and continue.

A good place to find the STRENGTH you need is by soaking in the RICHNESS and CERTAINTY of God's LOVE for you. To KNOW God's face is shining upon you can often give you the strength you need to press on.

Taste and see the SURE and CERTAIN LOVE He has for you in Jesus Christ.

<u>Or you maybe you are here today and you've never known this LOVE of</u> <u>GOD</u>. Maybe you have never thought much about GOD – or never thought God would LOVE you.

Many of you know that is the story of Pastor Hamid from the Middle East. He had grown up hearing about GOD. And he knew God was the ruler and judge of the world. But he had never heard that God LOVES people!

Maybe that is the way you think as well. Maybe you have thoughts about what GOD is like – and how God works. You never really thought that you can be SURE that God LOVES you. But that is what God is telling you here!

God sent His SON Jesus Christ into the world BECAUSE He LOVED the world – and gives us His LOVE FREELY in HIM!

Or maybe you think it sounds ARROGANT to say:

"I know God LOVES me."

It WOULD be ARROGANT to say that if you believed God LOVED YOU because you were GOOD – or BETTER than other people.

But that is NOT why we believe God LOVES us as Christians. We DO NOT believe God LOVES us because we are loveable people who DESERVE it.

We believe God LOVES us – and continues to LOVE US – THROUGH

Jesus Christ!

It is because of HIM that God's LOVE for us is SURE and CERTAIN.

So FIRST, God tells us <u>WHY His LOVE is SURE</u>. It is SURE because we are IN CHRIST JESUS!

MP2: WHEN is it sure? (38-39 – now and forever)

SECOND, notice God tells us WHEN His LOVE is SURE.

WHEN is God's LOVE SURE? NOW and FOREVER.

We see that in both verses 38 and 39.

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

Notice Paul lists all the things we could possibly think could TAKE AWAY GOD'S LOVE from us. He does this with a number of "*contrasts*" – from ONE EXTREME to the other.

The FIRST is between LIFE and DEATH.

Paul says: "For I am sure that <u>neither **DEATH** nor **LIFE**... will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."</u>

These are the only two possibilities for us as human beings in this world. We are ALIVE or we are DEAD. And Paul tells us NEITHER ONE will be able to SEPARATE you from the LOVE OF GOD as a believer.

And this is nothing more than what he said in another letter to the Philippians about his own life. He said (**Philippians 1**):

"...it is my eager expectation...that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, <u>whether by life or by death</u>. For to me <u>to live is</u> <u>Christ, and to die is gain</u>... My desire is to <u>depart and be with Christ, for that is far</u> <u>better</u>."

<u>To LIVE</u> in this world is to LIVE for Christ – KNOWING God's LOVE through Him.

<u>To DIE</u> is to be with Christ and KNOW the LOVE of GOD in deeper and better ways!

But notice Paul says NEITHER of these things could TAKE AWAY God's LOVE.

HOW could LIFE TAKE AWAY – or SEPARATE us from – the LOVE of God?

The most OBVIOUS answer is that we could be separated from God's LOVE by turning away from Christ! There are many people who have professed faith in Jesus Christ – but later TURNED AWAY and REJECTED Christ.

This is probably one of the greatest FEARS we have as God's people.

We could be SEPARATED from the LOVE OF GOD when we LIVE in this world by REJECTING Christ.

But notice Paul says that will NEVER HAPPEN to the person who is <u>truly</u> IN CHRIST.

All genuine – and sincere – followers of Christ will be HELD by His grace while they live in this world – and NO ONE will snatch them from His hand.

THAT is the assurance that Jesus Himself gave to His Apostles – and to us – which we read in our Assurance of Forgiveness earlier in our worship. Jesus said (**John 10**):

"<u>My sheep hear my voice</u>, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one."

Jesus Christ's true SHEEP – HEAR His voice – and they run to Him.

And Jesus takes away their sin – and HOLDS them in His hand. They continue to be HELD THERE throughout their whole lives in this world. They are held FIRMLY by His grace.

So that is what Paul is emphasizing here with this first "contrast."

Neither DEATH nor LIFE will be able to SEPARATE you from God's LOVE when you are IN CHRIST.

The SECOND contrast is between ANGELS and RULERS.

"...<u>nor angels nor rulers</u>..."

As you may know, ANGELS are messengers of God who live and serve God in the heavenly realms. God sometimes sends them into this world as His messengers. But they are normally with God and are God's army of "angels and arch-angels."

And from the context it appears that RULERS refers to those spiritual beings who are on the level of the angels – but are FALLEN angels. It seems this way because of the CONTRAST Paul is making here – putting these ANGELS and RULERS as contrasting spiritual beings.

He uses this same word in his letter to the Ephesians to describe (**Ephesians 6**):

"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the **RULERS**, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places."

So it appears these RULERS are fallen angels – who are demons serving Satan himself.

SO NOTICE Paul is essentially saying that <u>NO "super-human" spiritual</u> <u>power</u> – (whether good or evil) – will be able to <u>SEPARATE you from the LOVE</u> <u>of GOD</u> in Christ Jesus. You may FEAR DEMONS – and the DEVIL himself – because they are surely MORE POWERFUL than you are.

But GOD says NO SUPER-HUMAN spiritual being will EVER be able to SEPARATE you from GOD'S LOVE in Christ Jesus.

That is helpful to know – because we know these beings powerful enough to destroy us.

<u>Satan is compared to a LION</u> – because his POWER over a human being is like the power of a LION over a human being. A 400-pound lion – with powerful jaws and teeth – can easily tear a human being to shreds.

And it is true: the Devil – and his demons – surely DOES want to tear you away from the LOVE of God and destroy you. Jesus told Peter (Luke 22):

"Simon, Simon, behold, <u>Satan demanded to have you</u>, <u>that he might sift</u> <u>you like wheat</u>, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail." But GOD tells you: IN JESUS CHRIST you are SAFE!

No RULERS or POWERS in the heavenly realms can separate you from God's LOVE in Christ Jesus.

The THIRD contrast is between **THING PRESENT and THINGS TO** COME.

This contrast is a contrast covering ALL TIME.

Thing PRESENT obviously means NOTHING in your life RIGHT NOW – will separate you from God's LOVE. There may be things you are going through – or fighting against – right NOW in life that THREATEN you. They may threaten to shipwreck your faith.

But God tells you none of these PRESENT THINGS in your life are (or will) separate you from His LOVE. He LOVES YOU NOW through it – in Christ.

"THINGS TO COME" is a BROAD category – and Paul meant it to be! It means NOTHING in your FUTURE (whether IN THIS LIFE – or IN THE LIFE TO COME) – will be able to separate you from God's LOVE for you.

The FOURTH contrast is between HEIGHT and DEPTH.

We see that Paul is seeking to cover <u>ALL TIME and SPACE</u> by these contrasts!

The previous contrast was a contrast covered ALL TIME.

This contrast covers ALL SPACE.

It seems clear the contrast is telling you that <u>NOTHING in HEAVEN or ON</u> <u>EARTH</u> is able to separate you from the GOD'S LOVE for you. The HIGHEST HEIGHTS is in the heavens. The LOWEST DEPTHS are in the earth.

And this is obviously also an "earthly" comparison – but it covers the entire cosmos. NOTHING in ALL SPACIAL REALITY can separate you from GOD'S LOVE for you!

Is your head spinning yet?

If not, Paul finishes it off with the most "*all-encompassing*" statement he can make:

"...nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

In other words: "In case I possibly left ANYTHING OUT from all that I just said – let me just make this sweeping statement... <u>NOR ANYTHING ELSE IN</u> <u>ALL CREATION</u>!"

That statement truly covers EVERYTHING!

After all, there are <u>ONLY TWO categories</u>: GOD and EVERYTHING ELSE.

<u>There is GOD</u> the CREATOR – who always exists and has ALL POWER of being.

And there is CREATION which includes EVERYTHING ELSE that there is.

And that is the contrast Paul is making here.

"<u>ANYTHING ELSE in ALL CREATION</u>" – refers to EVERY SINGLE THING that EXISTS – which GOD CREATED.

In other words, there is absolutely NOTHING that can separate you from GOD'S LOVE given in Jesus Christ!

If you are in GOD'S HANDS – and HE has set HIS LOVE on you in Jesus Christ – there is ABSOLUTELY NOTHING that can take His LOVE away from you!

App: That is something we must take some time to ponder as God's people.

As I mentioned earlier – as a believer you KNOW that THIS is the very thing you desperately WANT and NEED as a human being! If GOD LOVES you – and His FACE shines upon you – you truly a BLESSED human being.

When you have the FAVOR of your CREATOR – you are a BLESSED human being.

And it is KNOWING GOD'S LOVE for you that will give you the strength to press on through ANY DUTY, AFFLICTION, or TRIAL in life.

God is telling us all of these things for a reason.

And the REASON is so that we can KNOW He LOVES us – and be INVIGORATED and STRENGTHENED by His LOVE – to LIVE for Him in this world!

One Christian writer said it like this:

God's LOVE for us is the <u>FIREPLACE where we warm our cold hearts to</u> <u>LOVE God</u>.

This is what we must understand about the gospel of Jesus Christ:

The message is that God LOVED US. It is His LOVE for us that SENT His Son – so that all of His LOVE could be poured out to us – even when we had forfeited and LOST it all.

As the Puritan Pastor John Owen said:

"This is the great DISCOVERY of the gospel – even though God has ANGER and WRATH against SIN every day – He is now revealed as LOVE to us in Jesus Christ."

GOD'S SURE LOVE for you is the only place to find true <u>REST for your</u> <u>SOUL</u>.

GOD obviously WANTS us to spend time seeing, remembering, and considering His great LOVE for us. Otherwise, God would NOT have given us these words through the Apostle Paul.

We are prone to spend little time thinking about this LOVE of GOD.

We tend to either NOT think of God at all – or think "HARD THOUGHTS" of God. We are more often prone to think that God is DEMANDING or ANGRY or IMPATIENT with us. And that can drive us to either frustration and despair – or SAP all strength to persevere.

That is why it is important to hear these words often from God:

"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."

So WHEN is God's LOVE for you SURE? NOW and FOREVER.

And WHY is God's LOVE for you SURE? Because you are IN CHRIST JESUS.

Conclusion: God did NOT give these words only to the old Scottish preacher, Hugh Kennedy.

God gave these words of His LOVE to US – so that WE TOO can find STRENGTH to PERSEVERE in the most difficult trials – know that God LOVES US.

So use them that way today. Listen to God tell you of His LOVE this week!

Let's pray...