



D. “The love of God,” Romans 8:39—my love for God or God’s love for me?

1. Security and assurance grounded in the Christian’s fluctuating faith, obedience, love for God and perseverance or in God’s unchangeable attitude and actions?

“Though our feelings come and go, His love for us does not. It is not wearied by our sins, or our indifference; and therefore, it is quite relentless in its determination that we shall be cured of those sins at whatever cost to us, at whatever cost to Him.” C. S. Lewis

“None other lamb, none other name, none other hope in heaven or earth or sea, none other hiding place from guilt and shame, none beside thee.

My faith burns low, my hope burns low; only my heart’s desire cries out in me by the deep thunder of its want and woe, cries out to thee.

*Lord, thou art life, though I be dead; love’s fire thou art, however cold I be: nor heaven have I, nor place to lay my head, nor home, but thee.”
Christiana Rossetti*

2. God’s love comes without conditions. Romans 5:6, 8.

3. The accusers: others, Satan, self.

“When I go to bed, the Devil is always waiting for me. When he begins to plague me, I give him this answer: ‘Devil, I must sleep. That’s God’s command, “Work by day, sleep by night,” so go away.’ If that doesn’t work and he brings out a catalog of my sins, I say, ‘Yes, old fellow, I know all about them. And I know some more you have overlooked. Here are a few extra, write them down!’ If he still won’t quit and presses me hard and accuses me as a sinner, I scorn him and say, ‘St. Satan, pray for me. Of course if you have never done anything wrong in your life. You alone are holy. Go to God and get grace for yourself. If you want to get me straightened out I say, “Physician, heal thyself.” ’ ” Martin Luther



4. Relationship to God grounded in a unilateral covenant between the members of the Trinity, particularly the Father and the Son. Galatians 3:16

II. THE MEANING OF THE GRACE AND LOVE OF GOD FOR THE BELIEVER.

- A. Grace means that in our entire relationship to God, we are not treated as we deserve, but as Jesus deserves.

- B. Grace does not mean we are accepted as we are, but as Jesus is.

- C. We are not loved unconditionally, but because God has kept and fulfilled all the conditions in Christ.

- D. Jesus has merited and purchased the love of God for us. My relationship to God is as sure and unchangeable as the relationship between the Father and the Son.

“A man in a high position who had been a great profligate afterward became a great penitent. He composed a little piece of poetry after his conversion, the leading sentiment of which in his own language was to the following purpose: ‘Great God, your judgments are full of righteousness; You take pleasure in the exercise of mercy, but I have sinned to such a height that justice demands my destruction, and mercy itself seems to solicit my perdition. Disdain my tears, strike the blow, and execute your judgment. I am willing to submit, and adore even in perishing the equity of your procedure. But on what place will the stroke fall that is not covered by the blood of Christ?’ ” John Witherspoon



III. GOD'S LOVE DOES NOT IDEALIZE US; IT COMES TO US AS WE ARE.

A. The love of God and the omniscience of God

1. Apostle Paul

2. King David

3. Apostle Peter

“Though Peter’s grasp of Christ had relaxed, Christ’s grasp of him had not. Peter might cease for a time to prize his Lord’s love; he might cease either to be conscious of it or to wish for it. But that love would not change.

Repelled, it still lingered beside him. Disowned, it still asserted its property in him. Being reviled, it blessed; being persecuted, it endured; being defamed, it entreated; patient through all wrongs and changes, it loved on till it had won back the erring heart.

However real and disastrous may be the power of our evil in troubling the communion of love between us and the Lord, and in compelling Him to smite before He binds up, never forget that our sin is utterly impotent to turn away the tide that flows to us from the heart of Christ.”

Alexander Maclaren

“Grace ceases to be grace if God is compelled to bestow it in the presence of human merit. Grace ceases to be grace if God is compelled to withdraw it in the presence of human demerit. Grace is treating a person without the slightest reference to desert whatsoever, but solely according to the infinite goodness and sovereign purpose of God.” C. Samuel Storms



- B. The depth and breadth of God's love. John 3:16

IV. THE LOVE OF GOD IS IN JESUS

- A. The love of God and the relationships of the Trinity
1. We are the love gift of God, the Father, to God the Son.
 2. *"Nothing you ever do will cause God to love you any more or any less. He loves you strictly by His grace given to you through Jesus." Jerry Bridges, Transforming Grace*
- B. The love of God and an alien righteousness (the nature and imputation of the righteousness of Christ).

V. THE IMPACT OF GOD'S LOVE ON MY LIFE.

- A. The power of the Divine love



B. Heidelberg Catechism

Q1: What is your only comfort in life and in death?

*That I am not my own,
but belong –
body and soul,
in life and in death-
to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ.*

*He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood,
and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil.
He also watches over me in such a way*

*that not a hair can fall from my head
without the will of my Father in heaven:
in fact, all things must work together for my salvation.*

*Because I belong to him,
Christ, by his Holy Spirit,
assures me of eternal life
and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready
from now on to live for him.*

Heidelberg Catechism