Just a Thought

Enduring Love

"For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 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." Romans 8:38–39, ESV

Love is a definite, enduring choice of the will directed toward the true well-being of another.

There has never been a greater demonstration of that love than the cross.

God did not merely say that He loved His people. He demonstrated it. *"But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."* Romans 5:8, ESV

Christ did not die for people who had made themselves worthy of His love. He died for sinners. The nails, the thorns, the suffering, and ultimately His death testify to a love that acted for the true well-being of those who could never save themselves.

But God's love did not end at the cross.

Paul asks a remarkable question: *"He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?"* Romans 8:32, ESV

Think about the argument.

God has already given the greatest gift He could give. He did not spare His own Son. Having accomplished redemption at such a cost, will He then abandon those whom Christ redeemed?

The cross should forever settle the question of whether God intends to abandon those whom He loved enough to redeem.

Jesus said of His sheep, *"I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand."* John 10:28, ESV

Eternal life is exactly what He called it—eternal.

The assurance of the Christian does not ultimately rest upon how tightly the sheep can hold onto the Shepherd. It rests upon the Shepherd who holds the sheep.

Before going to the cross, Jesus prayed for those the Father had given Him. *"Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me."* John 17:11, ESV. Later He prayed, *"I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one."* John 17:15, ESV

Christ prayed that His people would be kept.

And throughout Scripture, God gives the same assurance. *"I will never leave you nor forsake you."* Hebrews 13:5, ESV. Jesus promised, *"And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."* Matthew 28:20, ESV.

God's love is not an affection that appears today and disappears tomorrow. It does not depend upon the constancy of our emotions. There will be days when faith seems strong and days when it seems weak. There will be obedience and there will be failure. But the security of God's people does not rest upon the strength of their grip upon Him.

It rests upon His grip upon them.

That is why Paul could ask, *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"* Romans 8:35, ESV.

His answer was nothing.

Not tribulation. Not distress. Not persecution. Not danger. Not death. Not life. Not the present. Not the future. Not anything in all creation.

The Christian does not know what tomorrow will bring. There may be suffering, disappointment, weakness, loss, and eventually death.

But there is one thing tomorrow cannot bring.

Separation from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

His love was demonstrated at the cross. His love holds His people today. His love will carry them home.

That is enduring love.

Just a thought.

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