

Assured of His Love

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Unshakeable: Romans / Romans 5:6-11

Have you ever found yourself wondering... why don't I always feel God's love?

That's actually a question I get asked fairly often. Maybe more than you'd expect.

And sometimes it's not even something we say out loud. It just kind of sits there in the back of our mind.

You read your Bible. You come to church. You know what's true. But if you're honest...

We don't always feel loved.

What if I were to ask you on a scale from 1- 10, 10 being the strongest, how strongly you feels God's love?

And I think if we're really honest — that number moves.

Our sense of how loved we are by God goes up and down. It rises when we're doing well, when the quiet times are consistent, when we feel close to Him.

And it drops when we're struggling. When we've given in to temptation. When we've been distant. When we know we haven't been who we're supposed to be.

Here's what I often tell people to try to encourage them when they come and ask me that question, why don't I feel God's love?

I share with them that God is not an emotion, God is not a feeling.

And neither can we measure His love for us based upon a feeling.

And if we measure God's love by how well we are doing or how poor we are doing, that is exhausting and discouraging.

But here's what Paul wants us to know in these verses this morning.

That you and I can be sure of God's love not because of a fleeting feeling or emotion, but God's shows His love for us at the cross.

God's love for us is not shown in emotions, but in an act of sacrificial love on a cross.

If you are looking to know how much God loves you, don't look inward, but look to the cross.

Be assured of God's love, not because of how you feel, but because of what Christ has done.

Look with me at [Romans 5](#) this morning.

It's fitting, isn't it — as we head into Holy Week, celebrating the death and resurrection of our Lord — that on the Sunday before, we stop and reflect on the love of God shown to us at the cross.

Let this kind of prepare our hearts for what we celebrate this week, the love of God, the sacrifice of Jesus for you and me on the cross.

In [Romans 5](#), Paul is teaching us about the fruit of the gospel. He spent four chapters telling us what the gospel is and how we have access to it. Now he turns his attention to what the gospel *produces* in us.

We started to celebrate that last week in verses 1-5. Because you and I have been justified — declared righteous — we have peace with God. We have unlimited access to grace. We can rejoice in our sufferings. And God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

But how do I know?

How do I know that God loves me? How can I actually be assured of that?

Because here's my problem — I can't always trust my emotions. My emotions are not always an accurate picture of reality.

I know my wife loves me. But do I wake up every single day *feeling* loved 100% by her?

Not always. Sometimes I feel her love more than other times.

And most times, it's not her — it's me. It's what's going on in my head and my heart. It's what I'm carrying from work, or just my own stuff.

But I *know* she loves me. Even when I don't feel it.

Because she has shown me. Over and over again.

And that's exactly what Paul says here. God has shown His love for us. He proved it.

How?

Well to start, He loved us at our worst. He didn't just love us at our best, when we were loveable, but He loved us even when it was hard to love us.

AT OUR WORST

You can be sure of God's love this morning because He loved you at your worst.

Read with me what Paul says there in verse 6.

Romans 5:6 *ESV*

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

Some key words should jump out at us there. That word *weak*. While we were still weak.

The idea is that when we were unable to do anything for ourselves — disabled, incapable, with nothing to offer — He loved us in spite of our weakness.

And that word *ungodly*. It takes us back to everything Paul said in those first few chapters. When we were rejecting Him. Wanting nothing to do with Him. Willfully living in rebellion against Him, worshipping everything else but Him.

He loved me even in my rebellion and rejection of Him.

Now read verse 8 with me. *"While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

It's amazing, isn't it? God didn't wait for you and me to get it all together. He didn't wait until we had something to offer Him. He didn't wait until we came to Him, or even wanted Him.

While we were still sinners — while we still rejected Him, rebelled against Him — He showed His love by sending His Son to die for our sins.

And verse 10 takes it even further. *"While we were enemies we were reconciled."*

Enemies.

It's one thing to love people who are loveable. It's one thing to love someone who loves you back, who has something to offer, who at least cares about you. But to love someone when you get nothing in return — when they are your enemy — that's a different kind of love entirely.

We don't naturally love like that. It's hard to love like that.

But here's the thing about real love — it's not just loving when it's easy. Love is making the choice to love someone even when it's hard.

I remember when Ally and I first started dating, man, I would make sure that every time she came over my apartment was clean and dishes done. I made sure I always wore me best outfits.

On those first few dates I was on my best behaviour. I spoke with grace and kindness. I wanted her to see the best of me.

We fall in love with this character that is presented to us at first, like when you first start dating you don't see the real person, because they don't let you. You see what they want you to see.

And part of that is this fear inside of all of us, this subtle, not so subtle insecurity that if they truly knew us, if this person truly knew the worst about us, they would never love us.

But loving only the best part, the goodness is not true love. You're loving an idea of a person, not the person themselves.

After 20 years of marriage, you see not just the best of a person, you see them at their lows. You've seen their struggles, their fears, you've seen their bad habits, their vices...

It's easy to love someone when all you see is the best they have to offer, but that's not love. Love is when you choose to love that person even in their lowest points. When you choose to love that person despite their failures.

That's how you know God's love you... He didn't wait until we had it all together, He didn't wait until we were godly, He didn't wait until we loved Him back, He didn't wait until we were loveable.

But even in our sin and ungodliness, even in our rebellion against Him even though we were enemies of God... God shows His love for us...

How comforting, and yet humbling it is to know... That God knows the worst about you, not just the best, but He knows who you are completely. He knows your deepest darkest secret, your deepest fears, the evil that you are capable of and yet He chose to love you any way.

God chose to love me despite me.

And it was long before you chose to love Him back...

Read verse 6 again, for while we were still weak, it says **at the right time**... Christ died for the ungodly.

At the right time. It tells us that Jesus dying on the cross for your sin was not something that was decided last minute or as a plan B when all else failed, but it's this idea that God planned before the foundation of the world, before creation, before any of us existed, He planned that He would send His Son to die for you.

At just the right time, means God was waiting for the right time for this plan to unfold, He didn't wait for you or me to get our stuff together.

How can I be sure of God's love? Because He loved me at my worst, that's how.

If that's when God loved you... at your worst...
then how can you be sure of that?

Not just believe it... but actually be assured of it?

Paul says — God didn't just say He loves you...

He showed you.

That's really the test of love isn't it? Not just that someone tells you they love you, but you can tell by their actions, they show they love you.

That's where Paul goes next, it's not just that God loved us at our worst, but we can be sure of His love because He proved it at the cross.

PROVED AT THE CROSS

Look with me at verses 7 and 8,

Romans 5:7-8 ESV

For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

See, I think the challenges for you, and I is that so much of how we understand love is purely by emotion. We think love is all about how I feel.

We hear love describe in love songs and movies as this overwhelming euphoric emotion that we just can't control, that's not love that's chemical and hormones releasing into your brain.

I'm not saying that love isn't an emotion, it is. But it's more than that.

Love *is* an emotion. It's real, it's felt, it's powerful.

But emotion alone is not the whole story. Because emotion without action is just a feeling. And feelings come and go.

The proof of love is never just what you feel — it's what you do with it.

God doesn't just feel love towards us, His love for us compels Him to do something, that's what Paul tells us in verse 8.

But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us...

God shows that He loves us.... I love that, it helps me so much. It tells me that love isn't just warm fuzzy feelings for someone, love is action.

Love is not just how I feel, love is about what I do. One of the keys to understanding that is that any time you see love in the New Testament, it is most times used as a verb.

What is a verb? A verb is an action word; a verb always describes an action. It's this hint that the biblical definition of love is not purely emotional, love is an action.

And that makes sense doesn't it? Like I if told my wife, my kids I love them, but never wanted to spend time with them, was only ever harsh or rude to them, if I wasn't there for them when they needed me.. but I told them I love them, well my actions would be telling a different story.

Love isn't just what you say, love isn't just how you feel, love is about what you do, if there is true love it compels you to do something. To demonstrate that love in some kind of action.

That's what Paul is saying here, he is telling us we can be sure of God's love, because of the great lengths that He was willing to go to show us His love.

He sacrificed His one and only son, Jesus demonstrated His love for you in that He was willing to lay down His life for you.

For God so loved the world, that He did something about it... God so loved that He gave us His only Son...

You've maybe heard of the five love languages. Gary Chapman's idea that we all give and receive love differently. Some people feel loved through words of affirmation, some through quality time, physical touch, gifts, acts of service.

And the idea is that if you want someone to feel loved, you need to speak their language. You need to figure out how they receive love and love them that way.

But here's what's interesting when you think about how God expresses His love toward us.

God's love language is acts of service.

That's how He shows it. Every single time. He doesn't just say it. He does something about it. He acts.

He so loved the world — that He gave. He loved us — and sent His Son.

God doesn't just feel love toward you. He does something about it.

And what He did — was the most costly act of service in all of history. He gave His Son. Jesus laid down His life. For you.

That's not a feeling. That's a demonstration.

You need to understand that God's love for you and me is founded on an act in history, not in the emotions we feel from moment to moment. If ever you want to know if God loves you, if ever you want to be sure of His love, just look to the cross.

Paul is saying to us this morning if you want to be sure of God's love, you're not going to find it by looking with in but looking towards the cross.

And it's hard for us to wrap our minds around that isn't it? To think that God loved me enough, that Jesus loved me enough to die for me.

Because let's be honest, I don't know about you, but I'm don't think I'm worth dying for...

Like there are far better people than little old me, people who contribute far more to society; to the forward progress of humanity, there are surely more people out there who are kinder and nicer and more generous, and more righteous than me.

Why would anyone give their life for me?

But that's kind of the point, isn't it? I'm not worth dying for, but Jesus did it anyway.

God's love is not like our love; do you see what Paul says there in verse 7.

Romans 5:7 ESV

For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—

It's this contrast, how many people would be willing to die for a good person or a righteous person? There might be one or two willing to put their hand up. Why, because well we see their life is worth preserving.

But the contrast is, let's not forget... none are righteous, no one does good.

Like how many would be willing to lay their life down for an ungodly person? Their enemy?

Probably no one, but you see the contrast? God shows His love in that while we were still sinners, we were not righteous, not holy, not good and yet Christ was willing to die for us regardless.

It's hard for us to wrap our minds around isn't it, hard for us to understand. We love when there is love in return, we love when people are loveable, worthy of our love.

So often human love is transactional isn't? Like we have to be gaining something in return to love.

That's completely opposite of God's love, the nature, the character of God's love. His love is sacrificial, unconditional, His love moves towards the unworthy, He loves even though we don't deserve it, He loves even when we don't get it right, even when we fail Him. He loves us even when we don't love Him back.

How can I be sure of God's love? My friend, don't look to your emotions, they change, they shift.

Look to the cross, God demonstrates His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

But the question we have to ask it this... if that's the kind of love that God shows towards you and me. If God's love toward you and me is that His love was not just in word, but in action, if God loved us even when it was hard to love us, if He loves us unconditionally, He loved us sacrificially, if God expresses His love to us in acts of service.

Then what does that mean for how you and I are called to love others?

1 John 4:9-11 ESV

In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

If God so loved us in this way... we also ought to love one another.

That's the implication, isn't it? Not that we should just be recipients of God's love, but sources.

The love that God shows towards us is a transforming kind of love. It changes not just who we are, but how we love others.

Imagine for a moment how this would change how I love my spouse. If I loved my husband, loved my wife the way that Christ loved me. Sacrificially, unselfishly, in acts of service, unconditionally, loving even when it's hard to love, loving even if I'm not feeling loved in return.

Imagine how this kind of love could transform a marriage...

Imagine for a moment how this kind of love could transform a family, when not just mom and dad love each other this way, but parents love their children, and children love their parents with the love of Christ.

Imagine how this kind of love could transform a church, when brothers and sisters in Christ actually served and loved each other as Christ loved us, if we loved each other as we are commanded to love each other.

Imagine how this kind of love could pour over out of this church, into this community, this province, this country.

Here's where it starts... you need to know, I need to know that we are loved by God, and we are changed by that love.

We can be sure of His love because He loved us at our worst, He proved His love at the cross.

The question you may be asking though is how do I know that God will keep on loving me? His love saved me, but what gives me the assurance that one day He won't give up on me?

Paul doesn't leave us wondering, he wants to assure us of God's love not just for today, but for tomorrow, for all eternity.

That's where he goes next.

NEVER LET US GO

We can be sure that God's love will never let us go.

Romans 5:9-11 ESV

Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

What we have to see is that Paul is building our assurance here by speaking of both the past and future tense. The idea is that if God has done this in the past, we can be sure He will do it in the future.

Let me show you what I mean. He says in verse 9 — *since we have now been justified by His blood* — that's past tense. God has already declared us righteous. By faith in Jesus we are justified, declared righteous. God has already done that for those who believe.

But if He has done that now, Paul goes on to say — *how much more shall we be saved by Him from the wrath of God?* That's future tense.

And the phrase that should stick out to us is that phrase — *how much more shall we be saved... shall be saved?*

See, you should be thinking — haven't I already been saved? Isn't that what justification means?

We see something similar right in the next verse. *For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God* — there's the past tense.

By faith in Jesus' death on the cross, you and I have been reconciled to God. We are no longer enemies of God. We have peace with God. That's already been done. But then Paul says — *now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by His life?*

Again it's future tense. Shall we be saved. I thought we were already saved. I thought that's what reconciled to God meant.

And you would be right. Praise God — by faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus we have been saved. But is our salvation complete? Is the process finished?

Because there is also this sense that we are being saved, isn't there? We aren't perfect yet. We are still being changed, still growing in Christ, still maturing. We are being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. So yes — we have been saved, it's a done deal. But our salvation is also in progress. It's ongoing.

But how long will this process go on? How long will we be in the process of being saved?

Until Christ returns. And in that day, we will be fully saved, the process will be complete. In that day we shall be like Jesus — reflecting His glory, His righteousness, His holiness.

So do you see what's happening? We have been saved — past tense. We are being saved — it's ongoing. And one day we will be saved — our salvation will be complete.

And the point Paul is making is this — if God saved you then why would He abandon you in the process? Why would He give up halfway?

Do you see the assurance? If God justified you by His blood, if He saved you when you were an enemy of God, when you were ungodly, lost in sin, rebelling against Him — how much more will He make sure you are saved until the very end?

See God's love isn't just a saving love. His love sustains us. His love keeps us saved.

You have to see that... God doesn't leave things half done, He started a work in you, He saved you, He's in the process of saving you, He will be sure to see that salvation unto its completion.

We know people like this don't we? Maybe we're one of those people. We start things, but we don't finish them. We've got a house full of half-finished projects. God doesn't leave projects unfinished, the promise He gives us in His word, is that He who started a good work in you will see it unto completion.

That's the assurance that Paul is giving us here, if He saved you past tense, if you have been justified, reconciled to God through Jesus, yes there is still growth, still work that needs to be done, but the assurance is that God will see that work until completion, His love will sustain you till the end.

And the point that Paul is making is if you think about it, the hard part is already done. He's arguing from the less to the greater. From a human perspective, which one do you think is harder?

If you been justified by faith, if you've been reconciled by the death of His Son, think about when He did that, think about what went into that?

He did that when you were an enemy, when you were rebelling against Him. And think about what it took, the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus literally gave His life, and was resurrected to save you. If God put all that effort into getting you saved - that's the hard part.

Why would He put that effort in and give up on you now, do you see? The hard part, the difficult part is getting you saved, reconciling you to God, but now, now that you're heart has been changed, you love Jesus, you want to grow in holiness, you desire to live for Jesus, the hard part is over, His love will sustain you till the end.

The same love that saved you, is the same love that secures you, that's what you need to know, you are not in danger of losing God's love, if you could do nothing to gain it, why in the world would you and I think we need to do something to keep it?

His love is not based upon your performance; His love is secured at the cross. The same love that found you at your worst is the love that holds you now. His

love doesn't just save you from past sin — it preserves you, sustains you, carries you through to the end.

Think about it this way. Imagine someone who has already made the greatest sacrifice for you. Maybe it's a parent who worked two, three jobs, gave up their own dreams, their own comfort, to get you through school, to set you up for life. They did the hard part. They paid the price.

Do you think after all of that — after everything they gave — they're going to stop caring about you now? Do you think they're going to walk away halfway?

Of course not. Because the hard part is already done.

That's exactly Paul's argument. God did the hard part. He saved you when you were His enemy. He sent His Son to die for you when you wanted nothing to do with Him. That was the costly part. That was the sacrifice.

And now that you're His — now that your heart has been changed, now that you love Jesus and want to grow — why would He give up now? The hard part is over.

His love will sustain you till the end.

So let me come back to where we started this morning.

Why don't I always feel God's love?

Maybe that's still sitting with you. Maybe you came in this morning with that question quietly in the background. And I want to speak directly to that before we close.

Here's what I want you to hear.

The answer to that question is not — try harder. Feel more. Do better. Get your quiet times consistent and maybe then you'll feel it.

That's exhausting. And that's not what Paul is saying.

Paul is pointing you to something outside of yourself. Something that doesn't move when your feelings move. Something that doesn't change when your performance changes.

The cross.

If you want to know how much God loves you — don't look inward. Look to the cross.

Because at the cross you see a God who loved you at your worst. When you were weak, ungodly, a sinner, His enemy — He didn't wait. He acted. He sent His Son.

At the cross you see a God who didn't just feel love toward you — He proved it. The most costly demonstrated act in all of history. Not a feeling. An event. It happened. For you.

And at the cross you see a God whose love doesn't just save you — it secures you. He didn't do the hard part just to walk away halfway. The same love that found you at your worst is the love that holds you right now. And it will carry you all the way home.

So maybe that number — that 1 to 10 — maybe it's still not where you want it to be this morning. Maybe you still don't feel it the way you wish you did.

But here's what I want you to know. God's love for you is not measured by that number. It's measured by the cross. And the cross doesn't move.

Be assured of God's love — not because of how you feel. But because of what Christ has done.

Let's pray.