

Men Whose Eyes Have Seen the King - Part 3

by T. Austin-Sparks

The sermon explores the unbreakable nature of God's love and our response to it amidst sin and suffering.

Duration: 29:49

Scripture: John 1:14, Romans 8:31-35, Romans 12:1

Topics: "Seeing Jesus"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the incredible love of God towards us. He explains that God is for us in every aspect of our lives, and this love is demonstrated through Jesus Christ. The preacher urges the audience to respond to this love by offering their bodies as living sacrifices to God. He also addresses the challenges and temptations that can try to separate us from God's love, such as sin, suffering, and persecution, but encourages believers to hold onto the anchor of God's love.

Transcript

In the eighth chapter of the letter to the Romans, letter to the Romans chapter eight and verse thirty-one, what then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifier. Who is he that shall condemn? It is Christ Jesus that died, yea, rather that was raised from the dead. Who is at the right hand of God? Who also maketh intercession for us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or anguish or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sorrow? Even as it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor things present nor life nor things present nor things to come nor powers nor height nor depth nor any other creation shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. We have had our hearts directed at this time to the glorified Lord Jesus as the object and as the inspiration of Christian life, endurance and service.

We have looked at him on the Mount of Transfiguration and have seen a little of what that meant to the men who were with him for the rest of their lives and what Christ glorified meant to all the others who at different times in different ways and at different places saw him in glory. Stephen and Paul and later again John. John in speaking many, many years afterwards of the sole impression that remained with him from the time spent with the Lord Jesus summed it all up in one marvelous phrase a parenthesis it is in his

gospel but was there ever a more important and wonderful parenthesis we beheld his glory glory as of an only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth.

What they saw when they saw the Lord Jesus in his glory was the manifestation of the grace of God. This portion of Paul's Roman letter we have just looked at seems to me to be Paul's way of stating what he saw in the face of Jesus Christ. I have been dwelling much upon this part of the word for many weeks past and the impression has come to me as I have read to this point and at this point that this is what the Apostle was working toward all the way through.

This is his release. He has been doing a piece of very laborious work set himself to a great treatise and it is that he has defeated all the greatest minds ever since and still is in their efforts to fathom this letter and to interpret it. You have a feeling as you read and arrive at this point now the Apostle said now that's that let me say what I'm after all the time what I have really had in mind let me unburden my heart and he does so here.

These things to which he refers what shall we say then to these things all these things he's been saying what's the upshot what do they all point to what is the supreme significance and implication of all that I have been saying and he goes on to answer his own question and to release from his heart this thing that has been there prompting all his effort and undertaking it's this mighty, mighty revelation of the love of God in Jesus Christ.

I say he was working toward that it's a painful process the first stage of the letter as you know is occupied with that painful necessity that so unpleasant necessity of exposing sin he does it very thoroughly goes through the whole Gentile world and gives not an exaggerated picture a very terrible picture of sin there is no place in the whole Bible where sin in its awfulness is more exposed than in the early part of this letter it's a terrible picture of human sin in its natural state and he proceeds from the Gentile world to the Jewish world to the world of Israel and although elect chosen called separated and given so much of divine deposit and trust and revelation it had to be given the law it had to be given the law Israel had to have the law you don't need a police force in a

perfect state you don't need law if there is no lawlessness the very giving of the law Paul says is only another proof that Jews are no better than other people in this matter of sin by the law sin is manifested I've spoken of the police force the very seeing of a policeman says there's wrong in the world the very seeing of the law means that there must be lawlessness and so Israel is no better than the rest sin is universal sin is in every creature sin is the state of the whole creation it's a terrible exposure, uncovering but very necessary oh I'm quite sure when Paul got to the end of that he sighed sadly glad to get past that to get on to something better than that really what I'm after well you see the point dear friends this is what he's after he must do that and God must make us

know sin, the reality of sin the awfulness of sin sin must become a terrible thing with us before ever we can appreciate the grace of God no one ever appreciates divine grace who has seen little or nothing of the sinfulness of sin in their heart great pains then are taken to expose the reality and the nature of sin and its effects just not to bring condemnation not to make people miserable but to lead to the grace of God to enhance divine grace so the apostle says where sin abounded abounded over Gentile and Jew over the whole race in all the world a great wave passed over and inundated the whole creation where sin like a great ocean spread itself, abounded grace did superabound greater than the greatness of sin so he comes to this at last what shall we say then to these things if God

before us who is a gift it's a marvelous thing and as you can well see the apostle is speaking much out of his own experience and history here when he catalogs these things which which are a real threat to hope and to life and to prospect the very, very real and terrible thing they are that he catalogs here shall tribulation Paul knew something about tribulation tribulation in his experience was a very real thing indeed anguish anguish yes, we find Paul more than once in anguish anguish over spiritual state of his beloved converts and the churches he says concerning the Thessalonians twice he speaks of his travail his travail for them anguish or prosecution Paul knew quite a bit about that prosecution famine tells us that he was in hunger nakedness yes, in nakedness imperial or salt and

if that's not enough death life angel principality things present things to come powers height death and I can't go on enumerating and analyzing is there any more or any other creation that covers everything and I am persuaded that there is nothing in creation all these things and anything else that you like to gather into them I am persuaded that none of these things shall separate us from the love which is in Christ Jesus that's grace that's grace sin sin need not separate us from the love of God do you believe that? do you believe that? sin need not separate you from the love of God because of Romans 6 one died it is Christ who died yea rather is risen and further he is at the right hand of God making intercession therefore sin need not and on that ground cannot separate from the love

of God now dear friends it would be perhaps helpful to stay with all these things but I just have one end in view this morning one object you know whether we individually experience all the things that are mentioned here or not the fact is that there are a tremendous lot of things a tremendous lot of things that are given in a complexion by the forces of evil with the object of separating us from the love of God suffering anguish persecution death and life for life can be a terrible thing for some people life many many things that come into our experience are just played upon by these forces of evil everywhere to tell us that the love of God is not a reality that God does not love us this is proof positive this is the evidence we need in this talk when the winds blow from every quarter

when all the elements are against we need an anchorage we need something that will hold we do see Paul his great and unquestioned devotion to the Lord there is no question about it his devotion to the Lord nevertheless knowing as he knew in his own heart that there was no controversy between him and the Lord but really in truth in truth to be perfectly honest he was not aware of being in revolt against the Lord of being contrary to the known will of God his whole being was poised and focused upon the pleasure of his Lord to be well pleasing unto him he knew it and yet with that in his heart he is meeting all these things all these things his ministry is being discredited his name is being defamed he is suspect wherever he goes he moves in an atmosphere all over the world of suspicion and

ostracism and not only in the world but amongst Christians he is not universally loved even by the churches which had their existence through his ministry no this thing is spread like an awful vapor everywhere to somehow destroy this man and his ministry and there were not a few who would be glad if he were dead he knew it he knew it and in these many forms of expression he met it almost every day of his life you know a man or a Christian meeting things like that needs an anchorage needs an anchorage when things beat on you and sorrow overwhelms you you need an anchorage your anchorage will not be self vindication or self justification you won't get anywhere along that line your anchorage will not be your good argument and answer to your enemies that won't help you at all your anchorage

will not even be your own sense of rightness the only anchor that will hold in all this is God's love for you God's love for you you may make mistakes and we are always wrong when we think of Paul or any other

apostle as being faultless I used to in younger days to feel it was a terrible thing terrible thing to allow myself to think that Paul could be wrong or any other apostle be wrong make a mistake thought these men must be infallible oh no, we're wrong we're wrong we take that attitude Paul made his mistake he let himself in for difficulties by his mistake but what he came out with was this the love of God isn't changed when I make mistakes the love of God does not let me go when I make mistakes when I default, make wrong decisions take wrong directions perhaps say wrong things that

does not break the cable between my soul and the anchor of his love it holds I am persuaded I am persuaded that none of these things none of these things anything in creation that you can mention shall separate us from the love which is in Christ Jesus that is what Paul saw in the face of Jesus Christ John called it full of grace Paul would have endorsed that indeed this is his great endorsement sin yes horrible awful despicable wicked unfaithfulness on the part of Israel departure from divine intention yes his people God forbid it's one of his nine God forbids in this letter Israel yes but look what Israel's done look at Calvary look at their work look at Stephen look at their work look what they're doing everywhere Israel yes they may be under judgment they may be suffering for this in

their wickedness their iniquity they may have been set aside for the dispensation of God's instrument because of their unfaithfulness God says the apostle that has not ended God's love for them that has not ended God's love for them judgment in this world and in this life is never a proof that God's love is at an end it may be the very proof of his love better for us to suffer when we do wrong to discover something new of his love through suffering I want you to say that many of us what little we do apprehend of the divine love come to them by the knowledge of our own faultiness and what it leads to but here it is great illustration Israel even yet a spiritual company from the natural Israel Paul says will be found will be found in the kingdom and in the church God has not washed his

hands eternally of them as a people and said no Jew no Israelite will ever again have a chance not at all bad, bad as they have been done what they have done he set his love upon them his love will keep the door open so we could go on but you see dear friends the message who shall separate from the love of God what shall we say to these things what shall we say to these things if God is for us and this is how he is for us and where he is for us and when he is for us through everything his love what shall we say well after making this tremendous sweep of divine love and then illustrating it with Israel in this most impressive way he answers his question his interrogation what shall we say to these things he answers it I beseech you therefore by the mercies of God present to your bodies a

living sacrifice holy acceptable which is your reasonable service what shall we say the answer must not be in words but in an act present your bodies by the mercies of God that love so amazing so divine demands our soul our life our all sir we would see Jesus what are you looking for this is what you ought to see when you see Jesus the love of God in the face of Jesus Christ

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