

Begin by having everyone read from Romans 8:35-39

Romans 8:35-39 (NAS)

35*Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

36*Just as it is written, "For your sake we are being put to death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered."*

37*But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.*

38*For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,*

39*nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Beginning question: Share if Romans 8:28 has somehow been applied to your life since last week.

1. If so, describe how.
2. If so, share how Romans 8:28 impacted you.

I. Jesus' love is for the here and now

A. Romans 8:35 *"Who will separate us from **the love of Christ?** Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"*

1. The verse is about the love of Christ and not our loving Christ.
2. It speaks of the immense love that Jesus has for us.

B. How is it here and now?

1. **Illus:** Jack Benny and the single rose to his wife.
 - a. Jack Benny was a comedian from the parent's generation.
 - b. Upon his death, his will specified that a single rose be delivered each day to his wife for as long as she lived.
 - c. His wife, Mary Livingstone, wrote, "Every day since Jack has gone the florist has delivered one long-stemmed red rose to my home. I learned that Jack actually had included a provision for the flowers in his will. One red rose to be delivered to me every day for the rest of my life."
<http://www.snopes.com/glurge/jackbenny.asp#TVklyOSzzhGhQ9Jz.99>
 - d. The single rose reminded Mary of Jack's love for her.
 - e. However, Jack Benny could no longer love Mary in person since he was gone.

C. We, however, can experience the love of Jesus right now in our lives because He is alive.

1. The resurrection of Jesus gives us a Savior who can love us in the here and now.
2. Therefore, Jesus through His Holy Spirit can love on us in the here and now.

Small Group Time:

- a. Although this is not directly related to the point, share your thoughts about the action of Jack Benny in sending his widow a rose each day of her life after his death. Share why most people have such a positive response to his action.
- b. Share how we can be more like Jesus and be present in the here and now for our loved ones.

II. Jesus' love is enduring

- A. Romans 8:35 ***“Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?”***
 1. Verse 35 begins with the question: “Who will separate us...?”
 2. I shared last week that this is a semi-rhetorical question.
 3. Based on the first eight and half chapters of Romans, we should know the answer – nothing can separate us.
- B. Word Study: ‘who’.
 1. The interrogative pronoun ‘who’, could also be translated as ‘what’.
 2. In this verse, the thrust of what Paul is saying would be impersonal so it could be translated as ‘what’.
- C. Word Study: ‘separate’
 1. Means to divide, to vacate or to create space.
 2. It could also be translated ‘to put asunder’ and a form of this word is translated as ‘divorce’.
 3. It’s a strong word.
- D. Paul is telling us that nothing can divorce us from the love that Jesus has for us.
 1. Again, it’s not our love for Jesus.
 2. It’s Jesus’ love for us.
- E. We never have to worry about being separated from the love of Jesus, which is important because of the power of separation to cause anxiety.
- F. How wonderful is it to know that nothing can separate us from Jesus’ love for us.
 1. We should be free from separation anxiety when it comes to Jesus’ love.
 2. Jesus loved us then, loves us now and will love us forever.

Small Group Time:

- a. If we are to be more like Jesus, how we can live out the example of His enduring love with our loved ones?
- b. Share a situation where “nothing can separate us from our loved one” could and should be applied.

III. Jesus' love protects; not prevents

- A. Romans 8:35 *"Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?... 38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
1. God's love is current and binding, but it does not guarantee us that trials and tribulation will not occur.
 2. The mere fact Paul mentions specific categories of trials means that they happen to Christians.
 3. **Illus:** Paul would **not** write, "Will aliens from Mars separate us from the love of Christ?"
 - a. This wouldn't mean anything because there are no aliens from Mars.
 - b. And if he did write it, it would mean that there are aliens from Mars capable of space travel.
- B. How could God protect and not prevent?
1. Illustration of Turtle Wax
 2. You can wax your car with the best car wax on the market to protect it, but it won't stop rain, snow and sleet from falling on your car.
 - a. It won't stop bugs from splattering on your car.
 - b. It won't stop rocks or car doors from dinging your car.
 - c. Those things still happen.
- C. So, what's the difference between Turtle Wax and God?
1. Turtle Wax can only offer limited external protection.
 2. God provides unlimited internal and eternal protection.
 - a. The ultimate external protection is the resurrection.
 - b. Internally, God renews our soul daily – His mercies never cease.
- D. Romans 8:35 and 38-39 tell us that tribulations will still occur.
1. It also informs us that the love of Jesus will still be present in our lives.
 2. Romans 8:28 already told us that all things will work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose.

Small Group Time:

1. Share about a instance in your life when a trial hit and you had a hard time believing that God's love was present in your life.
 - a. How did it play out?
 - b. How did God's love eventually prevail or are you still working it out?
2. Share how Sunday's message has impacted your understanding of God's love for you.