



For I am persuaded that

**NEITHER** Death  
Life  
Angels  
Principalities  
Things Present  
Things to Come  
Powers  
Height  
Depth  
Created Things

will be able to separate  
us from the

*Love* of  
GOD

ROMANS 8:38-39

July 26, 2020

Introduction

Invitation

Call to Worship:

Today we gather together to worship from many locations. Even though we are separated by distance, we are joined together in Christ. We have the confidence to know that nothing - nothing at all - will separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Let us worship our God!

Hymn: "Just a Closer Walk with Thee"

Reading the Word: Romans 8:26-39

Message: "God and Us"

Rev. Dr. Deb Hanson

Prayer:

Gracious and loving God, it is because of your steadfast and amazing love for us in Jesus, that we can live confidently in your grace and mercy. We are assured that wherever we are, and wherever we go, you go with us, and you empower us to share your amazing love with others. You call us to love our enemies, and then you give us the ability to figure out how. You ask us to follow the guidance of the Spirit as we seek to live faithfully in our lives. Thank you for empowering us to be your servants in this world. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Hymn: "Blessed Assurance"

Blessing

## Romans 8:26-39

Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified, he also glorified.

God's Love in Christ Jesus. What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake, we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced 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.





SERMON TRANSCRIPT GIVEN BY  
Rev. Dr. Deb Hanson

## Message “God and Us”

Rev. Dr. Deb Hanson

Paul writes: “For I am convinced 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 (NRSV)

The entire passage for today is Romans 8:26-39, and I encourage you to read all the verses. Why? Because when we see this Scripture as a whole entity, we have a larger picture of the love of God in Christ Jesus. It is a love that holds us close, abides with us throughout our lives, and gives us hope when we feel most discouraged. This passage tells us that God, in Christ, walks in solidarity with human beings.

We do nothing to earn God’s love. Like a loving parent, God’s love for us is strong and steadfast. If we go to the beginning of this lesson at verse 26, we read that the Spirit helps us to pray with sighs too deep for words. Prayer is our connection and communication with God as we grow in that relationship. Yet, there are so many times when we falter and can’t find the words. Somehow, it raises a lot of anxiety because we falter in finding the “right” words, or we don’t seem to even have words for prayer.

Rev. Rick Morley writes, “Prayer. Really, it has nothing to do with the words. Nothing. I mean, the words are nice. Quaint. But, real union with God comes not from words but from sighs too deep for words.”\* Think about it. There are times we have only sighs. Romans 8 tells us that God hears our prayer because the Holy Spirit is with us, understands, and speaks for us.

There is a story that has been around for a while about a little child who was kneeling at the bed to say his nighttime prayers. He was reciting the alphabet, and when his mother asked what he was doing, he said, “I can’t think of the words, so I’m saying the alphabet so God can take the letters and put them together.\*\* God hears our prayers whether they are the alphabet, or sighs too deep for words.

I don’t know about you, but that gives me reassurance, that, even in our most difficult times, when we feel lost and alone, when we struggle to know God’s presence, we can be sure that God is with us, holding us and carrying us until we can regroup and feel on track again. God is there for us!

Look at verse 31: “If God is for us, who is against us?” Read that again: “If God is for us, who is against us?” Those are powerful words that we especially need to hear and believe during many times of our lives: whether we are in the midst of a pandemic, or experience pain and loss, or struggling to find ways to keep ongoing. We have hope because God is for us!

Romans 8:37 quotes Psalm 44:22: "We are more than conquerors through him who loved us." We can do this because God is there to help us! The journey of faith isn't a smooth path, but all along the way, we have the presence of God who came to earth to save us through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the Christ. God is for us!

Romans 8:38-39 are probably two of my favorite verses in the entire Bible. Every time I read them, I find such reassurance and hope because I am reminded that no matter what I face in life, God is there, and nothing will separate me - or any of us - from God's love.

Even my mom knew that when she was in the late stages of Alzheimer's Disease. She would sit and talk with God. We never really knew what she was saying, but when we asked, she often was able to tell us that she was talking to God. Somehow in the dark recesses of her mind where she had lost so much of her memory and comprehension, she knew that God was there and that she could freely have those conversations.

Nothing separates us from God's love: not dementia, the coronavirus, not war, illness, upsetting events, hardships, challenges, other people or circumstances, or even death. God is with us through it all and never stops loving us. This is the hope for our lives. This is an image of what is to come: not a future full of fear and anxiety, but one that holds and offers hopeful confidence in God's presence with us in all things. May we grasp onto that hope and hang on with the confidence of being the children of God!

Know that God loves you more than you could ever imagine! That is our hope. That is our joy. That is our journey. That is God's promise in Christ Jesus. Amen.

\* Found at Text This Week in the commentaries for this passage.

\*\* source unknown