

Romans 8:32-39

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Quest for Love

There is a quest today among mankind that is more significant than Columbus's search for a new world, more costly than science's pursuit of space. It is a quest that has made superficial heroes out of movie stars, cultic idols out of singers, millionaires out of romance novelists. It is a quest that has rightfully called young people to leave their homes in pursuit of life partners, it is a quest that has wrongfully perverted God ordained human intimacy. It is a quest that has turned both the legal profession and the pet industry to multibillion dollar profits. It is a quest for love.

The world cries out "I want to be loved!" And though it knows little of the real meaning of love, it nonetheless thirsts after it as a rushing deer seeks the fresh water of a forest brook. How sad it is that the very source that quenches this thirst is so much ignored.

The apostle John reminds us that "God is love" (1 John 4:16). He also reminds us of the greatest expression of God's love: "This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him" (1 John 4:9 NIV). It was out of love for mankind that God sent forth His Son to be conceived in a virgin and born as a man. It was out of love that the child was born in poverty and lived in humility. It was out of love that God gave His Son as a sacrifice for the sin of the world, and it is out of love that God grants forgiveness and eternal life to all who confess and believe: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

During the Christmas season this failed quest for love is felt the keenest in peoples hearts, and often the resultant hurt and unquenched thirst is pushed aside with the business celebration. Yet God would have mankind remember that the centre of the celebrations - the Christ Child, is the very point of the quest for love's end!

For the unconditional love of man, the child in the cradle became the Son on the cross. It was He who said: "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him" (John 7 NIV).

In our minds eye, let this prayer be written across the manger scene: "I bow my knees to the Father... that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3).

What is my response:
