

SHOW US THE FATHER

ROMANS 8:32

A SACRIFICE FOR SINNERS



FIRST BYRON CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

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INTRODUCTION

How do I know if God loves me? Have you ever asked that question? It's the kind of question we might ask when going through hard times: pain, loss, failure, family trouble, etc. **How do I know God loves me?** Maybe, we don't feel loved by anyone else or we don't even love ourselves very much. **How do I know God loves me?** Or maybe, we don't question that God loves us, but we do question how much he loves us. We believe he loves us, but it doesn't seem to be a very deep or passionate or constant love. **How much does God love me?** Unanswered, these questions will weaken our love for God in return. Thankfully God wants to answer these questions and does so in Romans 8:32.

BACKGROUND

During this series, we have seen God the Father from many different angles.

- Designer for creatures
- Love for the loveless
- Compassion for the hurting
- Provision for the poor
- Discipline for the disobedient
- Assurance for doubters
- Peace for the anxious
- Grace for Prodigals
- A Giver for Receivers
- A Sacrifice for Sinners

In this last sermon in the series, we will see into the center of our Father's heart.



How do I know if God loves me? And if so, how much does he love me?
Jesus shows us the Father's answer to this on the cross.



1. THE FATHER SPARED NOT HIS OWN SON

Most Fathers spare their sons

Most fathers have the tendency to protect and shield their own children from pain, loss, injury, danger, and death. It's a natural instinct that is not only God-given, but God-like.

A general who has a son in the army, will try to spare his son going to the most dangerous wars or parts of the battlefield. A coach who has a son in his football team may try spare his son injury by moving him to another position rather than face a violent opposing player. A teacher grading his son's capstone project may spare him his most rigorous marking.

There are many situations and circumstances in which we spare our children in ways we do not spare others. We show favoritism and bias towards them. We make exceptions for them we would not make for others.

This Father did not spare his own Son

He who did not spare his own Son (Rom. 8:32)

God the Father did not make any exception for his Son. He did not treat him better because he was his only Son. There was no favoritism. He did not hold him back from anything painful or dangerous or hold back anything painful or dangerous from him. He did not spare his eyes, ears, head, hands, feet, back, heart, body, mind or soul. He did not spare him denial and betrayal at the hands of his friends or of feeling abandoned by his father.

CHANGING OUR STORIES WITH GOD'S STORY

How can I know God loves me? Because when given the choice of whether to spare his uniquely beloved Son or me, he chose to spare me. Given the choice between hell for me or hell for Jesus, he chose hell for Jesus.

How much does God love me? He loves me so much, he spared Jesus nothing. He spared you from all that Jesus was not spared. He spared your eyes, ears, head, hands, feet, back, heart, body, mind, and soul. He spared you

AND WHEN I THINK
THAT GOD HIS SON NOT SPARING
SENT HIM TO DIE,
I SCARCE CAN TAKE IT IN.



If God didn't spare his Son,
what did he do with him?



2. THE FATHER GAVE UP HIS SON FOR US ALL

A Sacrificial Son

...but gave him up...(Rom. 8:32).

While most Fathers would defend their sons from danger and evil, our Father gave up his perfect Son to the worst evil. Like Abraham in Genesis 22, God surrendered his Son entirely. He handed him over

- to the penalty of his broken law
- to religious leaders, military leaders, and civil leaders.
- to guilt, condemnation, sentencing, execution.
- to the devil and evil spirits
- to divine anger and the judgment of hell.

This is the language of Old Testament sacrifice. As Jewish fathers handed over their best lambs as a sacrifice to God for sin, so our heavenly Father handed over his best Son as a sacrifice for sin on the altar of the cross.

A Substitute Son

...for us all...(Rom. 8:32)

"For" is not just for our benefit, but in our place. Not just for our good but instead of us. "Us all" reminds us that this sacrifice is equally a substitute for all God's children. He's not more of a sacrifice for some and less of a sacrifice for others. He is equally a sacrificial substitute for all his people.

CHANGING OUR STORIES WITH GOD'S STORY

How can I know God loves me? I can know God loves me by what he gave for me. We might spend a few dollars on a colleague's birthday present. We might spend more on a friend. We spend the most on our children. The amount given expresses the amount of the love. When we see the Son on the altar of the cross, God is mouthing to us "I love you!"

How much does God love me? God loves me so much that he gave his only Son to the worst death so that I could have the best eternal life.

A SACRIFICIAL SON
A SUBSTITUTE SON
FOR SINFUL SONS
AND DAUGHTERS



If he gave me his Son to save my life
what else will he give me to live?



3. THE FATHER WILL FREELY GIVE US ALL THINGS

All things for us all

...how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? (Rom. 8:32).

"All things" does not mean everything we want, but all things we need. It doesn't mean all that all God's other children have, but all that each child needs. Some children need more than others. Some children can cope with more than others. Some children give what they've been given more than others. "All things" may also be a reference to the believer's ultimate inheriting of the earth (Ps. 37:11)

What ever is in our "all things," it's all grace. Not one thing is deserved, Nothing is paid to us as a debt due. "All things" are all gifts. "Graciously" is translated differently in different versions. It can be translated "freely," or "cheerfully," or "willingly." There's no reluctance here. The whole being of God is in the giving.

All things with Jesus

This is an argument from the greater to the lesser. For example, if someone gives you a million dollars, he'll also give you money to buy a coffee. If he gave us something so great, he'll also give us something so small.

Similarly, if God the Father gave us such a great gift as his Son, how much more will he give us such small things as enough to live on. "With him also" reminds us that for the Christian, every small gift comes connected with the greatest gift.

CHANGING OUR STORIES WITH GOD'S STORY

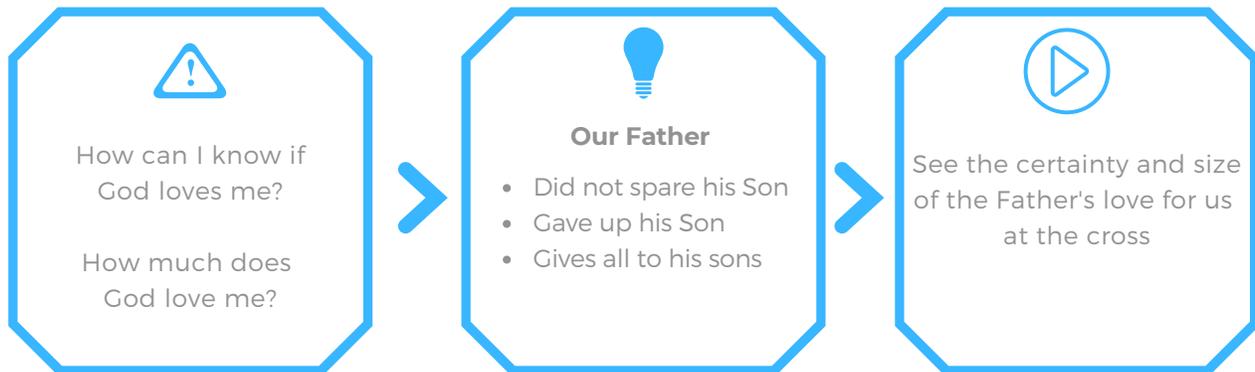
How can I be sure God loves me? He gave me the greatest gift of his love. So he will give me the smallest gifts of his love. He gives to me freely, happily, cheerfully.

How much does God love me? He loves me so much he gives me all things with Jesus. He gives in such a way that it makes me see Jesus in all things and love him more in return.

IF WE HAVE THE ONE GREAT THING
WE WILL HAVE ALL SMALL THINGS



SUMMARY



A NEW CHAPTER

Doubt: When you doubt God's love, let Jesus assure you of his love at the cross.

Self-hate: When you hate yourself, let Jesus show you God's love for you at the cross.

Need: When you are poor or needy in any way, let Jesus show you God's giving at the cross.

Cold: When you feel no love for God, let Jesus show you God's love for you at the cross.

Hopeless: When you have no hope of salvation, let Jesus show you God's salvation at the cross.

Worthless: When you feel of no value, let Jesus show you God's valuation at the cross.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What makes it hard for you to believe God loves you?
2. When do you feel most loved by God?
3. When have you spared your son or daughter?
4. How would you explain "substitution" to an unbeliever?
5. How would you counsel a depressed Christian who feels worthless?
6. How would you disciple a Christian who had been abused by their earthly father?

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