

God's Invincible Love for His Children, p. 2

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Well, take your Bibles and go ahead and turn to Jeremiah 31. We're in a series on the sovereign grace of God. I'm calling it "The Eight Unbreakable Strands in the Cable of Sovereign Grace." I want you to picture a massive suspension bridge cable and it usually has an inner core and all types of cords wrapped around the inner core to make an unbreakable superstrong cable and that's what our Lord has done. He has extended a line to us, a line that is made up of eight strands of unbreakable cable.

Now last week we talked about the middle one, the most important one, the one that everything else builds upon, not last week, the week before last, and that was God's grand or passionate all-consuming purpose to glorify himself. If you miss that, nothing else is going to work together. You've got to understand everything is about God's glory and then you're good. If you start with man's need and what's good for man or what sounds fair for man, or what sounds equitable for mankind, you're going to miss everything. You start with God. We call that being glory of God focused or God-centered. So God says, "For my own glory, to make much of me, to show the universe the glories and the wonders and the majesty and the attributes that I have, I'm going to do something in saving sinners and to building my church."

Now we come to the second message and that's "God's Invincible Love." Now we began it last week so I'll review briefly beginning in Jeremiah 31 and we'll talk about God's invincible love. In Jeremiah 31, the context is that Israel is in doubt. "God, are you still there? Are you still faithful? Is your love for us still ever true?" And the prophet responds in verse 3 of Jeremiah 31 and says,

3 The LORD appeared to him from afar, saying, "I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness."

It's almost like God says, "What do you mean do I love you? I love you with an everlasting love." What a statement that is. I've meditated a lot on that statement in my study break and in recent weeks. "I love you with an everlasting love." Now I believe encompassed in this love is everything I want to say about love, and I know it's not explicitly stated but at least in the balance of systematic truth we have these categories, if you will, or these aspects of God's love. First of all, I believe the love of God for all mankind is included here; then that special love for Israel; then beyond that, God's even more special love for the elect Israel, there was a lineage within Abraham's descendants

of which God chose to specially bless and favor; then all of that points to God's unique supreme love for his church, those who would believe on Christ, those who would be followers of Christ and become a part of his church.

Now last week we talked about, first of all, the simple phrase, I. God is love, and the only thing I want to bring out this morning for you to get your mind wrapped back around is that the totality of God's being is love but it does not cancel out the other attributes of God. There is a sense in which, for lack of a better way to say it, all of God's attributes flavor his love and his love flavors all of his attributes. God is holy but he's love so his love is holy. God is just but he's love so his love is just. God is eternal and God is love so his love is eternal, at least for his elect children it is. His love is not eternal for those who are unsaved and reject his Gospel because then his love will end and they will go into everlasting destruction and be under his wrath. But what I'm saying is you can't separate the attributes of God out, they all intertwine and his love is such an overarching aspect of who he is it touches everything else. His love is like the dye that affects every part of the fabric. His love is like the spice in the dish that flavors all of it thoroughly.

We talked about the fact that God has, II. a variance in his love. That is, God is God and God has love and does love different people in different ways in different times. Remember I said to you how we use the concept of love and it's not completely wrong, I'm not saying you need to be rebuked for it necessarily, but we say, "I love my wife. I love my dog. I love that plate of food. I love that sunset." We understand that we don't mean the same thing, we don't love our wife like we love our dog; well, a few nuts do but most of us don't. So God has variances in the way he loves.

Studying this truth has changed my life. I knew basically these things but once again as your pastor, I had to back up, take God out of the box I had put him in and let him be God as he declares himself to be, not as I presupposed he ought to be. But we as mankind do that in general, don't we? We think God's got to have the basic simple type of love and he loves everybody the same all the time, period. Sorry, unbiblical. God looks at you and says, "Why don't you let me be God? What does my word say? Yield to what I say about myself and quit trying to help me out with my public relations. I am who I am." I love that about a God where he says, "I am that I am." In other words, "I just am and you need to get over it. Don't make me who you think I am, I am who I am."

So God has a variance in his love. Now we talked about this in the way that God has a special love for all mankind and that is – let me say this – God's love for all is so wonderful, so powerful, it's incomparable, and we talked about God sincerely loves all mankind. He doesn't just say this, the Scriptures bear out that God from his heart does love all men of all time. Not only does he sincerely love all, he's been very active in his love for all. All the numbers of ways man roams this earth with the utter blasphemous ingratitude that he's just supposed to have all the stuff he has. He has a right to this oxygen he breathes. He has a right to this body he didn't make or create. He has a right to get eyesight or hearing or health or wealth or children and grandchildren. We could go on and on with the great, abundant, continuous ways God showers goodness and love on all mankind.

So God loves all and he has demonstrated this over and over. He loves them sincerely and he loves them with activity, but also we pointed out that God's love has boundaries. This is all review. There will be a time when those who have not believed on Jesus Christ will sin their way beyond the love of God. There is a place called hell. There is a place of eternal punishment and damnation where the justice of God will be glorified in punishing sinners who deserve that punishment. God's love has bounds, at least his love for all mankind does.

Now we come to a third thing, C. in our outline under the variance of God's love, and that is his special love for Israel. God told us in the Bible, "I'm choosing Abraham and I'm choosing to especially show my favor, my care, my love for Abraham." It didn't mean he didn't love all mankind but he said, "I'm going to especially love Abraham and his descendants." Deuteronomy 23:5 reminds us,

5 Nevertheless, the LORD your God was not willing to listen to Balaam, but the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you because the LORD your God loves you.

This is Israel. God chose to especially intervene here and not honor the request of Balaam for a curse but to bring a blessing. Why? God says, "Because I chose to love you." "Pastor, why does he do that?" I don't know. It's his good pleasure to do so. He chose to do so.

Another one, Genesis 12:1 through 3 as we see this special favor on Abraham and his descendants,

1 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; 2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; 3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

So God says, "I'm just going to especially favor and bless the descendants of Abraham."

You know, it's interesting to me, I've said this to you many times but those who are more Arminian in their theology, those who want to put man in charge of their salvation, that God sort of just throws out the offer of salvation and then it's completely up to man to make the decision, as if God is not active anymore after Jesus died, but I've never met an Arminian who does not agree with me that God sovereignly chose Abraham over everybody else. Now why was Abraham chosen? Why weren't the untold millions of other men on the earth chosen? Why Abraham? Because God sovereignly chose Abraham. Nobody rejects that. It's almost like God can't do that anymore. He did it one time but he's not doing it again. Well, the Scripture doesn't bear that out. As a matter of fact, thought Scripture bears out God's elect choice of the Old Testament Israel as a type,

a foreshadow of what he does in the New Testament in his church, but we'll get to that in a moment.

Malachi 1:2 and 3. He says, "I have loved you." Why did God have this favor? He said, "I just chose to love you."

2 "I have loved you," says the LORD. But you say, "How have You loved us?" "Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the LORD. "Yet I have loved Jacob; 3 but I have hated Esau, and I have made his mountains a desolation and appointed his inheritance for the jackals of the wilderness."

Now within the lineage of Abraham, God says Jacob is going to be uniquely loved and Esau is not. Now I'm going to go into a lot of thoroughness on this idea of Jacob I loved and Esau I hated next week, Lord willing. If the Lord sustains me through next week, I'll preach it next week. But, no, two weeks. I'm sorry. Next week is total depravity. It will be two weeks. It will be Friend Day. Well, that will be good for Friend Day, won't it? It's just the way it falls.

So God says, "I chose Abraham. I have a special love for Abraham and his descendants. Then within the descendants of Abraham, Jacob I loved and Esau I hated." Child of God, listen to me: don't try to help God's reputation out. Your job is not to defend him, your job is to proclaim him. Do you know what God is? He's a roaring lion, you just let him loose and he can take care of himself. Just turn him loose, he'll do his work.

Well, so God says, "I have a great love for all mankind beyond comprehension. Sincerely and actively I love all mankind but I have an even more special love for Israel and even a more unique and special love for a line within Israel, the line I have chosen through Jacob." Now we come to D. under the variance of God's love: God's superior or greatest display of love for his elect church. God's greatest display of love is for his elect church. Now I'm going to leave D and I'm going to turn it into III. That's not really the way you are supposed to outline something but I just couldn't get away from it. So D is going to become III because I just believe this needed its own Roman numeral. It's just too important to be D in an outline, all right?

III. God's supreme display of love for his elect church. Now you need to strap in. This isn't an adult nursery. Get your mind alert. Think with me this morning. You are to love you God with all your mind, that means you have to work at thinking through the things of God sometimes. Sometimes God gives us stuff that a seven-year-old can easily grasp. That's wonderful, but sometimes God gives you something where the Spirit of God has got to work in your mind and you've got to work in your mind to get it. So work with me this morning, say, "God, help me love you with all of my mind this morning."

Well, 1 John 3:1 is a verse I want us to look at,

1 See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God;

And the world doesn't know us. Now this is a unique subset of people. Leave it up there for a second. This is a unique subset of people. This isn't God's love for all mankind. You are absolutely, if you interpret that that way, you're going to misinterpret the whole Bible. Interpret it in its grammatical, cultural, historical context. This is to the church. This is for believers. "How great a love" is the idea of a certain sort of love, a certain type of love. God has this great love for all mankind but then for the church, how great. There is a certain type of love the Father has bestowed on us unlike everyone else that has made us to become such that we could be called the children of God, and the world doesn't get it. Some of you have fleshly worldly reasonings and you're not getting it right now because you just don't think God should be that way, to which Paul would respond out of Romans, "Who are you, O man, to answer back to God?" There is no other way to interpret that verse. A special, supreme love God has for his children.

Now again from the human side, those are those who repent and believe on Jesus. They are humanly responsible to do that or they are not saved, but God will not allow us to stay on the human side. God says, "That's true. I teach you that, but you must also come on the divine side and realize I am behind all of it." What special unique sort of love. Are you a believer in Jesus Christ? God says, "You can't comprehend my love for all mankind but you certainly can't comprehend this special sort of unique love I have for you." That's why we don't have to teach people that they can lose their salvation in order to get them to serve God, all we've got to do is let the Spirit help them understand how much God loves them and then they will want to serve him.

Romans 8:28 and 29. Turn over there with me. New Testament, Romans 8, and we'll look at verses 28 and 29. Now we're going to spend a lot more time in Romans as we develop these messages but in talking about this supreme love God has for his elect church, we need to go here first. Romans 8:28 and 29, "And we know that God causes," in other words God is the actor here, he causes something to happen. Okay, what has God caused?

28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

God causes certain things to happen for those who he calls according to his purpose. You cannot inject man in this. Man is not active in this text. The Scripture requires you to banish man's ability and activities from your mind right now and focus on what God says he does. God causes certain things to happen for those he calls.

Now those he calls, that's the same word like the elect. Now here's an interesting truth: the word "calls" here is the same root word for the word "church, ekklesia," and the word "church or ekklesia" means "called out ones." Almost 100 times in the New Testament, the word "ekklesia" is used and it means "called out ones." The church is made up of called out ones. You were once one type of person, you were once identified with the world and Satan and the worldly kingdom, lived for yourself, did religion your own way with the way you were comfortable, and then one day God caused you to be a called out one and all kind of good stuff follows after that.

Now, when we look at this verse in Romans 8:28 and the Bible says God causes all things to work together to the good for those who are called, this word "called," first of all let me tell you what it's not, then let me tell you what it is. First, it is not what we refer to as the universal call or the external call, alright? There is a universal call of God to all mankind. Now listen to me: Jesus in effect went on the cross and still today has bloodstained hands spread out to the entire world and says, "Whosoever wills, may come." And if they'll repent and come, he'll take them. Are you listening? That's the universal call. That's the external call. But there's one great problem with that: if Jesus had stopped there, do you know how many men would have the virtue, the inherited, inherent I should say, virtue and wisdom to turn to Jesus? Do you know how many would have it? Goose egg. Zero. If that's all Jesus did, none would come. But there is a universal call, and by the way, we are a part of that. That's why you witness. That's why you share the Gospel. That's what I preach the word and preach the Gospel. That's why Easter is coming. We're to be a part of that. We're to urge all men everywhere to repent and believe. That's the universal or external call and that's something we must be about and that we must be faithful being a part of.

Listen to Act 17:30, this example of a universal call,

30 Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent,

And they should and there is nothing that God does to keep them from it. The fact that men will not come and repent is the error and the fallenness and the depravity of their own soul and heart. It's not God's fault. In effect, if God wanted to be perfectly just and if God wanted to be in perfect harmony with his own holy justice, he would send Jesus to the cross, send out the universal call, the external call, and when none responded cast all of us, everyone who ever lived straight into hell and it would have been right, good and just if God did so. But God said, "You know, my love for those I want to be in my church is bigger than just to do that. I'm going to go further than just that." Now while every Christian, every preacher believes in the universal call, we have to remind ourselves, by the way, that when we give out that universal call, we witness to a friend at work or the neighborhood or we preach from the pulpit, whatever it is, some will respond, some will reject, some will postpone judgment and they'll say, "I'll keep thinking about it. I'll keep listening." It's always going to be that way. Some will come to Jesus, some will say, "No. I've made up me a little good Southern religion here in the Bible Belt that I'm comfortable with so I ain't going to be bothered with this Gospel you're preaching." And then others will say, "I'll postpone judgment. I'll think on it for a while."

But now let's get back to Romans 8:28. This is not the universal call when he says, "who are called according to His purpose," this is, in effect, what we call the effectual call or the internal call. Listen to me, church, listen to me: why would you limit God that God can only work through external physical things we can see and understand? We can hear this Gospel preached, we know that's a call, and we can discern those things, but somehow once again we put God in a box that God can't work beyond what I'm

comfortable in my understanding and grasping. If I can't grasp how it works, it's not true. No, God works in the external universal call but God also works in an internal or what we call effectual call. The word "effectual" or the word "efficacious" means "it achieves the end for which it was set out to achieve." Now listen to me: when God sends out the effectual call to a soul, it never fails. The universal call goes all over, the effectual call doesn't go all over.

Now who are these whom get this internal or this effectual call on their souls? Follow it further, verse 29,

29 For those whom He foreknew,

He's calling all of those whom he foreknew. Now the Arminians would say this just means God knew beforehand who would believe and so God decided to save those he saw beforehand who would believe. The only problem is that's not what the word "foreknow" means. As a matter of fact, the same Hebrew equivalent word is used throughout the Old Testament for when men have sexual relations with women. It means an intimacy, an intimate knowledge and knowing. He says, "I have an intimate knowledge and knowing of some. They are the ones I call. I call the ones whom I had an intimate knowledge of before they were ever born." Well, now God is getting bigger than us, isn't he? "By the ones I foreknew."

Then he says, "The ones I called, then I foreknew, I also predestined." That is, mark out beforehand. So I internally called them and they were the ones I already knew in an intimate way beforehand, and I've marked them out so that in the end or ultimately, look at verse 29,

29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

This is powerful here, listen to me" Jesus came to earth at the will of God the Father to purchase the children, and when Jesus came to earth and suffered and bled and died – listen to me – he didn't just throw out a sloppy possibility, when he suffered and bled and died, he secured the purpose of the Father, and what it says is that, the last part of verse 29, that all of those would be conformed to the image of his Son so he'd be, here's the phrase, "firstborn among many brethren." You see, the Father was not about to allow Jesus not to have his brethren. Did you hear me? The Father was not about to allow Jesus to not have his brethren. You mean to tell me you think it could have been a possibility for God the Father infinite, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, Almighty God of the universe to send his Son to die for the church and the Son go and die for the church and not get it? The Father will not have such. Jesus is going to have his brethren. He's going to have his children.

Now, going back to the thought of he foreknew them in intimate knowledge beforehand, predestined, he marked them out for a certain end, the text implies that all – listen to me –

all he foreknew he also predestined and he also called, he also justifies and he also glorifies. Not some of them, all of them, and that's the way the emphasis of the text works. All of those whom he foreknew. All of those whom he called. All of those he predestined. All of those will be justified and will be glorified. That's why our Baptist forefathers came up with the phrase, the doctrine of eternal security, the perseverance of the saints. Why did our forefathers teach us once you're saved, you're always saved? Because they said it's so thorough and complete, God does it all. If it wasn't all, they couldn't teach that. They could say most of those whom God called he foreknew, and most of those whom God called he predestined, and most of those he called and foreknew and predestined were eventually justified and glorified, but it doesn't say that. The implication is that all. Remind yourself, speak to yourself and remind yourself that the response of man is not the grounds for their predestination. We are not predestined, or rather we are predestined not because we responded to a call, we are predestined to respond to a call, and then that's the group that all things work together for the good for.

Now where does this come from? Why would God have this group among all of mankind and he has this special supreme love for them that he would foreknow them and call them and predestine them and justify them and one day glorify them, and then make sure that all things work together for our good? Brothers and sisters, do you understand that the Almighty Sovereign God of the universe is orchestrating everything on earth for your good? You don't see it yet but he is. What a supreme love he has for us.

Look at Romans 8 again and look over in verses 35 and 36, 35 and 39 is where I'm going.

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

He wants you to know how secure this great supreme love is for you.

Then here's another good cross-reference verse here, Ephesians 1:3 through 6,

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ [key phrase, we'll pick that up in a moment], 4 just as He chose us [same idea as Romans 8] in Him [when did he choose you in him?] before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love

He's doing all this because he has cast a special supreme love toward you. Verse 5 of Ephesians 1,

5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,

So that's your answer as why did God do this and why did he do it this way, because he just liked doing it that way. It was just his will to do it. Then verse 6,

6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us
in the Beloved.

Now that's a key phrase, "in the Beloved." How does all of this take place? In the Beloved. Who is the Beloved? Jesus Christ. God the Father looked at Jesus, God the Son, at his baptism and said, "This is my beloved Son. I'm well pleased, I'm delighted in this beloved Son of mine." You see, God is so delighted, God the Father is so delighted and God the Father is so well pleased in Jesus that he delights in all of those who belong to Jesus. Do you understand that? There is a very real sense in that God is so well pleased and delighted in you because you're in his Son Jesus. He's not delighted in you because of you, he's delighted in you because of Jesus. I'm that way, if I really know somebody well and I've grown to have an affection for them and a love for them and a treasuring of them, I find myself having the same kind of affection and love for their children and their children's children. "Well, if you are So-and-so's son, you're good with me." Well, that's what God is saying here. God says, listen, God says, "You can't comprehend how deeply I love my Son Jesus. You can't comprehend how deeply I'm delighted and pleased in Jesus, so you can't comprehend that I am also deeply delighted and pleased in you." That is a supreme love. That is a great great love.

You see, the Son cannot be the firstborn and not have any brethren so God says, "I'm going to make sure he has his brethren." Isaiah 53:10 reminds us, in Isaiah 53:10 the Bible speaks to us about the sufferings of Christ and notice what it says there, "But the LORD," that's God the Father, "was pleased To crush Him," that's God the Son. God killed God the Son. Why? "Putting Him to grief." Why did God do that? Because God had a purpose. Look at it, "If He would render Himself as a guilt offering," that's in our place. Now what's going to happen? If he does that, if God the Father crushes God the Son and God the Father is pleased to do it, for what end is he pleased to do it? "He will see His offspring." That's you. Jesus birthed you on the cross. You are his offspring. You are his precious brethren. You are his children that the Father purchased through the blood of his Son.

John 6:37 reminds us, Jesus is speaking,

37 All that the Father gives Me will come to Me.

How many? All. You see, it's the Father's supreme love for Jesus that we become the objects of his supreme love. Oh, if I could just do a lobotomy on you and pour this into your brain until it melts your heart. As your pastor, I'm telling you more than breath to live, I want you to know this truth. I want you to be crushed in the great treasuring of the supreme love of God for you.

Now all of this happens, Ephesians reminds us, 1 John reminds us, all of the specialness, this election, this foreknowledge, this predestination, happens out of God's great love for

us. Then, of course, a brief little note of application here: God says, "I love my Son so so much, therefore, I love my Son's brethren, my Son's children so so much." That's you. That's the church. Now he says, "And the world will know that you are my disciples because that love cannot help but slosh out between you as church members." It has to. It cannot not do that. If you have anything of Christ in you, then you have something of what is most important to Christ, love for the brethren. Are you hearing me, church? That's why I've told you many many times as a way of practical application, time proves everything in the local church. You immerse a person in a true local church and over time you'll find out do they love us or do they not love us. If they've got the Jesus in them that loves the church, they'll love us, want to be with us, want to serve with us, want to grow with us.

So God's greatest, most supreme love is this display of love that most magnifies him, most magnifies the greatest of all of his attributes, I shouldn't say greatest but magnifies the totality of all of his attributes and that is this love for his Son Jesus and his love for those who belong to Jesus, those who believe on Jesus, those who are his children, those who the Bible calls his brethren. You say, "Pastor, I just didn't have God figured out this way." Do you know what I say about that? Hallelujah and praise God. I would dare not serve a God that you came up with. You must know this God by revelation. It's not intrinsic to man to come up with the truth about God. It has to be revealed to us through his word.

Isaiah 55:8 and 9,

8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. 9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts.

I remember so well as a 19 year old college kid coming to faith in Christ and I just brought my natural human deductions and conclusions into the Bible and I had God all figured out and, my goodness, what a 38 year, 39 year season of rebukes and corrections I've been through as the word of God kept shutting down and reprovng and changing and rebuking my strong held inclinations of how God should be and I had to embrace how God truly is. Because it's idolatry, it's a violation of one of the 10 Commandments to hold God in your mind something that's not really true about God, including how he loves and who he loves and the way he loves.

Now circling the field, now you listen close as we close. There will be a test. In his love for his children who believe on Jesus, God has manifested more and more powerfully his attributes than in any other way, and all of his attributes are involved in his love for his elect children. Now remember in Mark 12:30, "You are to love the Lord your God with," what? "All your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength." You say, "That's a lot of love." How many of you have been doing that real good lately? Why does God tell you to love him that way? Listen to me: with everything, that means with everything you've got all the time you've got. Why does God tell you to love him that

way? Here, listen: because he loves you that way. In the totality of his being he loves you with all he's got because that's the way he loves his Son Jesus.

So you can take the attributes of God and think on how that speaks to God's special love for his children. So in my study I thought about this. For example, one attribute is God is unknowable. That means you can't plumb the depths nor scale the heights of his love for you. His love is beyond finding out.

Another attribute, God is unchangeable. That means his love is without waiver nor can ever diminish. His love can never weaken and it's never uncertain toward you.

Another attribute, God is sovereign. That means God is absolutely independent. Nothing can sway him. Nothing can influence him. Nothing can deter him from loving you.

Another attribute, God is infinite. This means he uses all of his power, all of his wisdom, all of his knowledge of infinite value to love you in all the ways possible that are good for you.

Another attribute is God is truthful. It means God cannot lie and his love cannot fail for it is the true love that comes from the God of truth.

Another attribute, God is good or his goodness. He is infinite in goodness. In love, he sends to us unending waves of goodness.

God is holy. It means his love toward us is holy in that his love transcends, it is superior in every way to every other notion of love and, therefore, it is invincible in its nature.

God is righteous, that's another attribute. In every way and in every expression, his love is right. His love sent his Son to the cross for us to cause us to stand fully acceptable and righteous before him.

The Bible says God is wrath. In love, his wrath fell on Jesus in our place and in his love for us, his wrath will eventually fall upon our enemies, freeing us from all their threats and from all the persecutions.

Another attribute, God is mercy. In love, his mercy is great toward us and he shields us in mercy from the penalty that we deserve.

Another attribute, he's grace. He's the God of grace. In love, he chooses to be, or rather he chooses us to be the objects of his great favor and the objects of this enduring love.

The Bible says he's faithful. His love toward us comes out of his supreme faithfulness, the faithfulness demonstrated in the Father's love to the Son Jesus and in the Son's love and faithfulness to God the Father. God cannot be less faithful to you than he is to his Son, or less faithful than his Son is back to him.

Another attribute, he's personal. His love comes to us in the dearest measures of personal care and compassion. We are indeed the apple of his eye.

Another attribute, he's beautiful. His love for us is the most beautiful expression of love in all of the chronicles of time and eternity.

Another attribute, he is perfection. His love for us is a divine perfection. It cannot be improved upon and it can never end.

The Bible says he's a lion with fierce power and full authority. His love for us conquers all of our troubles, all of our fears, and all of our foes.

The Bible speaks of God as an eagle. His loves source in majesty and in strength.

The Bible says he's like a lamb. His love is gentle, tender, and sacrificial.

The Bible says he's a hen. He protects us like a hen gathers her chicks under her wings.

The Bible says he's a sun. His love outshines the pollution and guilt of our sin and it incinerates the defilement that robs us of nearness to and the pleasures of God.

The Bible says he's like a torch. His love lights our way and leads us out of dark places.

The Bible says he's like a fire. It means his love is of an unquenchable nature. His love for us will not be put out. It will continually warm us with sweetness and with goodness.

The Bible speaks of him as a fountain. His love is refreshing and life-giving.

The Bible speaks of him as a rock. His love is immovable and firm.

The Bible speaks of him as our hiding place. His love shelters us from all threats real and imagined.

The Bible says he's the bridegroom which means his love is exclusive for us and it is passionate toward us.

The Bible speaks of him as a husband. His love for us is protective and compassionately authoritative.

The Bible speaks of him as a father. His love is instructive, faithful and honorable.

The Bible speaks of him as the physician. His love heals and restores.

The Bible speaks of him as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. All three love us and all three are wholly devoted agents to serve our temporal and eternal well-being in love.

The Bible says he's a unity. He's not three gods, he's one God. He's a unity. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are in complete delightful agreement on making us the objects of their love and securing us for themselves.

This one I saved for last, the Bible says he's eternal. Eternal. The Jews had doubt and the prophet said, "I've loved you with an everlasting love." Now this was a statement to Israel of old but it is a type, it is a foreshadowing of his love for his elect children, his church. God's saying here – are you listening to me, child of God? Please listen to me: "I didn't just start loving you, I've always loved you." Listen, there has never been a time in eternity when God didn't love you. From the councils of eternity past through time and on through eternity future, God said, "I've never not loved you. When I sent my Son to die for you, that was not the dawn of my love for you because my love for you has no beginning. That was the height of the demonstration of my love for you but that was not the beginning of my love for you." God says, "My love for you didn't begin when you believed on me." In other words, daily as you lived your life before you became a believer, God wasn't saying, "You're my enemy. You're under judgment. I hate you. Enemy, judgment, I hate you. Enemy, judgment, I hate you." Then boom, you decided to believe on Jesus. "Okay, now I love you, love you, love you." No! No! No! No! No! No! No! No! "I've never not loved you. I've never not loved you. Never. Now we had this problem of getting your son's remitted, we had this issue of getting your sins cleansed, but my Son took care of that because I've always loved you."

A brother sent me a quote this week. This was an early professor of theology at Princeton University who was a godly man and fought hard to keep liberalism out of Princeton. Geerhardus Vos. Geerhardus Vos said, "The best proof that he will never cease to love us lies in the fact that he never began."

"But in all these things, we overwhelmingly conquer through him who loved us, for I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 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."

"I never started loving you, I always loved you. I'll never quit loving you. I'll always love you." The invincible love of God.