



“CAUSE I LOVE YOU!”

Romans 8:31-39

I. INTRODUCTION

The first Bible verse that many of us can recall learning as infants, toddlers, and children was “God is love!” Our fore-parents, Sunday School teachers, and communities wanted us to get deep into our DNAs the simple, yet powerful, description of God’s nature. 1 John 4:8 captures the essence of this thought, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.” Yet, the toxicity and potency of the spirits of self-rejection, low self-esteem, low self-worth, and hate continue to increase in our society. This causes internal strife and makes fully embracing God’s love and the fact that we are God’s image-bearers more challenging.

Today’s sermon is simple. Its aim is to remind you that you are God’s **ONE AND ONLY FIRST LOVE!** God calls you “**BELOVED**” no matter what you say or think about yourself, how you treat yourself, what others say or think of you, and how others may treat you. By the end of today’s message, you will understand that it is not about how much we love God. Rather, it is all about how much God loves us! God loved us to death, death on the Cross! You will never experience a greater love than God’s love! As we accept God’s love, then, as the apostle Paul reminds us, “[we] being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge.”

II. BEING THE BELOVED

- A. The first word God the Father spoke of God the Son is “Beloved!” **Luke 3:21-22**
 - B. “Beloved” or *agapétos* (Gk.) means “dearly beloved one”; “the object of a special affection and special relationship.”
 - C. You are in Christ and Christ is in you! **Galatians 2:20; Colossians 1:27**
 - D. “Self-rejection is the greatest enemy of your sacred call” as “Beloved.”
Psalm 22:6
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III. BECOMING THE BELOVED

- A. “Becoming the Beloved means letting the truth of our ‘Belovedness’ become enfolded within our very being.” **John 8:31-32**
- B. God chose you because you already existed in God’s heart and mind!

Jeremiah 1:5; Isaiah 43:1

C. Our woundedness and brokenness allow us to become wounded healers!

Isaiah 53:5

IV. LIVING AS THE BELOVED

A. We do not belong to this world!

John 15:19

B. Our minds must be in a perpetual state of transformation.

Romans 12:1-2

C. The Holy Spirit is the most important person on Earth who guarantees our success!

1 Thessalonians 5:23

V. CONCLUSION

God's love is not like human love. Our love tends to be flaky, frail, and often fair-weather. God's love is constant, everlasting, exclusive, and unconditional toward each of us! God loves us enough to continue pursuing us even when we reject Him and try to run away! Be grateful today that God's love never fails and is always available! God's love to us is a gift without price! Thank God for calling you Beloved! Thank God that Jesus literally loved us to death!

Source: Nouwen, Henri J.M. *Life of the Beloved: Spiritual Living in a Secular World*, New York, NY: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1992.

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