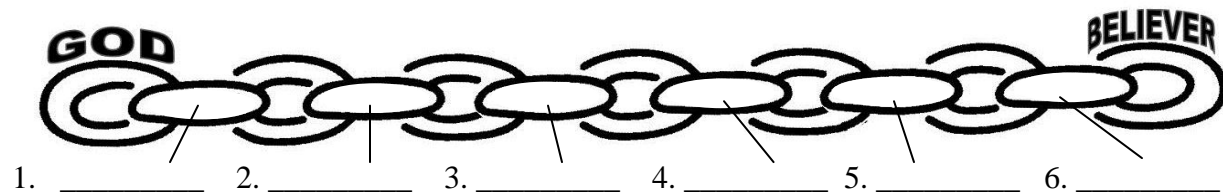


Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, June 13, 2012 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

THE ETERNAL SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER “Six Links in the Doctrine of Eternal Security – Possession of Love” *Romans 5:1-11*

JUST FOR REVIEW - Listen as Romans 5:1-11 is read and see if you can fill in the links in the chain below.



A HYMN STORY – “O Love that Will Not Let Me Go” by George Matheson (*Hymn #292*)

*O Love that wilt not let me go, I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe, that in thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.*

*O light that foll’west all my way, I yield my flick’ring torch to thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray, that in thy sunshine’s blaze its day
May brighter, fairer be.*

*O Joy that seekest me through pain, I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain, and feel the promise is not vain,
That morn shall tearless be.*

*O Cross that liftest up my head, I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life’s glory dead, and from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be.*

Questions:

- (1) What do you think might have prompted the hymn writer to write these words to God, “O love that wit not let me go”?
- (2) Why do you think the hymn writers soul might have been weary?
- (3) How can a love that will never let us go help us?

George Matheson suffered poor eyesight from birth, and at age 15 learned that he was going blind. Not one to be easily discouraged, he enrolled in the University of Glasgow and graduated at age 19. He then began theological studies, and it was while pursuing those that he began totally blind.

Matheson's three sisters rose to the occasion and tutored him through his studies — even going so far as to learn Hebrew, Greek, and Latin to be able to help their brother. With their help he was able to complete his studies.

After graduation, he answered a call to serve as pastor of a church in Innellan, Argyllshire, Scotland. He had a successful ministry there, and was later called to serve as pastor of the much larger (2000 member) St. Bernard's Church in Edinburgh.

On the day that one of his sisters was married, Matheson wrote this hymn. He recorded this account of that experience in his journal: "My hymn was composed in the manse of Inellan on the evening of June 6, 1882. I was at that time alone. It was the day of my sister's marriage, and the rest of my family were staying overnight in Glasgow. Something had happened to me which was known only to myself, and which caused me the most severe mental suffering. The hymn was the fruit of that suffering. It was the quickest bit of work I ever did in my life. I had the impression of having it dictated to me by some inward voice than of working it out myself. I am quite sure that the whole work was completed in five minutes, and equally sure that it never received at my hands any retouching or correction. I have no natural gift of rhythm. All the other verses I have written are manufactured articles; this came like a dayspring from on high. I have never been able to gain once more the same fervor in verse."

Matheson obviously didn't intend to tell us what caused his "most severe mental suffering," but people who know his background strongly suspect that it had to do with a heartbreaking experience several years earlier. His fiancée had broken her engagement to him, telling him that she couldn't see herself going through life married to a blind man. Matheson never married, and it seems likely that his sister's wedding brought to memory the woman that he had loved and the wedding that he had never enjoyed.

At any rate, Matheson's "severe mental suffering" inspired him to write this hymn, "O Love that Wilt Not Let Me Go." The hymn celebrates the constancy of God's love — "love that wilt not let me go" — "light that follow'st all my way" — "joy that seekest me through pain." It concludes by celebrating "Life that shall endless be."

Albert Peace, organist and editor of a journal called *The Scottish Hymnal*, wrote the tune, "St. Margaret," that is associated with the hymn. His experience was amazingly like that of Matheson, in that the music came to him quickly and he was able to write the tune in only five minutes.

When I read the various accounts of Matheson's writing this hymn, one sentence struck me as especially important. It was this — Matheson said, "The hymn was the fruit of that suffering." There is an important lesson in that. All of us suffer some sort of heartbreak or disappointment or

disability at some point in our lives. What makes all the difference is our response —whether we let the hardship stop us or inspire us to greater effort.

Matheson suffered two severe blows that could have stopped him — the loss of his eyesight and the loss of his beloved. In both cases, he made the best of a bad situation — and we are all the richer for it. As this hymn reveals, it was his faith in God that kept him going through the adversities that he suffered. He believed that God's love would not let him go — and that God's light would follow him all his way — and that God's joy would seek him through his pain — and that faith made all the difference.

³ The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: “I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.” – Jeremiah 31:3

LINK 4 – POSSESSION OF LOVE –

A. WHAT IS LOVE?

1. The world’s view of love – List some words that you would say describe the way the world views love:

lust _____	infatuation _____	a fleeting feeling _____
strong like _____	love at first sight _____	passion _____
emotional bond _____	sex _____	fluxuating feeling _____

*The world says things like, “If you really loved me you would...”, or “I just don’t feel in love with you anymore...”, or will express this feeling for things like, “I love hot dogs, baseball and apple pie!” The world’s love often is a very fluxuating and fleeting thing... very fickle, on again off again kind of emotion. Perhaps that is why, in this world love, seems to so often fail... marriage fall apart, and relationship fail.

2. The New Testament worlds view of love:

4 Kind of Love in Greek:

- (1) **Eros = Marital/Sexual Love** – Love between a husband and wife. We get our English word “erotic” love from this word because it refers to sex and the sexual relationship that exist between husband and wife.
- (2) **Storge = Family Love** - Refers to love in the family relationship... love between a parent and child, or between brothers and sister, family kin, etc.
- (3) **Philia = Friend/Brotherly Love** - Love that exists between friends. This Greek word literally means “brotherly love” and is the word for which the U.S. city of Philadelphia gets its name. The city of Philadelphia is also called “The City of Brotherly Love.”
- (4) **Agape = Unconditional love**

2 Words of Love NOT in the Bible: 2 of the above listed words for love appear in the Bible and 2 do not. See if you can guess which 2 are not in the Bible and which two are not used in the Bible.

- (1) Eros
- (2) Storge

2 Words for Love in the Bible:

- (1) Philia
- (2) Agape

3. God's kind of love:

3 Characteristics of God's Love: God's love has many facets or characteristics, but listen as the following three familiar verses are read (or quoted) and see if you can't name 3 of those characteristics based on these three verses or passages.

- (1) **God's love is giving (John 3:16)** - *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*
- (2) **God's love is sacrificial (Roman 5:8)** - *"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*
- (3) **God's love is unending (Romans 8:37-39)** - *"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

Which of the follow 2 types of love, found in the Bible, describe God's divine love? Place a check [✓] beside the appropriate response.

[] Philia

[] Agape

Characteristics of "Agape" Love:

1. Agape is the word for love most rarely used by the Greeks.
2. Agape is the most commonly used word for love in the New Testament.
3. Agape is used to describe unconditional love. Love that says "no matter what you do I'm going to keep loving you!"
4. Agape is the highest form of love in the Greek language.
5. Agape pictures the deepest kind of commitment. This is committed love.
6. Agape is used in the New Testament to describe God's divine love.
7. Agape appears twice in Romans 5:1-11. It appears in verse 5 and 8.

B. IS LOVE SECURE?

Test Yourself: Place the letter "s" for "secure" beside the following kind of love that you feel are really secure and discuss why or why not that love is secure.

[] **The world's view of love** – Not secure because often the world's love is fleeting, may be based on feeling or emotions that are subject to change, or may be a shallow love.

[] **Eros love** – Not secure because romantic feelings may fade or lose their appeal, also love that is based on sexual feeling can change with age and changes to our bodies.

[] **Storge love** – If one of the more secure forms of earthly love because we seem to stick to our family no matter what indicating a strong love bond, however it really is not a secure love because this love too is subject to things in this world that affect it like divorce, separation and even death of loved ones

[] **Philia love** – This too, may be one of the more secure forms of earthly love because we can have very close bonds in friendship that are very dear to us and that we would do anything to preserve, however this form of love is not really a secure love because it is subject to things in this world that can affect it like disagreements, and division and even death.

[] **Agape love** – This is the only truly “secure” form of love because it is unconditional (not subject to conditions), unmerited (not subject to what we do), and unending (not subject to end... ever).

*In our your own words how does it make you feel to know that God loves us with “agape” love? How can I love my salvation if it is based on God’s “agape” or unconditional love for me? Knowing that God is going to keep loving me not matter what I do give me security because I can know that if I sin, or fall, or mess up He still keep right on love me.*_____

2 Proofs that “Agape” Love is Secure: (Romans 5:b-8)

(1) **Internal Proof (Romans 5:5b) = The Holy Spirit** ⁵ *And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.”*

- What is the internal proof of God’s divine (agape) love? The Holy Spirit_____
- Listen as the following verses are read and write a word beside each that says this internal proof makes us secure in God’s love, eternally secure.

Ephesians 1:13-14 – _____ guarantee

¹³ *And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.”- Ephesians 1:13-14*

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 - _____ guarantee

²¹ *Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, ²² set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.” – 2 Corinthians 1:21-22*

(2) **External Proof (Romans 5:6-8) = Jesus’ Death on the Cross** ⁶ *You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*

- What is the external proof of God’s divine (agape) love? Jesus’ death on the cross_____
- Paul uses the argument of man’s love verses God’s love to show how great God’s love really is.
- The following words describe how secure God’s love is:

3 Words that Describe the Security of God's Love:

1. **Constancy** - It would be easy to understand God's loving those who are good, godly, and pure. But the mystery of divine love is that He loved those who are anything but that. Charles Hodge said, "If He loved us because we loved Him, He would love us only so long as we love Him, and on that condition; and then our salvation would depend on the constancy of our treacherous hearts. But as God loved us as sinners, as Christ died for us as ungodly, our salvation depends, as the apostle argues, not on our loveliness, but on the constancy of the love of God." God doesn't love you because you're worthy of His love. Although human love is attracted by the nature of the object, God's love is built into His very nature. There was nothing in us that attracted Him, yet He still loves us. Love is an unchanging part of the very nature of God and remember Scripture tells us He is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb. 13.8).
2. **Consistency** - Since nothing in us caused God to love us in the first place, what could be in us to make Him stop loving us? Nothing! Remember, He already loved us at our worst. Since Christ died for us when we were ungodly sinners, it isn't a problem for Him to love us now. His love is consistent... He loved us when we were "yet sinner" and He still loves us now, and He will love us eternally. He is not going to stop loving you!
3. **Sacrifice** - Romans 5:6 says that Christ died for the ungodly. The Greek word translated "for" (huper) is better translated "on behalf of," "instead of," or "for the sake of." Christ became a curse on our behalf (Gal. 3.13). At the proper moments in time, Christ put away sin through the sacrifice of Himself. The marvel of it all is that He lovingly died for such unlovely, godless people. Here is our passage in Romans 5:6-8, *"⁶ You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."* In verse 7, the Greek word translated as "righteous" and "good" are synonyms. There are times when someone might die for a good person. But the point of verse 7 is that no one would die for a bad person – no one, that is, except God. Our infinitely holy God is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity" (Hab. 1.13). The God who hates every sin – every evil deed, thought, and word – is the same God who reaches out and loves ungodly sinners. That is the surpassing nature of divine love. The Greek word translated "commendeth" (KJV) or "demonstrates" (NIV) means that God proved the nature of His love by having Christ die for us while we were yet sinners. That is the security of our salvation. Since God loved us when we were ungodly, wicked sinners – since he loved us enough to let His Son die for us – will He not love us enough to keep us after we have become His children? When we were saved, we were wretched sinners. But we will never be again. The love of God fills the heart of the believer. It is the kind of love that redeems a godless sinner. Since His love will do that, it will certainly hang onto a saint that sometimes still sins! And His forgiving love is poured into our hearts

by the Holy Spirit. He loved us when we were wretched, and He still loves us now that we know Him.

The evidence of God's sustaining and secure salvation is the peace, and grace and hope He has place in our lives as believers – all evidence of His great unconditional love that says, "Now, no matter what you do I will never, no never, not ever stop loving you!"

How Do You Respond? – Since God loved us when we were ungodly, wicked sinners, and since He loved us enough to let His Son die for us, will He not love us enough to keep us after we have become His children?