

The Reality of God's Love

2 Corinthians 11:23-33

2 Corinthians 11:23-33 (NASB)

²³ **“Are they servants of Christ?—I speak as if insane—I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death.**

²⁴ **Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes.**

²⁵ **Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep.**

²⁶ ***I have been* on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from *my* countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren;**

²⁷ ***I have been* in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.**

²⁸ **Apart from *such* external things, there is the daily pressure on me *of* concern for all the churches.**

²⁹ **Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern?**

³⁰ **If I have to boast, I will boast of what pertains to my weakness.**

³¹ **The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, He who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying.**

³² **In Damascus the ethnarch under Aretas the king was guarding the city of the Damascenes in order to seize me,**

³³ **and I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and *so* escaped his hands.”**

Does anything prevent you from feeling confident that God loves you? Perhaps you are convinced some sin from your past blocks His love. In that case, think about Paul. He violently persecuted Christians before he himself finally turned to the Lord. If such a man knew God loved him, would that help you realize you, too, are loved?

Whatever your experiences are, Paul probably encountered something you can relate to. Yet he kept spreading his message of hope: ***God loves us and sent His Son to die on the cross for our sins.***

Maybe you wonder how a God of love could allow you to be hurt or abused. Or possibly you feel alone and unlovable. Paul endured beatings and imprisonment for preaching the gospel, his friends abandoned him, and he was even shipwrecked. But if Paul was able to have faith that God loved him, won't you believe that God loves you as well?

Whether your situation is unfair, painful, or humiliating, the fact that it happened doesn't mean God has stopped loving you. Sometimes we face difficulty because He is polishing our rough edges and molding us into His image. Other times trials instigated by Satan are allowed in our life through the Lord's permissive will. Either way, God is working everything out to our good, according to His individualized purpose for each believer (**[Romans 8:28](#)**).

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Romans 8:28 (NASB)

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.”

The key to accepting the truth of God's unconditional love is to focus on Him, not circumstances. When you're learning of Him, talking with Him, and sharing your life with Him, trust and faith naturally replace doubt and fear.