

THE SAFETY OF BELIEVERS

INTRO: In our pericope, we meet the grand climax and conclusion of Romans 8. We find there assurance, absolute certainty that all those who are justified by faith will arrive at a state of ultimate glorification. This is the fifth head of doctrine in the Canons of Dordt: the preservation of the saints. Many passages teach it, but perhaps the two most beautiful ones are I Pet. 1: 4,5 and Rom. 8.

I. ARGUMENTS ADVANCED FOR THE SAFETY OF BELIEVERS

- A. The decree or purpose of God (vs. 29,30).
 1. God chooses certain individuals and predestines them to eternal life.
 2. God to glory conforms us to the image of his Son, changed from glory.
 3. Those who are chosen shall certainly be saved.
 4. The evidences of this election are effectual calling, production of holiness, continuance in well-doing.
- B. God's infinite and unchanging love (vs. 31-39).
 1. When we read of the love of God, it is of course God's love for us, not our love for him.
 2. He loves us not because we merit it or because of our excellence.
 3. It is an eternal love that is infinitely great and unchanging as is God.
 4. How can we know God loves us? It is the love of God in Jesus Christ
- C. Three things about the love of God in Christ:
 1. The love of God was manifested in the giving of Jesus Christ.
 2. It is always a particular, definite love.
 3. The love of God always triumphs. Benefits are forgiveness, righteousness, sonship, eternal life.

II. THE QUESTION: "CAN ANYTHING SEPARATE US FROM GOD'S LOVE?"

- A. The question asked: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"
 1. "Who?" In the list enumerated, a "who" is not mentioned, only circumstances and experiences.
 2. The "who" is the devil and his host. The devil as the prince of this world in which we exist.
 3. The devil would love to separate us from the love of God as he tried with Adam, Abraham, Israel...
 4. As the Apostle enumerates he is thinking of the suffering inflicted upon the church for Christ's sake:
 5. Three pairs of circumstances: tribulation & distress, famine & nakedness, peril & sword. A real danger!
- B. Trials will come.
 1. The quote from Ps. 44:22
 2. Why these trials? Is God not sovereign? Do bad things come from a good God?
 3. God is shaping, preparing, trying us, perfecting us.
 4. Trials do not separate the true child of God from God but are means to draw us closer to God.
- C. The answer that the Spirit gives. Impossible! Nothing!
 1. There are those who wrongly teach that it is possible for a child of God to fall away from grace.
 2. In vs. 38-39 a list of contrasts are presented as areas of possible threat
 3. The list begins with death which is separation. What about life with its many trials and temptations?
 4. The spirit world threatens us.
 5. We have our present circumstances. And what about the future? What does it hold?
 6. Can there be any force that comes down from heaven, or that arises up out of hell that endangers us?
 7. Is there any creature within the whole realm of creation that can separate us or get between God & us?

III. TRIUMPHANT CONFIDENCE

- A. "I am persuaded..."
 1. This faith is not simply I have a particular mystical feeling in me.
 2. This faith is not just hoping, hoping against hope.
 3. I am certain. This a settled conclusion worked in me by God's revelation to me.
 4. What is this conclusion? Not that the world is going to get better, or that trials will go away.
 5. Rather, nothing is able to break God's love, turn away God's love from us.
- B. How can I be so certain?
 1. We look at Jesus Christ our Savior.
 2. Grace makes us look at ourselves and see what miserable and weak sinners we are.
 3. Grace makes us look at our God in Christ who cannot deny himself.
- C. Why is this certainty so important?
 1. That we may know that God will never stop loving you, so precious you are to him.
 2. So that we can suffer well, not give up, but endure trials.
 3. So that we can live thankful Christian lives: joy, peace, triumphant!
 4. So that we might be strong in the service of the Lord.