The every present danger:
Do you love your child? Do you accept your child? Is there anything your child could do to you or to others that would sever the tie that exists between you? What would cause you to stop loving your child? What would it take for you to turn your back on your child, to stop talking to them, or receiving their phone calls, or responding to their letters/emails? From a finite perspective much would have to transpire before a parent would ever stop loving their offspring.

Does God love you? In the mystery of the infinite God He chose to love finite man. Such a choice on His part is completely voluntary without any external influence coming into play. **He loves finite man simply because He is an infinite God.** Because this action (and love is an action) on His part is completely sourced in who He is, there is nothing finite man can do to stop an infinite God from loving him. You cannot increase this love or decrease this love. It is constant and unchanging. Because it is infinite, its vastness is beyond measurement. No matter how excessive its expression, its resources never diminish or fade.

In trying to comprehend the love of God for His people we stumble and stutter because we work from the bottom up instead of working from the top down. The only way whereby we must understand His love for us is in understanding our love for one another, yet because we work from a limited premise we error as to what His love for us means.

Our present passage seeks to unpack this truth so that we might bath in the warmth of His loving embrace.

Why am I teaching this?
I do not believe there is anything greater for us to consider than the character of God in loving His people, though unworthy as they are. Because we do not understand His love for us, all of our expressions of love on a horizontal level are strained. To love as God loves is to have a heaven on earth, to see His kingdom on earth even as it is in heaven. The Spirit’s desire in this text is for you to taste and see the love of God for His people.
Introduction:
Have you ever considered the unconditional nature of God’s relationship to you? Unfortunately, such thinking is often beyond us. When we do seek to understand what it means, it often sits just beyond our reach, and we tire of the effort. Yet, there are very few things (if any) that are as significant for us to understand and lay hold of.

Everything is conditional. Money back guarantees come with hidden strings and signed documents have fine print. We live in a world where conditions exist, from work, to marriage, from friendships to parenting. Such conditions affect how we understand who God is and because we work from the ground up instead of from the top down, our view of God is highly distorted.

Yet our text assures us that we are the objects of HIS LOVE and it is this love that is unconditional. We must not allow our fickle nature to taint how we are to view His love for us. Our emotions deceive us and we ride a rollercoaster of feelings ranging from intense lust and passion to shallow indifference. If we fail to understand the nature of His love for us and why He loves us so ardently, we will harm the character of our earthly relationships. Such defining relationships as friendships, family, marriage, and parenting will become bondage forming instead of freedom producing. Instead of obedience out of love, conformity to standards will be exacted by the cruel power of guilt and promised rejection. Perhaps you soften such strong statements in your relationships, but they are true nonetheless.

It is His unconditional love for me that guarantees a freedom from doubt, debt, accusation, condemnation, and separation. The greatest tragedy is that we fail to live in light of such liberty. To deny this freedom is to undermine the very nature of His cross work. He became man in order that He might bring to His people a freedom from doubt, debt, accusation, condemnation, and separation. All of the bondage mankind experiences, and more, are man’s rightful due. He deserves to live and die in fear. He deserves to always work and never rest in order to cancel what can never be paid. He is rightly blame filled. He deserves the lashes of judgment against his bare back. And no matter how long or how many stripes he receives, it is never enough. He deserves to be separated from the presence of God forever. All this he deserves, but God ... God spared not His own Son, but freely gave Him up for us all.

There was absolutely nothing you or I did to merit His love. And the only way in which He could love us is through the merit of His Son’s death. He sent His Son, His only Son, to die in place of those who stood in open rebellion against this love. We hated Him. For once, we must feel the weight of this hatred, our hatred, toward God’s love. You and I were unlovely, but God loved us just the same.
The literary context:
The apostle concludes his treatise on sanctification in a spectacular manner. Romans 8:31-39 is breathtaking. It reaches into the deepest recesses of the human heart and breathes a whisper of calm to the agitated soul. It is the capstone that sits on the triumph of God over all things created.

“This whole passage, to Ro 8:34, and even to the end of the chapter, strikes all thoughtful interpreters and readers, as transcending almost every thing in language, while OLSHAUSEN notices the "profound and colossal" character of the thought [emphasis added].”
http://www.ccel.org/j/jfb/jfb/JFB45.htm#Chapter8

Again, the apostle concludes one thought and in so doing, introduces another. This paragraph is in response to the entire thought presented in chapters 6, 7, and 8. In light of our union with Christ and the certainty of God fulfilling His purpose, can we ever be separated from the love of God? What follows resembles a doxological outburst and expression of worship.

Question 5  “What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?” (Rom. 8:31-39)

As citizens of another country, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us (8:37). Our placement under the reign of grace is because of who God is and what He has done. The fact that our God reigns causes us to be the beneficiaries of His incomprehensible activity.

“We have no reason to fear that the Lord will not give us whatever is profitable for us, seeing that he has not spared his own Son to save us.” (The Geneva Bible [1560])

Structurally, it contains elements that are common to the previous questions (6:1, 14; 7:7, 13 “What then”), but unlike the previous four questions, it lacks, “May it never be.” In all of the questions that are contained inside of Paul’s final thought the bottom line appears to be, “Can the purpose of God for His people fail?” His response although unstated is clearly implied, “May it never be!”

For the purpose of God to fail for His people, His love for them would have to fail. Because each thought is inseparably linked to the other, neither one is capable of failing.

The answer Paul gives in directly connected to the question of 7:13 as well as the larger thought of chapters 6-8. There are five freedoms all believers enjoy because of their union with Christ. Remember, this union is a result of the Holy Spirit baptizing us into the merit of our Lord Jesus and His finished work. He begins by noting how we are free from doubt.
I. Freedom from doubt (vv. 28-31).

The “these things” of verse 31 are referencing not only Romans 8:28-30, but everything from Romans 6:1 up to this point.

“If God is for us, who is against us?” This condition of the first class carries Paul's challenge to all doubters. There is no one on a par with God. Note the two prepositions in contrast (huper, over, kata, down or against)." (A.T. Robertson’s Word Pictures)

Often we are plagued by our own doubt. We really wonder if it is all true and if this is real or just a bad joke. Our passage assures us that what God has begun, He will finish.

If God stands in our place, who can fight against Him and win? The second question challenges the idea that I must finish or contribute to what God has begun. Is the cross an enablement or an exchange? Because God is for us, what enemy do we face that stands as a true threat against the fulfillment of God’s purpose for us?

ILLUSTRATION:
Have you ever doubted your salvation where you began to wonder if you were truly saved? Have you prayed over and over the sinner’s prayer night after night you asked God to save you if perchance you were not saved? This verse is assuring us that the enemy of doubt cannot defeat the confidence of God.

This leads us to our second freedom.

II. Freedom from debt (v. 32).

There is no deficiency in the nature of what God has provided. The outpouring of God’s resources forms the basis of grace and is, therefore, incomprehensible. Why would we, how could we, question the certainty of the end or the fulfillment of His promises when they are based on the giving of the greater gift of God the Father in offering up His only begotten Son?

“This expressive phrase, as well as the whole thought, is suggested by Ge 22:12, where Jehovah’s touching commendation of Abraham’s conduct regarding his son Isaac seems designed to furnish something like a glimpse into the spirit of His own act in surrendering His own Son. In the light of this incident, then, and of this language, our apostle can mean to convey nothing less than this, that in "not sparing His own Son, but delivering Him up," or surrendering Him, God exercised, in His Paternal character, a mysterious act of Self-sacrifice, which, though involving none of the pain and none of the loss which are inseparable from the very idea of self-sacrifice on our part, was not less real, but, on the contrary, as far transcended any such acts
of ours as His nature is above the creature's. But this is inconceivable if Christ be not God's "own (or proper) Son," partaker of His very nature, as really as Isaac was of his father Abraham's [emphasis added]."

http://www.ccel.org/j/jfb/jfb/JFB45.htm#Chapter8

What do we lack that we do not already have in Christ Jesus? What deficiency is present in His presence? Every complaint we offer as to why we choose the lesser in place of the greater rings hollow when we see the enormity of what God did to secure for His people their eternal redemption.

“All other gifts being not only immeasurably less than this Gift of gifts, but virtually included in it.” http://www.ccel.org/j/jfb/jfb/JFB45.htm#Chapter8

“The gift of 'his own son' is the promise and the pledge of the all things for good of verse Ro 8:28.” (A.T. Robertson’s Word Pictures)

The offering the Father made in His Son was “in behalf of” His people. He did for them what they could never do for themselves. The words “freely give” comes from the word “grace.” God’s activity toward me is grace based. He can give freely all that He has because He gave freely the greatest possession in offering up the second member of the Godhead for the good of His people.

ILLUSTRATION:
If you immediately became the possessor of 1 billion dollars, what financial debt would you have that could not be removed by the billion dollars?

Q. How long would it take to spend $1 billion?

A. If you had spent $1,000 a day, every day since Christ was born, you would not yet have spent $1 billion.

There is no debt you have that has not been fully met in the infinite nature of our Lord’s sacrifice for sin.

This leads us to our third freedom.

III. Freedom from accusation (v. 33).

If my righteousness before God is sourced in His work for me, what created thing can possible raise any accusation that could affix itself to me? Not even God will undo what He has done.

The idea behind “bringing a charge against” has that of “calling in a debt.” It carries the thought of bring to account or raising a charge, of incriminating. It strongly implies that the accused is wanting.
The Geneva Bible (1560) offers this wonderful insight, “A most glorious and comfortable conclusion of the whole second part of this epistle, that is of the treatise of justification. There are no accusers that we have need to be afraid of before God, seeing that God himself absolves us as just: and therefore much less need we to fear damnation, seeing that we rest upon the death and resurrection, the almighty power and defense of Jesus Christ. Therefore what can there be so weighty in this life, or of so great force and power, that might cause us to fear, as though we might fall from the love of God, with which he loves us in Christ? Surely nothing, seeing that it is in itself most constant and sure, and also in us being confirmed by steadfast faith. Who pronounces us not only guiltless, but also perfectly just in his Son.”

The elect in verse 33 are those mentioned earlier in verses 28-30. And those found in verses 28-30 are no different than those in 8:1-17 or 6:1-14. In light of our blameless standing in Christ, there is therefore no condemnation.

ILLUSTRATION:
Perhaps this past week you had your annual review. With fear and trembling you were assessed. Perhaps it did not go as well as you had hoped. Perhaps the outcome of such an assessment left you weary and defeated. Friend, there is a far greater assessment to take place that will happen at the tribunal of God, and when that assessment takes place by the Son before the Father, those in Christ will have no accusers.

This leads us to our fourth freedom.

IV. Freedom from condemnation (v. 34).

The same idea present in 8:1 is echoed once more for us in 8:34.

There are four reasons as to why I am free from condemnation.

A. Jesus Christ died for my sin
B. Jesus Christ was raised from the dead
C. Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of God
D. Jesus Christ intercedes for me

For a fuller expansion on this verse consider, “A Sermon, [No. 256], Delivered on Sabbath Morning, June 5th, 1859, by the REV. C. H. Spurgeon at the Music Hall, Royal Surrey Gardens.”
http://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/0256.htm

“Using all His boundless interest with God in our behalf. This is the top of the climax. “His Session at God’s right hand denotes His power to save us; His Intercession, His will to do it” [BENGEL].”
http://www.ccel.org/j/jfb/jfb/JFB45.htm#Chapter8
The intercessory ministry of the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ the Son guarantees the outcome promised. If our non-condemnation is fully sourced in the cross work of Jesus Christ, then who can condemn us? The word “condemn” is a judicial word much like the word justify in verse 33. When we stand in the courtroom of heaven, who will be able to charge us with wrong as to discredit the judgment of God for us?

We noted earlier, in verse 27, how both the Son and the Holy Spirit are mediating for the people of God. What sense of security this provides for us in our failed performance and doubting state of acceptability. The last idea that the Holy Spirit communicates to us is the freedom from separation.

V. Freedom from Separation (vv. 25-39)

The issue is not my love for God (which tragically proves fickle), but rather His love for me. Who and what can place space between the love of God and the object of that love?

- Can physical calamity separate us from the love of God?
- Can spiritual entities separate us from the love of God?
- Can time separate us from the love of God?

Just in case something was overlooked he concludes with “Nothing created can separate us from the love of God!”

What can separate me from God’s love for me? There is nothing natural or supernatural that can separate me from God’s love for me. No matter what the charge is or from whom it is raised, I overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved me. This victory is not from me or by me; it is a victory that has been attributed to me.

As believers or Christians or disciples, we are in union with Christ. This union guarantees that we overwhelmingly conquer in life and in death. This is what sets us apart from the unbelieving. Not only do we survive the maladies of life, but we face them with a calm that is unknown to those who do not know the love of God.

Our present difficulty:
Herein is our difficulty. Our lives look just like the unbelieving. In fact, if the truth were known, we appear to be worse off than the unbelieving and thus there is almost an element of envy at the unbelieving because they appear to handle the difficulties of life far better than the believing. This is the constant thread throughout all of our studies, what the cross secured and promises, it delivers.
Our social lives are different.
Our marriages are different.
Our parenting is different.
Our employment is different.
Our recreation is different.
Our worship is different.
Our attitude toward and in difficulties is different.
Our living is different
Our dying is different.

If these things are not different than the unbelieving around us, then we fail to understand the nature of His cross-work. What the cross declares is real and necessary and life changing.

What the Holy Spirit lays out in our text is but the tip of the iceberg. The grandeur of His cross and person is far greater than our finite limits can unfold. Yet we must ask, “What is the NEXT STEP?”

Although God’s love for His people is unconditional, there is a basis for God’s love being unconditional and that was the sending and sacrificing of His only begotten Son. It is equally true that we must accept this by faith or we will not enjoy it. Take some time and step back to meditate on the unconditional nature of God’s love for you. Think about this, and as you think consider how your understanding or misunderstanding of this idea has impacted all of your relationships both horizontally and vertically. Friend, there is a world that is unseen which paints for us a profusion of color on the canvas of life that is absolutely breathtaking and it is a picture of God’s unconditional love for His people.

APPLICATION: (What is the NEXT STEP?)

“For I am persuaded” (pepeismai gar). Perfect passive participle of peithô, "I stand convinced."

1. Are you persuaded? The unconditional nature of God’s love for His people is non-negotiable. I believe it is tragic if for whatever reason you believe that the love of God is not for you. There is nothing you have done or will do that can separate you from the love of the Father for His people.
2. I do not know your past or your present or your future, but I do know this: that as His child there is nothing you can do to undo what He has done.
   a. perhaps you have murdered someone in your past
   b. perhaps you have had an abortion
   c. perhaps you have been an adulterer
   d. perhaps you have been a drug addict
e. perhaps you have abused alcohol  
f. perhaps you have been a pedophile  
g. perhaps you have been a horrible spouse  
h. perhaps you have been an abusive parent  
i. perhaps you have cheated and lied on your tax returns  
j. perhaps you have caused the destruction of another person’s character through your devilish tongue  
k. perhaps you have been addicted to sexual immorality  
l. perhaps you have been a source of destruction to the body of Christ  

Stuart Townsend captures the power of this idea in his song, “How Deep The Father’s Love.” Read carefully the following lyrics and especially note stanza two.

**How Deep The Father's Love, by Stuart Townsend**

How deep the Father’s love for us  
How vast beyond all measure  
That he should give His only Son  
To make a wretch His treasure  
How great the pain of searing loss  
the Father turns His face away  
As wounds which mar the Chosen One  
Bring many sons to Glory

Behold the Man upon the cross  
My sin upon His shoulders  
**Ashamed I hear my mocking voice**  
**Call out among the scoffers**  
It was my sin that held Him there  
Until it was accomplished  
His dying breath had brought me life  
I know that it is finished [emphasis added]

I will not boast in anything  
No gifts, no power, no wisdom  
But I will boast in Jesus Christ  
His death and resurrection  
Why should I gain from his reward?  
I can not give an answer  
But this I know with all my heart  
His wounds have paid my ransom

But this I know with all my heart  
His wounds have paid my ransom
This is who I am apart from Christ. The Holy Spirit describes for me my miserable estate in Romans 5:6-10. It equally establishes my shameful existence in Romans 1-3. Yet, not only despite this existing condition, but rather because of this existing condition, He loves me. Because of who I am and because of who He is, this love for me from Him must be unconditional. Do you not now see? There is nothing you can do to merit any blessing or favor from God. You brought nothing to the equation. The transaction between God and man must be by grace alone in Christ alone or all is lost.

It is a mockery of the highest order that you would even think that somehow your actions are repaying God for services rendered. How foolish. Until you see yourself for what you are apart from Him and see the nature of what He did and why it was done, you will never be able to rest in His cross. In addition, all of your relationships will be governed by fear, guilt, and bondage instead of love, purity, and freedom.

- If you are a believer there is nothing you have done or will do that can separate you from God’s love or cause His purpose for you to fail. This does not negate the inherent demerit to the sin, but God’s love for you is unconditional and constant.
- If you are an unbeliever then your only hope is the unconditional love of God. He stands with arms outstretched, give way to His loving embrace. Do not let the devil’s lies blind you to the love of God. You will never be clean enough to merit His love for you. He loves you where you are at.

May the Holy Spirit open your eyes to it so that you might truly enjoy Him.

Husbands Love your wives as Christ loved the Church
Wives Submit to your husbands as Christ submitted to the Father
Parents Love your children as the Father loves His Son
Young People Love your parents as the Son loved His Father
Singles Love one another as Christ loved His people
Seniors Love young people as Christ loved children

Until and unless you love as God loves, you will continue to hold people in bondage. It is only as He loves them through us that they will be free from doubt, debt, accusation, condemnation, and separation.