

Today, I have a short, simple message for you. I might be done early, but that's okay, because there's no need to confuse or complicate this message with extra words. My message is this: the greatness of God's love for you is demonstrated on the cross. The greatness of God's love for you is demonstrated on the cross. The Father sending His Son to die, in order that you might be saved, demonstrates how unfathomable His love for you is!

You might be thinking, "I can't believe He got me out of bed this morning to hear that same old story!" But I need to tell you this and tell you this because we stupid sheep keep forgetting it. Every time you skip Bible time, or prayer time, and you start to feel guilty, you start to think that maybe you're the black sheep of God's family, that maybe His patience is running out with you, you have forgotten Jesus on the cross. An act of love so great as Jesus on the cross cannot be undone by merely missing a quiet time.

Or maybe something bad happens to you: you crash your car, you drop your cell phone in the toilet, someone takes advantage of you, and in that moment you start to think, "God! Why me?" You wonder what you've done to displease Him that He would allow such terrible circumstances to affect you. Again, you've forgotten Jesus on the cross. Before God had placed one star in the sky, He knew all about you, He knew every wicked thing that you would do, and He knew the terrible price Jesus would have to pay because of you, but He went ahead with the plan anyway. Why? Because He loves you!

My mom touched on this a little last week, and I want to revisit it today: the Devil makes his primary war against you in your mind. Now, let me be clear: when I say "the Devil" I don't mean that Satan, the king of demons, is personally active in each and every one of our lives. But Satan has an army – an army of big demons, little demons, evil spirits, and just evil power, and all these things are constantly working as hard as they can to trip you up. So when I say the Devil makes his war against you in your mind, I mean any and all of the powers of darkness. They want to attack your mind, they want to attack your faith, and they want to attack your identity in Christ. Jesus wants you living a life of freedom, he wants your heart full of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, and the Devil hates all these things, he wants you depressed, he wants you in despair, he wants you miserable, he wants you thinking you're worthless, he wants you thinking you're the black sheep and NONE of that is true BECAUSE JESUS ON THE CROSS! Before the beginning of time you were in the most tender place in His heart, and I can prove that because Jesus on the cross! And you need to own this, some of you have been listening to the Devil and his lies your whole life. You've been hearing voices – not, necessarily voices in your head, but people in your life – telling you the Devil's lies, doing his work for him, telling you you're stupid and worthless, that you'll never amount to anything, that you'll never make a difference, that you don't deserve love, that no one really loves you, that no one really knows you, and on, and on. And you need to take those lies and dash them to pieces on the Rock of Jesus on the cross. The greatest act of love that ever was and ever will be was done for you! So you can take those lies that you've been hearing and chuck 'em in the garbage. It is time to displace that nonsense with the truth: Jesus on the cross, a horrible death for the Son of God to demonstrate His love for you. It was done for

you, and it was because you are loved.

There's one more bit before I'm done: Jesus died for them, too. Once you get this, once you understand just how great and unfathomable His love for you is, remember that this love was shown to the rest of us as well. When you're having a hard time with that guy at work, remember that Jesus went to the cross for him. That guy that cut you off in traffic? Jesus went to the cross for him. Let this be the place out of which your grace and mercy and forgiveness flow. And make it your personal mission to share this good news of great love with those who need it. (Everybody needs it!)

But for you, the next time you feel sad, remember what God did to show you His love. The next time you feel worthless, remember the price that was paid for you. The next time you feel alone, remember what Jesus did to restore relationship with you. When you feel like you've messed up, and God couldn't possibly love you anymore, remind yourself just how huge that love really is: Jesus on the Cross.