

Sermon Note: Unconditionally

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Introduction

As **God Is in the Radio** comes to a close, we arrive at a love that won't let go. Throughout this series, we've journeyed through longing and fire, silence and sorrow, mystery and motion. We've listened for God in grief and in grace, in raw questions and unexpected harmonies. And now, we land where everything leads: the assurance that nothing—nothing—can separate us from the love of God.

Our final song, “Unconditionally” by Katy Perry, offers a prophetic echo of that promise. It paints a picture of love that sees clearly and stays anyway—a love that doesn't require fixing or proving, but simply invites us to receive it.

Scripture names this kind of love with cosmic conviction. Paul writes to the Romans from a place of deep faith and deep struggle—and still insists that God's love is unstoppable. No force, no failure, no fear can undo it. This week, we're invited to hear that same promise through new speakers. To believe—maybe for the first time, or maybe just more deeply—that divine love isn't earned, and it isn't fragile. It holds. It frees. And it finds us, even here.

Illustration Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uZRvNrAOYH8>

This week's lyric video presents Katy Perry's Unconditionally in a clear and focused way, allowing the message to come through without distraction.

For those interested, [the official music video](#) uses metaphor and dramatic imagery to explore the overwhelming power of love. Some viewers may find certain scenes suggestive or emotionally intense. Viewer discretion is advised.

Video Discussion Questions

1. What did you notice most in the song—lyrics, tone, repetition, emotion? What made it stand out to you?
2. The chorus uses the word unconditionally over and over. How does this repetition impact the way you hear the message?
3. Do you think the love described in the song is romantic, spiritual, or both? Why?
4. One line says, “There is no fear now—let go and just be free.” What kind of freedom do you think the song is describing?
5. The song insists that the beloved is accepted “without apologies.” What would it mean to be loved like that? Have you experienced it?

6. If you watched the official video, how did the visual metaphors—like fire, snow, or the car crash—shape your understanding of the song?
7. In several scenes of the official video, Perry wears large cross earrings. Do you think she’s making a spiritual statement? What role do symbols like that play in how we interpret art?
8. What do you think is the difference between conditional and unconditional love in practice? Is it possible to love unconditionally?
9. The song ends without a clear resolution—just more repetition. Does that feel satisfying, or does it leave something open? What might that openness suggest?

Romans 8:31-39 (NRSVue)

³¹What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³²He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³Who will bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? ³⁶As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Scripture Study Questions

1. Paul begins with the question: “If God is for us, who is against us?” What does this suggest about the foundation of Christian hope—even in uncertain or painful seasons?
2. Verse 34 names Christ as one who not only died and rose but now intercedes for us. How do you understand the idea of intercession? What comfort or strength might it offer when prayer feels difficult?
3. This passage makes a sweeping declaration: that nothing—trouble, hardship, death, or even unseen powers—can separate us from the love of God. Why is this important to hear today? What difference does it make in how you approach life’s struggles?
4. When have you felt distant from God, or unsure whether divine love still included you? Does Paul’s assurance here change how you remember that experience?
5. Many people feel hesitant to pray aloud—especially in groups. Why do you think that is? Does knowing that the Spirit prays with and for us shift anything in how you understand or experience prayer?
6. Paul doesn’t deny the reality of suffering. He names it directly. But he also insists that God’s presence is unwavering. What might it look like to hold both truths at once—in your own spiritual life, or in the life of your community?

7. This passage closes with conviction: that nothing in all creation can separate us from God's love. What does that mean to you personally? What might it mean for someone who feels forgotten or unseen?

Weekly Action

As this series comes to a close, spend time this week watching and listening for signs of unconditional love—in places you might not usually look. It could be in a conversation with a friend, a lyric that catches your ear, a story in the news, or an ordinary act of care from someone who doesn't expect anything in return. Each day, pause to ask: "Where did I see love today—gracious, persistent, undeserved?" Write it down. Hold it in prayer. And then ask: "How might I offer that kind of love to someone else?" This series began with the idea that God still speaks—between the frequencies, beneath the noise. This week, let your intention be one of listening. Because wherever there is unconditional love, there is God.

Prayer

God of unshakable love, when fear rises, you remain. When we lose our way, you are near. When words fail, your Spirit to us—and sometimes even for us. You have loved us from the beginning—with no prerequisites and no limits—because love is your nature and your name. Help us to trust that nothing—no failure, no sorrow, no silence—can keep you from us. Let that love shape how we live, how we listen, and how we care for one another. Let it free us from fear. Let it lead us into joy. Amen.