

Romans 5:6-11 Early Morning

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[0 : 0 0] Let's pray together. Lord, as we come to your word this morning, there is so much good news for us in terms of what you have done for us by the cross, on the cross.

And I pray that you would soften our hearts, that you would cause us to rejoice and to hope again if those things have grown dim for us, and that we would see the great hope and the great glory that you have for those who love you.

And we pray this in your name. Amen. Why don't you grab a seat? It's good to be here this morning. We're in week two of our Lenten preaching series, which very appropriately is on the cross.

I believe it's called The Cross of Christ, which is also a very good book if you haven't read that before. And last week, we looked at John chapter 12.

And John 12 startled us with the news that the cross is the place of Jesus' glory. That an instrument of death was made into a beacon of life.

[1 : 1 5] That Christ's humiliation begat his ultimate victory. Sin and Satan are overthrown by his obedient sacrifice. That's the glory of the cross, the victory that was won there.

So by the cross, Jesus glorifies his Father. He's perfectly obedient. On it, he glorified, he is glorified before the world, right? He's lifted up and people see the love of God in his death.

And through the cross, we're given the hope of glory. And that's what our topic is today. That's what we get into in Romans is the hope of future glory.

And so we're moving from this glory that's revealed. This just our eyes are open to who God is, who Christ is on the cross. It's revealed on the cross in John. But there's a glory that's also promised by the cross.

And that's what Romans is talking about. And so I'd urge you to turn to chapter 5 if you're not looking at it. Because that's how Paul is. It's a little bit dense. It's sometimes hard to track with if you don't have it in front of you.

[2 : 1 7] But verse 2 tells us, We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. We rejoice because we have this glorious and certain future with God.

And that future is built on Christ's glorious and finished work on the cross. And that's the way this whole passage in Romans works. Paul lays out this incredible benefit package.

Here's all the things, you know, you've got health benefits too. And you've got, you know, you've got a housing. He's got it all. All the things that Christ has achieved for us. And he says, yes, all of this is really yours.

It's really yours. You can know because of the cross. So he's offering us proof upon proof. I think at least there's proof of concepts. There's proof of love.

And there's proof of delivery. In this passage. And all of these proofs are the basis for Christian hope and Christian joy. So we're going to look at that this morning.

[3 : 1 6] So Romans 5, first point, proof of concept. So you've probably noticed verse 1's therefore. And this is summing up the entire argument of the book of Romans.

Which we're not going to go through in its entirety. But we are going to go through very briefly. And it's this. That all humanity has sinned. And made ourselves enemies of God.

And that we deserve judgment and wrath. But in his love, God sent Jesus. He sent him into our hopeless situation. And through his death on the cross, God showed himself to be both fair and faithful.

God on the cross is shown to be fair and faithful. He's fair because sin is rightfully punished. Jesus suffers and dies. Showing us that he's absorbed the wrath.

Absorbed the death that we deserve. But God is also faithful. Because he fulfills his promise. Which is to forgive and to save his people.

[4 : 21] And he does that by the cross as well. And so God is fair. He's faithful. This is what Paul is arguing. And this benefit is applied to us remarkably. Unthinkably.

Very simply. By faith. So as we look to Jesus. As we trust Jesus. As we lean into Jesus. His faithfulness. Which he displayed. By his obedience to the cross.

Becomes ours. It's counted to us. We are declared righteous. We're justified by faith in him. And so you can see how chapter 5. Just picks up right on that stream.

Of what he's been arguing. Right? The first few verses echo this. Therefore. Since you have been justified by faith. Because we have trusted Jesus. We have been decisively.

It's happened. It's a moment in time. We've been justified. We've been counted as righteous. God has made that judgment. That we have the righteousness of Christ. That's what it means to be justified.

[5 : 22] And what that means is. That we have currently. Peace with God. So justification by faith is the how. That's how God accomplishes it. But the end.

The why. Is peace. God wants to have peace with us. He wants to be reconciled with us. So now we have restored relationship with God. God counts us as friends.

And Paul describes this as the grace in which we stand. Which means we have a new status. Yes. So I think it's helpful to realize. This means we don't slide in and out of peace with God.

So it's not like. You know. This week I'm having a good week. And I have peace with God. And this week. I started eating chocolate. Even though it's Lent's. And I'm out again. Right. It's not based on our behavior.

We have a status. We're justified. We have peace. And now we stand. In grace. Before we stood under judgment. But now we stand under this waterfall.

[6 : 19] This kind of waterfall of beneficence. Right. We're constantly benefiting. Receiving all of these aspects of God's grace. God smiles on us. God works for our good.

God holds us until the end. And because his grace is freely given. That's what grace means. It means that it's come out of God himself. It's freely given by his initiative.

That means it can't be lost. And it can't be taken away. And you know. What to say about this. How do you comment on this. It's just wondrous. This is the story that never gets old.

This is the gospel. So by this promise. God holds us through everything. Without these promises. We have nothing. And I think. The response is that.

As believers. We take these ideas. And we roll them around. In our minds a little bit. And we remember them. And we get the feel for them. And we warm them up. In our hands. And we test our weight. Upon them in our lives.

[7 : 17] And the result. Of meditating on it. And thinking about it. Thinking about these truths. Is joy. Joy is inevitable. As we think about. All of these things. That God has done for us.

Because for us. It means the hope of glory. We rejoice. In the hope of the glory of God. That is God's friends. We will share in his life. And his victory.

Into eternity. That we're fully loved. All things will be fully fixed. Within us. And within the world. We're fully fixed. But. What about suffering?

That's what Paul goes to next. He maybe is worried. That it's sounding a little bit triumphalistic. And we still live in a world. Where things don't always go right. And this word suffering here.

It doesn't speak to. The decay of our world. Or the decay of our bodies. Right. So we have this. You know. We kind of live. And there's difficulties in life. And life is. Just intrinsically hard.

[8 : 13] In many ways. That's not what this suffering is talking about. This is talking about.

Persecution. It's talking about suffering. For Christ. Or because we bear the name of Christ. And so the question.

Maybe pops up. At this point. Paul. If God's got your back. And he's just so for you. And he's got you all the way into glory. How come you keep getting shipwrecked. And mocked. And beaten. And all these things keep happening to you.

As you try to follow Christ. And the short answer to this. Is that God's purposes. In allowing suffering. Are beyond us. But.

We do know that God makes our suffering purposeful. He uses it. So. When Christ suffered and died. It was his glory. And what looked like defeat.

Was actually victory. And because. We are justified. And reconciled. And united to Christ. We're given this same promise. That in our suffering. We will receive the same qualities.

[9 : 13] Of Christ himself. We will. Share. In. In the way that Christ. Gains victory through suffering. We're going to share. In that quality of Christ. So instead of.

Suffering. Squashing hope. Which you think it would. Right. You would think that Christian. Christian suffering. Would. Would make them doubt. But what Paul says here. Is it's actually. Because of the gospel shape of this.

It's exactly the opposite. Suffering. Calls forth. Endurance. So the endurance of Christ. That is within us. Because of Christ being within us.

Suddenly is shown forth. When suffering comes into our lives. And as we endure. It reveals that actually. The proven character of Christ. Has been formed within us.

So we might think that. Nothing's happening. You know. I'm still the same person. But in fact. In suffering. What is revealed. Is that Christ has been formed in you. And you endure.

[10 : 11] And you. Your character is shown. It's tested. It's shown to be. To be there. And the hope that should be crushed. Actually comes back stronger. In the end.

Hope is not put. To shame and suffering. It burns brighter. And it burns hotter. Into eternity. And it's because. Of all these things. Justification. Reconciliation.

The spirit within us. They don't. None of these things happen outside of us. Right? We have this idea that. You know. There's just a book somewhere. And we're just justified in that book. And it's all out there. You know.

No. All of this happens in us. These aren't legal fictions. They happen in us. And this is what verse 5 brings us to. As he gets to the end of this list. Of how God works in suffering. God has poured his love into our hearts.

By giving us the Holy Spirit. So this is the proof of concept. These big realities of Christ's work. That are accomplished for us.

[11 : 08] They also ring true within us. Both in our experience. Of being faithful to Christ through suffering. And in our understanding. Of the Holy Spirit's presence with us. Our experience.

Of the love of Christ. This feeling that we get. As we think about this. And we come to know that it's true. And have faith and confidence. And believe that God indeed does love us.

This is evidence of the Holy Spirit. Shedding God's love abroad in our hearts. These things ring true within us. And that's the Holy Spirit. So. By the Spirit we don't just know.

That being justified and reconciled is true. We know it. We know it in our whole being. And we start to live differently. And if we're ever in doubt about this.

First. We only need to look to the cross again. And so this is the second point. Is proof of love. So now Paul goes back to the cross. And he's talking about this thing that. Has been revealed inside of us.

[12 : 03] By the Spirit. But it's also a love that's revealed outside of us. By the cross. And this is verses six to eight. Which are so simple. And so beautiful. And here's the good news.

That God's love is different. Than our love. His love is different. It's categorically different. So we love. This is what Paul lays out here.

We love based on loveliness. So we see something lovely. And we think it's lovable. And we love it. If we think someone or something is worthy of love. We love it. And this is his argument here.

So. If there was a very good person. A righteous person. We might. Just barely. On a good day. After a good night's sleep. Dare to die.

But God's love isn't like that. God's love comes from his own good and merciful character. So God. In himself. Is slow to anger.

[13 : 02] And quick to love. He is love. His love isn't based. His love for us isn't based on our lovability. Which I don't even understand. We don't even understand that. As people. Which is why Christ had to show it to us.

And we know that because he loved us first. He loved us when we were at our very worst. And you can look at all the words that Paul uses there. He loved us when we were weak. When we were enslaved to sin.

When we were in love with sin. He died for those who were ungodly. We were enemies. Of God. He gave his life to us when we were still sinners.

All these different ways. He's trying to get the point through to us. You weren't good. He didn't love you because you were good. He loved you while you were bad. And it's proof of his unflinching love.

He gave up his life when we were at our worst.

Meaning that his love is bigger and stronger and deeper. And different than our love. His love comes from within him. It's unearned. It's unbidden. It's unstoppable.

[14:06] And Paul shares this so that we can shore up any doubts that we have about God's love for us. We know ourselves to be unlovely. And so then we begin to wonder. Perhaps we're unlovable.

Perhaps I have to measure up. Perhaps I have to do this or that. But if God really loves like this. Then all the rest of it can be true as well.

He really would justify us by faith alone. Even though that's ridiculous. What a ridiculous thing for God to do. But if he loved us like this. He would do that. He would freely give us his own righteousness.

He would take the penalty for sin upon himself. He wouldn't wait for us to become good first. But he would declare us good. And then help us to grow up into his character. If this is what God's love is like.

He really would make peace with his enemies. He really would do that. We were the aggressors. We were fully in the wrong. God makes all the concessions. He makes the concessions.

[15:05] We take the spoils. That's what his love is like. So you might say. If God is for us. Who can be against us? But we wouldn't say that until chapter 8.

But we can remember it. Right? That's the point here. God loves us. He loved us at our worst. And so he will love us through anything. Okay. So let's look at our final point.

Number three. Proof of delivery. And this is more forward looking. And this is verses 9 to 11.

Towards the end of the passage. And he doesn't use the word hope here.

But it really picks up the idea of it. How do we fix our eyes on this hope that we have? And all of these things. How do we look to the future? And what he's saying here in these verses is that.

As we look at what God has already done. It helps us to hope in what he's yet to do. So this is verse 9. Since therefore we have now been justified by his blood.

[16:03] Much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. So very simple. If God had already gone to the trouble of sending his son to die. So we could be declared righteous.

Of course he will follow through. On saving us from his wrath. Essentially he's already done the hard part. It's kind of what Paul is arguing here. And so we're now. As people.

As the church. We're waiting for the day. When God will fully judge all things. When the earth melts. When the heavens are consumed. When God finally gets rid of sin and evil. And we know that on that day.

Every person will answer for their deeds. We will be saved from wrath. Through Jesus. So that fear that we have. About judgment.

And as we reflect upon our lives. And the regrets that we have. We think about this. We think about how. We've already been justified. And therefore.

[17:00] The wrath that God. Is going to pour out on sin. And evil. We are saved from. Through Jesus. It's based on the thing that God has already given us.

The righteousness. Of Jesus. So if he died to grant it to us. He's going to save us. Through the day of judgment. That's the argument here. Verse 10 is similar.

For if while we were enemies. We were reconciled to God. By the death of his son. Much more.

Now that we are reconciled. Shall we be saved.

By his life. So if God loved us enough. To make enemies into friends. By the death of his son. Now that we are his friends. He will certainly bring us into eternal life.

That's the argument here. Of course. Why would he not. Save his friends. Of course he will. And we know that we don't have that life fully yet.

[17:57] Because we age. And we decay. And we die. We sin. And we wait. But if God has done this truly hard thing. Of loving the unlovable. Of making peace with enemies.

How will he not finish the job? By giving us eternal life. So I think the best way. To end. Is just in the way that Paul does.

Which is. This calls us to joy. It's strange to be. Called to joy. We usually think it's something. That has to just kind of spontaneously happen.

But. Paul says. As we meditate on these things. As we remember them. And we. Unpack them. And tease them out. But. We rejoice. That's the outcome.

So I just invite you to that. It's. I guess it's odd. In Lent. To be inviting you to joy. And yet. That's what this passage invites us to. We rejoice in God. Through our Lord Jesus Christ.
[18 : 56] Because he's proved his love. By his work. In us. His love for us. His final purpose. So. Thanks be to God. Amen.