

Sermons through

Romans

By His Death, By His Life
Romans 5:9-11

With Study Questions

*Pastor Paul Viggiano
Branch of Hope Church
2370 W. Carson Street, #100
Torrance, CA 90501
(310) 212-6999
pastorpaul@integrity.com
www.branchofhope.org
6/9/2013*

By His Death, By His Life

Romans 5:9-11

Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. ¹⁰ For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. ¹¹ And not only *that*, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation (Romans 5:9-11).

Introduction

Over the years we have entertained the idea of purchasing a dog. We have owned animals that require less attendance such as fish, a rabbit and cats. In my mind, our level of excellence in caring for these lower maintenance animals have been a sort of test of how we would fare with a canine. Everybody is initially excited at almost any type of new animal – bunnies, kittens, puppies. But how responsible will we be once the initial infatuation wears off? Will we still faithfully clean, feed, walk and otherwise care for the pet?

A potential dog for our household was brought to our attention even this very week which was followed by my wife engaging in a very thorough investigation of the type of dog and the responsibilities behind owning such an animal. Does the dog shed, bark incessantly, has it has its shots, is it playful, does it bite, how much does it eat, how often do you have to walk it? At first these things won't matter if it's a cute puppy; but down the road they will be the big issues of whether or not the dog gets attention. You wonder if animals could talk, would they express some level of sorrow regarding how excited everybody was when they first arrived versus how ignored they are now?

And could we not say the same for our relationships with other humans? And even more importantly, can we not say that in a walk with God? Jesus addresses the church in Ephesus with this chastisement:

But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first (Revelation 2:4).

And in Jeremiah we read:

**I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride,
how you followed me in the wilderness, in a land not sown
(Jeremiah 2:2).**

But similar to many marriages, it did not take long for the grumbling in the wilderness to begin (Exodus 15:24; 16:2; 17:3). It requires effort to continue to appreciate – it is a virtue – a virtue sadly lacking in a culture demanding continual and immediate gratification.

Our pets should rest secure in the knowledge that if we purchased them (especially if the purchase price was very expensive) we will take care of them. Our spouses should gain an increased sense that if we vowed to marry them, we should ever love them, as in the devotion of our youth. But again, because of our sinful estate and the sinful world in which we live, this takes effort.

Now here is the problem:

We think that because it is in our sinful nature to struggle with a declining love for God and others (even pets), we assume the same of God. Of course we may not answer the test question that way; we know the Lord “**does not faint or grow weary**” (Isaiah 40:28). But our experience can be quite different. There can be two people in a marriage where one has given up and the other working hard. But if asked, the one who has given up may not acknowledge that the other is devoted because they are viewing the entire relationship through their own lazy, sinful and selfish disposition.

In this passage the Apostle Paul assures us that there is one Person who is making this relationship (the relationship between God and the sinner He saves) work. And because of His faithfulness, we can be assured that He does not grow weary in attending to those whom He purchased at a very expensive price:

**...knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways
inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things**

such as silver or gold, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot (1 Peter 1:18, 19).

Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him (Romans 5:9).

Saved From Wrath

This is what is known as a greater to the lesser argument – and in a couple of ways: As Charles Hodge comments “**Christ died for His enemies, he will surely save his friends.**”¹ Also, if the precious blood of Christ was shed in order for sinners to be justified or acquitted (declared righteous) God will certainly not fail to complete the fullness of that salvation by subjecting those for whom Christ died to His own wrath? Paul writes of “**Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come**” (1 Thessalonians 1:10).

Wrath *orges* is where we derive our word ‘orgy’ which signifies unrestrained passion. It’s as if human history gets glimpses of God’s wrath in the tragic events both recorded in Scripture and observed in the natural world (both nature and human nature). But the full wrath of God is held back, as it were, by a dam of His own patience:

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed (2 Peter 3:9, 10).

There will be a day of reckoning where the dam will break and God’s wrath will be unrestrained. And it is from that day that those who are covered by the blood of Christ – those who are justified by faith (Romans 5:1) will be saved.

¹ Charles Hodge. *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. p. 138.

The Maintenance of Faith

God is not like men (even Christian men) who grow weary in maintaining relationships – in doing good in general (Galatians 6:9). Similarly does Paul elsewhere teach:

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:6).

This is why it is so important for us to know the source and nature of our faith – as the Westminster Larger Catechism’s answer that **“Justifying faith is a saving grace, (Heb. 10:39) wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit (2 Cor. 4:13, Eph. 1:17-19) and word of God...”**² And the gift of faith is not merely given at regeneration but ever sustained by that same God. There is a reason why our faith remains. Peter explains that we

...are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (1 Peter 1:5).³

We have salvation through faith, a faith which comes from the power of God and this is how He keeps us. We belong to Him and He keeps us. This is what Jesus prays for us

Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them (Hebrews 7:25).

And His prayers are always answered.

For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life (Romans 5:10).

² The Westminster larger catechism: With scripture proofs. 1996. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

³ The New King James Version. 1982 (1 Pe 1:5). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Justified and Reconciled

Verse 10 is similar to verse 9 but seems to move in a more personal direction. He mentions Christ's "**blood**" in verse 9 and Christ's "**death**" in verse 10 which are both references to the same thing. He also mentions being "**saved through Him**" in verse 9 and "**saved by His life**" in verse 10 which seem to mirror each other. Both of these are very thick doctrines – the death of Christ, the subsequent resurrection and current priestly office of a living Savior – things we've touched on briefly. But "**reconciled**" *katallasso* in verse 10 is a bit more personal than "**justified**" *dikaiothesentes* in verse 9.

"**Justified**" has a very forensic dimension to it – a legal pronouncement of acquittal whereas "**reconcile**" denotes a move from enmity to friendship. And it must be added that even though this enmity was, in a sense, mutual; that is we, in our sin were hostile toward God and He, because of His holiness and purity could not even look on our wickedness (Habakkuk 1:13), the context seems to indicate that what has primarily been dealt with by the blood of Christ is God's enmity toward us. In Christ, the Father can look upon us as His beloved.

We should not merely look at this as a courtroom transaction where the somewhat reluctant judge gavel our acquittal and sends us on our way. For even though our offense was against the Judge, His love was made manifest in sending His Son to endure our sentence. But it goes beyond this! He then adopts us, puts His name upon us and calls us His own. It is with this backdrop that Paul expresses what the beloved of God can and should expect "**much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.**" Friends of God – the beloved of God have a bright eternity!

We saved by His life. It is because of His life that we can have a certain anticipation of our own eternal life:

A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also (John 14:19).

And not only *that*, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation (Romans 5:11).

A Current Reconciliation

Paul completes his thought with a reference to our rejoicing and why we rejoice. We come to church and sing praises to God – why? Is it because of what He will do? Certainly in part. But in this verse the adverb “**now**” indicates that we rejoice in what He has done and what we currently have: “**we have now received the reconciliation.**” For those who have faith in Christ, everything necessary for their justification, reconciliation – for our salvation – is complete! Although at times it doesn’t seem that way.

We wrestle with sin, doubt, fatigue. As mentioned earlier, our love for God wanes. We don’t see the kind of growth we’d like in our behavior. We should ever wrestle through these things – exhibit the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-24), “**strive to excel in building up the church**” (1 Corinthians 14:12).

But the rejoicing Paul writes of here is in that which has happened outside of us but has an eternal impact upon us. We are rejoicing here in our acceptance before a holy God. And the grounds – the substance of that acceptance is not our works, it is not our faithful obedience, it is not the work of Christ in us, it is not even our faith – which at times may be strong or weak. The substance of our acceptance before God is not found in what Christ has done in us but in what Christ has done for us.

Christ has purchased us, knowing precisely what we need. He daily cares for us and sustains our faith. He has effectively justified and reconciled us to Himself by the blood of Christ, and He will most assuredly save us “**on the day of wrath when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed**” (Romans 2:5).

Questions for Study

1. Have you noticed certain relationships where your enthusiasm and love have grown cold? Specifically, what does this look like and how should you respond (pages 2, 3)?
2. Does it sometime appear that God has lost interest in you? Why do you think that (page 3)?
3. Who is making your relationship with God work? What does that look like (pages 3, 4)?
4. What is the wrath of God and how can you know you will be saved from it (page 4)?
5. How do you know if your faith will endure (page 5)?
6. What is the difference between “justified” and “reconciled” (page 6)?
7. What is the substance of our acceptance before God? What are some things that can lead us away from the peace of knowing that (page 7)?