

The Blessings of Justification by Faith, Part 4
(Vs. the Hopelessness of Justification by Works)
Romans 5:1-11

Sermon-in-a-Sentence: The supreme demonstration of God's love for mankind is Christ's death on the cross, not for good and righteous people, but for ungodly sinners like you and me.

In Romans 5:1-11, the Apostle Paul identifies no less than ten spiritual blessings which we receive when we place our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to be our Savior:

1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have...

#1 – Peace [with God] – ...**peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...**

#2 – Access [to God] – **2 through whom we have gained access by faith...**

#3 – Grace [from God] – ...**into this grace in which we now stand.**

#4 – Hope [of God] – **And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.**

#5 – Sufferings [for God] – **3 Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings...**

#5a – Perseverance – ...**because we know that suffering produces perseverance;**

#5b – Character – **4 perseverance [produces] character;**

#5c – Hope – ...**and character [produces] hope.**

#6 – Love [from God] – **5 And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts...** (Cp. verses 6-8)

#7 – The Holy Spirit [from God] – ...**by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.**

- We receive and experience God's love by means of the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us. (Cp. Titus 3:3-7; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22)
- It is the gracious ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives that:
 - 1) Draws us to God
 - 2) Opens our minds to understand and believe the Gospel of God
 - 3) Opens our hearts to receive and respond to the love of God

#6a – The Timing of God's Love (5:6) – You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.

- Jesus was born at just the right time. (Luke 2:5-7; Galatians 4:4)
- Jesus' ministry began at just the right time. (Mark 1:15)
- Jesus' sacrifice on the cross took place at just the right time. (John 17:1)
- Jesus died for us just in the nick of time, at just the right moment, when there was absolutely nothing we could do to save ourselves. (Mark 2:17)
 - In order to experience His healing touch, we have to admit we are spiritually sick.

- We have to confess that we are sinners on the verge of eternal death so that we can receive the saving benefits of His sacrifice on the cross.

#6b – The Unusual Nature of God’s Love (5:7) – Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die.

- Someone might choose to sacrifice their life for another person whom they consider to be worthy and deserving.
- But infinitely greater is the love of God, that He would choose to die for those who were neither righteous nor good; He died for those who were His sworn enemies!

#6c – The Demonstration of God’s Love (5:8) – But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

- Demonstrates – present tense. God’s love for us is a present reality!
- “We weren’t what we should have been *before* we were saved, and we aren’t what we should be *now* [that we have been saved]. Nevertheless, God, who faithfully provided undeserved favor to save us from sin, continues to [love us] and offer undeserved favor now.” (*Swindoll, Romans, p. 115*)
- We couldn’t earn God’s love by being good and we can’t maintain God’s love by being good!
- “...nothing in us deserved saving, yet Christ died for us. How remarkable it is when one good person sacrifices his or her own life to save that of another good person. Most of us can identify with that kind of selflessness and hope to have similar courage if called upon to do the same. But who would volunteer to take the place of a serial killer on death row? Who would give his or her own life to save that of a Hitler or a Stalin? Jesus Christ did.” (*ibid*)
- Cp. 1 John 4:10.

GOD LOVES THE REBELS

God sent Jesus to die for us, not because we were good enough, but because he loved us so much. Whenever we feel uncertain about God's love for us, we should remember that he loved us even before we turned to him. If God loved us when we were rebels, he can surely strengthen us now that we love him in return. Because our knowledge of God's love is based on his demonstration, all doubts ("How do you know God loves you?") can be directly answered: "I know God loves me because Jesus died for me."

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