

Romans 5:6-11

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[0 : 00] If you've been with us the last few weeks, you know we're in Romans. And if it's been the last few weeks and you know we're in Romans chapter 5,! Grab your copy of God's Word and turn to Romans chapter 5.

When Britton and Jed were four, we took a trip out to Arizona. And of course, one of the places we visited out there was the Grand Canyon.

And we had really talked it up. Like, you're not going to believe the Grand Canyon. We're going to the Grand Canyon. It's so great. So on our way to the Grand Canyon, we were about two hours away.

The kids, as we passed the valley, would say, is that the Grand Canyon? No, that's not the Grand Canyon. Or as we passed a cliff, they'd say, is that the Grand Canyon? And we would say, no, that's not the Grand Canyon.

If we passed a river, they would say, is that the Grand Canyon? And again, we would say, no, that's not the Grand Canyon. In fact, we got to the point where we had to say, you will know when you get there that we're at the Grand Canyon.

[1 : 09] It is that magnificent. The magnitude of the Grand Canyon is just off the charts. In all honesty, if we told them that a small little valley was the Grand Canyon, they wouldn't have known any better.

They would have probably been happy. Because as excited as we were, as much as we talked it up, they were just happy to see something that we talked about. That we kind of made exciting. The love of God is the same way. We too often settle for, or just don't know any better, about the magnitude of God's love.

When telling somebody about the Grand Canyon, words just don't explain it. Words can't do it. It just doesn't do the trick. It's just one of those places that you just can't explain.

Well enough. Communicating the love of God is the same kind of thing. Words just sometimes don't do it. So this morning we have a great task.

[2 : 16] I have a great task to try to communicate to you through Romans chapter 5 the love of God. I feel a lot of times that I'm explaining a small valley.

Or a ditch even. When the love of God is the Grand Canyon. So let's start reading in chapter 5 verse 6. Read through verse 11.

Romans chapter 5. It says, For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person, though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die.

But God shows his love for us. And that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

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.

[3 : 25] More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. Pray with me.

Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you that there's power in your word. That as we read, we are hearing words from you to us this morning.

And God, I pray that you would speak through me this morning. That you would use me. That I would decrease and you would increase here this morning. That your name would be proclaimed.

Your name be exalted. Your plan, your desires for us would be lifted up and that be clearly seen to all of us. And God, can we get a glimpse, get a big picture maybe even, of the love that you have for

us.

I pray, God, that we as a group in this room, that all of us here rejoice and celebrate the love that you have for us.

[4 : 32] And not hide from it, not try to hide it, but we celebrate what you have done and what you have shown us. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. Amen. Amen. A hymn written by Isaac Watts entitled, When I Survey the Wondrous Cross. Charles Wesley actually said he would trade all his hymns that he wrote if he could be the author of this one hymn.

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross. All we can do is really survey the wondrous cross. All we can do is look at it and get a big picture, a view of it.

And continually be surprised by it. Be in awe of it and rejoice in it. Paul in our text repeats the same thing, but in different ways.

Because all he can do is survey that wondrous cross. All he can do is survey the love that God has shown mankind. So let us this morning survey the cross.

[5 : 38] Let us look at it. Take a survey of the love of God. Because the cross is the center of the love that God has. Last week I said that chapter 5 of Romans is about the assurance of our salvation in Christ.

We are assured of our salvation because of the magnitude of God's love. Because of the weight and the substance and how big God's love is.

It is an eternal, forever and always love. We are assured of our salvation in Christ Jesus because God's love is life changing.

It saves his children from the wrath they deserve. It reconciles his children to himself. And it compels his children to be ministers of reconciliation to the world.

God's love is life changing. So our first point this morning is just that. God's love is life changing.

Verses 6 through 8 says, For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

[6 : 46] For one will scarcely die for a righteous person, though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die. But God chose his love for us. And that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Take a look at the adjectives that Paul uses to describe the us or the we in this text. The Christians. Paul uses weak in verse 6. Somebody who is helpless.

King James says it's without strength. Someone who is unable to help themselves. Verse 6 also says ungodly. An adjective he calls them ungodly.

The opposite of godly. Having nothing to do with God or his standards. Ephesians chapter 2 verses 1 through 3 says, And you were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work, in the sons of disobedience, among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

Ephesians is also written by Paul. So in Romans 5, we're weak. We're ungodly. In Ephesians 2, we're dead. Sons of disobedience.

[8 : 14] Children of wrath. Colossians 2 also says that we were dead in our trespasses. See, what we have to do is, though we're going down a gloom and doom direction, but we have to talk about who we were, and in some cases even are, to see the magnitude of God's love for his children.

It's almost like the before and after pictures of when the sumanami came through Japan. See, things looking great and perfect, and then the after pictures, everything's wiped out.

We have to see who we are before so that we can then see who we are after. Verse 8 says that we're sinners. Of Romans chapter 5.

The adjective calls us sinners. What is sin? Sin is any failure to conform to the mortal law of God in act, in attitude, or in nature.

So, the question for you is, have you ever lied? Have you ever lied? Have you ever stolen anything? Anything. Have you ever taken the Lord's name in vain?

[9 : 29] Have you ever looked at a girl lustfully or a guy lustfully? Have you answered yes to these questions and you are a lying, blaspheming, fornicating thief? You are a sinner.

You have broken four out of the ten commandments and it took me 30 seconds to figure that out. This is the reality. The point of asking those questions is to crush any thought in you that you are

good apart from Christ.

God's word is clear that none is good. None of us can do anything God-honoring on our own. In fact, that's a little sugar-coated. God's word says that no one does good.

We are dead inside. Decayed, lifeless bodies needing a resurrection before Christ. Needing a resurrection or a miracle without Christ.

So this is where our story begins. This is kind of where we launch to. Look at verse 8 of Romans chapter 5.

[10:33] It starts with two beautiful words. But God. Ephesians chapter 2 does the same thing in verse 4. It says, But God. Romans 5.

It says, But God shows His love for us and that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Ephesians 2 verse 4 through 6 says, But God, being rich in mercy because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, He made us alive together with Christ.

By grace you have been saved and raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. God's love is life changes.

It makes the dead alive. It makes the weak strong and it makes the sick well. God's love makes a new creation out of the old. 2 Corinthians 5.17 If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

The old has passed away. Today, behold, the new has come. The love of God takes the sin of sinners and removes them.

[11:47] Colossians chapter 2 says, And you were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision in your flesh. Listen to this. God made a life together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands.

And He's not talking about the courtroom down the street. This, He set aside, nailing it to the cross. The love of God takes the sin of sinners and removes them.

Not only does God's love make the dead alive, it also removes the sin through the cross. He canceled the debt of our sin that we were condemned with.

Turned sinners into saints. This is the love of God. Turn to Psalm 103. Psalm 103 is written by David, a man who understood God's love.

A man, the Bible says, was a man after God's own heart. If you're a Christian and we read these words together, celebrate in it.

[13:02] Celebrate this love that God has shown us. If you're not a Christian, see what God has done for sinners. Starting in verse 1.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me. Bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagles.

The Lord works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the people of Israel. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

He will not always chide, nor will He keep His anger forever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His steadfast love towards those who fear Him.

As far as the east is from the west, so far does He remove our transgressions from us. As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear Him.

[14:26] For He knows our frame. He remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are like grass. He flourishes like a flower of the field for the wind passes over it and it is gone.

And its place knows it no more. But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him. And His righteousness to children's children, to those who keep His covenant and remember to do His commandments.

The Lord has established His throne in the heavens and His kingdom rules over all. Bless the Lord, O you His angels, you mighty ones who do His word, obeying the voice of His word.

Bless the Lord, all His hosts, His ministers who do His will. Bless the Lord, all His works in places of His dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul. That is the God.

That is the God we worship. That is the God who has shown us love and it is His love that we celebrate this morning. It is His love that changes lives. Reading this and seeing God's love is His

love is honestly, clearly outside of our understanding.

[15:40] See, what we've done is we've contaminated the word love. We've contaminated this word because we say, I love cheeseburgers or I love TV show blank or I love my mom or I love you.

Well, which kind of love is it? The love that you have for food or the love that you have for a TV show? I'm uncertain. So, so when we try to wrap our heads around God's love, the two just don't compute our idea of love and His idea.

So, verse 7 in Romans chapter 5 says, For one will scarcely die for a righteous person, though perhaps for a good person one would dare even die.

In other words, we very rarely would die for any person righteous or good. We're just not going to do it. We are selfish creatures created and wired to be selfish. But God is not.

Verse 8 said, But God showed His love for us and while we were sinners, Christ died for us. 2 Corinthians 5:21, we alluded to it earlier.

[16:54] For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin. So that in Him we might become the righteousness of God. So no longer are we sinners.

No longer are we weak. No longer are we ungodly. But we can now be the righteousness of God. And that is good news. God's love is life changing. He makes the dead alive, the sick well, and the old new.

Also, second point, God's love saves us from the wrath we deserve. Since therefore we have now been justified by His blood in verse 9, much more shall we be saved by Him from the wrath of God. God's love is shown to mankind in two different ways. There's only two. In one way it's by giving sinners what they deserve. Which is the wrath of God and the end of that is hell.

Romans 1:18 says, For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. In Luke chapter 13, Jesus is teaching in verse 1-5, He repeats Himself twice and says, Unless you repent, you likewise will perish.

[18:10] He's talking about in what He's talking about is the cities that have crumbled. But what He's talking about, what He's saying here is that if you do not repent, you will perish eternally, not just here on this earth.

Hell is a real place where real emotions and real feelings exist. In Luke chapter 16, we have the story of Lazarus, a homeless man with sores on his body and a rich man.

And the rich man eats rich food. And it says that Lazarus would just want to eat the crumbs off the rich man's table. And both of them die.

And the rich man goes to hell. And it says that Abraham helps and picks up Lazarus and takes him to heaven. Here's some of the words that Lazarus says while he's in hell or Hades.

Verse 23 says that he is in torment. Verse 24 says, I am in anguish. Verse 28 calls it a place of torment. Now, whether this story is a true story, whether it's a parable or a vision, the point is the same.

[19:25] The description that awaits sinners who do not repent of their sin is a horrible place. It is a real place with emotion and feeling.

If you remember the story, the rich man says, Abraham, please let Lazarus dip his finger in water and bring it to my mouth. He's that thirsty, that tortured and tormented.

God has wrath towards sin because he is righteous and holy. He must have wrath to be God.

Because if I define sin as any failure to conform to the moral law of God in act, attitude, or nature, then God being God, he must punish that sin.

I have four beautiful children of my own and a beautiful Charlotte who stays with us. Would I be loving if I just let them do whatever they wanted to?

Would I be loving if I didn't teach them anything? I love my kids. I love them dearly. I love them by giving them a standard to live by, by giving them God's standard to live by.

[20:45] I love them even when I'm forced by obedience to punish them for their wrongdoing.

Likewise, God shows sinners love by giving them what they deserve, by punishing them for the lives they live.

Some will say, that is a cruel God, that's a tyrant who doesn't love, he just rules. I say, and Scripture says, that God loves those he disciplines.

God shows his love to humanity by punishing the sin. God's love is also shown to sinners by giving sinners what they do not deserve.

Verse 9 in Romans 5 says, Since therefore we have now been justified by his love, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

You remember earlier I read through Ephesians chapter 2 or a little bit of it? Right in the middle of that, Paul says, by grace you have been saved. So, he says, but God, being rich in mercy because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.

[21 : 56] By grace you have been saved and raised us up with him and seated us with him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. By grace we have been saved.

Unmerited favor given to those who don't deserve it. It's a gift. A new life. Being dead or now being made alive.

There's nothing we've done, nothing we have said, nothing we can do to change the grace that God has shown you or I if you are a Christian. God is God and he does as he pleases.

He does what brings him glory and making the dead alive so that the new life can live for his glory brings him more glory. God loves sinners. He loves his children and he shows it through grace.

Our third point, God's love reconciles his children to himself. Verses 10 and 11. It says, For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more now that we are reconciled so we be saved by his life.

[23 : 08] More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have now received reconciliation. Reconciles or reconciliation is a relationship that has been broken and now has been mended.

Put back together. The picture for us is coming back to what we were created to be originally. We were created in God's image.

Genesis 1, 26 and 27 tells us that we were created to be image bearers of God. We were created to reflect the glory of him to the world.

That's what we were created to do. And it took one chapter, one chapter in this book to ruin that. Chapter 3 is the fall. We became image bearers of ourselves instead of of God.

Instead of reflecting God's glory, we've reflected our sin and our desire to honor ourselves instead of God. That's us in the Garden of Eden. And until Christ came to earth to live a perfect sinless life, to die and take on the sin of the world, to bear the wrath of God that we deserve, we are image bearers of ourselves until Christ came.

[24 : 31] He came to die for sinners so that sinners who are dead can be made alive. This is the love of God. Because of Christ, we have been reconciled to God.

Our relationship has been fixed. We're no longer severed by sin but made right in Christ. We are now image bearers of God.

You now bear the image of God in His glory. Or at least you should. It's a great, great privilege to be image bearers. God has acted on our behalf not for our glory but for His.

Not for praising us but for praising and pleasing Him. He has reconciled us to Himself because of the love that God has for us and for His glory.

Look at the beginning of verse 11. A familiar three words that we have seen in chapter 5. It says, more than that. More than that.

[25 : 36] In verse 3 of chapter 5 we saw more than that. He says, more than that we rejoice in our sufferings. So we rejoice in our sufferings more than rejoicing in verse 1 and 2 our future glory.

What we will be when we are perfected. What we have to look forward to. Well now, in verse 11, more than that we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

See, God is to be our focus of worship. He is to be our center. our one true love. I wonder how often we take the focus off of God and put it on someone or something else.

I wonder how often do we remove God as our Lord and put in His place a cause. We put in His place a belief or a girl or a boy or a pastor or a certain type of theology or a certain type of music or a certain type of order of service.

We have so many things that can easily be placed in the crosshairs of our worship. We have so many options and what Paul reminds us here is no matter the circumstances, no matter the great things to look forward to, no matter the wonderful things He has done, He is to be the center of our worship.

[26 : 57] He is the one who loves. He is the one who saves and He is the one who reconciles. We now have a relationship with Him where we can pray to Him. We can call Him Father. We can

actually call Him Daddy as in Abba Father.

We can approach the throne with boldness all done by His redeeming hand, His love for His glory. We have been reconciled to Him, by Him, and through Him.

What a great and loving God we serve. What a great and loving God. We can be assured of our salvation is secured in Christ because of the love that God has shown us.

So not only is God's love life-changing and not only does it save us from the wrath of God and reconcile us to Himself, but fourthly, God's love compels us to be ministers of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5. Go ahead and turn to 2 Corinthians 5. 2 Corinthians 5. Verse 14.

[28 : 10] It says, For the love of Christ controls us. ESV says controls. Other versions say compels us. For the love of Christ compels us because we have concluded this, that one has died for all, therefore all have died.

Verse 18 says, All this is from God who through Christ reconciled us to Himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. We are now compelled, controlled by the love of God and the love of Christ to be part of the mission of God.

To go and to make disciples. To help reconcile them to God. We have been charged with marching orders. Where we will go? What people are you loving?

What people are you praying for? What barista are you discipling? What office mate are you communicating the love of God to? What fellow student are you sharing with the love of God in hopes that the gospel will take root?

We have been given a mission. Let us not fail. Let us proclaim with boldness the love that God has for them. In verse 20 of 2 Corinthians 5, it says, Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ.

[29 : 25] God making His appeal through us. We are His ambassadors. We're not just disciples. Now we're ambassadors. We represent Him. To be an ambassador for anything, one must know the person they represent.

Do you know Jesus? They must have approval by the one represented and they must have a message to share. If you're a Christian, you have all three.

You know Jesus. You've been approved by Him to be an ambassador. His Word says it. And you have a message to share. God's love is life-changing.

It does not matter what you have done or what they have done or any person has done. God, Jesus Christ died bearing the sin of the world. Bearing the wrath of God so that any and all sins can be forgiven.

I have a copy of letters, transactions between a serial killer and a guy named Roger. Serial killer's name is Wesley Allen Dodd.

[30 : 35] Been described as one of the most evil killers in history because of the methods and the heinous acts of his crimes. I'm going to read you some transactions through here.

Roger writes first and says, because of the love of Christ in me, I care about you and love you. I am watching the news a couple of nights ago and immediately began writing this letter.

I heard your plea for an expedient death so that you wouldn't do more of what you've already done. At first, I felt that it was quite noble to protect society like that.

I hoped that I could have that courage given the same situation. Then I realized even more so how sad it is to be so confined and bound by sin that death seems the only out.

I really feel for you, not in a sense of looking down on you, but knowing quite well what it is to be bound by sin. Sin is sin no matter how perverted it is.

[31 : 43] You may be compelled to rape and kill children. Another man may steal cars. Someone's mother can't help but lie all the time. A 50-year-old man is still trying to control the same lust he fought when he was 14.

Name one person who hasn't been secretly controlled by sin. They want to get rid of it, but they can't. Many people give up and claim to be comfortable in their sin. Many are convincing in their charade of happiness.

But if they dare to think, they realize that in actuality, they've been defeated by it. That one stupid item of sin has stood taller and more powerful than they.

No one enjoys being a slave, especially to something like sin. You can't see it or touch it, so how can you fight it? Every single person on the face of this earth, if given a no-cost solution to win out over sin, would take it.

The problem is that there is no solution which costs nothing. The only solution is Jesus Christ, but that costs you your pride. On the other hand, sin is not without its cost either.

[32 : 55] He is God. We are incapable of testing the limits of His grace because grace by definition is undeserved favor. You don't deserve it and I don't deserve it.

But God gives us His favor because He loves us. Please don't think that you've gone too far. Don't think that you don't deserve God's love. The whole concept of God's grace rests on the fact that each one of us deserves hell.

What a slap of arrogance at the love of God to say that we don't deserve His forgiveness. It's all been accomplished so that you might have life, an abundant life at that.

If you want to know the true love and peace and joy that can be yours, you just need to surrender to the love of Christ. Wesley, Alan Dodd, the serial killer, writes back.

He said, I said in the courtroom what the papers reported that I had done a few Bible studies but didn't consider myself a Christian. Later, he says, I've probably put in at least 2,000 hours of Bible study.

[34 : 02] There is absolutely no doubt in my mind after all that studying that the Bible is the Word of God. I was baptized on July 16, 1991.

The reason I did not want to say that in court was because I didn't want people thinking that I'm using God to save my own life. I will not ask any man to spare my life.

On July 16, of last, I asked Jesus Christ to be my attorney in that court where everyone will face judgment. Man's law says I must die and I agree with those laws.

I am also aware that my faith is weak and there is far too much evil in this prison. I have turned away from the Lord too many times. I come back, but if I turn away again, I know how easy it would be for me to kill a guard.

I would rather die now than take a chance of killing again and turning away from God permanently. And Roger responds and says, regardless of whether you still fight the temptations, the evidence lies in favor of a changed heart.

[35 : 16] Even David, a man of lies, adultery, and murder had a heart after God. You so willingly lay down your life that none other should die at your hands.

That's the love of Christ working in you. You've already experienced the victory over Satan. Even when he would try to have his way with you, Jesus reigns.

For even though you are in this body of death, you have been given a peace about having it taken from you. God will in turn clothe you with his glory as he has already bathed you in his love. See, every story has a villain and every story has a hero.

We are the villain and Jesus is the hero. Who are we to say that this man cannot receive the grace that God has for him? Who's to say that you cannot receive the grace that God has for you?

No man is out of the reach of God's love. God's love is great. It is life-changing. God's love is powerful. The Grand Canyon is too small to describe God's love.