

Romans Chapter 5 v 1 - 11

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[0 : 00] If you have one of the Red Church Bibles, that's page 1132, page 1132. Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.

And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance.

Perseverance, character, and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who's been given to us.

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die.

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him?

[1 : 42] For, if while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life?

Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

I mentioned just, if you turn back to chapter 5, I mentioned just in passing this morning, not because I wanted anything in return, but really just to give thanks to God that it was five years since I began as pastor here.

And usually what I like to do is on the anniversary of whatever, to sort of pick a subject that's close to my heart, to preach on something particularly that is dear.

Or something that I feel particularly is an important or pressing matter, or something like that. And this morning we were in Luke in chapter 10, and that was following on really in our series, so perhaps brought a bit more out of that than we might expect.

[2 : 54] Luke in chapter 9, rather. And this evening I want us to think particularly of a subject which I know every one of us as believers finds most delightful, if I can put it that way.

Though the world would say that we are macabre for doing so. That is the blood of Jesus. It's peculiar, isn't it, to the Christian faith, that we are the only people who celebrate, delight in, rejoice in, give thanks for the death of the founder of our faith.

No other religion does that. No other faith does that. And particularly, of course, and it's become a little bit out of popularity, I think if I can put it that way, amongst hymn writers.

This, though the hymn we'll sing a bit later on, which is a relatively modern hymn, does mention the blood of the Lord Jesus in it. But the blood of Jesus has become not a word to use.

You don't sing about, or talk about, or pray about the blood of Jesus, or the blood of Christ. And yet that is something which the New Testament is unashamed in doing. And we have it there, even there in Romans 5, just one of many places since we have now, verse 9, been justified by his blood.

[4 : 12] And such a lot of books have been written about the death of our Lord Jesus, such a great deal of debate and discussion, and of course, much of art through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance was about the cross and the death of Christ and trying to express it in some way in picture language, which is impossible, of course.

Absolutely impossible. Which is why, really, paintings or pictures or carvings of Christ on the cross can be very unhelpful. In fact, I would say are very unhelpful. But for us, of course, the blood of the Lord Jesus is the very bedrock of our faith.

The very cornerstone of our faith is the historical event of the death of Jesus Christ crucified. And, of course, when we think of his death, there is one sense that comes to our mind, one emotion, if I can put that, one thing that we think of, we think of love.

Because his death is a sacrifice, an atonement, a substitution. It is the demonstration of love. In fact, we have that even here, don't we, in this passage in chapter 5, verse 8, God demonstrates, so that word is to sort of publicly broadcast to the world his love, his own love for us in this way, in this manner, in this picture, this event, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

But, of course, all the way through the New Testament, we have, again and again, this truth that it is the love, the love of God that is revealed in the cross.

[5 : 57] We're studying 1 John, and we'll get to this, no doubt, in chapter 4 in some time. This is how God showed his love among us. He sent his one and only Son to the world that we might live through him.

And then it goes on, this is love. Not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice. That word is propitiation.

We'll pick up on it a bit later. For our sins. And, of course, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, when he was talking with the disciples in the upper room, said to them, greater love has no one than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

And he immediately goes on to say, you're my friends. So, when we're talking about the blood of Christ, when we're talking about the death of Christ, as I want us to do briefly, in one sense, in preparing us as well for the Lord's Supper, when we, again, are given this visible sign to remind us of what Christ did for us there.

I want us not to be engaged in some theological discussion. There's going to be theology in what I'm going to say tonight from God's Word. It's going to make us think, but it's hopefully going to engage our hearts.

[7 : 11] It must engage our hearts. It can't detach our thoughts, our hearts, when we're dealing with the divine love of God for men. What we're talking about then, ultimately, is the accomplishment of the cross.

That's what I want us to think about, the accomplishment. What has Jesus done in dying on the cross? What has he accomplished? Now, the world in which we live can attach a great deal of value to almost worthless things, can't it?

You see, these auctions, I don't know if, well, whatever they may be, they may be, you may watch, I don't know, daytime TV, you're a daytime TV person, and you've got the Antiques Road Trip, and you've got, what's that, Flog It, and there's another one at lunchtime.

I can't remember what it's called now. Sorry? Bargain Hunt. See, Stephanie doesn't mind everybody knowing she watches daytime TV.

All the rest of you are going, I'm not going to say, I watch it, it's called Bargain Hunt. Stephanie, thank you for your honesty. And they just find junk, basically, and then they flog it for money. People attach all sorts of, and it can be something like a scrap of paper, a letter written by a famous personality or celebrity or something like Elvis's clothes or, well, a few years ago, it was the letters of Diana, Princess of Wales.

[8 : 29] Seemingly unimportant, worthless things, because of their attachment to a person, make them valuable. Well, of course, the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is infinitely more valuable than anybody else's blood because he is God.

So when we're talking about death of Christ, we're talking about the death of the immortal, undying God. We're talking about the blood of the creator of the universe.

And so immediately, when we begin to study the cross, the death of Christ, the blood of Christ, we're plunged into something way beyond our comprehension. that God can die, that God can bleed and shed his blood.

The creator of all life should give up his life. And that's, again, something that comes out once more in the preaching and the teaching of the New Testament.

When Peter is preaching in Acts chapter 3, verse 15, he accuses the people, you killed the Prince of Glory. Wow, you killed the Prince of Glory.

[9 : 43] And in 1 Corinthians 2.8, Paul as well speaks about they crucified the Lord of Glory. And so immediately, when we come to the cross and we think about the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, when we have that full comprehension of who he is, we are immediately astonished, standing in awe that the completely pure, the completely sinless, the completely innocent, only innocent, there is.

Our babies, no matter what age they are, they're not innocent. They're born with a sinful slant, a sinful nature. It won't take you very long to find that out, Mum, that within a few years you'll discover, why is this child so difficult?

Well, because of its grandparents, you'll say. No, no, because of its parents, because of our sinful nature. It's passed on into our children. But this one who is without sin, this one who is totally pure, this one who is totally innocent.

And so, when we think about value, then surely we begin by saying that the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is of infinite, limitless value.

It can't be compared, it can't be put alongside, there is no, it is so totally and utterly unique and belonging to the very source of life, the author of the universe, that it cannot, its purchasing power, if I can put it that way, is limitless, because it belongs to the infinite God, the limitless God, the eternal God.

[11 : 30] So when we're talking about the blood of Jesus, we could begin by saying that here is all that possibly could be required to purchase the salvation of every single sinful man and woman in the world.

And yet, we also realize that this sacrifice of the Lord Jesus was necessary for the salvation of one person. You see, our sin is not a trivial thing.

Our sin is against an infinitely holy God. and the only redress, the only response, the only punishment for sin against an infinitely holy God is, in one sense, an infinitely holy sacrifice for that sin.

We get that sort of idea, don't we, when we think about it. We think about sin a bit like, I don't know, whether it be grains of sand or stones. We think about it sort of being a great, great mountain, a big thing which can be counted.

but we have a wrong understanding of sin when we see it in that material sense. Sin is sin because it is something done against an infinitely holy and eternal God.

[12 : 43] And therefore, it is even that one sin, that tiny sin that we think is so small is of unbearable weight upon us, an unbearable guilt and judgment upon us because it is done against one who is limitless and infinite.

But I want us to bring our thoughts down a little. What, according to the Bible, has Jesus' blood accomplished?

What has his death accomplished? I'm sure you've heard it and it's a very sad state of affairs. I think it was just recently this young girl who took her own life because of things she watched upon the internet and of self-harm and how you could kill yourself and so on.

And she took her life and there's a sense and I think the parents were interviewed and they said well if her death can prevent this happening to somebody else it's not a wasted life, it's not a wasted death.

If it means that the law is changed so that these pictures can't be shown and other young people can't be drawn into it there's a sense that that death has accomplished something. But it's a grasping isn't it?

[13 : 58] You can understand that a grasping. But what is it that the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ has accomplished? And we have that here I think in chapter 5, I want us just to think of that for a moment, where Paul is encouraging and strengthening the believers that their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is not pointless or unnecessary but it has accomplished great things because it is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who died for them.

We've already noticed of course that one of the great things that stands out to us in the cross of Jesus is the love of God. We are assured of the love of God. He is proof positive that God loves us because his son was given to die for us.

Jesus came into this world motivated by love. But there's something more than that. It isn't simply a demonstration of love. That's how sadly many in the world have cheapened the gospel.

They brought the cross down to simply a demonstration of love. Oh look how he loved us. He died for us. That's it. But no, there's more than that. There's an accomplishment that's taking place. Jesus in the cross was performing our redemption.

He was redeeming us. That's a word that's often used in the New Testament, in the Bible in fact, to redeem redemption, a price being paid for deliverance, for rescue, for salvation, out of captivity and bondage.

[15 : 32] Remember I read at the very beginning of our service, Revelation chapter 1 and verse 4, unto him who has loved us and freed us from our sins by his blood.

Price being paid. That word redemption isn't used or redeemed here particularly but it comes out, there's a sense of it there in verse 6, don't you? You see at just the right time when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.

There's a giving of himself for us. And later on there in verse 8 as well, God demonstrates his own love for us and it's why we were still as soon as Christ died for.

There's that substitution, that paying of a price, that giving of one in the place of another. And that comes out of course in other New Testament letters, other writers.

Here's wonderfully, 1 Peter chapter 1, for you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver and gold that you were redeemed but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

[16 : 42] Been redeemed, a price been paid, not gold and silver, not the things of this world but the very precious blood of Jesus, the greatest price. And that word redemption and redeem covers all aspects of our salvation, everything in one sense, all the blessings that we enjoy come under the umbrella of being redeemed.

But here Paul uses some others, first of all justified or justification, therefore, verse 1, since we've been justified, verse 9, since then we have been justified by his blood.

So our faith doesn't justify us but the blood of Christ justifies us and our faith in him applies that justification to us. That means we're pardoned for all our sins.

Not only that we're forgiven, wonderful though that is, more than that, it's we're declared righteous in the sight of God the judge. So somebody can, you know, you see again on the TV, a criminal has carried out a terrible crime in one way or another against a victim and the victim, maybe even a Christian has said, look, I forgive you.

You know, it was a terrible thing you did, I don't undermine it, but I forgive you. Well that doesn't change the attitude of the judge because that person has to be punished for their crime. They may even be put in prison for life because of that crime.

[18 : 06] Yes, the victim has forgiven them, but the judge hasn't. But with justification we're forgiven and we're pardoned by the God of heaven, the judge of the world.

We're acquitted in the court of heaven of all our law-breaking. 2 Corinthians and chapter 5, there's that wonderful verse again which says this, verse 21, God made him, that's Jesus, who had no sin to be sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God, this great exchange, justified.

Then there's that word propitiation. Now it doesn't appear here, but certainly the explanation of it appears here in verse 9. Since we have now been justified by his blood, notice this, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him.

Propitiation or propitiate means to turn aside anger, particularly to turn aside God's holy anger against sin by taking it upon yourself, taking the blow as it were, in the place of somebody else.

And the word propitiation itself is used by Paul earlier in chapter 3, verse 25. In the NIV it's translated sacrifice of atonement, but it's there.

[19 : 26] God presented Christ as a propitiation through the shedding of his blood. Justification, propitiation.

Why does Jesus need to be our propitiation? Why does he need to be the one who takes upon himself, as it were, the blows of God's anger? Well, because God hates sin.

God hates sin. Every fiber, as it were, if I can put it, of his being hates sin. He's not willing that sin should escape justice. He's not willing that in any way sin should be let off the hook.

And therefore, neither can he let off the hook anyone who has sinned, who has imparted of sin, who has sin upon them. But upon the cross, Jesus Christ bore the very wrath of God in full for your sin and mine.

Isaiah 53, that wonderful prophecy, looking forward to what the Messiah, the Savior of the world would do. We esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

[20 : 41] We mustn't ever lose sight of that, that at the cross, Jesus is being punished for our sin by God.

Mind-blowing, isn't it? But that's what the scripture is saying again and again and again. We can't, we can't put that aside. We can't, we can't, as it were, try to get rid of that truth.

Our sin deserved God's punishment and Jesus bore it. And thirdly here, under this phrase of redemption, we've got, we've got justification, propitiation, then we've got this wonderful, near the end of the reading there in verses 9 and following, reconciliation.

For if while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his son. That's the sweetest work for us of Christ's death upon the cross, because it's the restoring of a broken relationship with the living God who made us.

It comes out there at the very beginning. In verse 1, we have peace with God. Peace with God. We were once enemies of God. Once we were in rebellion against God, but now we're at peace with God.

[21 : 54] All enmity is removed between us and God. He is our Father. We are his children. We are friends with God. Fellowship with God.

So, we've seen that the blood of Jesus is that which has brought about, that which has accomplished this redemption, justification, propitiation, reconciliation, the blessings of salvation.

But the question then comes, and this is the big one. Who has Christ accomplished this for? Who has Christ died for?

Who has Christ's blood redeemed? Now, if you were listening as we read through that reading in Romans 5, you'll notice again and again that Paul constantly speaks of the blessings of the cross of Christ's death as being for those he calls we and us.

He never says here that Christ died for every person or died for all. Now, he uses the phrase, doesn't he, that the ungodly, verse 6, you see at just the right time when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.

[23 : 10] And indeed, every single person is ungodly. But surely in that verse, it's clearly the powerless and the ungodly are one and the same. Us. So who are the we?

Who are the us? Well, again, this Bible declares to us that the we and the us, and it's pretty plain, isn't it, from Paul's letter, because he addresses it at the very start of Romans in chapter 1 as writing to all in Rome, verse 7, verse 1, who are loved by God and called to be his holy people.

It's believers, Christians, those who are born again, those who faith in God and love God. Those whom God planned and purposed to save through the blood of Jesus.

Did you notice there in verse 6, you see at just the right time, whose time? God's time. Comes out in Galatians 4, verse 4 as well, that at the right time, at just the right time, Christ was born.

God has a plan. His redemption of his people, his salvation of his people is running according to a plan. A plan that God had before the world was made, a plan which has been unfolded throughout history from the very first day of creation and will continue on to unfold throughout history and time until we all enter into eternity.

[24 : 45] God planned and determined before the world was made when Jesus would die and who Jesus would die for. Those that he had planned to save.

Again, that comes out again and again. Ephesians 1, verse 4 particularly. For he, that's God, chose us, that's believers, in him, that's Christ, before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

It comes over and over again. Those he predestined, he also conformed to the likeness of his son. Those he chose. Now as some Christians struggle with this, we find it a hard thing.

They try to reason it out in their own minds. Some people even, as Christians say, well it's something that's been added to the Bible. It's not what the Bible teaches at all.

That Jesus died purely and wonderfully for the believer. But it is here, again and again. The very words of Jesus in John chapter 10, when he was talking about himself as the good shepherd, he said, I lay down my life for the sheep.

[25 : 58] And he goes on to speak to the Pharisees and says, you are not my sheep. He clearly did not die for every single person. Even there in the congregation to whom he spoke, I lay down my life for the sheep.

Acts chapter 20, as Paul is teaching and speaking to the leaders of the church in Ephesus, he tells them to shepherd the church of God. Look after the church of God, which he bought or purchased with his own blood.

The church, not the world. Ephesians 5.25, Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. There's a particular choice that's being made.

There's a determination, as it were, in the mind of God, that Jesus would die for a particular people. And that really, not only is what the Bible declares, but it's something that is utterly reasonable.

Utterly reasonable that Jesus' death upon the cross was to secure salvation for those that God had chosen to save. Particular atonement.

[27 : 09] Think of it if it isn't the case. Think of it in this way. If we say that Jesus died for every single person who's ever lived, then it raises some very deep problems.

How can God, on the day of judgment, punish sinners for their sin if Jesus has already been punished in their place? Yeah?

That's injustice, isn't it? If somebody has paid the price, the fine, the debt, you cannot apply it again. So if Jesus has died for every single person's sins, whoever they are, whether they ever come to faith in Christ or not, no matter how they live, then on the day of judgment, God cannot call for that price to be paid again.

God would be unjust. Secondly, if Christ has died to accomplish the redemption of all people, every single person who's ever lived, Jesus died to accomplish salvation, to make certain salvation, to secure redemption for every person, then he has failed.

Because we know that not every single person will be saved. Grievous as that is, hard as it is for us to bear at times, we know that men and women are going to hell.

[28 : 35] Men and women are lost. And if Jesus died to secure their salvation, but he's failed to save them, then he's failed as a savior.

That can't be right, can it? Surely if we say that Jesus died with the power to save every single person, but not every single person is saved, then the cross, the blood of Jesus, has been emptied of its power.

It becomes ineffective. It becomes of little value. It only makes possible salvation and forgiveness. The sinner has to contribute so in themselves.

We're saying, well, if Jesus died for all people, but not everybody's saved, then we, the people who are saved, have given something, have contributed something, even if it's just our faith, or our right attitude.

We've contributed something because Jesus' blood by itself couldn't save any and everybody. You see, this is the wonderful thing.

[29 : 43] This is why this is so special. This is why this truth, which came to my heart, as it were, as I began to understand the Bible as a young Christian, has become so wonderful to me, is this, that Jesus' blood not only makes it possible for men and women to be saved, but it actually accomplishes salvation, secures salvation, effectively and powerfully saves all those for whom Jesus died, every single one.

That's why Paul is able to say here in verse 10, For while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his son.

How much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved? Or other, we shall be saved. How can Paul be so confident that we shall be saved through Jesus?

How can we be certain if Jesus' death only makes it possible? The confidence that Paul has is in the blood of Jesus. that we shall be saved.

Romans 8, verse 32. He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

[31 : 08] Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus has died.

Those that God has purchased with the blood of Jesus are securely, eternally, forever saved.

And nothing, nothing can stop them from entering into all the blessings of salvation.

Here's what Jesus said in John 6, 37. All that the Father gives me will come to me. In other words, all that the Father chose to follow Jesus will come to me.

And whoever comes to me, I will never drive away. They'll never be rejected. For I've come down from heaven not to do my will, to do the will of him who sent me.

[32 : 10] This is God's will. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.

How can Jesus be so confident that those that God has given him he shall not lose? Because everything is part of the plan and purpose of God. It's not in your hands or mine or your power or mine.

It's in God's power and it's because of Christ's blood. So just as we close, four things as we close.

What does this mean to us today? If what we've seen in God's word is true, that Jesus' blood has secured salvation for all those God has chosen, if his blood was particularly shed to purchase us to redeem us, what does it mean for me?

It means this, that you can be assured that all your sins are once and for all forgiven. You can be assured what Jesus did on the cross. If he died for your sins, particularly, knowing you completely, you can be certain that they are all forgiven.

[33 : 24] That there's none outstanding. That there's none left over. Secondly, you can be sure of this, that your salvation is and always shall be secure.

You're as saved today as you ever shall be. You're as saved today as the saints in heaven. It's a lovely hymn and I can't remember the line of it, but it goes along the lines of saying, more happy, but not more secure, the glorified spirits in heaven.

Those who've gone before us are in heaven, but they're not more saved than you or I. we shall be there and the certainty is the blood of Jesus. Nothing can stop that.

Thirdly, dear friends, what confidence we have to preach the gospel of God's redeeming love to all the world, knowing that in every nation there will be those for whom Christ died and who will come to him and be saved.

If we aren't certain that Jesus secured and accomplished salvation for his elect, then how can we preach the gospel of confidence? How can we say, Jesus will save you?

[34 : 37] when we don't know for sure that he has accomplished salvation in the cross.

Thirdly, dear friends, we can joyfully, with satisfied hearts, give glory and honor to Christ alone for our salvation.

If we believe that this is true, which it certainly is, that everything that has been done for your salvation and mine has been done by Jesus and Jesus alone, then we can give him all the glory and all the praise and all the thanks for everything in our salvation.

Here's those who are in heaven praising Jesus. Listen to what they sing. They sang a new song saying, you, to Jesus, are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals because you were slain and with your blood you purchased for God person from every tribe and language and people and nation.

You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God and they'll reign on the earth. Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels numbering thousands upon thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand.

[35 : 53] They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they were saying, worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and praise.

We're going to...