Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

The Security of Salvation, Part 3
Scripture: Romans 5:5b-11
Code: 45-42

Let's look together at Romans chapter 5, Romans chapter 5, and we're going to be looking again at the first eleven verses, this monumental passage of the Word of God dealing with the security of salvation. Now let me introduce our thinking tonight along this line.

We live in a day of unfaithfulness. Men cannot be trusted, basically. We have learned, if we've learned anything about men, that you can't trust them. They don't keep their promises. They don't keep their word, whether you're talking about individuals or whether you're talking about nations, it's the same thing. People can't be trusted. They are not worth what they say they are in terms of their integrity. Husbands are unfaithful to their wives, to the vows they have made. Wives are unfaithful to their husbands. Children are very often unfaithful to live the principles their parents have taught them and parents are very often unfaithful to give to their children that which they should. People are unfaithful to promises they make to employers and people with whom they work, and so on. Employers are often unfaithful to fulfill their obligations and responsibilities to those in their employ. And I suppose we would have to acknowledge the fact, also, that Christians are frequently unfaithful to God, though God is never unfaithful to them.

No one of us can claim immunity from this terrible sin of being unfaithful, the sin of being untrustworthy, of not living up to your promise, not keeping your word.

The only one in all the universe who is always faithful and always keeps every promise in full is God. And that, my friends, is a very important truth because it is upon the faithfulness of God that everything we believe in stands. God must be able to be trusted. Our eternal destiny is at stake. Everything we do is at stake. And it is indeed refreshing by contrast, it is indeed blessed to be able to lift our eyes above the scene of unfaithfulness to the beloved God who is always faithful.

Back in the pentateuch, that first set of books in which we read about God and what He's like, we read this - "Know therefore that the Lord thy God, He is God the faithful God." And the Apostle Paul said in II Timothy 2:18, "He remains faithful, He cannot deny Himself." And what He meant by that was it is His nature to be true to His word and so He will be.

And I love the phrase of Isaiah. Isaiah said, "Faithfulness is the belt around God's waist." It's that which encompasses Him and hold's everything else together. His belt holds all the other...or His faithfulness, rather, is the belt that holds all His other attributes in place.

The Psalmist in Psalm 36 and verse 5, says: "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and Thy faithfulness unto the clouds."

And Jeremiah echoed a similar thought when he said: "Great is Thy faithfulness."

And I guess you're kind of stuck with that concept. Great is Thy faithfulness, or Thy faithfulness reaches unto the clouds because we really have no way in human language to describe the infinite faithfulness of God.

In Hebrews 10:23, the writer says: "He is faithful that promised." In other words, if God makes a promise He is faithful to fulfill it.

Now, those are samples of a...of really a Scripture filled with comments about the faithfulness of God. And one area where His faithfulness stands out is in the area of preserving His people unto glory, preserving His people unto glory. He stands out in the area of keeping us, of securing us in our salvation. He is faithful to do that. In I Corinthians 1:9, it tells us that God is faithful, "By whom ye are called to the fellowship of His Son." And the verse before that says, "God will confirm you unto the end that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." Paul is saying - If you're saved, God's going to confirm you to the end and the basis on which you can know that is that God is faithful by whom you are called. If God promises you eternal life, what will He give you? Eternal life. God is not like men, God is faithful.

And that's why I Peter 4:19 says this: That believers can have confidence to do this...listen to what the verse says, "Commit their souls to His keeping who is a faithful creator." In other words, when we give our soul to God by faith in Jesus Christ, we can know that God will be faithful to keep it to the end and bring His children to glory. That's His promise. God is faithful, then, to preserve His people to glory.

Now, this comes again and again in the New Testament. Not only do we see the faithfulness of God in the Old, but as well in the New. And just a couple of passages that sort of reinforce it in my mind, I Thessalonians 5:23 says: "The very God of peace sanctify you holy, and I pray, God." listen to this, "your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Now just listen to that. The Apostle Paul says: "I pray that your whole spirit and soul and body will be preserved blameless to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ." Now that is a prayer for security, isn't it? That you're going to be blameless all throughout time until you face Jesus Christ.

The next verse says: "And faithful is He that called you, who also will do it." One of the greatest passages in all the Bible on the security of the believer, I Thessalonians 5:23 and 24. This is what I hope for you, that God will preserve you and He will preserve you, faithful is He that called you, who

also will do it...great statement of confidence.

In II Thessalonians chapter 3 and verse 3, "The Lord is faithful who shall establish you and keep you from evil, and we have this confidence in the Lord concerning you, that you both do and will do the things which we command, and the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patient waiting for Christ." He says we have this confidence about you that you're going to walk in obedience and you're going to live the way you ought to live because God is faithful and He will keep you and, we said last time, that God keeps you from His side and from our side He energizes us to walk in obedience. So, we persevere. From the divine side God keeps us. From the human side we remain faithful. But it is only possible to remain faithful because God who keeps us infuses us with His power. And that's what Paul means in II Thessalonians chapter 3.

Philippians 1:6, I remind you of, we quoted it two weeks ago, "Being confident of this very thing that He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it to the day of Jesus Christ."

Now, all of the Scriptures are telling us the same thing. And I..whenever I hear the debate about eternal security or the perseverance of the saints, and somebody said, in fact my own daughter said to me the other day, she was talking to another young person about whether you're secure in your salvation, this other person didn't believe you were, Can you give me one verse, Dad, that will prove that you're secure in your salvation? Just one. And I was sort of dumbfounded at the moment because I could immediately think about fifty. It's not something that's a thin argument based on some obscure statement somewhere, it is replete throughout Scripture that God is faithful to those He calls to bring them to glory. And we've been looking at that concept for the last two weeks.

Now, let's go back to Romans 5 and with that as an introduction we want to say this - the whole idea of the security of the believer then is premised on the attribute of God that we call faithfulness. And all these other Scriptures that we read, including Romans 5, simply describe to us, listen carefully, they simply describe to us how God implements His faithfulness. We are kept by His faithfulness. And we learn in Romans 5 and elsewhere how He implements that keeping faithfulness.

Now, there are six links in an unbreakable chain that unite us to the Savior. We've been looking at that in verse 1 and all the way down through verse 11. And we suggested these six links.

- First, peace with God.
- Second, standing in grace.
- Thirdly, hope of glory.
- Fourth, possession of love.
- Fifth, certain...certainty of deliverance.
- And sixthly, joy in God.

Now, we're going to go into those, hopefully we'll be able to finish them tonight. Now, remember that the first link that ties us eternally with the Savior is peace with God, verse 1 "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, from now on God is on our side. We made our peace. And it isn't so much that we were hostile against God as it was that God was hostile against us. Remember? God was angry about our sin. The Bible says He's angry with the wicked every single day, Psalm 7:11. So, we are secure because we are at peace with God. His anger is satisfied. His wrath is satisfied in the death of Jesus Christ.

Secondly, we are secure because we stand in grace, verse 2: "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand." Now grace operates where there is sin. If you don't have any sin then you don't need any grace, right? So, grace operates where there is sin. Now if we stand in grace, then when we sin...what happens? Grace operates. And what does grace do? Forgives our sin because of Christ. And so we are secure then, not only because we've made peace with God and His wrath has been spent on Christ, but because we stand in grace. And grace is God's undeserved favor to sinners.

Thirdly, we are linked eternally to the Lord through the hope of glory, the end of verse 2: "We rejoice in hope of the glory of God." And remember last time I told you, and I think this is such a tremendous point, that we are secure because God saved us to bring us to glory. There are three tenses to salvation: past, present, future We have been saved. We are being saved. We shall be yet saved. We wait for the full salvation, the redemption of our bodies, the full and ultimate glorification, and we looked at Romans S and said: "whom the Lord justifies He also...what?...glorifies." So, He has saved us to bring us to glory. Salvation wouldn't even be salvation. You couldn't even call it that if you could lose it. You can't even define it that way because salvation can only be defined as three parts: past, that is we have been saved from the sins of the past; present, we are being saved; future, we shall yet be saved in full glory. And so the hope of glory links us to Christ.

And then we noticed verse 3, not only that but we also rejoice or exult in our tribulations because we know that tribulation not only does it not take away our salvation, not only does it not weaken us, but rather it produces endurance and endurance produces proven character and proven character has a greater hope. So, Paul is saying we are anchored to the Savior by the promise of ultimate glory and even when we go through trial that just increases our hope of glory because trials produce proven character. And the more spiritual character you have, the more spiritually mature you are. The more confident you are in the hope of ultimate salvation.

And that's why verse 5 says: "Hope does not disappoint us, it is not something we are ashamed of because we know God will bring to pass what He has promised.

So, the security of our salvation is then based on peace with God, standing in grace and hope of glory. Now, let's go to the fourth link and one with which we are all so wonderfully familiar as we look

at verse 5.

"And hope makes not ashamed," or does not disappoint, "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given unto us." Now stop there for the time. Here we find the fourth link, and we'll call it the possession of love. God has begun a love relationship that stretches through all eternity. We have become the possessors of love. That's what that says. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the resident Holy Spirit who is given unto us."

When you become a Christian, God deposits in you the Holy Spirit and Paul the Apostle calls Him in Ephesians, the earnest, or the *arrabon*. it means engagement ring. or down payment, or guarantee. In other words, when you become a Christian you're given a guarantee, and that is the guarantee of your ultimate glory, the guarantee of your ultimate salvation, the guarantee of heaven, the guarantee of your perseverance, your security. And that guarantee is none other than the indwelling Holy Spirit given to every Christian. And the Holy Spirit, then produces in us an awareness of the love of God.

The hymn writer said it so beautifully when he said, "Ever since by faith I saw the stream Thy flowing wounds supply, redeeming love has been my theme and shall be till I die." The most overwhelming concept in all of Christianity is that God love us, isn't it? That God loves us. And frankly, folks, this passage escapes words to describe its grandeur and I...I commit myself and you to the Holy Spirit to speak of it to you in words that I can't speak. But what it says here is...it speaks of a personal, internal, intimate ministry of God through the Holy Spirit which takes security out of the cognitive area. It takes security out of the mind and plunges into the heart. It is not intellectual. It is emotional. It is not objective so much, it is subjective now. God is assuring our hearts that we belong to Him by pouring out love.

Over in the eighth chapter of Romans, verse I4 says: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God." Ask yourself a question - Have you ever been led by the Spirit of God? If you've ever been led to do anything for the glory of God it was the Spirit of God leading you. If you've ever been led to a righteous behavior. If you've ever been led to an intense and faithful study of the Word of God, if you've ever been led into prayer, if you've ever been led to worship the Lord Jesus Christ with all your heart...if you've ever been led to any of these things it's been the Holy Spirit leading, hasn't it? And if we have sensed the Holy Spirit's leading then we know we are the sons of God. And if we've ever felt in our hearts what verse 15 of Romans 8 says, to cry "Abba Father," if we've ever felt like saying to God - Daddy - in other words, if we have sensed intimacy with God that is an internal subjective assurance of salvation. Do you see that?

The unbeliever feels none of that. The unregenerate individual senses no affinity to God, senses no intimacy with God, senses no real communion with God. But for those of us who know Jesus Christ, God has nut His Spirit in us and His Spirit in us draws us into an intimate love relationship with the living God Himself. So, listen carefully now, security in our salvation comes not only from outside

revelation but from inside revelation...not only from the mind, the cognitive process, but from the heart.

Now. let me get you a little deeper into verse 5. It says: "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts." Now listen very carefully, that is not talking about our love for God. That is talking about God's love for us. How do you know that? Because the rest of the passage makes a point of that. Verse 8: "God commended His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." It's talking about God's love for us. And so the truth is that God's love for us has been deposited in our hearts by the presence of the Holy Spirit. What are we saying, practically? That the Holy Spirit gives the believer the sense that God loves Him. That's a...that's a subjective thing.

But, let's face it, we are emotional beings, we are beings who feel and respond to the moving of the Spirit of God. And the truth you see that gives solidity to all the rest of the things we know in our minds, for example, we can know in our minds that we have peace with God, that because there was a divine transaction on the cross in which God's wrath was poured out and now He can make peace with sinners. We can know in our minds that we stand in grace and we can have a sense of that standing cognitively, in other words, we can say - That's logical, that's reasonable. And we can know in our minds that we've been redeemed for future glory but God goes beyond that and says - Not only do I want you to know that factually and by revelation, I want you to feel that in your heart. And so He sheds abroad in our hearts His love through the Holy Spirit.

Now, at this point I want to say something that I think is very important in understanding this truth. You will forfeit the sense of assurance that comes by the Spirit ministering to you that God loves you, you'll forfeit that if you live in disobedience. You say - How do you know that? Listen carefully, Galatians 5:22. "But the fruit of the Spirit is...what?...love." I'll say it again. "The fruit of the Spirit is love." If in your life by disobedience you quench the Spirit, if in your life by unrighteousness, by unconfessed sin, by disobedience you grieve the Spirit, you will cause the Spirit to bear no fruit. You will hinder that operation. And what you will lose is the sense of love. Now, I realize that the fruit of the Spirit has to do with love and so forth, perhaps in the fullest dimension that is including it being passed on to someone else, but I'm also convinced that it has to do just as well with the sense of God loving you because it talks so much about a very..a very private internal reality which is the second one named, peace, and another very private internal reality - joy. So, there's a sense in which we have to recognize that though God has shed abroad His love in our hearts by the Holy Spirit' if we're not walking in the Spirit we're not going to experience that assurance.

Now, to help you to understand that even further, look at Ephesians chapter 3, and this is very practical. Ephesians chapter 3 verse 13, and here Paul prays, really, for the Ephesians, verse 14. He says, "I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." And then he asks for this, verse 18, "That He would grant you according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man." Now stop there. Paul says - I'm praying for you that you would know the full

strength of the Spirit. that you would know the full power of the operation of the Holy Spirit, that you would really know the Spirit moving in your life. Why? Why? Verse 17: "In order that," and these just build upon one another, "I want you to be strengthened with might by the Spirit." In other words, if you're going to really see the Spirit operating in full power in your life then you have to get rid of the sin and the disobedience and the flesh and the selfishness and all of that and when that is gone and the Spirit of God is operating in full strength, "Christ will dwell in your hearts by faith." Now, what does he mean by that? Well, the word dwell is to settle down and be at home. When you're controlled by the Spirit then Christ is at home in your heart. The result is this, verse 17: "You will be rooted and grounded in...what in love." Whose love? Not your love for God, watch verse 18: "You will be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ." You can stop there. What does he want us to know? What does he want us to experience there? The love of Christ? Isn't that exactly what it says in Romans 5, is shed abroad in our hearts? Well. if it's shed abroad in our hearts, why does he pray that we might know it? Because, if it's shed abroad on our hearts, it is shed abroad through the Holy Spirit who is given unto us and here we learn that if we are not strengthened with might by His Spirit we'll not fully comprehend His love. That is why, beloved, Christians who walk in disobedience, Christians who walk in sinful patterns, Christians who are unrighteous do not have the sense of being secure in their salvation because all they've got to lean on is that cognitive stuff. They can say - Oh yes, we have peace with God. Oh yes, we stand in grace. Oh yes, we have hope of glory. But they do not know that internal subjective ministry of God's Spirit affirming to their soul at its deepest point that they belong to God. You see? And so there has to be that obedience to walk in the Spirit so that we may be able, I love this in verse 18, to comprehend...and the verb means to seize, to grasp, to make one's own. So the Lord has given us an internal witness. We need to seize it and make it our own.

So, when you ask me if I know I'm saved and I know I'm secure, I'm going to tell you I'm secure because of the transaction that made peace and grace and hope a reality. but I'm also going to tell you that I know that I belong to Jesus Christ because the Holy Spirit witnesses with my spirit that I am a child of God. See? That's Romans 8. And the Holy Spirit causes me in the depths of my heart to cry out to God -Abba Father, a term of intimacy, Daddy. and have a sense in my heart tha I have every right to say that to Him.

Now, let's go back to Romans 5 again.

For the love of God is shed abroad. Can I just talk about the word - shed abroad - for a moment? The word carries the idea of profuse pouring out, of lavishly pouring out, of copiously pouring out. It's not that God's up there with an eye-dropper, saying - I don't want to overdo you so here's a little drop of love. God is not like us. we eye-drop ours out. He doesn't. He lavishly profusely, copiously pours it out.

I'm reminded of John 7 where it says that when you receive the Holy Spirit, out of your belly shall flow rivers of living water. God never does anything in the drops. He always does it in the rivers. God' love is not dripped on us one drop at a time, it is profusely poured out. And so our hearts are filled with the sense of His love as the Spirit of God confirms it to us. What a great truth.

Now, back again to verse 5, it says it's coming to us by the Holy Spirit who is given unto us. The Holy Spirit is the agent by which God works in the life of the believer. He is the gift of God's love.

Now, let me just say this because I think this might add a dimension of thinking maybe you've never had. The very fact that the Holy Spirit lives in a believer is in itself a massive testimony to the love of God. Is it not? Would God give you His Spirit if He didn't love you? Would God plant His Spirit. the third member of the trinity, within the life of a believer if He didn't love that believer? The very fact that the Spirit of God is there in residence in your heart is the great testimony of the love of God.

And that self same Spirit. I..II Corinthians rather, 1:22 says it is the guarantee, is the down payment, is the engagement ring that proves once and for all that the final salvation will indeed come to pass.

In Ephesians 1:13 it says we are sealed by the Spirit...sealed with the stamp of God, never to be broken or open by anyone else.

And so, Romans 8, will you look at it for a moment? Verse 35, says this: "What shall separate us from the love of Christ?" That's really a key question, isn't it? What shall separate us from the love of Christ? Now we're back to the question of security again. What can separate us? Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, can that separate us?

Verse 37, - No, no. in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, says Paul, that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor powers, those are names of demonic beings, ranks of fallen angels, nor things present nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. So, what's the answer to the question in verse 35 - What shall separate us from the love of Christ? What? Nothing! If you still wonder whether you're secure in the Lord you ought to read that again. Nothing! But, the sense of that...the assurance of that in our hearts comes by the ministry of the blessed gift of God, the Holy Spirit Himself who is given to us to confirm that reality to us. I really believed, based on this Scripture, that no human heart can truly know the love of God unless he has living in him the Holy Spirit. And the only people who have the Holy Spirit are whom? Christians...we alone know that God loves us and the Spirit points that to us.

Now, again I say, if a Christian goes through a period when he loses this sense of God loving him, it is because he has quenched the ministry of the Spirit of God.

Let's look at verse 6, and Paul wants to talk a little more about this love and he wants to define the nature of it. And oh, is this important, you don't want to lose your train of thought here. Tell us about this love...tell us how we can know what kind of love it is. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet perhaps for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commended His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

Well, what kind of love is the love of God? That's the definition, folks. That's the kind of love. Now, let's look at verse 6. "For when we were yet without strength," means powerless, impotent, without strength to do what? Without strength to do anything that pleased God. Without strength to overcome sin...without strength to overcome Satan...without strength to overcome the world...without strength to overcome death...without strength to overcome hell...without strength period...to live a righteous life, without strength to save ourselves when we were literally paralyzed by our sin, and unable to do anything about it. We had no moral ability at all...none. We were enemies of holy God. It says in Romans 8:7, we were at enmity against God. And in the flesh we cannot p!ease God. So we were powerless to overcome our sin, powerless to overcome Satan, powerless to overcome death, powerless to overcome hell, powerless to please God....powerless.

And when God looked at us all He could see in us was something to make Him be disgusted, to be full of wrath and anger. Why? What's the word at the end of verse 6? Ungodly...we were the very opposite of God. We were ungodly. So, here are these ungodly, impotent people. And that is amazing that God who is absolutely pure, absolutely holy, looked at people who were repulsive to His holy nature, who were the very opposite of everything He is and He loved them. And how much? Verse 5...verse 8. rather, "So much that in due time, at the right time, in the fullness of time, at the right season, at the moment God prescribed Christ...what?...died for the ungodly."

I suppose we could understand it if God were to love the good and God were to love the godly and God were to love the pure, but the mystery of divine love is that He loved the folks that were opposite of all of that. The great theologian and commentator Hodge has said this, "If God loved us because we loved Him, He would love us only so long as we loved Him and on that condition, and then our salvation would depend on the constancy of our treacherous hearts, but as God loved us as sinners, as Christ died for us as ungodly, our salvation depends, not on our loveliness, but on the constancy of God's love." Oh. I love that You see, God doesn't love you because you're so lovely...me neither. God didn't look down on us and say - Oh, they're irresistible. We...we love...our love is object-oriented, isn't it? In other words, our love is attracted by the nature of the object. I mean, we basically love based upon the object that attracts us. You go through the world before you are married and you...you just look around and you say - Oh yes, there's an object...ooops, see. And something about that object pulls love out of you. Or you say - So-and-so is so lovable. Or we say -Now, you know, there's a face that only a mother could love. You see, basically human love...human love is based on

the object, it is objectively oriented. But you see. God's love is built into His nature so that if you happen to exist, you get loved. And there was nothing in us to attract Him.

Now listen carefully, if there was nothing? in us to attract Him to love us in the first place, what could there be in us to make Him stop loving is in the second place? Couldn't be anything. You see the point he's making? I mean, if Christ died for us when we were ungodly, impotent, ugly sinners and God could love us then, is it going to be any problem for Him to love us now?

Christ died...I love that...the end of verse 6, underline it, Christ died for the ungodly. Oh, that's great.

Literally it says He died in behalf of the ungodly, or instead of the ungodly, or for the sake of the ungodly, however you want to translate huper, it can be translated all those ways. Just translate it this way - He died instead of the ungodly, in behalf of...great truth...great truth.

In John 11, they got up and said, It is fitting that a man should die huper the people, should die in behalf of the people' for the sake of the people.

In Galatians 3:13 Christ became a curse instead of us on our behalf. What a wonder that at the proper moment in the fullness of time He appeared once in the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, the consummation of human history and the marvel of it is that He died with such love that He loved the unlovely, unloveable, godless people.

That's so different, verse 7 says, so different: "For scarcely, or hardly, for a righteous man will one die." I mean, men rarely will die for a righteous man, "And perhaps for a good man, some might die." And I think righteous and good simply are synonyms, talking about the same kind of person, Sometimes in human society, somebody might die for a good person. In other words, somebody might sacrifice his life for the sake of another good person, but the point of verse 7 is nobody' and I mean nobody, is going to die for a bad person...nobody but God. And that's verse 8.

"But God commended," and this is the contrast, and why divine love is so surpassing, "But God commended His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Now, beloved, if this passage doesn't shake you to the foundation o. your being, it is because you don't know how God hates sin, or you don't know how sinful we are. Infinitely holy God who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, cannot look upon iniquity. The God who hates every sin, every evil deed, evil thought, evil word, despises it with the fury of all of heaven, that He could reach out and love ungodly, impotent sinners. That is the surpassing nature of divine love.

The word commended in verse 8 means He proved, He proved the nature of His love, the level of His love, the zenith of His love because while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

Now, that is the security of our salvation. I'm going to sum this up, listen carefully. If God can love us when we are ungodly, wicked, impotent sinners, if He can love us enough to have His Son die for us to save us when we are godless, will He not love us enough to keep us after we have become His children? You see the poinne at all. And the confidence of that love, that forgiving love is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit so that when I sin I don't duck and expect God to whack me and send me to hell, I cry out - O Father by Your love forgive me...because I have the sense of His love.

Listen, look at it another way. If God gave the greatest gift His love could give which is His Son to save us, and then gave the greatest gift He could give, His Spirit to fill our hearts with love, will He not do less to keep us? His love hasn't changed. He loved us when we were wretched. He still does.

That leads me to a fifth link in the chain, and now we come to the summation. I call it certainty of deliverance, and this sort of builds on the point of peace with God, but look at this, this is really something, verse 9. Here it is: "Much more than being now made right with God," that's justified, "made right with God by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him."

What are you saying here, Paul? Well, we have been justified by His blood, that's past. And we shall be saved from wrath in the future through Him. Now that's just a statement of fact. We've been made right with God by His blood, and listen to me carefully now, salvation by definition is past, present and...what?...future. So, if we were made right with God, how long, or to what extent were we made right? For good, so we shall be saved from wrath because there is no such thing as a biblically defined part-time salvation. You can only understand salvation in its fullness and so because we were made right with God by the blood of Jesus Christ, we will be saved from the wrath to come through Christ. That transaction covers past, present and future. And the wrath to come is the lake of fire, you can read it in Revelation, chapter 2O, the lake that burns with fire and brimstone where the godless are sent forever.

Now, God is a God of wrath, but that wrath that is to be poured out on men was gathered in by Jesus and when we put our faith in Him that wrath is set aside and we are no longer, as Paul calls men in Ephesians 2:3, children of wrath, that is bullseye for the guns of God's judgment. We have been saved from wrath. That's the wonderful promise, I think, Paul made to the Thessalonians. He says in verse 10: "To wait for His Son from heaven whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivered us," past tense, "from the wrath to come." No Christian is ever going to stand in judgment. No Christian is ever going to know the wrath of God. The full fury of wrath for your sin as a Christian was poured out on Jesus Christ. So, we will be delivered in the future.

Now, why is that true? Watch this, verse 10, so powerful, "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more," there's that same phrase again, "being already reconcile we shall be saved by His life." This verse thrills me and I want you to understand it.

Now watch, follow Paul's reasoning, just profound. "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God," stop right there. You got the picture? If God brought us to Himself when we were enemies, much more we will be being reconciled, and we'll stop there. And I'll add this. Now that we are His friends. In other words, if God reconciled us to Himself when we were His enemies, don't you think He'll keep us now that we're His friends? You say - Oh. but sin gets in the way. No, no, no, you don't understand. You see, when He reconciled us in the first place we were wretched, rotten, vile, Godless. impotent sinners. We'll never be worse than that. And if that was not a barrier to His reconciliation then, it poses no barrier to keeping us reconciled now. Do you understand that? So, being now justified, reconciled, when we were enemies, don't you think much more we'll be kept when we're His friends? If He redeemed us when we hated Him, do you think He will not keep us when we love Him?

Now, let me take it a second way. And this verse...you haven't yet got to the heart of it. Here it comes. "If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by...what?...by the...what?...the death of His Son, much more we'll be continually being reconciled," I think that's the idea there, "by His life." Now, what is this saying? Here it comes. If Jesus saved us in His death, don't you think He could keep us in His life? In other words, if a dead Savior on the cross can redeem us, can't a living Savior keep us? A great truth, isn't it? If Jesus in death provided our salvation, what can He be doing now in glorified resurrection life? You see, that's the whole point. If He could save us in His death, He can keep us in His life. Great truth. By the way, blood in verse 9, and death in verse 10 are synonyms. They're synonyms. Much more than....this is what people call, in theology, an a fortiori argument. It argues from the lesser to the greater. If God already did the greater, saved us when we were wretched sinners, will He not to the lesser, keep us? If Christ did the greater when He was dead, can He not do the lesser now that He's alive? Great truth.

Trapp said, "It is a greater work of God to bring men to grace, than being in the state of grace to bring them to glory, because sin is far more distant from grace than grace is distant from glory."

And would you notice this? It's all through Jesus Christ, verse 1, "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Verse 2: "By whom also we have access." Verse 6: "In due time Christ died for the ungodly." Verse 8: "Christ died for us." Verse 9: "Justified by His blood, we're saved from wrath through Him." "Reconciled to God," verse 10, "by the death of His Son." We shall be saved by His life." "And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Do you see? It's always through Christ.

No, God never loved us because we were lovable. We were not lovable. He saved us in the midst of our sin and He did it for His own glory, to show what a glorious, gracious, merciful, loving God He was, to put Himself on display throughout all eternity, and what kind of God would He be if He turned His back on us? There would be no glory in that. Certainly if He did the greater. He will do the lesser.

If He saved us, He'll keep us. We were enemies, but He made us His friends. He reconciled us to God. Paul talks about that in II Corinthians 5:2O and 21. that we've been reconciled to God, a great, great text.

Now, just this to kind of sort of wrap up your understanding of the passage, I don't want to take anymore time. Look with me at Hebrews 7:25, and then we'll just look at that final point, it's very brief. In Hebrews 7:25, this is a monumental text as far as our subject is concerned. Verse 25, listen: "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him." Stop there. You come to God through Jesus Christ and He will save you to the...what?...to the uttermost. What does that mean? To the fullest, to the extreme end of salvation. How's He going to do that? What about when you sin, and so forth? The rest of the verse: "Seeing," here's how, "He ever lives to make...what?...intercession for them." You know why it is that Christ saves us by His life, Romans 5:10? Because while He is alive now at the right hand of the Father, what is He doing? Interceding for us, taking our case and saying, Father, that's My child, I have borne their sin, I've borne their judgment, I've borne Your wrath, they're to be forgiven. And He intercedes, He ever, ever, ever lives to make intercession for us and thus carries our salvation to the extreme, the uttermost, and that is ultimate glorification. And when Jesus said, "Because I live," John 14:19, "you shall live also," He wasn't just talking about the resurrection there. He was saying. "Because I live you shall live also, because I live now I will intercede for you to be sure that your eternal life is eternal." Great truth.

So, we're secure, kept by God because He's faithful. And the means by which He keeps us? Peace with God, standing in grace. hope of glory, possession of love, certainty of deliverance and a last one in verse 11. We'll just call it joy in God. "And not only so," and this is, you know, this is more than you can bear, if that isn't enough, "Not only so," says Paul, "we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we've now received the reconciliation."

Now, here's another subjective reality, another reason that we know we belong to God is because He fills our heart with joy. The fruit of the Spirit is...what?...love, joy, peace, joy. And again I say, salvation is not merely a future, though certain. good...it is a present and abundant joy. And one of the ways that you know you belong to God and one of the great securities is that internal joy.

It's already been talked about. Verse 2: "We rejoice." Verse 3, "We exult, or we rejoice greatly." This is the third time it's mentioned. We have joy in God. The concept here is to exult again, to rejoice jubilantly, to...to be thrilled. And so our present sense of joy is an additional guarantee of future salvation. That sense of inner joy produced by the Holy Spirit.

The believer's joy is all in God, you know, you don't joy in your own righteousness, you don't joy in your own ability, your own worthiness. you joy in God and that's why the psalmist says: "O magnify the Lord with me and let us exult His name together." That's why when Clayton gets up and waves his arm around, we're not just reading words off a page, but we're sending messages out of a joyful

heart. That's why in the midst of death or disaster we don't lose our perspective because we joy in God who keeps His own. The psalmist said: "I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation, I will go to the altar of my God, my God, my exceeding joy." And so, we don't boast in ourselves. We don't rejoice in ourselves We don't say - Hey, how wonderful we are. We're not the kind of religious people who pat ourselves on the back about how good we are. We joy in God.

I think the hymn writer said it: "O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise. The glories of my God and King, the triumph of His grace. My gracious Master and my God, assist me to proclaim, to spread through all the earth abroad, the honors of Thy name. Jesus, the name that charms our fears, that bids our sorrows cease. Tis music in the sinner's ears, tis life and health and peace. He speaks, and listening to His voice, new life the dead receive, the mournful broken hearts rejoice, the humble, poor believe. He breaks the power of cancelled sin. He sets the prisoner free. His blood can make the foulest clean, His blood availed for me. See all your sins on Jesus laid. The Lamb of God was slain. His soul was once an offering made for every soul of man."

And then this verse above all: "Hear Him, ye deaf, His praise, ye dumb. Your loosened tongues employ. Ye blind, behold your Savior come, and leap, ye lame, for joy."

The final link that anchors us to the blessed Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, is that we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have received the reconciliation with God. So, we're secure. What a great, great hope is ours. Let's bow in prayer.

I guess we need to ask a question, at this point, at the last minute of our time tonight. Do you have the security we've talked about? Do you know without a shadow of a doubt that you belong to Jesus Christ now and forever? If you don't, one of two reasons has caused that. First, you do not know Christ, you're not a Christian. You don't have the Holy Spirit. You're not secure because you have no salvation. Then I would open my arms in the imagery of Christ if He were here and say - Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Christ wants you to enter into His salvation...now and forever. Put your faith in Jesus' blood. Embrace Him as Lord and Savior. Only a fool says no...only an utter fool holds on to his own selfishness, his own sinfulness, his own vile life and rolls the dice to gamble against eternity. That's a fool. Wisdom comes to Christ. And not only does that secure the future, but, oh my, it fills the present with love and joy. There's joy, it says in the New Testament, in believing.

But, there are some of you who may not sense security, you may not feel assured in your salvation and it may be that you have lost that internal witness of the Spirit, affirming the love of God to you, and you've lost your joy in the reconciliation provided because you're walking in sin, you're living in disobedience. And it may be a small thing, you know, you may not be able to see some glaring evil that is very obvious to the whole world, it may be some small sin that is choking out your sense of assurance. You confess, ask the Spirit of God to search your heart, give you that full sense of God's

love and joy in the Spirit.

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