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

The Divine Guarantee of an Eternal Salvation, Part 3
Scripture: Romans 5:9–11
Code: 80-352

Let's turn back to Romans chapter 5 tonight. It was a number of months ago that I began to take a look with you at Romans 3, 4 and 5. We sort of really began in the middle of chapter 3 and we end in the middle of chapter 5 because this unit of truth from chapter 3 verse 21 through chapter 5 verse 11 features the glory of the great doctrine of justification by faith.

I want to read the opening 11 verses of chapter 5 just to set it in your mind.

"Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we exult in hope of the glory of God. And not only this, but we exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance and perseverance proven character, and proven character hope, and hope does not disappoint because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly, for one will hardly die for a righteous man though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die, but God demonstrates His own love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more than having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him, for while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more having been reconciled we shall be being saved by His life, and not only this but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have now received the reconciliation."

Now the theme of these verses, as we've been pointing out, is the security of salvation. It is to tell us that what God promises, He is faithful to deliver. If He declares that we have been justified by faith, that is a gift that He gives and does not take it back. We live in a day of unfaithfulness, we're very used to people telling lies, making promises they do not keep, making promises they never have any intention of keeping. We are very familiar with the fact that people can't be trusted, they don't keep their word. All of us even fail at that point as well. Husbands are unfaithful to their wives, wives unfaithful to their husbands, children unfaithful to their parents and vice-versa, people unfaithful to promises made, unfaithful to responsibilities they have accepted. Christians even unfaithful to the Lord and to each other. This is part of being fallen people living in a fallen world, the terrible sin of being untrustworthy, unfaithful.

But God is above all of that and God is faithful and it's important for us to remind ourselves of that. Deuteronomy 7 verse 1, "Know therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God." The faithful God, this in contrast to all the unfaithfulness that dominates life in this world, defines God as the absolutely faithful one. Paul says in 2 Timothy 2:13, "He remains faithful because He can't deny Himself." What it means is He has to be faithful because being faithful is being consistent with His nature, and because He is God and He is perfect, He is therefore perfectly consistent. Isaiah says faithfulness is the belt around God's waist. It's as if faithfulness holds all His attributes together.

The psalmist in Psalm 36:5 says, "Your mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens and Your faithfulness to the clouds." That is, you cannot get past or beyond God's faithfulness. Jeremiah could only sum it up in Lamentations 3:23 by saying, "Great is Your faithfulness," and he means great in the sense of incomprehensible, infinite. The writer of Hebrews says in Hebrews 10:23, "He is faithful that promised." First Corinthians 1:9 says, "God is faithful by whom you're called into the fellowship of His Son."

The faithfulness of God then, those are just a few samples as extolled from one end of Scripture to the other. Peter even chimes in, 1 Peter 4:19, calling on believers in confidence to commit their souls to God's keeping because He is a faithful Creator. He is faithful to preserve His people into eternal glory.

Listen again to 1 Thessalonians 5:23, "May the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely, may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, faithful is He who calls you and He also will bring it to past." Since He called us to eternal glory, He will bring us to that glory.

Second Thessalonians 3:3, "But the Lord is faithful and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. We have confidence in the Lord." Our confidence rests in our faithful God.

The familiar words of Philippians 1:6, "For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ." That wonderful promise that comes at the end of Jude with which we are all familiar, "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to make you stand in the presence of His glory, blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior," etc.

So God is faithful who has called us to Christ to bring us to final glory. He is faithful to fill His promise, the promise that those who were justified will be glorified, as it's laid out, you recall in Romans chapter 8.

So that is the theme of the verses in chapter 5, the first eleven verses. It's all about the believer's security because God is faithful.

Now the way God expresses that faithfulness is in an unbreakable chain with spiritual links. We've been working through that chain, there are six links in this unbreakable chain that secures us to God. There is peace with God, standing in grace, the hope of glory, the gift of love, the certainty of deliverance and final joy in God. Peace, grace, hope, love, deliverance and joy, those are features of the faithfulness of God that are expressed and delineated to us in the wonder of salvation. Verse 1, we having been justified by faith have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. That's not the peace of God, that's not a subjective tranquility, that's an objective truce, a final, permanent, forever peace has been made between the sinner and God and once the sinner was the enemy of God and God was the enemy of the sinner, and now there's perfect peace between the two mediated through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Secondly, there is standing in grace. And this is such a wonderful truth. Verse 2, we have obtained our introduction, or better, access...access by faith into this grace in which we stand. The reason our salvation can never be altered, the reason it can never be forfeited, the reason it could never be taken back is because we have a permanent and lasting peace and because we stand in grace...which means all our sin is dealt with graciously. We live in a spiritual environment of grace. Grace is fully operative all the time, taking care of all our failures and sins.

So this is in itself a marvelous, glorious gift. We also have, looking forward, hope of the glory of God. That is hope that one day we will attain to the glory of God, this is called glorification...that we are saved to be glorified. We were predestined to be glorified, justified to be glorified, sanctified on the way to being glorified. That is to say that we were chosen before the foundation of the world for the purpose of eternal glory, not for some intermediate stop. We were not chosen just to be justified or only to be regenerated, we were chosen to be glorified. We are looking ahead to that great glory. And even the difficulties that come into life test our faith, and when our faith is tested, it stands the test and so tribulation produces perseverance, having persevered, your character as a believer is proven and having proven character, enlivens and secures our hope.

And then last time we kind of wrapped up by talking about the incredible gift of love which becomes our possession...and that is, of course, in verse 5. "The love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us." When you came to salvation in Christ, it was an act of love. You were redeemed by love. It was love that bought you. It was love that called you. It was love that saved you. That is the message of verse 5 through 8 which culminates in verse 8, "God demonstrates His own love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." He loved us so much that He gave His Son to die for us.

His love then is demonstrated in the cross and then it is shed abroad in our hearts. It is His love for us. It has an inherent quality to enable us to love Him back and to love others, but it is His love poured out in us that is on the mind of the Apostle Paul as he writes, His great love for us first

demonstrated in that He loved us when we were yet sinners and enemies of His.

How secure are you? Permanent peace, permanent grace, an undying hope and a love that is not minimal but literally abounds in our hearts. Love is poured out in our hearts. The language of Ephesians 3 might help to enrich that a little bit. We have been given such immense love, verse 17 says we are rooted and grounded in love, a love that is difficult to comprehend as to its breadth and length and height and depth because it is the love of Christ, verse 19, Ephesians 3, which surpasses knowledge. We have a massive impartation of divine love poured into our lives. It is incomprehensible. The verb means you can't seize it. You can't make it your own. You can't capture it. This is a massive inexplicable love, unlike any kind of human love that anybody would ever know or experience. Nothing can alter it, nothing. All kinds of human love exists and you can just about kill any of them. And sometimes it doesn't take much. But here is a love that us unassailable. In Romans 8 verse 35, it is a love that neither tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril or sword can alter. It is a love that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing will ever be able to separate us from. It is the love of God from which we cannot be separated.

Now we've been talking about the fact that the battle through the years theologically has been if you're saved, can you lose your salvation? It is inconceivable that anyone who understands Romans 5 could ever conclude that you could lose your salvation. You have a permanent peace, we stand in a permanent state of grace, we have an everlasting hope determined before the foundation of the world and we have a love from God poured out to us that is unassailable and unalterable. That is why we have an inheritance undefiled that is laid up for us untarnished in heaven to be received in the future.

The one that secures that love in us, the one who distributes that love we might say in our experience, in our worship, in our prayers and in our ministry is none other than the Holy Spirit who has taken up permanent residence in us as well. Even in the most disobedient Christian, Paul reminds the Corinthian Christians that if you are the temple of the Holy Spirit and you join yourself to a harlot, you join Christ to a harlot. Any sin that a believer commits is a sin that involves the indwelling Holy Spirit. He is God's guarantee, the down-payment of our eternal inheritance.

This, by the way, if the first specific mention of the Holy Spirit in the whole book of Romans. The Spirit is given to us to distribute in our experience all our spiritual experience, this immense love that comes from God through the Spirit to us. That is why, we are reminded in Galatians 5, the Fruit of the Spirit is...what's the first...love, the kind of love that believers experience transmitted to them through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is far beyond anything an unregenerate person will ever know. All kinds of disappointments can come in this life in our loves. That is a love that never ever disappoints.

How vast and extensive is this love? Look at verse 6. "While we were still hopeless, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly." The point there is it was a love first extended to us not because we

deserved it or earned it when we were ungodly. It is a kind of love that is very different than the world gives, for one will hardly die for a righteous man. People are so self-protected, self-preserving by nature that they rarely would give up their life for a righteous man but perhaps for some their life is willing to be sacrificed for a good man. Certainly through history we see that. Even today there are people who willingly give up their lives for the sake of some good person. But God demonstrates His own love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. No one does that. Maybe some will die for a righteous person. Maybe some would die for a good person. Nobody dies for a wretched person. Nobody is going to sacrifice his or her life for a wicked, evil person. You don't give up your life for mass murderers and criminals.

How different is this love of God? And mark it, if He loved you like that when you were ungodly and unworthy and wicked, you'll never be there again. You have been transformed in the newness of life. If He loved you then, believe me, it's not difficult for Him to love you now.

And that's the point of verse 9, "Much more than now having been justified by His blood." And we'll stop at that point. Much more does He love us now when we have been justified, when we now belong to Him.

Christ died for the ungodly, that's maybe the most important thing to say about the Christian gospel, *huper*, He died in behalf of, instead of, for the sake of. As it says in Galatians 3, He became a curse for us. This is the uniqueness of God's love. It is love unlike any other kind of earthly love. It is a love that is commended to people who are yet sinners. This again is the message of Ephesians 2, which, of course, is that great gospel passage, Ephesians 2:4, "God being rich in mercy because of His great love with which He loved us...then this...even when we were dead in our transgressions." That is what sets the love of God apart. He loves those that no one loves, the wretched, the ungodly, the wicked sinners who are utterly undeserving and unworthy. And if He could love us like that when we were not His, when we were enemies, He has no trouble loving us now that we are sons.

There are two more links in the chain that I want to talk about a little bit tonight. We are linked to a faithful God through peace, grace, glory and love, or hope and love. There are two more links in this. Let's just...let's just look at number five and call it deliverance. But there's a more important word than that. Deliverance from what? Well deliverance from wrath...deliverance from wrath. We are, folks, get it, immune to divine wrath. It does not pertain to us.

Verses 9 and 10, "Much more than having now been justified by His blood we shall be saved...future...from the wrath of God through Him. Here's why. "If while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more having been reconciled we shall be being saved by His life." Those two verses are really very, very important.

This is a tremendously foundational promise to believers. It's reiterated in 1 Thessalonians 1:10 which says, "We as believers who have turned to God wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead...that is Jesus...who rescues us from the wrath to come." This is part of the promise of God to believers, rescue from the wrath to come, or 1 Thessalonians 5:9, "For God has not destined us for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us." It goes back to the satisfaction that God had over the sacrifice of Christ, His wrath was fully satisfied against all our sins and therefore there is absolute certainty that we are delivered from final wrath, THE wrath.

Specifically, back to Romans 5, the wrath of God is the Lake of Fire, eternal hell. The judgment of Revelation 20 is familiar to us, we know it as the Great White Throne Judgment. "I saw a Great White Throne, Him who sat upon it from whose presence earth and heaven fled away...this is in the future...no place was found for them. I saw the dead, the great, the small standing before the throne, the books were open, another book was open which is The Book of Life, the dead were judged from the things written in the books according to their deeds. The sea gave up the dead which were in it. Death and Hades gave up the dead in them. They were judged, every one of them according to their deeds, then death and Hades were thrown into the Lake of Fire. This is the second death, the Lake of Fire, and if anyone's name was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the Lake of Fire." This is eternal hell where there's weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. There is darkness. There is isolation. There is the torture of guilt and remorse and no relief forever. We are saved from that.

In 2 Thessalonians, just to make it clear, chapter 1 verse 5, "This is a plain indication of God's righteous judgment. What is His righteous judgment? Jesus will be revealed, verse 7, from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power." This is the final wrath.

"God is a God of wrath, we know that. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men," Romans 1:18. God's wrath is not an automatic sort of judgment. There is sowing and reaping wrath, but God's wrath is not an automatic judgment on sin by some kind of anonymous cosmic force. God's wrath is an active intense personal reaction to sin. And its full fury will come in the final judgment at the Great White Throne when all who are outside the gospel will be sent to hell. They're designated Ephesians 2:3 as children of wrath, but we on the contrary, we shall, verse 9 of Romans 5, be saved from the wrath through Him...through Him.

How so? "Having now been justified by His blood." Because we have been justified, made right with God by the death of Christ who paid in full the penalty for our sin, we are certain of our deliverance from future wrath. It is the sacrifice of Christ, as we know, we've sung about it tonight which is the true ground of our acceptance with God, our peace, our grace, our hope of glory, our love, our deliverance

are not based on our works, they are based on Christ's death. Our justification requires Christ's blood to be shed. He is the faithful offering, the satisfactory substitute for sinners. And this is what it means when it says His blood, it doesn't mean the fluid, it means His death...blood is a graphic way to symbolize His sacrifice on the cross.

Now all of that is prologue, in a sense, it's beginning to mount here, verse 9, "Much more than..." It's wonderful to have peace with God. It's wonderful to have grace endlessly. It's wonderful to have the hope of glory. It's wonderful to be loved by God with a love that cannot die. But more than that, to be delivered from eternal wrath. Now you're arguing from the lesser to the greater, delivering us from eternal wrath through Him. That's the pinnacle.

By the way, God never found anything in us that was good enough for that deliverance, never found anything in us that made us worthy, never found anything in us deserving of heaven, deserving of salvation. Don't kid yourself, you may be a faithful Christian, you may walk the walk, don't get the illusion that you bring anything to the issue of salvation...you don't. Even the best that you, the best that I do is mingled with our sinfulness. He saved us for His own glory in spite of us, and He secures us forever and promises deliverance from wrath.

Now Paul elucidates this point, I think, in a very memorable way in verse 10, "If while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son..." That's a very important statement. If...when we were enemies, Christ's death could reconcile us to God, much more having already been reconciled, we shall be...the Greek says.. "Be being saved by His life." If when we were enemies He could reconcile us by dying, now that we have been reconciled, He can certainly keep us reconciled by living." If He could do what He did through His death, how much more can He do through His life?

This leads us into the priestly ministry of Jesus, "He ever lives to make intercession for us." The reason we don't fall away, the reason we don't abandon faith, the reason we don't deny Christ, the reason we don't lose our salvation is because we have a living interceding High Priest who ever lives to make intercession for us. We were reconciled, you might say, by a dead Christ, we are kept reconciled by a living Christ, whoever lives to secure us into eternal glory.

That is what it says, Hebrews 2:17, "He had to be made like His brethren in all things so that He might become a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, make propitiation for the sins of His people, and since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered...in that which He has suffered, is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted." He ever assists us, aids us, guards us, keeps us.

This isn't talking about some mystical experience, this is talking about a divine transaction. If Christ in death can save us, then a living Christ can keep us saved. If we can be saved and reconciled when

enemies, we can be secured now that we have become friends.

All of that leads to a final link, a final wondrous reality which certainly is the culmination of everything in verse 11. And that's why he says, "And not only this," he's been piling it on a little bit, verse 8, "Much more than...verse 10...much more...verse 11...and not only this... We've now reached the pinnacle. We've gone from peace to grace, to hope, to love, to deliverance and now to joy...now to joy.

Not only all this...not only all these five, but we also exult...remember I told you that word means a kind of joy that is over the top? We also rejoice exceedingly in God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have now received the reconciliation. If there is one thing, one emotion, one attitude, one disposition that should dominate the life of a Christian, it is joy...it is joy. What else do you want if this doesn't bring you joy? What are you holding out for? That's the issue. Salvation is not merely a future, it is a present joy in anticipation of that future. That is why Paul says, "Rejoice always, and again I say rejoice." That is why it's a sin not to have joy. What do you want out of life? More contentment? More comfort? More agreement? More stuff? More what? What is the source of your joy if it's not this? Everything else is less than this. Everything else is considerably less than this. Everything else is wood, hay and stubble.

Not only all of these wonderful things, but because of all these wonderful things, we rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ because all of them have come to us through this unearned, undeserved reconciliation.

I really do believe that the single greatest mark of spirituality is joy...joy. I'm not talking about silliness, frivolity, kind of a slap-happy attitude, irresponsible mentality that doesn't take into account serious things. I'm talking about an unassailable, deep-seeded settled joy that nothing in this world circumstantially can move...can't move it. My soul will make her boast in the Lord, O magnify the Lord with me and let's exalt His name together. I will rejoice in the Lord, says the psalmist, I will joy in the God of my salvation. I will go to the altar of my God, to God, my exceeding joy.

I think you feel some of that when you sing, don't you? When you worship? You're rejoicing in the Lord. This is where your salvation links take you. That's why you let loose and you sing, "O for a thousand tongues to sing, my great Redeemer's praise. The glories of my God and King, the triumphs 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, to 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 canceled 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...and above all this verse...Hear Him, ye deaf; His praise, ye dumb, your

loosened tongues employ, ye blind behold your Savior come and leap ye lame for joy."

There's nothing to boast about in us, it's all through our Lord Jesus Christ. And the end of it all is joy. And if your life isn't dominated by joy, then you've lost touch with the greatness of the gifts that come in your salvation. You are secure forever, unalterably so. You have been given divine peace, divine grace, divine hope, divine love, divine deliverance and divine joy.

Do you live like that? Your life and my life should be endless exuberant act of gratitude to the God who gave us true and everlasting joy.

Father, this passage of Scripture opens up to us again the things that we know and love but so easily slip into theological categories far away from living attitudes and experiences. Restore these things to us to the front of our minds, and may our worship not be confined to the service in the church when somebody has to lead us. May our worship, may our songs of joy, songs of praise flow out of our minds and hearts at all times as we contemplate the greatness of the elements of our salvation which link us everlastingly to You, our absolutely faithful Lord. And again we confess that we are unworthy of all of this. We thank You that You loved us when we were ungodly sinners, and now that we are friends, sons, You love us and that love that saved us secures us. We can trust You and we do and it is joy unspeakable and full of glory. May that joy reverberate from us, around us, and may it be infectious to all those who see us and know us that we have a joy that is beyond human comprehension because it is tied to a gift that is beyond human attainment, the gift of reconciliation, salvation that You've given us. Fill us with joy and use that joy to be attractive to draw others to Christ, we pray. Amen.

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