

The Justified's Boast in Full Reconciliation

Romans 5:1-11

Romans 5:1-11: "Therefore having been justified on the principle of faith, we have peace towards God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom we have also access by faith into this favour in which we stand, and we boast in hope of the glory of God.

And not only that, but we also boast in tribulations, knowing that tribulation works endurance; and endurance, experience; and experience, hope; and hope does not make ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given to us: for we being still without strength, in the due time Christ has died for the ungodly. For scarcely for the just man will one die, for perhaps for the good man some one might also dare to die; but God commends his love to us, in that, we being still sinners, Christ has died for us. Much rather therefore, having been now justified in the power of his blood, we shall be saved by him from wrath. For if, being enemies, we have been reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much rather, having been reconciled, we shall be saved in the power of his life.

And not only that, but we are making our boast in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom now we have received the reconciliation."

Father, we thank You always for Your Word, and we know Your Word is truth. We know Your Word is life. We know Your Word can quicken. We know Your Word can cause us to walk in the fulness of life in Christ Jesus. So we plead with You this morning as we come, do what no man can do. Open Your Word, anoint Your Word, cause it to live as we consider it this morning, and cause us to not just to be hearers of the Word only, as James says, but doers of the Word. We want this Word to affect our lives, where we live, where we go, how we act, how we relate, we want this to be the living Word in us that is Christ Jesus our Lord. All these things we ask in Your precious name. Amen.

Introduction

I think everybody knows that we are dealing with these first eleven verses. When you get into the study of the Word, try to break it down in sections. I think it will help you. If you break it and limit it to certain sections, it will help you understand the writer's thought. If you sometimes take in too much, you might take too many thoughts at once. So that is why we are dealing with these shorter sections.

I was struck by the last word in this section in verse 11, "reconciliation." It is an enormous word. If you do not understand reconciliation you can never live the Christian life. Reconciliation is something that is most important to a believer. It is our starting point. In justification it is through reconciliation that we come into all that God has for us. So I borrowed that last word in the title, "The justified's boast in full reconciliation." Now some of you may not have seen or read the e-mail, and if you haven't, this is what we are dealing with. This section ends in a glorious boast, a boast that would justify, realize all that God had done, and it is a boast not just in

reconciliation, it is a boast in full reconciliation. So this is what we will be dealing with. I want to read, maybe to help you understand the importance of this word, “reconciliation” with some verses. I think these are very important words for us understanding full reconciliation.

II Corinthians 5:18-20: “and all things are of the God who has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ,” (that is the first thing; think of that. All things are of God who has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ. This is a very important thought about reconciliation.) “and given to us the ministry of that reconciliation:”

This is our ministry. When we speak of God, we must speak of reconciliation because with Paul, and not just with Paul but with you and me as believers in the Lord Jesus, we live now and have been given this ministry of reconciliation. “how that God was in Christ.” This is our message. “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not reckoning to them their offences; and putting in us the word of that reconciliation.”

Verse 20: “We are ambassadors therefore for Christ,” Did you know that you were an ambassador? I always think it is kind of humorous that when a president is elected, he appoints all of his ambassadors, and usually it is who gave the most gets the best ambassadorship. It is usually friends, and I am not sure they are all qualified, but they did give a lot of money.

“We are ambassadors therefore for Christ, God as it were beseeching by us, we entreat for Christ, Be reconciled to God.”

This is our ministry, and this is our calling. This is what God was doing. He was in Christ reconciling the Word to Himself. This is an enormous subject Paul takes up in these eleven verses. I do not know if you know this, but the word reconciliation is only used by Paul in the epistles, and only four times. You might be interested in writing these down and looking at them later.

Romans 5:11, Romans 11:15, dealing with the mystery of election, and II Corinthians 5:18-20. This is the calling of God. So what we will be dealing with this morning is how God reconciles us to Himself in Christ. And if you see that, you begin to discover a wealth of power and grace and favor that has been poured out on you that you now, because of this reconciliation, and through this reconciliation can live the Christian life. It is the only way possible. So that is sort of what our thought is.

I want to read you a word about reconciliation, and this really spoke to me. This is a book I recommend to you if you have not read it, W. E. Vine’s “Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words.” I do not want for a moment that you or me, unless you have a great ambition to do it, to turn into Greek scholars. I always liked what Brother Kaung said, “It was not necessary that we do that,” but certain words at certain times you need to know what the Biblical meaning is of a word, and this book is very helpful when we study such words.

Vine said, “It properly denotes a change, an exchange, hence a person to change from enmity or enemy to friendship, to reconcile with regard to the relationship between God and man. The use of this and connected words shows that the primary reconciliation is what God accomplishes.”

That is the one thing I want you to focus on in his definition. “Primary reconciliation is what God accomplishes, not what we do.” So I think that is very important.

He went on to say, “Exercises His grace towards sinful man on the ground of the death of Christ in propitiatory sacrifice under the judgment due to sin.”

This is what we need to know, brothers and sisters. God’s reconciliation is a thing that He accomplishes for us; we are the beneficiaries. We get the grace, the favor poured out on us, but we did not do anything. All we can do is look up and say, “Lord, You did all of this.” This is the secret in Romans chapter 5 that God through Christ has brought us into full reconciliation. He made it possible and this is our testimony.

When we look at this, there are four things we need to look at. First of all, they are defined eternal facts about reconciliation. If you do not know those divine eternal facts you will underestimate this full reconciliation. Once you know, you see how full the reconciliation was. So we will look at some divine facts, not human facts.

The second thing we need to look at is, “God’s work of reconciliation.” Not only does He show us the facts of reconciliation, He does the work of reconciliation. It is all of Him. How wonderful that is, and we receive from that work.

Third, there is God’s power for reconciliation. So He does not just give the facts, He does the work and grants the power for reconciliation. If you understand those three simple things, then you can begin to realize the fulness of reconciliation. And if you understand those things, you come to the fourth point, which is our boast in full reconciliation.

Paul was outside of himself boasting in what we receive through this great reconciliation. That is the introduction and I hope it will guide you where we are headed.

Eternal Facts Resulting from Reconciliation

First, these are the eternal facts resulting from reconciliation. It is only in verses 1-2 that these eternal facts are included here, but verses 1-2 are so full that you can hardly imagine the depth of this reconciliation. We sometimes read, and I think Lance would use the term, “la-la-la”, just read through casually. However, if you read these two verses and do not focus, you will not understand how full and deep that reconciliation is. I hesitate to say, “blessings;” it is much more than blessings. And I certainly do not want to use results. Results is too common a word. These are the results of reconciliation. No, these are immutable facts. Now do you understand the difference? Blessings may change, may come and go. You may experience results or not, but divine facts are changeless. You cannot change them. The word immutable means “you cannot change it.” If you let me put it in even stronger fashion, these are divine guarantees. This is what the guarantor has done. He has given us these essential divine guarantees that we can know how full His reconciliation is. It is much deeper than just blessings and results. They are eternal facts, divine facts.

I think of starting with the encouragement that is there. It says in the phrase: “Therefore, having been justified.” Notice that is the starting point. He did not say, “He hoped to be justified.” He did not say, “He might be justified.” The Apostle Paul is very deliberate in his choice of words. He said, “Therefore having been justified.” Brothers and sisters, this is what we need to know. At the beginning of our walk, His work was so great that we are completely justified. This is the

beginning. It is a glorious fact. The first glory is fact; He wanted to communicate to the church in Rome and all that would ever read this letter following, "You have been justified." This is past tense. This is wonderful to know as we begin our life in the Lord.

Now you think about this marvelous fact. You have to go back and think about what happened in chapter 1:18-3:20. I know I beat you up with those verses, but in those almost three chapters, we see how impossible it is for us to be justified. Man is totally corrupt. Sometimes we make the mistake and say, "We are not so bad." You cannot read chapter 1:18-3:20, if with any divine light whatsoever, you cannot come to the conclusion, "Well, we are not so bad. We just need a little tweaking, a little adjusting." It is like when your timing is off in your car. They used to put a light on it, but I do not know what they do now. There are computers in these things, and you cannot work on them anymore. But when I was a kid, we would just open the hood and get down in the engine and work on them. We made them work by tweaking on them. With just a little tweak they would run better.

It is not true when it comes to be reconciled. When you are reconciled, you cannot just be tweaked. God has to do a lot more than that.

If you notice He begins with the word, "therefore." This is a very important word. As a matter of fact, if you study the book of Romans, I would like you to notice the word "therefore." Paul uses this word sixteen times in the book of Romans. And he uses it very often if you will look for it in strategic points where there is a turn of events or where there is some important point he wants to make clear. He always begins, "Therefore," Therefore we having been justified." This is a marvelous fact.

I believe you can think of Romans 12:1 as an example. It says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to give yourself as a living sacrifice, which is your reasonable service." Now you may not have thought of giving yourself as a sacrifice to God. It sounds like a pagan culture to the uninstructed. You may think this sounds crazy, but if you see the full reconciliation of God, you will not think it is crazy at all. You will arrive at the very same conclusion that the Apostle Paul came to which is "your reasonable service." It is "your intelligent worship" as other versions say. So there is where he uses that word most profoundly. He looks back over those eleven chapters of Romans, and he comes to this grand conclusion: "Therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service."

Now when you look at that first phrase in verse 1, "Therefore, having been justified," you notice that it is in a certain tense. Tenses are important. Now you know that I have said it enough I am not an English major, but I happen to be married to one who was on that path, and I learned enough from her, and she will always tell me when I did not get it right, and I appreciate that. I think that is very helpful. It took me forever to get the I's and me's straight being an engineer. But finally with the help of my dear beloved wife, I was able to get it right in my mind and most of the time it comes out.

So notice it says, "Therefore, having been justified." This is in the present, perfect tense. That is very important. "Therefore, having been justified," means this is completely done. You cannot

do better in English, at least, as far as I understand, than the present perfect tense. It is an accomplished fact. It is a fact that you cannot change. It is an immutable fact. This is what is so important.

Brother Darby spoke of this “perfect tense”, and I like the way he put it. He said, “We have obtained it and possessed it.” That is what it means to me. Have you obtained this being justified? He did not attain it. He could not attain it. It was not through your works; you obtain it. And have you possessed it? Is it your own? Can you say like the Apostle Paul in this most important beginning, “therefore having been justified.” That is the first fact. That is very important.

One brother said this: “Justification by faith is being declared righteous by God because of believing God. It is a fact that has happened.” Never forget that. I think some people live in their feelings so much, particularly, maybe it is Americans. I am American; I live in this culture. I know this culture fairly well, not so much other cultures, but we often say, “I don’t feel justified. I got up this morning, and I am not feeling it.” Don’t the young people use that word, “I am not feeling it”? This is nothing about feelings. This is about facts. If you forget the facts and only live in your feelings, your Christian life will be destruction. This is what the Apostle Paul has to say.

Griffin Thomas said, “Justification is an immediate gift.” Isn’t that beautiful? “It comes through faith the moment a man believes. It is received, not accomplished, obtained, or attained.” You can go to school and work hard and study hard, or you can open a business and work hard, and in all of your efforts you can say, “I obtained this.” But you will never be able to say that in full reconciliation. No believer is a self-made man or woman. We are God-made men and women. It was all His doing, and how wonderfully superb that is. One said this: “The moment you believe, God declared you righteous,” (and he said something else that so helped me,) “Never to change His mind.” If we live not in the facts, but in our own feelings, we might wake up tomorrow morning and say, “I wonder did God change His mind about me. That is how people think. “I wonder, if that is true.” Brothers and sisters, this is the exhortation of the Apostle Paul: “Live in the facts, not in your facts, not in your truth; live in the divine facts. And if you live in the divine facts, you will be an overcomer. It is that simple.

There is another fact, “we have peace with God,” it says in that verse. Now our brother Steve already talked about that at the table, but how wonderful this is. This is that first part he was talking about. This is the peace with God. This is how the King James Version translates it. “We have peace with God.” How wonderful that is! We are no longer at war with God, we are no longer the enemies of God. We are no longer the outcasts of God. We now have peace with God. That is a fact. We can live in that fact. Now you may sin still because we all do. As long as you are living in the flesh and as long as you operate under that old life, you may sin. You may temporarily lose that peace with God, but all you have to do is come back and confess, and He will restore that peace in you. It is a divine fact; live in it. I think that is what this teaches.

In the early chapters of Romans, you see that there is no peace between God and man. You see how antigod man was, and how God in His righteousness could not tolerate it. There was absolutely no peace but now we have peace with God, total peace. Peace can rule in your heart; peace can rule in your mind; peace can rule in your experience because this was the fact declared in full reconciliation. Animosity, enmity, broken relationship between God and man has been

completely removed in full reconciliation. What a wonderful thought that is! How we as believers need to embrace that thought. We need to wake up in the morning: "God, we have peace with You through our Lord Jesus Christ." That was the only way it was possible. Otherwise, we were in conflict and in conflict all of our life. Now when you read this, you understand there is a difference between the objective reality and the subjective experience. You begin to see that, that there is something here we need to see very clearly. We need to live in the objective reality; that is truth; that is fact.

But then we begin to learn how to walk in the subjective experience. This is what is important. How is this peace with God to be made possible? How is it even able to be done? I think we begin to see how it is done.

Later, it says because the Holy Spirit has been shed abroad in our hearts. This is how it is able to be done. We are able to go from the fact of peace with God to the experience of the peace of God all because He has put something in us which is the Holy Spirit, that we can live the Christian life. This is how He makes this possible. If we mix these two things up, experience and fact, we will be confused in all of our Christian life. The fact is justification; the experience is sanctification. Justification goes through chapter 5. When we finished chapter 5, Paul would have dealt thoroughly with full reconciliation and justification. When we come to chapter 6, 7, and 8, Paul begins to deal with the living experience.

How do we live as a Christian? In chapters 6, 7, and 8, the topic is sanctification. Don't ever confuse these two because the only way that you are going to go from the objective, immutable fact of peace with God, to the experience of the peace of God is when the Lord does His work in you by the Holy Spirit. It becomes part of your experience.

The Apostle John in John 14:27 it says, "I leave peace with you; I give my peace to you: not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it fear."

He gives something to us as the Holy Spirit works in us where that peace is manifest in our experience. But it is always based on we have peace with God. Do not ever change the order. You may look at your experience and say, "I have no peace." You need to look at the fact, and that is where you discover the peace.

It says in Philippian 4:7: "And the peace which passed understanding shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus."

How is that possible? To go from peace with God to that kind of peace that passes understanding? It is only as the Holy Spirit brings us into that experience. It is the only way.

Then there is a verse which I love in Isaiah 26:3: it talks about perfect peace. Do you understand that perfect peace is possible in the Lord Jesus? Do you understand that?

Isaiah 26:3: "Thou will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee."

How marvelous! Brothers and sisters, we begin with the inalterable divine fact. Enmity between us and God is gone. But then this chapter goes into our experience, and our experience is the Holy Spirit working in us until the reality of the peace that passes understanding, the peace

of God. Perfect peace guards our hearts and minds, which is our own experience. This is what the Apostle Paul is dealing with. While we stand in the objective eternal truth, we begin to yield our lives to the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit to be conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus this is the fuller working of the peace of God, and this is what this chapter is talking about.

The third thing is fact. This is the fact to me that is astounding—it's access. It could never even be considered in the Old Testament.

Verse 2 says, "By whom we have also access by faith into the favour in which we stand, and we boast in the hope of the glory of God."

Do you understand that we now as believers, because of the full reconciliation, have full access to God? Do you understand that? It is not limited access. You can remember the story in the Old Testament, the high priest. The high priest, either in the tabernacle or in the temple, could only go into the Holy of Holies or the Holiest of all, (they mean the same thing) where the presence of God was. You could only go once a year, and you could go only on one day, the Day of Atonement, and only then that the most holy person that was appointed as the high priest had access to God. Can you imagine if our Christian life was like that? If on March 15 was that one day you could get into the presence of God, that one day you could have access by faith. How terrible the Christian life would be!

But this fact that the Apostle Paul is bringing to us is that we have full and unlimited access to the living God. That is wonderful! Brothers and sisters, that is wonderful.

Hebrews 9:7-8: "But into the second (meaning the Holiest of all) the high priest only, once a year, not without blood, which he offers for himself and for the errors of the people: the Holy Spirit shewing this, that the way of the holy of holies has not yet been made manifest while as yet the first tabernacle has its standing."

What they had in the Old Testament pales in comparison to what we have in Christ Jesus. Now every moment of the day, every minute of your life, every year of your existence you have full and free access into the Holiest of All. I think one day when we are in eternity, if any of the high priests, whom I believe there will be some high priests who will be saved because they believed, will come up to you and to me and say, "What you have we could not even think of. We could not even comprehend. We could not even approach with such a thought." But what you have is beyond anything man could believe that every human being, the great and the common, have full, unlimited access to God by the Holy Spirit in Christ Jesus. This is the third eternal fact. Do not ever forget that, because if you do, you will be lost in your Christian walk.

Hebrews 10:19-20 says, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness for entering into the holy of holies by the blood of Jesus, the new and living way which he has dedicated for us through the veil, that is, his flesh."

That is how we are instructed to come. It is not ashamedly, it is not being ashamed to come, it is to approach boldly knowing that this was the provision of full reconciliation that you and me can come into His presence beyond that veil because His body was ripped on the cross, and when it was ripped, that veil was torn in two from top to bottom. Do you know that veil was not a minor

thing. When the Lord offered up His Spirit on the cross and He gave up the ghost, it immediately says, "and the veil in the temple was rent from top to bottom." Do you know what that did? It gave you complete access, and that was no small feat. If you read carefully all the facts in the Old Testament, the veil was forty-five feet tall. That is the biggest curtain I have ever seen. That is four stories of curtains. And another supreme fact about that veil is that veil was a handbreadth in width when it was made, three and a half inches. That is a two by four stud. It was that thick, and yet it was torn, not from bottom to top to give us access as if man could do anything to get that access. It was torn from the top to the bottom by the divine hands of God, and now you have free and unlimited access to God.

I always think of the book of Esther; one of my favorite books. You remember that when Esther wanted to approach King Ahasuerus she would have to wait until the king held out to her the golden scepter, and if he did not hold out the golden scepter she could never come into his presence. Do you understand what limitation that was? I cannot imagine how many times she must have walked up to the court, saw the king on the throne with his golden scepter, and he never extended it to her. What must it have been like being his own queen. But brothers and sisters, one day, he extended the golden scepter to her, and she went up and said, "She touched the top of the golden scepter."

We are able because of full reconciliation to touch the top of the golden scepter, the real golden scepter, not Ahasuerus' golden scepter; God's golden scepter, and now this is the story of Esther. We have full and complete and unlimited and unbounded access into the Holy of Holies. This is the facts when you look into this part of the book. How tremendous it is.

The fourth fact: "And we boast in hope of the glory of God."

Do you know that you have hope? Real hope? When I read the news, and I probably read too much news. I will congratulate Linda on this. She has cut down on my news watching. She is the news police. If I turn it on to a news channel, she exits the room with a little bit of fanfare: "I am out of here; I am out of here, you are looking at your news." But when you look at the news, you are so hopeless. What hope is there in this world? But in Christ the fourth fact that Paul wanted to impress upon the saints in Rome and us forever is that we boast in an eternal hope. We have a hope that the world does not know. We have a hope regardless of what happens to us. Regardless of our daily life, our trials and our difficulties. We have a hope that is forever. It cannot be taken away because it is not conditional; it is a fact. This is what we need to see.

In I Peter 1:3 he says that this is a living hope. "God the Father has brought us to a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." It is a living hope, not a wishful thinking.

Paul wrote to Titus in Titus 2:13: "This is the blessed hope." It is the most blessed hope that could be imagined. We will be with God for eternity. Now I do not know what you think of time. Time is a speck of dust.

I went to a celebration with the firm the other day because they invite the old guys once in a while. They said, "What are you doing?" And I said, "Well, I am enjoying retirement; this is wonderful. I like this very much." And they know what I am doing with different things. This hope that we have is so tremendous; we are not hopeless like the world. They said, "What do you really

want to do?" I said, "I am enjoying retirement; I am enjoying being with God's people in gatherings and knowing the Lord and studying the Bible more. I am so thankful for that." This is the hope that we have, and it will never fade away. This is our unfailing hope that cannot be taken away.

Hebrews 6:18b-19a it says, "We might have a strong encouragement, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us, which we have (Underline that in your Bible. We have that hope. We are not looking for that hope.) as an anchor of the soul, both secure and firm, and entering into that within the veil."

This is the hope of the glory of God. Isn't that tremendous? Can you imagine more hope than that. It can never be taken away. This is what we boast in. This is talking about the anchor of the soul. Now if you have a boat, and I do not have a boat and I never will have a boat because I understand the saying that the first day you get a boat is the best day of your life, and the last day when you get rid of the boat is also the best day of your life. But this is about being anchored. How are you anchored to God. It is through the hope; it is through the hope.

I remember an old story that I read years ago about the royal navy in Britain. The royal navy defeated one of the most powerful navies in the world, the Spanish Armada. They defeated them in 1588, but they knew something in that navy that was profound. They developed an anchor that would never fail, and they would test it. Why were our ships coming unmoored and losing their anchor and drifting to destruction? How can we correct it? The Royal family appointed a special research group to make an anchor that would never fail. And when they tested that anchor and found that anchor that would never fail, they put the Royal Seal on it. It is only the anchor with the Royal Seal that never fails. That is the hope. I hope you know that hope.

God's Work of Reconciliation

The second thing we want to talk about is God's work of reconciliation. All these eternal facts we must know. They are what we have, but we must also know that full reconciliation is based on His work alone.

Romans 5:3-5: "And not only that, but we also boast in tribulations knowing that tribulation works endurance; and endurance experience; and experience hope; and hope does not made ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given to us."

Now this goes beyond the fact, this is the work of God. What He does for us is unthinkable. He puts the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Divine Trinity in us. You remember when the Lord said, "I will go to the Father and ask for the promise of the Father," and you remember what He said in John in those lovely chapters when He said, "He will be with you" (and remember what else He said about the Holy Spirit) "He will be in you." Can you imagine! God the Holy Spirit in us. That is how we go from fact to experience. That is how we can boast in tribulations, that is how we can come into endurance. That is how we can come into experience because the Holy Spirit brings us into that reality. Brothers and sisters, I cannot think of anything more powerful than that. Just think if the Lord Jesus had left and said, "I leave you with My Word." Where would we be? Could you do it? Could you live the Christian life? Could you overcome? Could you do all that

He requires? There is not a moment's chance you could. So He did something that no one could have imagined. He said, "I am going to the Father, and I am going to ask of the Father that He would give you", what He called, "the promise of the Father." And that Holy Spirit would come and be with you forever. That is a long time. And that Holy Spirit will be in you forever. How marvelous is the work of God! This is how we are conformed to His image. This is how we are bought from justification to sanctification. This is how we live the Christian life, not just by fact but by His work. This is what is essential.

If you look at Philippians 2:12-13: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." I think for a lot of Christians that is the way they read that verse full stop. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling?" What a miserable Christian life that would be. I think I would give up. You could not do it. No man could do it. But thank God that that verse does not stop there.

"For it is God that works in us both to will and to do for His good pleasure."

Isn't that good news? This is the work of God. He is working in us. What does the first part mean? There is effort. There is giving yourself to God. There is saying, "No to the flesh." There is a trial in life, but you know at the end it is all completely dependent on the work of God alone. It is God that works in you to will and to do for His good pleasure. That is the first secret of this work.

Verses 6- 8: "For we being still without strength, in the due time Christ has died for the ungodly. For scarcely for the just man will one die, for perhaps for the good man someone might also dare to die, but God commends his love to us, in that, we being still sinners, Christ has died for us."

How marvelous this is! Brothers and sisters, we need to notice when we read these verses how wonderful this is. It says, "But we being without strength.." Now it does not say when you were saved, all of a sudden you had strength to live the Christian life. It says as a matter of fact, "for we being still without strength." That is what the Apostle Paul said, "Christ died for the ungodly." One day you had no strength. It was not as if the day after you were saved you had strength to live the Christian life. When Paul talked about full reconciliation based on the work of God, he said, "For we being still without strength." I think this is revelation. We need to confess that we do not have the strength to live the Christian life. We need to confess that we never had the strength to live the Christian life. We need to be up front with God and say, "Unless You work in me, I can never be that man or woman of God that You want me to be." It is utterly and completely impossible. The tense is very strong here. "For we being still without strength." This is what we need to see. We were powerless, and then God works.

II Corinthians 12:9-10 is about Paul's thorn in the flesh: "And he said to me, My grace suffices thee; for my power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather boast in my weaknesses, that the power of the Christ may dwell upon me." Isn't this marvelous!

You do not have to agonize over your weakness. As a matter of fact, the Word of God makes it very clear. You were still without strength. Now what can you boast in? The power of God that

is upon you. That is what makes the Christian life possible. That is the only thing that makes the Christian life possible.

He said, “in the due time Christ has died for the ungodly.” Listen to this: “For scarcely for the just man will one die; for perhaps for the good man someone might also dare to die, but God commends His love to us in that we being still sinners.”

Did you notice that? It is almost the identical phrase. “We being still sinners.” It is impossible for you, yet God’s work is so complete that we are able to live the Christian life. How marvelous it is! How grand it is! Someone might dare to die for a just man. Can you read the first three chapters of Romans and find a just man? In chapters 1-3, can you read those chapters and find me a good man?

The rich young ruler came to the Lord Jesus in Luke 18 and said, “Good Teacher,” that was the issue the Lord had with him. He said, “Why are you calling Me good? No one is good but God.” Yet he still insisted that he had kept all the commandments from his youth. I think that is exceptional, what he thought of himself!

Brothers and sisters, how we need to know that the Lord in His work of full redemption did something far more than dying just for the ungodly; He died for sinners. He did far more; He exceeded even His own definition for love. You remember when He was speaking in John he said, “I no longer call you slaves because the slave does not know what His Master is doing. He said, “I call you friends.” Before that He said, “Greater love has no man than this that he should lay His life down for His friends.”

To me that is the definition of greatest love. Can you imagine someone laying His life down for you as a friend? This was the Lord’s own definition. This was not Peter’s definition. This was not Matthew’s definition. This was not John’s definition. This was the Lord’s definition of greatest love.

But when you come to chapter 5 of Romans, He laid His life down for the ungodly. And when you come to chapter 5 in Romans, He laid His life down for sinners. We are still sinners. He laid His life down. How tremendous that is! It exceeds every definition, the highest definition of the greatest love, and this is the work of God. How tremendous it is! May the Lord help us to see how great this love is. We cannot live the Christian life without knowing that when we were still without strength, I want you to underline that phrase, He died for the ungodly. And when we were still sinners, He died for us. That is the work of full reconciliation.

God’s Power for Reconciliation

Now I want us to also think about God’s power. Not only has He given us eternal facts that we are to live by, not only does He do the work in us by the Holy Spirit and gives us strength that we can live the Christian life, but when you come to the last part, we see the power that He gives us. There are two phrases I want us to consider in this last part. It is only in verses 5:9-10.

“Much rather therefore, having been now justified in the power of his blood, (notice that statement, underline it) we shall be saved by him from wrath. (We are enemies, remember) For

if, being enemies, we have been reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much rather, having been reconciled, we shall be saved in the power of his life.”

Now there are two phrases I want you to recognize. In the King James Version, it is “much more.” If you read chapter 5 of Romans you will discover there are four “much more’s.” What God is saying is that I have done all this, I have given you the divine facts. They will never change. What He is saying is, “I have gone beyond the highest standard of love and saved you while you were without strength and while you were still sinners,” and now in the last section Paul comes to this point where he shows us the power that makes it possible for us to live the Christian life. So notice that “much more.” Underline it in your Bible. You will discover that in this first part and in that last part of Romans. But then he gives two powers. One power deals with all of our past, and one power deals with the whole of the Christian life.

The first one is that we have been saved by the power of His blood. Brothers and sisters, there is nothing more powerful than the blood of Jesus. It can erase every sin and every fault and everything you have ever done. Only by the blood of Jesus. Last week we sang that wonderful hymn about there is power in the blood. I did not grow up in a Christian home, but I remember when I was saved in a little chapel in the Bethel Assembly of God in February 4, 1972 we sang “There is power in the Blood.” And I wept and I wept, and I discovered that night I left that place a changed man. I could not believe it. I went on singing, “There is power in the blood, wonder working power in the blood.” How powerful it is! All your past is erased, and even if you fail as you walk the Christian life because you are still human, the blood never loses its power. Think of it!

I John 1:9 says, “It is able if we confess our sins to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Not just some, but “all”. But one will say, “But you do not know me. There are certain sins if you knew, you would be ashamed.” But the Lord can cleanse us from all unrighteousness. What the Apostle Paul was trying to get us to see is the absolute power in the blood of Jesus, “saved in the power of His blood” was the phrase.

But he had something else to say. He did not just cleanse our past and leave us to ourselves, but He had another secret. And that secret was, “much more, now being saved, justified, we shall be saved in the power of His life.” Notice that phrase, very important phrase. It is the great secret of the Christian life. You are given a life in you, the life of God, and that life in you, you can now live the Christian life. Understand what the Apostle Paul is saying. “All of your past is dealt with. There is provision for any of your future sins. It is in the power of the blood. But this life that you are called to live which is utterly impossible for you, you can only live it one way through the power of His life. Do you understand that? That is astounding! That is the secret of this. This is what the Apostle Paul wants us to see, and if we see it, it will make such a difference. This is what the “much more” is.

Our Boast in Full Reconciliation

The last thing, our boast in full reconciliation. If you read verse 11 it is very clear. “And not only that, but we are making our boast in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom now we have received the reconciliation.”

How marvelous this is! We have received this full reconciliation. And if you read the early chapters of Romans you see it is very clear man has nothing to boast of. You cannot boast in the law. You cannot boast in your righteousness because you have none. You cannot boast in your acts; there is nothing you can boast of. But when the Apostle Paul came to chapter 5 he said, "There is something you can boast in. You can boast in the Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have received the full reconciliation, but now (notice that word) through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have received the reconciliation." Salvation from death and the wrath was through Him. Salvation by His life now is in us, and we have what is absolutely clear, the full reconciliation. Now we can boast in the hope of the glory of God as it says in verse 2 that we read. Now we can boast in our tribulations until all of that becomes endurance and becomes experience because we are in the Lord Jesus and the Lord Jesus is in us, and our boast is in He is our full reconciliation. I hope this makes sense. This is the justified boast in full reconciliation, who has been made unto us wisdom and righteousness. Christ has been made unto us all these things, and sanctification, a holiness. All these things He has been made unto us. He is our only boast, and this is how we can live in full reconciliation. Do you understand the eternal facts? Do you understand it is God's work? Do you understand it is God's power? If you do, you have something of to boast. May the Lord open our eyes to full reconciliation.

Lord, we just commit to You those things in Your Word that are so precious they can change our life, those things in Your Word that can open our eyes, and we no longer need to walk in our own strength or struggle in our own nonexistent power, but we can live in the fulness. How we pray that we would begin to live in the facts. How we pray that we would begin to live in the understanding that You did the work, and You are doing the work. And how we need to understand in the end that it is all through Your power, the power of the blood, the power of Your life. This is the secret of our boast. This we ask in the name of the Lord Jesus. Amen.