

# The Text

Romans 5:6–11 (CSB)

<sup>6</sup> For while we were still helpless, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly.

<sup>7</sup> For rarely will someone die for a just person—though for a good person perhaps someone might even dare to die.

<sup>8</sup> But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

<sup>9</sup> How much more then, since we have now been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from wrath.

<sup>10</sup> For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, then how much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life.

<sup>11</sup> And not only that, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received this reconciliation.

# The Introduction

How did we get here?

This passage does not hang by itself. In other words, is not a standalone passage. Even though I am preaching just this passage, I will need the full council of God which is completely and perfectly contained in this Book concerning all things necessary for God's glory and our salvation.

Why would I be so bold in saying that?

Open up the 1689 2nd London Baptist Confession and right from the gate, it will show you what what the Scriptures teaches about the Scriptures. First chapter, first page, first sentence:

The Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience

Continue reading this Confession to part 6:

The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down or necessarily contained in the Holy Scripture

Let me be clear: Historical Confessions, whether it is the 1689 or the Westminster or the 39 Articles, are certainly not Scripture. But our Historical Confessions of Faith are simply

confessions of doctrine. What is doctrine? Doctrine is what the Bible teaches. If the Bible does not teach it, then it is outside of doctrine.

We know that the Bible does completely teach what is necessary for the glory of God and what is necessary for our salvation. How? We know that because the Holy Spirit inspired the authors who penned all of the words of the 66 books within this Bible.

On salvation, Paul tells the young pastor Timothy:

2 Timothy 3:14-17 (CSB) But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed. You know those who taught you, and you know that from infancy you have known the sacred Scriptures, which are able to give you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Paul continues on to give this declaration:

All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Christ himself speaks on concerning his great glory:

John 6:45 (CSB) It is written in the Prophets: And they will all be taught by God. Everyone who has listened to and learned from the Father comes to me—

So, when I say I need the full council of God, that is, all of the Bible, to preach to you today, what this particular passage of Scripture means, I mean what I say. And if I need the full council of God, so do you.

We've been learning in Bible study in Chad Bird's "The Christ Key" that the Bible starts with the Torah--the first five books of the Bible--and then the other 61 books of the Bible refers and quotes and builds off of the Torah. The Bible is not a disconnected bunches of little books that have nothing to do with each other--they are connected because they have one author: the Holy Spirit who inspired human authors to put pen to parchment.

I say that to say that tonight's passage, Romans 5:6-11, does not exist by itself so I cannot preach this nor could not faithfully read it as a standalone, disconnected, taken-out-of-context passage. Romans is built upon the foundation of all of Scripture starting with Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

As much as I would love to, tonight, I cannot give you a survey on the entire Bible. We don't have that kind of time. Maybe another time. BUT, using the first five chapters of Romans, how did we get here? What did Paul say before getting to tonight's wonderful gospel passage in Romans 5:6-11 How did he build his case?

## A Walkthrough of Romans

- Romans 1:1-17 God's good news - Paul starts with glorifying God and his affections for the church in Rome.
- Which let me remind each of us what the city of Rome was like in the first century: a hot bed of depravity and idolatry--which the citizens of Rome were masters at the time of mixing and integrating sin and the worship of other gods. Wickedness, social injustices, political corruption. How does Paul respond in his letter to the church? Justification by faith alone. Incredible. Paul declares this great truth:

Romans 1:16–17 (CSB) For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, just as it is written: The righteous will live by faith.

- **Romans 1:18-32** The Depravity of Man
- **Romans 2** God either gives the law to the Jews or gives conscience to the Gentiles. We all know what is right and wrong at a basic level. No one has an excuse in the sight of God
- **Romans 3** No one is righteous. No not one.
- **Romans 3:21-26** We have fallen short of the glory of God but righteousness of God is through faith for those who believe and therefore, we are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that can only be found in the one, Jesus Christ
- **Romans 3:27-31** The law does not save us because it can't save us
- **Romans 4:1-8** We cannot do enough good things to put God into our debt so he has to save us God does not have to save anybody. In other words, whatever good have done does not beckon, persue, coaxed the Almighty God to save you. Isaiah 64:6 calls our good works "self-righteous filthy rags" in the sight of God. They are useless because they are tainted with our sin. You are going to need someone who is perfect and willing and able to save us despite ourselves.
- **Romans 4:9-25** Simply sum it up: we are saved by faith alone in Christ Jesus alone

Then our passage today is in the context of all of that with one more passage:

Romans 5:1–5 (CSB) Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We have also obtained access through him by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we boast in the hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our afflictions, because we know that affliction produces endurance, endurance produces proven character, and proven character produces hope. This hope will not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

James, the half-brother of Jesus, says it this way:

James 1:2-3 (CSB) Consider it a great joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you experience various trials, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

Since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through Christ alone. Since we have peace, we have obtained access to God. Christ in Matt 6 & Luke 11 on the Lord's Prayer puts it like this, "If you turn to God, go to God, ask God for God, you are going to get God." No delay. No if, ands, or buts about it. Ask for God, you are going to get God.

There is the good news. But what else is Paul talking about here?

Verse 3 says, "boast in our afflictions?" Afflictions? Some Bibles call it 'trials'. The Geneva Bible translates that as 'tribulations'. Consider it a great joy for trials and tribulations? Who needs tribulations? Isn't life hard enough as is?

The building up of character and endurance? What is God preparing us for? Why do we need to be build up in character, endurance and hope?

To answer that question, you got to start again from the beginning. Not necessary the beginning of time but the beginning of our lives.

# Our God

<sup>6</sup> For while we were still helpless, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly.

## Future Sin Future Grace: Our Helpless Estate

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come  
Let this blest assurance control  
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate  
And has shed His own blood for my soul

Horatio Spafford. It Is Well With My Soul.

Why do we need the building up of character, of endurance and hope?

Consider our helpless estate before we met God:

Upon the prophet Isaiah seeing the glory of Christ (John 12:41), he cries out:

Isaiah 6:5 (CSB) **Woe is me for I am ruined because I am a man of unclean lips and live among a people of unclean lips, and because my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of Armies.**

David feeling the pangs of separation from God:

Psalms 22:6 (CSB) **But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by people.**

Us in our unbelief:

Ephesians 2:1 (CSB) **And you were dead in your trespasses and sins**

Us apart from God:

Titus 3:3 (CSB) **For we too were once foolish, disobedient, deceived, enslaved by various passions and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, detesting one another.**

Let me contend that the Christian comes upon seeing the glory and beauty and the holiness of God and just becomes undone. Now you and I might not have the Paul's Road to Damascus radical transformation. Some do. Others might have been like C.S. Lewis who just gets on their motorcycle and at the end of a very short ride through the countryside, Mr. Lewis just believes and trust in God.

But we are all undone in one way or another at the sight of God and the beauty of his grace and gospel. And once you see it, you are never the same. You can't go back to what you once was. If your eyes were opened to the gospel of God, you cannot go back to your helpless estate because that feeling of being helpless is terrible and the worst feeling in the world. You now know that you need help--super help, something outside of yourself. Like Paul, you cry out, "Wretched man that I am! Who is going to save me from this body of sin and death!" Or like the tax collector, standing in the back of the sanctuary, beating his chest and crying out, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner!"

It was there, in that moment, is when God saved you completely and perfectly to himself. For good. You and I as sinners in the sight of God are helpless. I used to say 'helpless as babes' but even babies breathe on their own. We were helpless as dead corpses at the bottom of the ocean. Who is going to save us?

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<sup>7</sup> For rarely will someone die for a just person—though for a good person perhaps someone might even dare to die.

## Future Sin Future Grace: Far From God

Let me shoot straight: we are not born just and righteous people. Romans 3:10 quoting Psalm 14: None of us were born good. No, not even one.

And, to that end, I am going on a short limb to say that I don't think anybody here has ever been in a situation where you put yourself in danger in order of someone else to live. If you have, share with us afterwards because that would be an awesome story.

I was a kid of the 80s where I was constantly exposed to the greatest movie genre ever to be invented: The Action Movie! And man, as fan of the genre, you got to see so many movies where someone gives their own life so someone else would live, that you grew up thinking, "Man, this is just life for now on. Just psych yourself to take one for the team."

And even as a US Air Force vet, I didn't see any action like that. My job titled had the word, "Combat" in it. Alas, no action to be found.

And in these action movies, it was someone being saved was if not a good person, at least someone redeemable.

But life is not an action movie. As awesome as it might sound, we do not live in constant danger with bullets whizzing by our heads every second of the day.

But this life is certainly not an action movie because the ones needing to be saved--you and I--were not good in the sight of God and by own strength, could not redeem ourselves.

In this passage, do you see what Christ did here?

<sup>6b</sup> at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly.

Let me give it to you in another the way. Let me give you some good news...

# The Gospel

<sup>8</sup> But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

## But God

Let us start off here. Who is God?

In the book, *Cross of Christ*, John Stott puts it bluntly on how we are not God and in fact, very far from God:

- **God is high above** our sin and idolatry
- **God is far** from our wickedness and depravity
- **He is glorious** - He shines the brightest

I am in sweet communion with Christ as a poor sinner can be; and am only pained that he hath much beauty and fairness, and I little love; he great power and mercy, and I little faith; he much light and I bleared eyes.

Samuel Rutherford. The Loveliness of Christ.

- **He is all-consuming** - he will perfectly eradicate all sin from everywhere
- **He is rejects all sin** from his presence - no toleration, does not have to live with it; he vomits it out of his being

Does God have good and bad days and whatever life circumstances give him, he deals with accordingly? No. In actuality, he is completely sovereign over all circumstances. Things don't happen to him unless he allows it. That makes him omnipotent--which is a fancy way of calling him, the Almighty God.

Of all the things that he is and we are not, do you know what is the one chief thing that God is and we get to do? We do get to love one another.

proves his own love

I am not going to sugar coat this: the world has try to taken the word 'love' by God's definition and twist it like their father Satan does. But I want you to see how, in Scripture, God defines love.

For here is love, God proclaims the good news that He will make all things right:

Genesis 3:15 (CSB) I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.

And here is love, God is faithful:



Psalm 103:15–18 (CSB) As for man, his days are like grass— he blooms like a flower of the field; when the wind passes over it, it vanishes, and its place is no longer known. **But from eternity to eternity the LORD’s faithful love is toward those who fear him, and his righteousness toward the grandchildren of those who keep his covenant, who remember to observe his precepts.**

And here is love, God's mercies will never come to an end:

Lamentations 3:22–23 (CSB) Because of the LORD’s faithful love we do not perish, **for his mercies never end.** They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness!

And here is love, God saves us from our sins:

Matthew 1:21 (CSB) She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

And here is love, God sent his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ:

John 3:16–17 (CSB) For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

And here is love, God adopts us into his family:

Romans 9:25–26 (CSB) As it also says in Hosea, I will call Not my People, My People, and she who is Unloved, Beloved. And it will be in the place where they were told, you are not my people, there **they will be called sons of the living God.**

And here is love, God loved me and lived and died for me:

Galatians 2:20 (CSB) I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

And here is love, we have no condemnation:

Romans 8:1 (CSB) Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus,

And nothing can separate us from God's love because of Christ our Lord:

Romans 8:38–39 (CSB) For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor any other no created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And the ultimate form of love? He loved us first...

1 John 4:10 (ESV) In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

God has all day to open your eyes and see what is actual love and how much He loves you.

I could take the book of Leviticus and prove to you that is the love of God for you. And you might think, "How is the law of God is the love of God for us." Because in delivering the law to us, he shown us how far we are from him. If you read the law correctly, you are going to shout out, "I can't do this! It is impossible!" God is saying, "I know. I know. That is why I sent my Son."

for us

And he sent his Son for us!

And here is love:

2 Corinthians 5:21 (CSB) He made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Or as the ESV reads, "For our sake." That is the most amazing part. God does this for us. For our sake because we were so helpless, dead, woeful, and far from him.

That God doesn't have a generic all encompassing love generic for all things. No. This love, this saving love, this perfect love, this sanctifying love, this glorifying love, this satisfying love, this maxed out joy love is specifically directly targeting you, the children of God, the people of God, the sheep of his flock, the apple of his eye and the joy of his heart.

No other created being. Not the puppy dogs. Not the kitty cats or the cute things of this world--although adorable, he does not target his love on them because he is already their Lord. He does not have this type of love for the angels because they are His already and they worship him perfectly. He has a specific love for his people because He made us in his image from the start. Not anything else ever created holds that distinction. We are made in his image.

And you might be asking, "But what about unbelievers who don't love and trust God." Let me reply by asking you how God replied to the prophet Isaiah: "Is the saving Almighty arm of God too short?" In other words, does our God have T-Rex arms? No! **He is mighty to save.** And let me submit to you because in eternity before the foundation of world God the Father and God the Son set out to save His people from their sins and we know this in full because God proved his love for us already.

in that while we were still sinners

I had to avoid the temptation of making this the main point "while we were still sinners." You can already see the main point of this sermon is God and His great love for us. But don't miss this point. Don't gloss over it. Don't speed read over this:

But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners

I know we are in Romans 5, but let me give you a spoiler alert for Romans 8:

Romans 8:28–30 (CSB) We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called; and those he called, he also justified; and those he justified, he also glorified.

You might want to say that "God looked down the corridors of time and look to see when we accepted him as our Savior and God picked that timeline."

That is a nice theory but there is one glitch. The Bible says "God foreknew us". It never says, "God foresaw us." In other words, he didn't see us changing our minds and hearts and choosing him to be our God. No! He knew us in our sin and depravity and wickedness and evil and he knew that we were always going to run away from him unto death because He alone knows the depths of our hearts. And you know what the Almighty God, creator of the heavens, earth, and hell, when he saw us sinning and rebelling against Him all day long, do you know what he said, "That's who I want in my family. That person I want in my family forever. And I am going to send my Son live and die for that person and send my Spirit to give them life so we can be together forever."

He knows our hearts. And still he loves us. Because...

Christ died for us

As many of you know, God saved my oldest son, Yusef, not that long ago. And I have shared this story tons of times and I am going to share it again. I don't care. I love worshiping the Lord because He is so good.

I get to talk to Yusef twice a week. And I thought this particular Tuesday in August was going to be like any other small talk phone conversation. But this call started out different. He wanted to know, "How does one start to believe in God?" That was a loaded question that deserved a loaded answer. Towards the end of the call, Yusef tells me, "Dad, I have always told you I could not be a Christian because false preachers and hypocrite Christians. But to be honest, that is the not the reason at all. What if I go 'all-in' into this faith and it doesn't work out. There are no guarantees in life. What if this doesn't work out."

And I simply responded, "You are right. In this life and in this world, there are no guarantees. But out of all the faiths, cults, religions, and philosophy, we Christians have a guarantee--the guarantee is in the life and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. And you know what makes it even more amazing? All of what Christ did happened 2000 years ago. Our guarantee is an historical fact."

A few days later after that unforgettable phone call, Yusef was saved by God. A couple months later, I got to baptize him. Praise be to God!

God foreknew my son. God knew that my son's heart was from Him. God knew my son, knew his disbelief. Knew that Christianity was just a myth and nothing more. God knew him and saved him.

God knew that I was deceived into wickedness and sin. I tasted the goodness of God when I was young but spent so much of my life rebelling and trespassing against a holy God. I was at war with God and his creation. God knew me and sent his Son to save me from my sins.

Saved by him through him for him

<sup>9</sup> How much more then, since we have now been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from wrath.

Jesus Christ, the son of God who is God, the Alpha and the Omega, and the Beginning and the End, who was and is and is to come, came into our existence and timeline, stepped into our world, by the sovereign decree of God the Father, conceived by the power of the Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, live perfectly under the law of God, then was arrested, tried, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was tortured, beaten, hung and crucified on that cross, unto to death, buried in a rich man's tomb and he descended into Hell to snatch up the keys to Hades and Death, and on the third day, he was raise back to life and then ascended to the right hand of the Father forever.

Christ's life was given for me. His death was meant for me. His resurrection is that I might be born again and now live to him. His ascension to glory means that since he justified me, he also glorified me.

My salvation is secure and set because I am in Christ and Christ is in me. And guess what? If you are in Christ, your salvation is secure and set. Because our God is perfect, Christ is perfect, the Holy Spirit is perfect and what they promised to do is perfectly done. The Almighty Holy God lacks the sin and wickedness and deceit to break any of his promises.

# Our Response

What? So you struggle with sinful desires and thoughts and your heart sometimes flee?

<sup>10</sup> For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, then how much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life.

Future Sin Future Grace: Christ has already saved you

Listen to the words:

reconciled...  
the death of his Son...  
reconciled...  
saved by his life...

Hear the past tense. Hear the already done. Hear that God is our Perfect Father in Heaven who doesn't lose his kids. Hear that Christ is the Good Shepherd who has never lost one of his sheep because the sheep hears his voice because Christ knows us and we will follow him. The Holy Spirit has put a seal upon our heart and marked us as and bear witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

God foreknew our wicked hearts. Psalm 103 says that God remembers that we are made from dust. How are we going to save ourselves? That is why he sent his Son to live and die so that we might live and never die.

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<sup>11</sup> And not only that, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received this reconciliation.

Future Sin Future Grace: God is ours

What is the reconciliation? To appease, harmonize, to rectify, to resolve... to reunite.

To reconcile with someone in this life is one thing. In my experience, when I hear of a reconciliation between two people, I think that is simply astounding! Especially in the times of divorce or relationships ending on a whim or our jerkiness and the lack of tact and wisdom and grace on social media, we are so easily offended and often quick to dismiss and block. But when people can sit in front of each other, and give grace and understanding to one another, I think that is a miracle. I don't see it happening as often as I would like to. But that is what it is like to live in a post-Genesis 3 world.

If I am calling that a miracle, then how would you define the sons of Adam now belonging to God because of Christ. (If you want to see the details of this real miracle, keep reading Romans 5 starting at first 12. That is another sermon.)

How would you explain how Paul quotes the prophet Hosea in Romans 9:

Not my People, My People, and she who is Unloved, Beloved. And it will be in the place where they were told, you are not my people, there they will be called sons of the living God.

Because we were all born sons and daughters of Adam and therefore away and separated from God, we are now reunited with God by power of the Holy Spirit through the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Listen to me: Christ didn't die so that you were just saved from hell and now you are on neutral ground with God. No! Reconciliation to God means you and I get it all. We get the whole kit and caboodle! The whole enchilada! Reconciliation to God means:

- we are saved to God
- predestined by God
- called by God
- justified in the sight of God
- adopted by God
- co-heirs with Christ who has inherited everything (Heb 1:1-2)
- glorified by God
- alive by God
- maxed out joy by God
- pleasures evermore by God
- completely satisfied by God
- beautifully and preciously loved by God
- forevermore with God by God for God

We are truly love by God. Nothing is going to separate us from the love of God who, as the prophet Zephaniah absolutely declares, that God "rejoices over you with gladness, who is quiet in his love, and delights in you with singing." (Zephaniah 3:17)

Our great God who sent his only begotten Son for you has saved you. God rejoices, loves, and delights in you. God sings and rejoices over you? Why? Nothing that you and I have ever done. We were born sinners. But God loves us because you are in Christ and Christ is in you.

I asked in the beginning of our time here, "What is God preparing us for? Why do we need to be build up in character, endurance and hope?" I am reminded of the Day 4 Advent Reading from Ronnie Martin's God Who is With Us and he expounded on Genesis 50:20:

Genesis 50:20 (CSB) You planned evil against me; God planned it for good to bring about the present result—the survival of many people.

We live in fallen, evil world. There is no denying that. You can actively pay attention to the news and doom-scroll your social media and listen to worthless conspiracy theories and myths and have your heart and soul be inundated by the mad world we are a part of. You can simply not watch the news and not doom-scroll and you would still know the just how corrupt the world is becoming. You know without even looking hard enough that Satan is the still the prince of the air--as defeated as he might be.

With all evil and corruption--the radical depravity of the world around us--Christ did not come to shield us and buffer us and keep us unscathed and uninjured and disconnected from those who are still imprisoned by Satan and sin.

See how Jesus prays for us:

John 17:15–17 (CSB) I am not praying that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

Why is God building us up in character, endurance and hope? Because while we are not of this world just like our Christ was not of this world, we are very much in this world, just like Christ was. And just like Christ, we are here to do the good works that the Father has laid out for each of us to do--namely, to minister and to love one another.

TODO:

Rest in that absolute truth, brothers and sisters. And give thanks to Him. Amen.