

Series: Romans
Title: God's Love in Trials
Text: Romans 5: 3-11
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Romans 5: 5: Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3: And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4: And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

How could anyone rejoice in trouble? It is not so much the trial but what God does for us through the trial. We know that tribulation works patience—submission to the will of God. And patience works experience—growth in grace and knowledge of Christ Jesus. And experience increases our hope—confidence in Christ of our sure salvation by him. And the hope God gives never deceives and never leaves us disappointed. Here is why? It is because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Our subject is God's love in trials.

Through trials, God's love for us is magnified as we are made to behold our sin and as we experience God's keeping grace. By this, God reminds us from what Christ has already saved us and assures us that Christ shall continue to save us.

WHAT WE WERE

Romans 5: 6: For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly...8: But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Through trials, God reminds his child of what we were as we see our total weakness. Yet, we see God keeps us in spite of us. This reminds us of God's great love toward us when we were dead in sins.

In our text, God describes his people, in our natural born condition, as "*without strength*", "*ungodly*", "*sinners*", and "*enemies of God.*" False preachers speak of God looking down through time and beholding some good in us. But what does God say?

Psalm 14: 2: The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and* seek God. 3: They are all gone aside, they are *all* together become filthy: *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.

Nothing is more helpless than a newborn, especially a newborn cast out and abandoned. That is how God describes his people when he found us.

Ezekiel 16: 4: And *as for* thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple *thee*; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. 5: None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the lothing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. 6: And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee *when thou wast* in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee *when thou wast* in thy blood, Live...8...I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy

nakedness: yea, I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine.

Through the trial, as our heavenly Father makes us behold our current sinfulness, God reminds us that when God found us we were *ungodly*. It means we were everything God is not! God is just—we were unjust, guilty sinners. God is righteous—we were unrighteous before the unyielding law of God. God is holy—we were unholy, corrupt within, with no strength to even believe on Christ.

In our minds, God was our enemy. The god of our imagination was not our enemy. But the God of the Bible was our enemy.

Romans 8: 7: Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

Colossians 1: 21: [God says you were] alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works,...

God sends the trial to do for us now what he did for us in the first hour, to make us see we are still sinners in need of God's grace. By this, he keeps us from looking to ourselves. That is the reason the apostle Paul says that God sent him such a heavy trial in Asia.

2 Corinthians 1: 8 For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: 9 But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:

WHAT GOD DID FOR US

Romans 6: For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7: For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. 8: But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

When God has used the trial to bring us to the end of ourselves then our gracious Savior saves us from the trial, reminding us how he saved us when we were ruined in our sins.

Some will die for a righteous man. A few might even die for a good, benevolent man. But none but God would die for a worthless, vagabond, sinner. How greatly God commends his love toward his elect! While we were sinners, God the Father sent his only begotten Son and Christ died for us.

God's love for his people surpasses knowledge. (Eph. 3:18,19.) Not even our fall in Adam altered his love for his people. Why? It is because God does not love his children because of something in us. God loved his people freely by his grace. It is for that cause that our sins did not change God's love toward his people. It is for that cause that God gave his Son to die for us—"*God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*"

Hosea 14:4: I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely

Romans 3:24: Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

When God reveals to you, his child, that you are a sinner then it is the greatest news you can hear that God chose you and loved you without a cause in you. When we are made to know how truly vile in sin we really are then we rejoice to find out that God,

2 Timothy 1: 9: hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

Titus 3: 5: Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;

The reason this is the best news is because due to the fact that he chose us without a cause in us, no cause in us can change his love for us. The love of God for his people never changes.

Jeremiah 31: 3:...Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

Lamentations 3:22: It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.

Malachi 3:6: For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Why was it necessary that God send his Son? God is just. All those God saves broke God's law. Therefore, God's justice demands we die under his fierce justice. God "*keeps mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.*" But God "*will by no means clear the guilty.*" (Ex 34: 7) But in amazing love, God sent his Son to take the place of his people so that Christ might die the shameful death we deserved.

We ought to pause and think long on that! The great condescension, the suffering, the shame in taking our place ought to set our Redeemer highest in our affection. This is the gospel! By his blood, Christ justified all for whom he died. Once a guilty man has died, the law can say nothing else to him. And so it is with God's people for whom Christ shed his precious blood and brings to rest in him by faith. "*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*" (Rom 8: 1).

WHAT HE SHALL DO FOR US

Romans 5: 9: Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 10: For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

Through the trial, God not only reminds us of our sins and the great salvation Christ accomplished in redeeming us from the curse of the law, but seeing God save us once again from the trial, we are reminded of what Christ shall continue to do for us.

God will not pour out justice on his people again since he poured out justice on us in Christ. This is the love of God seen in the trial. He reminds us that "*if we when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled friends, we shall be saved by his life.*" If God reconciled us by the death of his Son when we were enemies, then now being friends, God shall surely save us by the life of his Son.

It is for the sake of Christ and by Christ's Life that he sent the Holy Spirit and gave us life and faith in him when we were dead in sins. It is for the sake of Christ and by Christ's Life that God continues to keep us by his power and shall lose none. Not our works, not our faith, not our obedience after faith is given us but only by Christ our Life are we accepted of God (Ro 3:25 Eph 2:13 Heb 9:12). Every trial is to remind us that nothing shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom 8: 39). Christ our

Head is alive and reigning supreme and just as he has saved us, just as he is saving us in this current trial, so he shall continue to save us until that day we reign with him for all eternity! This is what God reminds us of in every trial.

THE TRIAL'S END

Romans 5: 11: And not only so, but we also joy IN GOD through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we now have received the atonement.

When God has brought us to the trial's end, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. As our hearts overflow beholding his great love wherewith he loves us, we thank God for increasing our hope. We thank him for growing us in grace by experience. We thank him for granting us patience to submit to his will. We even thank God for the trial saying from the heart, "*It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes*" (Ps 119:71). But most of all, we joy in God himself.

So brethren when the trial comes, do not fear that you will be cut off. If when we were enemies he saved us by his death, much more being friends he shall save us by his life! The trial is to remind us of that!

Amen!