

"Love Poured Out" - Romans 5:1-5

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Do They Love?

1. Do other religions *love* their gods?
2. Does the Hindu love Krishna or Ganesha or one of the millions of other deities they worship?
3. Does the Buddhist love Buddha or the Muslim love Allah?
4. No: Their gods are *feared*, yes; but *loved*? Hardly!
5. They have statues of fierce monsters to guard the gates of their temples
 - a. and they must stand at a distance and clap their hands to awaken their god
 - b. they burn incense and offer sacrifices to them as though they were gods who had to be appeased
6. How about the cults; do they love God?
 - a. the love of God is rarely spoken of among Jehovah's Witnesses
 - 1) they *respect* God
 - 2) and they think they are serving Him
 - 3) but there is little *love* in their service
 - 4) their work is motivated by an attempt to curry His favor
 - b. Mormons do not love God
 - 1) their god, whom they call Elohim, is nothing more than an exalted man who used to live on a planet called Kohlab
 - 2) he is more an *example to follow* than a god to be love
7. Really, there is only one religion in all the world that teaches it is the essence of life to enjoy a love relationship with God = Christianity!

B. Romans 5-8

1. If, as many people say, the book of Romans is the greatest book of the bible,
2. Then chapters 5-8 have to be the climax
3. If the bible were a world atlas, Romans would be the Himalayas, and Chapter 8 would be Mt. Everest
4. Chapters 5, 6, & 7 are the foothills that bring us there
5. So today, as we begin Chapter 5, we move into the holy heights of Romans

II. TEXT

A. V. 1

{1} Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

1. As you remember, Paul has laid a clear case for our being declared righteous, not based on our works but by faith in Christ
2. He now turns to write about the *results* of our justification
3. And the first things he says is that "we have peace with God"
4. Apart from Christ, man is at war with God

- a. he is in rebellion and revolt
- b. the war began in the Garden of Eden and continues to this day
- c. God has declare the terms for peace and amnesty - believe in Christ
- d. but most people think they can be *neutral* towards God
 - 1) old boss, out to dinner, "God and I have an agreement; I don't bother Him and he doesn't bother me."
 - 2) he didn't realize that to ignore God is to despise Him
 - 3) the famous missionary David Livingstone spent many years among the Zulus of South Africa
 - a) after a time, he went to work in the interior
 - b) when he returned, he discovered that an enemy tribe had attacked the Zulus, killed many people, and taken the chief's son captive
 - c) the Zulu chief, who was a believer, did not want to make war with the other tribe
 - d) but he asked Dr. Livingstone, "How can I be at peace with them while they abuse my son?"
- e. in Heb 10:29-31 we read this:

{29} Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?

{30} For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people."

{31} It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

- f. there is no neutral ground
 - 1) either you are a child of God or His enemy
 - 2) Matthew 12:30

"He who is not with Me is against Me.

- 3) James 4:4

Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

- 4) Psalm 7:11

God is a just judge, And God is angry *with the wicked* every day.

- g. now, some people think they can appease God by throwing Him an occasional bone
 - 1) so they go to church on Easter and Christmas
 - 2) or they kick in a few bucks from their paycheck to the United Way
 - 3) they give up candy for Lent
- h. the only way to appease the wrath of God is through faith in Christ
- 5. Paul says that having been justified by faith, we have *peace* with God
- 6. And because of that peace, we can enter into relationship with Him
 - a. we have been changed from enemies and rebels
 - b. into loving and devoted children
- 7. Christian— what is your concept of God as He looks at you today?
 - a. do you see Him as angry and frustrated that you don't have it more together?
 - b. heed the words of this verse

- c. having *been* justified, *past* tense -
 - d. we *have* peace with God, *present* tense
8. Let's face it; none of us like being around people that are upset with us
 - a. it makes us uneasy
 - b. in fact, we'll go out of our way to avoid people we know are angry with us
 - c. the devil knows this; and that's why he loves to cast God in the role as an angry deity who is just waiting for a chance to swat us
 - d. isn't it interesting that while he tries to make *Christians* think God is mad at them,
 - e. he tries to make unbelievers think God is just one big mass of cosmic love who accepts everyone *regardless* of how they live or what they believe
 - 1) if there is no wrath
 - 2) there is no need to be saved
 - 3) after all, if there is no wrath, then what do we need to be saved from?
 9. The fact, is:
 - a. Christian - you are at peace with God
 - b. non Christian - while God does love you, He is furious at your sin and rebellion and unless you repent and ask Him to forgive, you *will* know His wrath

B. V. 2

{2} through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

1. The Christian is not only saved by grace, he/she also STANDS by grace
 - a. we don't start with grace and then go on to human endeavor
 - b. that was the trouble with the Galatians
 - 1) Paul came to the region of Galatia and planted churches there
 - 2) God's Spirit had done a mighty work of revival and the church got off to a great start
 - 3) but no sooner had Paul moved on than a group of false workers arrived claiming that in order for the Gentiles to be Christians, they had to *first* become Jews by submitting to all the rites and rules of the Jewish religion
 - 4) Paul wrote a stinging rebuke, asking them, "Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect in the flesh?"
2. Grace isn't merely the starting point in the Christian life, it is also the *means* of the Christian life
3. As Paul says it here, we *stand* by grace--
4. And "**rejoice in hope of the glory of God.**"
 - a. not only do we begin in grace, and stand in grace,
 - b. we also will be completed through grace
 - c. Phil 1:6

We are confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ;

- d. Jude 24

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present *you* faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,

5. The word "rejoice" means to exult with jubilant celebration
 - a. we have reason to be excited
 - b. we're going to heaven!
 - c. you know, excited, joyous Christians are often called fanatics
 - 1) a fanatic is someone who is *overly* enthusiastic
 - 2) someone who is zealous *beyond reason*
 - d. when you consider the promises God has made to us, and the future glory that is ours
 - e. *no* amount of excitement or celebration is too great
 - f. compare a college or pro-football stadium to a church

<i>Football Stadium</i>	<i>Church</i>
Fans wearing their team's colors and officially licensed logo bearing clothes	Bring a bible - really serious!
Scream their heads off	Raise your voice in praise? Ooh!
Paint their faces	Raise your hands? Weesh!
Wild Gestures, the wave	Kneel? Fanatic!
Pay \$50 to \$100 bucks a ticket	Drop a \$20 in the offering? Going way overboard

6. We have reason to rejoice because we have a hope the world does not have
 - a. our hope is the glory of God
 - b. He has promised us that one day we will see Him in all His glory
 - c. 1 John 3:2-3

{2} Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

{3} And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

- d. this is called by theologians, "The Beatific Vision"
- e. Moses could only see the trailing edge of God's glory; to see more would have killed him because it was simply too awesome for mortal man to behold
- f. but the little Moses did see set his face a glow
- g. we cannot see the glory of God in this state because it would wipe us out
- h. but one day, we shall be changed and we will see Him face to face
- i. this vision will pour glory upon us, and we will be transformed
- j. of this day Jesus says in Mathew 13:43

"Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

7. I never really wanted to go to Hawaii; thought it was nothing more than an overblown tourist trap
 - a. then had the chance to go a few years ago, and since Lynn wanted to go really bad, I gave in
 - b. I look back now and realize how narrow minded I was
 - c. Hawaii is gorgeous!
 - d. we went to Maui and drove over a good part of the island
 - e. truly, the beauty of the place is awesome
 - f. to sit on the beach and watch the sun set over the ocean

- 1) to feel the warm sea breeze blowing in your face
- 2) the smell of the fresh salt air
- 3) the aroma of tropical flowers lightly scenting the air
- 4) it takes your breath away as well as any ability to put into words how glorious it all is!
- g. yet Maui, with all it's tropical beauty is but a Chicago ghetto compared to the glory of heaven
8. We have good reason to rejoice in hope—we shall be glorified in Christ!
9. Who else has such a hope?
 - a. the Hindu? - no, he only has endless cycles of reincarnation to look forward to
 - b. the atheist? - no, they are all dressed up but with no place to go
 - c. the agnostic? - no, they face an uncertain future and will find out too late that it really did matter what they believed
10. Paul has revealed our glorious destiny, now he turns to our present

C. Vs. 3-4

{3} And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;

{4} and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

1. It's easy to rejoice in the hope of heaven, but how can we glory in tribulations?
2. Frankly, we can't—unless we understand that the God who loves us is in control of all things
3. Paul sees tribulations in the life of the Christian as a means of being made into the image of Christ
4. You see, God isn't content to just save us and then put our lives on hold till we die and go to heaven
5. No, He relentlessly works in us to transform us into new people
6. 2 Cor. 4:17 puts it like this . . .

Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,

7. The word "tribulations" in v. 3 means to be put under pressure
 - a. it was a word used to describe the process of getting oil out of olives and juice out of grapes
 - b. we are put under pressure, not to destroy us, but to extract the qualities of life God would build in us
 - c. you start with a lump of coal, and by applying pressure and heat, you get a diamond
8. Tribulation produces endurance, as any athlete knows
9. And once the soul has been fitted with endurance, then true character can be developed
 - a. this word "character" means proven integrity
 - b. it was a word used of metals that had been through the fires of purification
10. It's true isn't it, the fires of trial really do bring out what's on the inside
 - a. it isn't till we're pressed that we see what inside
 - b. it isn't till trouble comes and the facade is ripped away that we see the real

- us
- c. and quite frankly, it can be pretty surprising
 - 1) we maybe surprised by the ugliness that surfaces
 - 2) or we may be surprised to see how the Lord has worked real virtue into our character
11. God uses tribulation to reveal the real us
 12. The result is a character that has been tried and found true
 13. And when we see this proven character, it gives us even more hope as we see the faithfulness of God
 14. Hope is a settled confidence that God is the one who sits at the potter's wheel as the circumstances of life spin us
 - a. hope is the assurance that it is His hand which shapes us
 - b. hope is the certainty that even when we are in the oven, His hand is on the thermostat, and we are only being fired to become a vessel fit for a special and holy work
 15. Have shared this before, but bears repeating because there are some here this morning that need this
 - a. the church is called the bride of Christ
 - b. He wants a bride with some character, some spine
 - c. not some milk-sop, whining, sniveling, selfish wench
 - d. it is difficulty that builds character
 - e. so think of tribulation as pre-marital counseling!

D. V. 5

{5} Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

1. People put hope in so many things, but they end up getting disappointed
2. Our hope in Christ will never be disappointed
3. God will keep His word
4. As a down payment on His promise, He has given us the Holy Spirit
5. And along with the Holy Spirit, He has poured out His love
 - a. not in measured drops
 - b. the word means to overflow; there is an unstoppable supply of the love of God
6. A poor woman who had a been born into poverty and want, was taken on an outing by an inner city church to the beach
 - a. it was the first time in her life she had ever seen the ocean
 - b. she was delighted, but after a while, tears filled her eyes
 - c. when someone asked her what was wrong, she exclaimed, "Thank God for a sight of something there is enough of!"
7. The floodgates of heaven have been opened and God is pouring out torrents of His love upon us
8. There is enough of that love to meet ever need of your life

III. CONCLUSION

A. The Benefits

1. How great are the benefits of being justified by faith in Christ!
2. We have sufficient grace to make us stand
3. We have peace with God
4. We have a living hope
5. We have the promise of glory
6. Even tribulation has a purpose
7. God's love overflows our hearts
8. And the Holy Spirit lives in us
9. Count you blessings!