

Romans 5:6-11

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[0 : 0 0] Okay, so in Romans chapter 5, we're going through Romans, since the start of the year, and we come to these magnificent verses in verses 6.!

Does God love me? Does God love me?

the apostle paul he speaks about in this passage god's love being poured out in his heart and him rejoicing in the gospel of god and he's full of joy and he's full of delight that's the tone of the passage and he goes on to say not only do we rejoice in this good news of god and in the lord jesus christ we even rejoice in our sufferings because we know that suffering produces endurance and so on and when we read a passage like this i expect some of you scratch your heads and wonder does god really love you and you'd really love him to pour his love into your hearts like that but you're not sure that it's happened does god love you maybe you've got doubts over the love of god and so here is the apostle who wrote this letter paul and he's rejoicing and he's telling you and i that as his people we ought also to rejoice and even to rejoice in our sufferings and you might say well how can i be sure that god loves me what assurance do i have in my own experience and in my own struggles and in all the issues of my life and the mess of my life what evidence is there that god actually loves me is there an evidence that that god loves me how can i be sure well look what paul says how can you know how can you have assurance can you just look with me at um verse six while we were still weak the right time christ died for then godly for one will scarcely die for a righteous person though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die but here it is god shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners christ died for us since therefore we've now been justified by his blood much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of god for if why we were his enemies we were reconciled to god by the death of his son much more now that we're reconciled shall we be saved by his life more than that we also rejoice in god through our lord jesus christ through whom we've received reconciliation so there's three things that i i want you to see i i want you to see um what we're like really what god sees in us i want you to see what god does and i want you to see what the lord jesus christ does and he's explaining a really simple straightforward language the supreme incomparable display of the love of god that is in jesus christ and his death and as we begin to understand it if it grasps and dawns on you you'll find that it's incomparable and it's staggering and it's amazing what god has done the death of jesus christ is a display of god's love and so this morning if you're struggling which many of you probably are to understand does god love me does god love sinners god says to you this morning turn back and look at the cross and then you'll be able to know what love is the death of jesus christ does not cause god to love you it is because of god's love for us jesus dies on the cross and in order for us to understand that we need to grasp it so that the love of god will be poured into our hearts and we would appreciate with joy and it would overflow so let's look firstly then what do you bring to the table what have you done so there's four words and let me just pick them out that the text uses to describe who god loves who he sends the lord jesus christ to die in the place of four words verse six can you see the first one weak helpless or without strength second one is the end of verse six i'm godly third one is sinners fourth one in verse 10 is enemies four words to describe who god loves four words to describe what you brought to the table and you might think well i thought you're going to try and encourage us this morning i thought you're going to talk to us about the love of god now great that is and instead you give us four words about us which are thoroughly discouraging four words that describe us as unlovely that there's nothing in us to attract us to god and you say well i was already worried whether god loved me but these words don't help do they but you need to listen really carefully when he says we were weak when we were without strength the picture there is of being feeble of without energy we are deficient in some sense so when god looks at us what what does he see it's so humbling isn't he sees a thing that is weak and infirm you might not like that he sees something

that is feeble and without energy and deficient and unable to obey him broken second word is ungodly it's the negative word isn't it of godliness we were without godliness paul says and when you look at the meaning of the word godliness the godliness that we are without is is not pointing to a kind of righteousness of character or a behavior but it's saying that that we were without a worship of god we didn't love god with all our heart and soul and mind and strength we didn't revere god we didn't hold him in reverence and so paul says because you don't do that you are ungodly he describes us as not having an awe for god and a reverence for god or an adoration for god so what does that mean it means doesn't it that all our awe and all our reverence and all our adoration has gone to ourselves in our own lives no respect for him no reverence for him just an idolizing of self and who we are it's not encouraging is it then look at verse 8 he uses the word sinners that's one that misses the mark trying sometimes but but never hitting it deviating from the path the last word is in verse 10 an enemy we were enemies of god there's alienation there's hostility towards god we're not god's friends we were his enemies we're not neutral either probably you might like to think of yourself as neutral it's not simply saying that you weren't mates that you're distant acquaintances it's not like with some people isn't it well i i know of him i don't know him it's not like that with you and god he's saying here as hard as it is to hear that we were actively engaged in rebelling against him and turning from him and so here's what god sees here's what god says about us here's what he sees in me i'm already worried he might not love me and paul now you're heaping up words to describe me and you say to me over and over again this is what god sees in me that i'm weak that i'm without reverence i break his law and i'm his enemy and yet the truth is god saw you like that and he loved you and he loved you when you were like that it's not that he changed you and he's waiting to change you and then he'll begin to love you he loved you when you were like that he loved you when you were in that kind of rotten state of war against him

christ died for you when you were like that it's not that he changes you a little bit and moves you in the right direction and then he chooses to die for you no he dies for you when you were like that that is the love of god he demonstrates his love he shows his love for us in this that while we were still sinners christ died for us look what he says in verse 7 for one will scarcely die for a righteous person or perhaps for a good person one might dare even to die he's been heaping up these words to remind us what we're like and he's saying to you and I I want you to see that God's love is actually staggering it's incomparable you can't find anything to compare it with sure we might find someone who's willing to die for a kind man you might find somebody who's willing to die for a really generous, kind, friendly woman or an upright woman that's rare but you might find someone like that but you'll never find this you'll never find somebody who's willing to die for somebody who's weak and ungodly and sinful and their enemy and so when you understand it it's staggering it takes our breath away it's beyond our capacity to voice and he says these four things about us to show us how staggering the depth of God's love is and so Charles Wesley could say couldn't he amazing love how can it be that thou my God should die for me why is this love of God so amazing and staggering it's because of what he sees in us because whether you're willing to admit it or not this morning you're not lovely you're a sinner like I am so secondly let's see secondly what does God do what does God do in his love how does God demonstrate and show his love it's important to remember the context in which Paul is writing these words he's talked in chapter 4 about a man named Abraham and he said to us

[10:42] Abraham's life in the Old Testament was not a performance driven life it was a promise driven life God had given him a promise it was not a works driven life but a grace driven life it was a promise that there would come a rescuer and he is reminding us of that saying here how we stood before God weak and godly sinful enemies and what does God do when he finds us in that state when he shows his love for us and that while we were still sinners Christ died for us it's a big statement in the apostle's mind and heart and it stirs him to say well if he loved me when I was like that how much more is he going to love me now that he's worked in my heart and he's declared me right with him and he's reconciled me he's brought me back together and his son has died for me and given me hope if he loves me when I'm his enemy then how much is he going to love me now I'm his child now he's brought me into his family and home and he's showing what the love of God does for us and then he goes on to describe it in more detail so you can see it there in verse 9 look with me at verse 9 they're passive verbs since therefore we've now been justified by his blood that's declared right with God who did the justifying

God did it how much more should we be saved by him who's going to save us he will from the wrath of God for if while we were still sinners we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his son how much more now that we are reconciled should we be saved by his life do you see all the things that God does there he saves he justifies he reconciles us and God is the one who's at work we began by saying does he love me well look at what God has done for you look at the things that God is willing to do for you and all of those things point to the work of God and so as you listen to the gospel week by week as you confess your sin and hear the forgiveness of sins and the assurance of pardon and as you hear

God's word exclaimed to you what is it saying to you it is saying God the father himself loves you and that God the father is willing to work for us in that work and it's an enormous work because in it it involves the death of his son Jesus Christ so the love that he has for you and I when he knows what we're really like is staggering and the work that he's willing to do for us knowing exactly what we're like now is equally staggering and so it stands doesn't it the point is if he was willing to do that in the past which is amazing that everything else is small in comparison to that how much more will he save us through his life what does it mean the details are twofold he talks here of God's love of the father love saving us from his wrath this love will save us from his wrath what is God like the catechism our kind of statement of faith says that God is infinite eternal and unchangeable let's bring that understanding of God to his wrath it is infinite eternal and unchangeable something that ought to stagger us when we think about the wrath of God

I find it unthinkable unimaginable it's indescribable come to our body and our soul if we were to fall under the wrath of God you think of the kind of downpours of rain you know the downpours of rain and outside the butchers there's those kind of canopies out the front isn't there cloth canopies and people stand at them and the rain collects under it isn't it and there's this huge kind of puddle of rain in there that's what the wrath of God is like breaks it's unimaginable it's indescribable indescribable and yet what happens is the dam breaks and that wrath falls onto the Lord Jesus Christ and he endures the agony of it and in his crying out of his heart and his soul his body he sweats great drops of sweat that's like great drops of blood in the garden of Gethsemane there's agony there as he faces the prospect of God's wrath the unimaginable the unthinkable the undesirable and as it overtakes him as he takes our place on the cross and he bears the wrath of God it is the love of the father saying to you

I was willing to put my son through that wrath it was because I sat my love upon you it is because I have loved you that you will be saved from that wrath and then he gives us a second description of what this love means not only does it save us from wrath but this love brings about our reconciliation and that reconciliation is something that God brings about he's using a really particular word it's not a two-sided where two parties come together and they make it up he's using it as a one-sided thing God accomplished reconciliation it wasn't that God and us came to a mutual agreement it is his work and his gift of grace that we receive so we receive reconciliation it means that God himself sees that there's a problem and he's the one that acts to make that problem right that we are his enemies and in our sinfulness we are his enemies but in his love he takes that step to deal with that and he deals with the wrath of

[17:13] God even while we were still enemies he dealt with that enmity by sending his son to die on the cross that was God's gift that was God's work and so he gives to us the gift of reconciliation that you this morning can be brought back together with God in another place in 2 Corinthians 5 Paul picks up this theme and he says all this is from God who through Christ reconciled us to himself and he gave us the ministry of reconciliation that is in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself not counting their trespass against them and entrusting to us the ministry of reconciliation therefore we are ambassadors of Christ and God makes his appeal through us and so we implore you on behalf of Christ be reconciled to God for our sake he made him who knew no sin to be sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God and so what Paul is telling you in

Romans 5 is that for those of us who are believers he's given us the liberty to say to you in Christ's name be reconciled to God all that needs to be done has been done so come in and enjoy it step into the gift of God's grace to us in the Lord Jesus Christ and so if God did all those things for you while you were his enemy while you were without fear or reverence or awe of his name and you were sinning against him while you were weak and without strength what more can he do for you now that you're his friends and so we don't look for encouragement in ourselves and what we can do and what you've done you look for it in the cross of Jesus Christ and God takes us by the hand

and says come and look at my son and what he did and so the third thing we see what Christ has done what is it that's central in all of this it's what the

Lord Jesus has done he died it's the mystery of what we call the incarnation that God took on flesh and became a man and the immortal God takes on humanity and he dies and it was just at the right time it was at the time that was set by his father it was at the time when we were unable to do anything to help ourselves at just the right time appointed by God Jesus Christ died and he uses a really specific word he says he died for us that doesn't mean he died for our benefit although there are some benefits that come to us through Jesus death it's much more specific it means that he died in our place not just for our good that he is the substitute and so when he keeps saying Christ died for us he's saying over and over and over again he did it in place of his enemies and Jesus takes the place of his enemies and he takes the terrifying wrath and curse of God upon his own body and upon his own soul and so if you want to know the love of God where do you go you go to the cross and the death of Jesus Christ and you don't overlook those words much more if this then much more that's what he's saying much more shall we be saved by his life in one sense that's pointing to the fact that Jesus Christ came back from the dead he was raised from the dead but I think in this context it's pointing to the continuing presence of Jesus he's died and risen but he's risen and present and if he was willing to die in that suffering and in that shame then how much more in his living life in the presence of the glory of

God in the exaltation that belongs to him how much more will he love us and demonstrate his love to us now if he died for you when you were his enemies will he not keep you now you are his child and Paul says what this should produce in us is joy more than that we also rejoice whom we have obtained reconciliation and our joy ought to be overflowing but if you're not focused in your life on the cross of Jesus Christ that will be where you stutter that will be where you stumble that is where you will doubt when you look for definitions of God's love or expressions of his love that are not cross centered or that aren't flowing from the cross then you will stumble but as we look at the cross what we will find is that joy flows from that for what he did on the cross what the

[22 : 45] Lord Jesus Christ was willing to do John Murray speaks about commenting on these verses and he says glorying or rejoicing knows no restraint and cannot be too exaggerated when it is in God through our Lord Jesus Christ it cannot be too exaggerated when it is in God through our Lord Jesus Christ and he brings us back to that place when it is in God through our Lord Jesus Christ that we are brought to God and so brothers sisters this morning we should rejoice he says he delights over us and he rejoices!

over us and we ought only not to be rejoicing! in God but also rejoicing because of God because of all that he's been willing to do but also rejoicing that today Jesus Christ lives and we can have union and communion and friendship and fellowship with God in Christ the death of Christ is followed by the resurrection of Christ which leads us into a living relationship with him and that is where our joy is to be found our joy is not to be found in the messiness of our lives it is not in the ups and downs of life it is not in our successes because they are short lived but if we put our joy in Jesus Christ day by day moment by moment because he makes intercession for us he prays for us he gives us his holy spirit he says that all things work together for good to those who love

God and those who are called according to his purposes and so it is in the death of Christ Jesus that we find the certainty of the love of God in Christ death and in our communion with God through Jesus death and so let us pray let us pray for God's grace to be upon us to drive us to the Lord Jesus and his cross let's pray God