

Justification by Grace Through Faith: The Application (Part 5)

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Date: 15 May 2011

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[0:00] Romans chapter 5 and verse 9.

If you'll find Romans chapter 5 verse 9. And I'm going to read three verses. 9, 10, and 11. And hopefully my voice will hold out.

I don't know what it is. I can't seem to kick it. Much more than. An odd way of beginning the verse. And I don't want to take the liberty and take the time to go back and, you know, show at least at this point how it connects with what has preceded.

But it certainly does. And it's obvious that it does. It says, much more than. Having now been justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

That's through Jesus. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his son, much more.

[1:16] There is that phrase again, similar. Much more. Having been reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only that.

But we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

All right. Those three verses where we want to camp out here tonight. And I'll move through this fairly quickly. But before we look at the verses themselves and kind of consider the meaning, the truth that resides there.

Let me highlight just a few things about the text. That I think are important for us to understand or have a better understanding of what Paul is saying.

Number one, Paul in these three verses, and really he does this a few more times later in the chapter. But in these three verses, just one, two, three, bang, bang, bang.

[2:18] Paul is presenting an argument. It's an argument. Now, I need to explain that because for many of us an argument means that we're at odds with someone.

And we're arguing over some point, you know, like that. But not argument in that sense. But maybe we could say that he is proving a point. Proving something.

He's arguing. And he's using a particular kind of argument. Kind of a formula for arguments. And there are a number of them.

We'll not get into that. Or we might say kind of a logic that he's using. A particular kind of logic. A certain form of logic. That seeks to prove something.

And this argument, or this kind of argument that he's using, can be used and is used two different ways. It can be used to prove a greater truth by referring to a lesser truth.

[3:29] Now, that's not what he's doing here. We'll get to that in a minute. But that is one side of this form of arguing a point. Or making a case. To prove a greater truth by referring to a lesser truth.

That is, if the lesser thing is true, and all agree to that, then that proves the greater thing to be true also. You understand?

Let me give you an example from Scripture. In fact, Jesus used it. And I'll just read it to you.

Matthew 7, 11. And it'll be familiar to you. He said, If you then, you then, being evil, that is, you're human, earthbound, fallen creatures.

If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father, who is in heaven, give good things to those who ask Him?

There's the argument. Only here it is, from the lesser to the greater. The lesser being, you're evil people. You know, you're just fleshy, sinful people.

[4:35] And you know how to give good gifts. Then how much more, then? The greater. Can your heavenly Father, does your heavenly Father give gifts? Great gifts.

Wondrous gifts. All right, so there is an example of this argument from the greater to the lesser. Or, excuse me, from the lesser to the greater. But there is another form of using this argument that is on the opposite side.

And it has a technical term. And I just thought since Tom used a little Latin this morning, I'll use a little tonight. It's called argumentum a fortiori.

Can you just jot that down? Okay. An argument that takes the greater thing, if the greater thing is true, then that proves the lesser to be true.

All right, do you understand? Now, argumentum a fortiori is what we have here in this text. Paul used this form of argument.

[5:43] And he used it three times. Three times in a row. It's a little difficult in the English text to see it in the third example, but I'll help us point that out.

Or I'll point that out. So, three times in three verses, he uses this argument, the greater thing that proves the lesser thing.

Now, he's going to apply this to God. And God doing a greater thing, and that greater thing, if you understand that and believe that and have received that and know that to be true, this great thing, then you then ought to know, be able to trust, that the lesser thing is also true.

Now, it's applied to God, and yet it's difficult for us to imagine that we could divide the things that God does by greater and lesser, or harder or easier.

I mean, all things are easy for God. There isn't anything too hard for God. But in a certain sense, to understand that there are certain things that God has done for us, that are great things.

[6:59] And if we know that to be true, then we shouldn't have any trouble believing some of the lesser things he has promised to do and will do.

There's the idea here. This is Paul's approach in these three verses. So, if God has done the harder thing, or the greater thing, then he surely will do the easier thing, or the lesser thing.

And so, you see it in verse 9. Look at verse 9 there. And I'll, in fact, I would like to quote it from the English Standard Version, because somehow, of all the translations I looked at, they brought it out from the Greek text into the English much more understandably.

And this is how it's worded. Since, therefore, we have been justified by his blood. That's the greater. Much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

That's the lesser. Now, I don't mean that it's somehow insignificant. But the greater, as Paul puts them side by side, using this a fortiori argument, the greater is that we've been justified by his blood.

[8:20] Do you believe that? Do you? Then you should have no trouble believing that you will also one day be saved from the wrath, rescued from the wrath.

You see his point? Both truths are wonderful. And both truths, we are to believe. And so he uses the argument from the greater to the lesser.

Verse 10. I'll go back to the New King James. For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his son, that's the greater.

Much more. Or we could say, then you should have no trouble believing. Having been reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

So there they are, side by side. Now, you know, you could, if I might back up just a minute here to verse 9, it is attached to the great statement that he said in verse 1 of chapter 5.

[9:28] justified by faith. We have peace with God. And this is the natural progression from that first verse of the chapter. And he's saying, if you believe all that, and if that's all true, then this is also true.

All right? Verse 10 ties with verse 8. That God demonstrated his love toward us.

When? In what condition were we in when he did that? While we were still sinners. And here's the, here is, that's tied, or verse 10 is tied to that.

When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his son. That's the great truth. Much more than, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

And then verse 11, though the, the A4 teori construction is not as easy to see in the English, it is there. And let me, let me point it out.

[10:33] And not only that, that's the greater. Referring back to, not only that, but we also, here's the lesser, rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have now received the

reconciliation.

All right? There they are. Three verses, three times, Paul uses this argument. From the greater to the lesser. Now let me explain something else in the text.

that I think we need to understand. So, Paul has the argument, and every argument has two sides here, or his argument has two sides, the greater and lesser.

The two sides of his argument are present, well, past and present, and future. Future.

And so he is, he is presenting the past and present, or more specifically, the present, the reality, what you have now, what God has done for you now.

[11:44] And so, the lesser is, then you should have no trouble believing that he will one day do all of these things for you. He is putting present, and future side by side here.

What we already have, that is the greater, and what is yet to come, that is the lesser. To bring it out in the text, verse 9, says, we shall be saved from the wrath of God.

In one sense, in a very true sense, that already is a reality, though we have not, not realized it yet. Because the wrath has not fallen yet, well, at least, God's full wrath and final judgment is yet to come.

And so, this is future. We shall be saved. It comes right out into the English text. We see it as a future thing. We shall be saved from the wrath of God.

That, that, that is the, the, the, the argument, the lesser. Verse 10, we shall be saved by his life.

[13:03] And, again, I'll hold off a little bit later. We'll talk about what salvation he's speaking of here. Or what dimension of it he's speaking.

All right, so those are two future things. Now, when we get to verse 11, though we still have the argument side by side, the greater to the lesser, the lesser is pointing to a reality that we ought to believe in, ought to be a reality to us, though it is not just future, it is also present.

And he says, we also rejoice. grace. So there are the three truths. We shall be saved from the wrath of God. We shall be saved by his life.

And we also rejoice. Now, I say that is something that's present. We sense that even from the grammar of the text, that we shall, we also rejoice.

That is, right now we do. But it is a present participle. And so it means, literally, keep on rejoicing.

[14:12] Rejoicing. And it is something that ought to be our experience now. And it will continue.

And even grow in fervency. Alright, now. In each of these three verses, as we're going to see here real quickly.

We better get to it. We have three truths. They represent the greater. That come with three results.

That's the lesser. And so, Paul is saying, you believe these truths, then, the results that God has promised you ought to believe those two. Alright, now what are they?

Well, we'll take them one at a time. Verse 10, or verse 9 rather, truth number one. And I know this is sounding redundant, but we need to get this fortified in our minds and hearts.

[15:13] Truth number one. Verse 9, we have been justified by His blood. That's truth number one. And what, what a truth.

What a truth. The truth that at conversion, at the moment of our salvation, our sins were all forgiven. All forgiven. And all charges against us. Charges of a holy, righteous God. Charges based upon His clear, revealed law.

All those charges have been dropped. They were dropped forever. forever. And God declared us not guilty.

I know we've, we have, or I have touched on the meaning of justification many times since we've, we have been in Romans. And you can't help it because it is the subject here.

[16:25] God declared us not guilty. I like Wayne Grudem. Wayne Grudem's definition of justified, and here it is. An instantaneous legal act of God.

Legal act. That means it was not an act based upon His feeling about things, or not based upon His knowledge of certain things, or based upon anything He foresaw.

it was a legal act of God in which these two things. He thinks of our sins as forgiven.

Now for us, when we think things, we can sometimes be wrong, but when God thinks something, He's always right. And when He sees you and He sees me, He thinks of our sins as forgiven.

and Christ's righteousness as belonging to us. That's a tremendous way, and very concise way of putting it.

[17:42] An instantaneous legal act of God. that is the moment you were saved. That moment when you were born again, regenerated, birthed from above at that very moment, instantaneously.

You didn't feel it. It's not an experience. Not something you took note of. Wow! I just felt that. God justified me. It was a legal act, instantaneous, where from that point on, and on and on without end for eternity, God now thinks of you in a different way.

He thinks of you as having all your sins forgiven, and that the righteousness of Christ, perfect righteousness of Christ, belongs to you now.

That's tremendous. righteousness. And so, not only are we declared not guilty, we are also declared righteous. Righteous. Righteous as Christ. 2 Corinthians 5.21, For he made him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

[19:04] Romans 8.1, There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit, no more condemnation.

The only way there can be no more condemnation is that God sees you as righteous, that all your sins are forgiven, and you now have the righteousness of Christ.

Now, we don't want to pass too quickly over the fact that we're saved by his blood. I mean, Paul included that in here. By his blood, his blood, the blood of Jesus Christ, and that truth just runs throughout the Bible.

The great W.A. Criswell, I believe it was on a New Year's Eve occasion, big worship service that they had, invited the entire community of Dallas, and I think they had thousands present.

In fact, it was conducted not in the church building but at a local coliseum. And he preached through the entire Bible in one sitting.

[20:21] Several hours. In fact, I think it was on past midnight when he finished and everybody stayed. Can you believe that? Glued to this preacher who from Genesis all the way to Revelation proclaimed and described the scarlet thread that runs throughout the Bible.

The blood of Jesus. Hebrews 9.22 says, There is no forgiveness without blood. Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin, no forgiveness of sin.

Exodus 12.13, the blood satisfies the holy claims of God. It's the blood that does that. The Bible says, when I see the blood, God said, I will pass over you.

1 Peter 1.8-19, For you know that it was not with the perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life, your futile way of life, handed down to you by your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish and without spot.

1 John 1.7, The blood cleanses us from sin, the blood of Jesus. His Son purifies us from all sin. All sin.

[21:37] So the blood of Jesus. So there's truth number one. We have been justified by His blood. What's the result? Truth, the truth is the greater in this argument that Paul is posing here, the case he's making.

The truth is justified by His blood. what's the result? The result is we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

Saved from wrath. Now, what does that mean? Well, the word wrath, in fact, there are a couple of words in the Greek language that could have been used.

the word wrath here is the word orge, orge. And it, Paul, by the way, has already used it six times here in Romans.

We didn't dwell on all those times, but we mentioned them. The word wrath here means, it's speaking of an inner anger, a burning, seething anger.

[22:50] anger. Now, with God, it's a holy, righteous anger. But it's not an emotional anger. And there's no ebb and flow in His anger.

You know, with us, we can get angry, and we can have flashes of angry, anger, and then it kind of dies down, or maybe we change our mind.

And so with us, anger is an emotion, but not so with God. In fact, it's best to understand the wrath of God as something that is eternal, as He is eternal, but something that is settled, it's settled in Him. He's not thinking about it and wondering about it. He's not growing in it. He's not deciding things concerning His wrath. It's a settled thing.

It's settled with Him. He has a settled anger towards something. What is it? Sin. A settled anger towards sin.

[23:58] That's His wrath. See, now listen. And here's where we put the truth with the result, which the result is also truth as well, but it's the lesser of the greater.

But the truth here is that because God is just, holy, just, righteous, He must punish sin. Must.

He cannot let one half of one sin. I've heard Adrian Rogers say that over and over again. One half of one sin. God will not allow one half of one sin to go by without judgment.

He cannot. He's a holy God, a just God. And the moment He allows even one half of a sin to go by, unpunished, then He ceases to be holy.

But, because of His love and mercy toward us, He sent His own Son as a substitute for us.

[25:06] That way, God can be loving and merciful and just at the same time. Because He sent His Son and His wrath then was poured out upon Him.

And so, God, you know, for you who are saved here tonight, you've been redeemed. God did not just wink at your sin or decide to let it pass.

Somebody took the punishment and that somebody is Jesus, of course. We know this is Christianity 101, isn't it? And so, His wrath is fully satisfied and because He has fully satisfied or unleashed His wrath on Jesus, then He is now free to love and free to have mercy upon you.

And so, that's an awesome truth. Really, in this sense, the love of God rescues us from the wrath of God. Romans 3.23, He did it to demonstrate His justice at the present time so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

And He's able to do that because of Jesus and His sacrifice upon the cross. So, the result of the truth of justification, we will be saved from the wrath.

[26:39] Now, is this wrath future? Yes. It's a future wrath that you had in store for you in your future and would receive that wrath if it were not for Christ or not for God's grace through your faith.

Your faith. The Bible says in 1 Thessalonians chapter 1 verse 10, it mentions being rescued from wrath. I'll qualify it here in just a minute, but the Bible says Jesus who rescues, speaking of Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

1 Thessalonians 5.9, For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath, appoint us to wrath, but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, in those two passages, I believe Paul's application is to a specific time or a specific wrath, the wrath. In fact, there could be a case made here even in Romans chapter 5 when he said save from wrath, there's the definite article in the original text, the wrath.

And so there may be a reference here to that time period when God's wrath will be poured out upon unbelievers, poured out upon unbelieving Jews.

[28:09] It's the time of Jacob's trouble, and I'm talking about the tribulation. But we can still understand this in the broad sense that because of our justification, we are now rescued from, do not need to fear in any way, God's righteous and holy wrath.

We're saved from it. Amen and amen. All right, second truth, and we get this one in verse 10. We were reconciled to God through the death of his son.

All right, there is the truth. Reconciled through the death of his sin. Reconciled to God. That is, we are no longer enemies of God, we are now friends of God.

In fact, John 15, 15, Jesus said, I have called you friends. Speaking to his disciples, his followers, I have called you friends for everything that I learned from my father, I made known to you.

And we can claim that for ourselves as well. He calls us friends. We have been reconciled. We are no longer enemies of God.

[29:26] And he did that through the death, his death upon the cross. There is the truth, you see. Now see, if God did all of that, all that, excuse me, if God did all that he did for us when we were still enemies, see here is where it ties to verse 8, God demonstrates his love toward us in the while we were yet sinners.

Christ died for us. If God did all of that, justified us, saved us from the wrath, if he did all of that for us when we were his enemies, then what will he do for us now that we're his friends?

That's the argument. That's what Paul is saying. So that's the truth number two. We were reconciled to God through the death of his son. What's the result? The other side of the argument.

We shall be saved by his life. We shall be saved by his life. And this is probably as clear and a fortiori argument as you can get.

Greater to the lesser. Since a dead Savior can redeem us, then don't you think a living Savior can keep us? Don't you think?

[30:47] is it hard to come to that conclusion? Shouldn't be. If the one is true, then it should be hard for us to believe the other. And yet isn't it amazing that so many Christians or so many within the church today have a hard time believing that.

Yeah, I believe he saved me, but I'm not sure he can keep me. Christ not only gave his life for us, he gave his life to us. That's something we need to understand.

And we're ready and have really no problem shouting from the mountaintops that Christ died for us. And what a testimony, and I'm glad of that, and that's the truth.

But he also died to give his life to us, that he literally, spiritually and literally lives in us and keeps us. Galatians 2.20, I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. In me. All right, so and I mentioned this earlier, this passage really is a good example or a good text to go to in any discussion about the dimensions of salvation.

[32:06] There are three of them. Sometimes we call them tenses of salvation, and maybe that would be the better way to define it. That is in the sense of salvation, past, present, and future.

And the Bible speaks and has passages that are directed specifically to one of the dimensions of salvation, or tenses of salvation, past, present, or future.

And we can attach to those tenses of salvation great doctrinal words that have great meaning. The first one would be justification.

We've already been talking about that. And that really is specifically connected to our salvation in the past tense.

That's why we, the Bible speaks of us as having been justified. We've been justified. See, that deals with our past liberation.

[33:12] Liberation from what? Liberation from the penalty of sin. Forever. By the shedding of the Savior's blood. That's justification.

But then we have the word sanctification. A tremendous, wonderful doctrine. One that's very misunderstood by many. Sanctification, that doctrine pertains to our salvation in the present tense. I would say qualify it present and ongoing. Because while justification is an act of God, remember an instantaneous act, it's not a repeatable event, not a repeatable act, it's not ever to be done again, it's point in time, act of God.

Justification but sanctification has a beginning in time with justification but it continues on all throughout our lives and that is then dealing with our present liberation from the power of sin.

It's the best way to kind of conceptualize these dimensions of salvation and you've heard it before, this isn't new. justification, liberation, past liberation from the very penalty of sin.

[34:38] Sanctification that's ongoing deals with present liberation from the power of sin. And then the third one is glorification.

Those are the three. Justification, sanctification, glorification. That's the ultimate end, the final end of sanctification.

Glorification. When's that going to happen? Well it's not going to happen in this life. Even John Wesley knows that now. Not going to happen now.

And so glorification is that third dimension and it takes place in the future when believers come face to face with their Lord and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ and are at that moment forever liberated from the very presence of sin.

Now we've experienced justification and we understand or at least we ought to and ought to rejoice in the reality that we have been forever delivered from the penalty of sin.

[35:40] God will never ever ever hold any sin to your account. That's justification. We ought to know that and rejoice in that and we also ought to have some sense of this thing of sanctification are growing in Christ and being transformed and conformed into the very life of Christ where we are systematically and methodically through the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives being delivered, liberated from the present, from the power of sin.

I'm getting all my P words all mixed up here. The power of sin and then glorification is something we just don't know anything about yet. We can only imagine it to actually be in a state of being where there is no presence of sin.

Not just around us but no presence of sin in us. Now dear people, that's tremendous.

That's full salvation. The fullness of salvation. An aspect or dimension or tense or sense whatever word you want to use of salvation that we have yet to experience and yet it's promised to us and we ought to believe it and that's what Paul is saying here.

Then how much more? How much more will we be saved by his life? That's the sense in which he uses the word saved here.

[37:36] It's future. It's a future thing. Alright, so we are reconciled and rescued and reconciled and then we get to the third truth, verse 11 and you have to look to the end of the verse in most translations to see it because the English just, well, you have to look at the end of the verse to see it.

Here's the truth. We have now received the reconciliation. We've received it. It's present tense. We've received this reconciliation. King James translates it atonement interestingly. But it's the same word for reconciliation reconciled that's used earlier there in verse 10 actually. And so we've received it.

We're reconciled. Alright, there's the truth. John 5:24 says, I tell you the truth, whoever hears my words and believes him who sent me has eternal life, has it, and will not be condemned, will not be, and has crossed over from death to life.

The great truth of reconciliation. So there's the truth, what's the result? The result is something that we should know to be true now and experience as an active truth in our lives right now.

[39:05] Every time we meet for worship, even in the ugly times of our lives, this ought to be true, we ought to just embrace this, and that is that we rejoice, we keep on rejoicing in God, keep on rejoicing in him.

Now, this is the third time in Romans that Paul is referred to rejoicing, and it's an interesting word, powerful word. It doesn't just mean joy. Joy, well, it does mean that, but, you know, the word joy, you know, has taken on different connotations, and so the word is strong, it means to exult, to rejoice jubilantly.

I mean, it's just difficult to define it. I read one commentary and they used this word, translated it with this word, and I think this is right on, and it's the word thrilled.

Thrilled. Thrilled in God. That's the idea here. To be thrilled with God himself. Just thrilled with him. It could, this could really be translated glory. In fact, we could say glorying in God. I said it's a participle.

[40:27] It doesn't come out that way in the English translation. And so it's ongoing. Glorying. Exulting.

Rejoicing. In God. Psalm 35 verse 9. Then my soul will rejoice in the Lord and delight in his salvation. That's what Paul's talking about here.

Sir Thomas Moore. I don't know if you've ever heard that name, but he wrote a complaint one time about the English reformers. And he said this, he said they were too frivolous, too giddy, and too joyful in their salvation.

Now what a complaint. Could that be said of you? See, that's that's the point, isn't it?

Are you thrilled with God? Sometimes we're not. Sometimes we're not even thinking about him. Sometimes, oftentimes, to our discredit, he's the furthest thing from our minds.

[41:45] Sometimes we go through seasons where for whatever reason, circumstantial, physical, or we just get off into sin, and we get out of source with God, out of fellowship with him, and we go through seasons where we're not thrilled with God.

In fact, we're very much like Adam and Eve who hid themselves when he came. And if that's you, then maybe it's time to pray Psalm 51 verse 12.

You know what it says? Restore the joy of your salvation. Your salvation.