

Romans; Grace and Faith

5:9-11

“Placed in God”

Today is the final Sunday before I begin my 10-week sabbatical.

- Have all the teachers come stand behind me.
- Then read names of the testimony givers, and have them stand if they’re here.

Rom 5:9 Since, therefore...

Review!

- **Peace with God**
 - what a joyous approach to life!
- **Purchased by God**
 - “What do I deserve?”
 - God’s grace is a gift – dying for us while we were his enemies...

... we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

Rom 5:10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

Rom 5:11 More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Group Time!

- **Summarize the above in one sentence.**
 - Get answers.
 - *Say: You comprehended the passage well if your summary included the word “reconciled,” AND/OR something about the **eternal security** God gives the believer – that God once you place your faith in Him, He will be faithful to never let you go – you are heaven-bound because of the promise of God.*
 - **Reconciled = katallasso = change mutually** (*I love the word “mutually”*)
 - **I recently taught on reconciliation with God, so nothing deep there today, except to say this:**

Message title: Placed in God

You are reconciled to God by God – brought back into a restored relationship.

- One that was purchased by Christ in his death
 - **And one that will never again be torn apart**
- “Placed in God” is meant to assure all believers that **God will never cast you out.**
- **Galatians 3:26-29** (often called a “mini Romans”) sums it up perfectly:
 - “... in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. (27) For as many of you as were **baptized into Christ** have put on Christ. (28) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all **one in Christ Jesus**. (29) And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, **heirs according to promise.**”

These 3 verses are primary verses used to teach a doctrine called **“Security of the Believer”**

- AKA “Preservation of the Saints”
- AKA “Once saved, Always saved”
- AKA “Eternal Security”
 - While it doesn’t literally say “security of heaven” in the passage, the words “saved” and “reconciled” and “justified” coupled with **“much more” (3 times)** paints a great picture of loyalty and logic of God’s perfect intention to keep his promise.
 - My one-sentence summary:
 - **“The deep love of God in reconciliation is so awesome, it is foolish to think it could ever be undone.”**

Good theology is not just head knowledge. (Say that with me out loud)

- “Practical Theology” – great book
- Good theology aids a healthy vision of both the temporary AND the eternal life.
- Some frown on studying deeply, debating theology, doctrine, etc.
- They may say, “Eh, whether or not my salvation can be taken away or not taken away, God knows, I’ll let him sort it out.”
 - **Comprehending and resting in the Security of the Believer is paramount to Christian living.**
- I encourage you to KNOW the Truth, because indeed, the truth sets you free.
 - **The truth does not bind you to a set of codes.**
 - **The truth releases you to a joyful call.**

Last week, I said I was a 1.5 point Calvinist.

- Mary then asked me to clarify.
- I said I’d get deeper into in come March’s NU
- That said, **I’ve decided to don my professor’s clothes** to teach some questionable doctrine – for the purpose of correcting it according to God’s word, so we can all understand a bit more about where Paul is heading - where he’s leading us to in the coming sermons, but especially what he’s introducing to us today about eternal security.

A brief synopsis on Calvinistic theology:

- **Calvinism is a theology on how salvation happens**
 - Bitter debates – no matter how strong – start and stop with Soteriology
 - Outside of “how salvation happens” you will likely agree with 99% of what a Calvinist person believes about sanctification, heaven, righteous living, worship, serving one another, etc.
- **John Calvin lived one generation after Martin Luther.**
 - He is considered the “father” of the Reformation movement.
 - Martin Luther is not a “Calvinist” - Luther lived pre-Calvin and pre-Arminian (the opposite of Calvinistic thought)
- **Calvinism is not a denomination**
 - It is a doctrine primarily on soteriology
 - I believe (and have seen) Calvinists get along fine in churches that consider themselves “Bible teaching churches” but don’t necessarily prescribe to all 5 points.

- *That said, Presbyterians, all “Reformed” churches, United Church of Christ, and any church that has the name “Sovereign” or “Grace” in its title.*
 - If the Church is called “Sovereign Grace Church,” you know what you’re getting.
- According to a **2010 George Barna poll**, 30% of Protestant leaders describe their church as “Calvinist or Reformed”
- **Calvinism is famous for consisting of 5 “points” – with the acronym “TULIP”**
 - John Calvin himself was dead when “Calvinists” came up with them.
 - The 5 points were in response to Joseph Arminius’ teachings in the late 1500’s.

DON’T LET ME LOSE YOU.

- Feel free to ask questions as I take 10 minutes to do this.
- Just trust me IF my answer is “wait until March” – based on the depth of the answer. 😊

Calvin’s TULIP:

- **Total Depravity:**
 - **Man cannot “respond” to anything good, since he is born into sin**
 - Warren has a fantastic challenge to teach correctly the doctrine that – yes - all mankind is born into sin.
 - We and NC teach this scriptural truth.
 - But Calvinists take this understanding to an extra-Biblical extreme
 - Calvin says the work of salvation is not “Grace and Faith,” but simply, “Grace, period.”
 - Calvin believed FAITH was a “gift” from God as well
 - And again, extra-Biblically, believes God only gave the gift of the ability to have faith in Christ to “the elect”
 - However, God countlessly calls upon the WORLD to repent, return to Him, and place their faith in Him.
 - What a cruel joke if only some were equipped by Him to actually have the ability to do that.
 - This is one reason why I’ve titled the whole Romans series “Grace and Faith”
 - The “and” is there on purpose.
- **Unconditional Election:**
 - God selects whom He will save, and all other created human beings are damned to Hell **because God did not select them.**
 - IMO, briefly, the entire doctrine of Calvinism hinges on the misunderstanding of the term “elect” found throughout the OT and NT.
 - **(next)** “Elect” was a term **used strategically** by the Holy Spirit to encourage Gentile believers that they are now – by faith – included among “the chosen people of God”
 - **“elect” is the direct Greek translation of the Hebrew word for “chosen”**
 - **Much of Paul’s letters** to the newly established Christian Church that consisted of Jews and Gentiles was to **get both parties to view the other as FAMILY** – that the Gentiles were now among the chosen.
 - It makes perfect sense **if the letters are understood as if the reader lived in the first century.**
 - Otherwise, we lose context, think the letters were written directly to us today, and therefore, create bad theology.

- Additionally and related to the term “elect,” much of Calvinism is flawed based on **A misinterpretation of the term “predestined”**
 - A term used just 4 times in the NT (2x in Romans, 2x in Ephesians)
 - It literally means “predetermined”
 - All 4 times not in direct context with salvation, but rather how the saved person will relate to God:
 - **(The saints are) Predestined to conform to Christ (Romans 8:29-30)**
 - **(The saints are) Predestined to adoption as sons (Eph 1:5)**
 - **(The saints are) Predestined to obtain the inheritance as heirs (Eph 1:11)**
 - In other words, people who place their FAITH in God can BANK on God’s predeterminations of conformity to Christ, adoption into the family, and the inheritance that comes with it.
 - Predestination is NOT about salvation, PERIOD.
 - Don’t be afraid of the word.
 - Just know its context.
- **Limited Atonement:**
 - I went over this briefly last week.
 - Basically, a bizarre teaching: **Jesus’ blood is “efficient” for all mankind’s saving, but only “sufficient” for those God selects.**
 - It’ll make your head spin, and most Calvinists can’t even express its validity.
 - No time to repeat last week’s thoughts on it, let’s move on...
- **Irresistible Grace:**
 - Calvinism is called a “systematic theology”
 - This means that if you can grasp the concept of the points above, you are then ready to learn the next point.
 - IOW, Irresistible Grace will likely be rejected if you haven’t yet been convinced of Total Depravity, Unconditional Election, and Limited Atonement.
 - How convenient.
 - Irresistible Grace is what it says: **God’s grace** – the gift of salvation to those He selects – **cannot be resisted or “unaccepted” by the individual person.** God ordained it, it’s gonna happen, and that’s that.
 - **Me thinks Calvin’s followers needed to get out more.**
 - What a twist on both the character of God and the character of sinful man.
 - **(next)** Irresistible Grace is where the term “Free Will” comes into play
 - Calvinists don’t believe in Free Will
 - The final word Calvinists twists to make their theology prop up is **“Sovereign”**
 - The word itself isn’t even in the New Testament
 - But the concept of sovereignty is that of a King. Royalty. His way or the highway.
 - Yes, God is sovereign, but Calvinists take that to mean “absolute control,” thereby removing man’s free will entirely.
 - **Irresistible Grace** can only be swallowed IF sovereignty means “absolute control”

- Serious questions about prayer, the pursuit of godly character, and any good reason to engage in missions or evangelism are twisted and returned void, IMO, when one engages a Calvinist regarding Irresistible Grace.
- **Preservation of the Saints.**
 - Now, remember I said Calvinism is a systematic theology.
 - I'm going to teach on this very Biblically supported doctrine – supporting the understanding of **“once saved always saved.”**
 - Let me be clear:
 - We believe in that teaching here at NC, and we're not alone.
 - Most Southern Baptists, Lutherans, most Bible Churches, and the Calvary Chapel movement teach this doctrine, without prescribing to all or most of the other 4 points of Calvinism.
 - **Read: The reason Calvinism puts this last in the systematic order is because they believe eternal security is tied to irresistible grace (that if you can't resist God's grace when offered to you for salvation, then you also can't mess it up. You simply cannot resist all God does to carry you into heaven when you die, because God won't let you).**
 - However, the scriptures give us WAY better reasons – far outside the questions of free will – to grasp the concept of eternal security, and REST IN IT.
 - When I take off my prof clothes, we're going to address those scriptural concepts!
- **The fallout:**
 - **Prayer**
 - “God's gonna do what God's gonna do” births an insanely ugly theology of prayer.
 - **Evangelism**
 - Why share the gospel if God is doing all the selecting?
 - Calvin's people would say He still uses us to tell the world, so we are obligated to evangelize.
 - But already, even as I say that out loud, you can see the problem with the motivating factors of evangelism among Calvinist circles.
 - **Sinning all the more because I'm already saved**
 - Paul uses this line of thinking later in chapter 6 and 7 to REFUTE the faulty thinking that led to Calvinist theology.
- **The one thing Calvin's followers had right, IMO: Eternal Security.**
 - *(BTW, I said I was a 1.5 Calvinist... the other half is ¼ Total Depravity and ¼ Unconditional Election... I'll get into that when we get closer to Romans 9)*
 - But IMO, they use that security not for motivation for Godly living (as I'm about to teach today), but rather as a sense of pride and a faulty reason to get away with laziness in regards to obedience.
 - Again, not all.
 - I know some incredibly loving, gifted, outgoing Christians who identify as Calvinists.
 - But by default of the way the systematic doctrine flows, it is my opinion that most Calvinists have a rather cold attitude toward sharing the gospel, because God alone makes it happen, and they don't have to work hard in the harvest field.

(Take off prof. clothes)

I'm a little more than half way through, and just beginning to teach the main point of the day!!!

Let's read our text again and gain some great security in our eternal home!

Rom 5:9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

Rom 5:10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

Rom 5:11 More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Justified

Saved

Wrath of God

- (v9) **justified** is roughly the verb tense of the Greek word for "righteous"
 - IOW, justified means "to make righteous" or "to render just"
 - Justification (the act of making us righteous/holy for salvation's purpose) is offered by Grace alone, and granted by our faith.
- Salvation (saved) tends to be thought of as the beginning piece, but really, it's the entire ballgame.
 - We are not only saved and **PURPOSED** for this life.
 - We are saved for eternity.
- In justification, we are **saved** from God's **wrath** (hell – the place God created for the devil and his angels)

Reconciled by his death, Saved by his life

- (v10) Verse 10 is the pivotal verse between all three...
- The juxtaposition of Christ dying even for his enemies, and being raised to life for ALL such enemies who believe to live with him as heirs!
- Again, Paul's main point:
 - "The deep love of God in reconciliation is so awesome, it is foolish to think it could ever be undone."

Again, Comprehending and resting in the Security of the Believer is paramount to Christian living.

- **Say that out loud...**
- How and why you live depends upon this.

Is your image of God someone who is..

- Easily upset with you?
 - Or easily pleased in you?
- Quick with a critical word?
 - Or quick with encouragement?
- Joyfully leading you to stretch yourself?
 - Or scowlingly frustrated with your laziness?

All these “views” of God stem from how you comprehend the type of hold God has on your eternal soul.

Again, good theology is not just head knowledge.

- Good theology aids a healthy vision of both the temporary AND the eternal life.

Practical, Everyday Examples:

- There are two kinds of people who **volunteer at the TNFP**:
 - 1) Those motivated by God’s love to joyfully serve, and
 - 2) Those motivated by “doing the right thing, and maybe God will notice.”
- There are two kinds of people who **go to church on Sunday mornings** across the globe:
 - 1) Those motivated by God’s love to worship Him and connect with family, and
 - 2) Those motivated by fear of “not getting into heaven if I don’t”
- There are two kinds of **people who pray**:
 - 1) Those motivated by being HEIRS with Christ, comprehending well the authority given them to agree with God’s will upon the earth.
 - 2) Those motivated by fear, praying in large part for themselves, their plight, lacking any concept of the priesthood of the believer.
- There are two kinds of **people who mourn**:
 - 1) Those who receive great comfort even in the midst of great loss
 - 2) Those who receive only doubt and confusion, while also dealing with great loss
- **Give me a situation, and I’ll show you two kinds of people, BASED ON THEIR CONFIDENCE IN THE SECURITY OF GOD’S PROMISE REGARDING THEIR ETERNAL HOME.**

While I embark on sabbatical, I’m very excited to see already how the church is already stepping up in preparation for my absence.

- While I’m away, I greatly encourage you: **Remind one another of the Coming King.**
 - When Paul told the Thessalonian church he wanted them to be wise about the end times, he wasn’t teaching it so they’d “get their lives straight.”
 - He taught it with an air of excitement, anticipation, and expectation that ALL THE SAINTS OF GOD would rise up to meet Jesus in the air!
 - And right in the middle of the teaching, he said things like,
 - **1Th 5:16 Rejoice always,**
 - **1Th 5:17 pray without ceasing,**
 - **1Th 5:18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.**
 - Not because it gave them more of a chance to get to heaven
 - But because that’s what heirs of the promise DO!
- **I feel a little like Apostle Paul**, embarking on a journey God is clearly sending me out for.
 - I’m excited for the rest, refreshment, encouragement from His Spirit...
 - But I’m equally excited for the return!
 - Paul often ended his letters – or mentioned somewhere in them – how much he was looking forward to seeing them again.
 - And reporting on what the Lord was doing!
 - And Paul’s letters were ALWAYS full of encouragement to BE THE CHURCH – regardless of whether or not he was with them personally, or just in spirit.

(next) Today, I leave you for 10 weeks with a word of great encouragement:

- ***By grace through faith in Christ Jesus, you are SEALED WITH THE PROMISED HOLY SPIRIT – empowered to be His hands and feet among the body, and in the community.***
- ***As you minister – as you obey the Spirit’s moving – let the security you have in your eternal home be the motivator for love, ministry, extending hope, in your private thinking, in your near vision, your far vision, and your overall spiritual health.***
- ***KNOW your God keeps that promise, through even life’s biggest challenges, and freedom and joy will follow you everywhere you go.***

PRAY

Tim and Stuart available for prayer

GO AND BE THE CHURCH!