

Sermon Notes & References  
The Fifth Gift: God's Indwelling Love  
Romans 5:5-8  
March 15, 2009

- A. Setting our focus
  - 1. showing love is hard to do ...
  - 2. 'hope' links today's text with verses 1-4
    - a. the hope we have of future glory
    - b. the hope we have of present sustenance
  - 3. God's indwelling love assures our hope<sup>A</sup>
- B. God's love: poured out a-plenty<sup>B</sup> ..... verse 5<sup>a</sup>
  - 1. 'shed-abroad'
  - 2. abundant
- C. God's love: personally present ..... verse 5<sup>b</sup>
  - 1. God is a personal God
  - 2. Christ's death was 'for us'
    - a. for our sake
    - b. in behalf of
    - c. instead of

- D. God's love: powerfully practical ..... verses 6, 8, 10
  - 1. dealing with out desperate situation
    - a. helpless<sup>C</sup>
    - b. ungodly<sup>D</sup>
    - c. sinners<sup>E</sup>
    - d. enemies<sup>F</sup>
- E. God's love: precious ..... verses 7-8
  - 1. its benefit
  - 2. it is voluntary
  - 3. its cost
  - 4. it is undeserved
- F. applying this truth - 'Never forget ...'

Thought for the day: The love of God dwells within us giving assurance of our privileged position as children of God.

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<sup>A</sup> Psalms 146:3, Isaiah 36:6, Psalms 22:4-5  
<sup>B</sup> Psalm 23:5, Isaiah 55:7, John 10:10, 3:16

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<sup>C</sup> Ephesians 2:1  
<sup>D</sup> Psalm 14:1  
<sup>E</sup> John 3:18, 3:36  
<sup>F</sup> Ephesians 2:3

—{1}. **Romans 5:5-8** . . . . . **The Fifth Gift: God's Indwelling Love**

A. Setting our focus on the text

1. showing love is often a hard thing to do

- a. the Peanuts cartoons
- b. often carry theological truth along with their humour
- c. there is a book on this, 'The Gospel According to Peanuts' which contains the following cartoon—{2}.
- d. Charlie Brown: 'All it would take to make me happy is to have someone say he likes me'
- e. Lucy: 'Are you sure?'
- f. C.B: 'Of course I'm sure!'
- g. L: 'You mean you'd be happy if someone merely said he or she likes you? Do you mean to tell me that someone has it within his or her power to make you happy merely by doing such a simple thing?'
- h. C.B: 'Yes! That's exactly what I mean!'
- i. L: 'Well, I don't think that's asking too much ... I really don't ... but you're sure now? All you want is to have someone say, "I like you, Charlie Brown" ... and then you'll be happy?'
- j. C.B: 'And then I'll be happy!'
- k. L: 'I can't do it!'
- l. with Lucy around to encourage him, Charlie Brown doesn't have much hope – but our text today tells us that our hope as Christians, is founded securely on God's love

2. the first part of verse 5 links

- a. what has gone before
  - (A) the previous 4 gifts of justification
  - (B) and particularly those relating to our Christian hope
  - (C) the hope we have of glory in the future, and,
  - (D) the hope we have of sustenance in trials in the present
- b. to what now follows, God's indwelling love

3. God's indwelling love is the assuring reason for our hope

- a. 'and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God < > '

- b. it is abundantly clear that when our hope is in people
    - (A) we shall often be disappointed, and,
    - (B) we shall be subjected to shame as the expectations that we have declared to others come to nothing
    - (C) it is for good reason that the Bible says, 'Do not trust in princes, In mortal man, in whom there is no salvation.' (Psalms 146: 3 NAS)
    - (D) and God describes the help of one great nation in these terms: 'Behold, you rely on the staff of this crushed reed, even on Egypt, on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. So is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who rely on him.' (Isaiah 36:6 NAS)
  - c. but this Christian hope has been twice confirmed
    - (A) first, because it has withstood trials and afflictions
    - (B) so that we can say with David, '4 In You our fathers trusted; They trusted and You delivered them. 5 To You they cried out and were delivered; In You they trusted and were not disappointed.' (Psalms 22: 4-5 NAS)
    - (C) second, because of the proven love of God
    - (D) so, we will never be disappointed, never ashamed by this hope, neither now nor in the future
4. God's indwelling love
- a. is a completely proven and unshakable foundation to hope
  - b. A. W. Tozer's words on God's love were: 'I can no more do justice to this awesome and wonder-filled topic than a child can grasp a star. Still, by reaching toward the star the child may call attention to it and even indicate the direction one must look to see it. And so, I stretch my heart toward the high, shining love of God so that we may be encouraged to look up and have hope.'<sup>{3}</sup>, and, happily,
  - c. as Spurgeon said, 'God's commendation of Himself is not in words, but in deeds' – deeds; facts that we can examine
5. in these verses we find His love is demonstrated in gifts;
- a. the gift of God the Holy Spirit
    - (A) who bears God's love into our innermost being
    - (B) who makes us aware of that love in salvation

b. the gift of God the Son who died to bring us salvation

B. God's Love is Poured Out a-Plenty – verse 5

1. '... because the love of God has been poured out ...'

a. a more familiar translation is 'shed abroad'

b. the picture is not that of a few mercy-drops of rain but of a torrent, a deluge – our God does nothing by halves – not in a single historic incident, but

c. the idea of God's abundant dealing with His creations is repeated from start to finish throughout the word of God

d. in that most familiar of psalms, David exclaims, '... my cup runneth over' (AV) ... '... my cup overflows' (Psalm 23:5b)

e. God said, 'Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the LORD, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.' (Isaiah 55:7)

f. Jesus said, 'I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly' (John 10:10)

g. and in such a fashion God pours out His love toward man

h. in that most familiar of all verses ... John 3:16

2. How great is the love of God; how can we express it?

a. Many hymn writers have attempted it

The love of God is greater far  
Than tongue or pen can ever tell,  
It goes beyond the highest star  
And reaches to the lowest hell;  
The guilty pair, bowed down with care,  
God gave His Son to win:  
His erring child He reconciled  
And pardoned from his sin.

Could we with ink the ocean fill

And were the skies of parchment made,  
Were ev'ry stalk on earth a quill  
And ev'ry man a scribe by trade,  
To write the love of God above  
Would drain the ocean dry,  
Nor could the scroll contain the whole  
Though stretched from sky to sky

O love of God, how rich and pure!  
How measureless and strong!  
It shall for evermore endure.  
The saints' and angels' song..<sup>-(4)}</sup>.

C. God's Love is Personally Present – verse 5

1. '... poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit ...'

- a. we said that this was not a single, historic incident, but a continuing work of God – taking place every time a person comes to Christ in faith – as the Holy Spirit enters them
- b. then so does their consciousness of God's indwelling love
- c. let me share a little piece of Christian theology
- d. what makes our faith unique is that our God ...
  - (A) ... is not a concept, a power, an influence, an ideal
  - (B) our God is a personal God
  - (C) that is true if you are speaking of the Triune God – eternally true because of the personal relationships that exist between Father, Son and Holy Spirit
  - (D) and it is true of each Person of that Trinity
  - (E) and each Person sustains a personal relationship with those who are God's children through faith.
- e. so we discover in God's word, that God who is love, resides in every believer – the same God whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain lives in you as His redeemed

2. this is true because Christ's death was 'for us'

- a. four times in these few verses that word 'for' is repeated in connection with someone dying for another
- b. and a 3-letter word in English understates the intention
- c. Christ died for us – J. Sidlow Baxter explains it thus<sup>-(5)}</sup>.
  - (A) 'for the sake of' – He died for our sake, because of us – not simply a martyr for a cause, not a leader giving a heroic example – but that we benefit by that death
  - (B) 'in behalf of' – He did something on our behalf which we could not do ourselves – He satisfied by His death the divine Law that sin must be punished by death
  - (C) 'instead of' – not only as a representative dying on our behalf, but as a substitute, dying in our, no, in my very stead – taking my place on that cross
- d. Christ died as a sacrifice, as a ransom, as a propitiation
- e. and this was the most personally, present fashion that God could show His love, dressing Himself in my sin, in your sin that we should be saved from our sin

D. God's Love is Powerfully Practical<sup>-(6)}</sup>.

- 1. God's love deals with our desperate situation as human beings
  - a. in that our iniquity has separated us from a holy God
  - b. here is how we are described before being saved:
    - (A) helpless or without strength,
    - (B) ungodly,
    - (C) sinners,
    - (D) and enemies
  - c. God's love is pertinent to our situation
- 2. ... because we were 'helpless or without strength' – verse 6
  - a. 'For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died'
  - b. that word 'helpless' was commonly used to describe
    - (A) physical inability of the sick, feeble, wasted by disease
    - (B) moral inability to carry out a duty
  - c. Ephesians 2: 1 describes Christians as once being 'dead in our trespasses and sins' – now, that is fairly helpless

- d. so, here in Romans 5, it means that
    - (A) we had no power to achieve justification on our own
    - (B) left to ourselves we were unable to please God
    - (C) we were unable to anything about our lost condition
  - e. before coming to Jesus Christ we were powerless, incapable
  - f. but Christ by His death did what we could not
3. ... because we were 'ungodly' – verse 6 –
- a. '... at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.'
  - b. that word 'ungodly' is the negative of 'godly or pious'
  - c. it is a word related to worship; so it is used of us
    - (A) as lacking reverence, fear, worshipful attitude to God
    - (B) as being indifferent to God
    - (C) as living without concern for Him
    - (D) as if He did not exist –
  - d. Psalm 14:1 tells us the resulting life-style: 'The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; There is no one who does good.' (Psalms 14:1 NAS)
  - e. we were uninterested in doing any about our condition
  - f. but Christ by His death did what we didn't want to do
4. ... because we are 'sinners' – verse 8
- a. '... in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.'
  - b. not only were we unable and uninterested in acting against the spiritual mess that we were in, of dealing with our lost condition, but,
  - c. when we most desperately needed to do something, instead
    - (A) we were slaves of sin, instead of good
    - (B) we acted unrighteously, instead of justly
    - (C) we missed the mark that God had established – that's what sin means –and because of that
  - d. we fell under God's judgement, '... he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.' (John 3:18b)

- e. and His wrath, '... but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.' (John 3:36b)
  - f. yet we delighted in living this way, not realizing our peril
  - g. but Christ by His death dealt with our enslaving sin
5. ... because we were 'enemies' – (leaping ahead to) verse 10
- a. 'while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son'
  - b. far beyond inability, indifference and iniquity
  - c. we were active rebels, rebelling against His law, against His truth, and against God Himself
  - d. so that Ephesians 2:3 says '... we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, ...'
  - e. 'children of wrath' - not very pleasant nor popular teaching today – and we will be examining it further next week – but it is the truth – that's is what we are prior to Christ
  - f. but Christ died to reconcile us who were enemies, to bring us who were enemies back to God
6. God's love is powerfully practical
- a. it is pertinent to our most pressing need
  - b. through the death of the Son of God
  - c. it restores our rebel selves to fellowship with God

#### E. God's Love is Precious

1. But God demonstrates {or, commends} His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.'
  - a. the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, that provided the gift of justification of God's indwelling love, shows its preciousness
  - b. Pastor John Piper suggest the following four ways whereby we can measure how precious this gift is<sup>{7}</sup>.
2. It can be measured by its contribution or benefit
  - a. as we have said, when Christ died
    - (A) it was no mere heroic example

- (B) nor as a martyr to some great cause
  - b. but his death brings abundant, eternal life to the believer
  - c. it is of infinite benefit; and infinitely precious to us
3. It can be measured by its voluntariness
- a. it is not infrequent that when we give a gift to someone, it is done out of a sense of obligation – ‘We owe them one’
  - b. but mankind has absolutely no claim on God
  - c. on the contrary: without strength, ungodly, sinners, rebels
  - d. what claim? what obligation? none
  - e. but according to His grace
4. it can be measured by its cost
- a. this was no mere sacrifice of a bull, a goat, or a lamb
  - b. the infinite, eternal God, in the Person of God the Son
  - c. gave His own self to leave heaven’s glory, to suffer death on the cross, reviled by those He came to save
  - d. to utter those dreadful words, ‘My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?’, for my sin experiencing separation from the Father unknown throughout eternity
  - e. I cannot comprehend the magnitude of the cost
5. It can be measured by the undeservedness of its recipients
- a. the picture of our undeservedness – our lack of merit – is clearly drawn out first in verse 7: ‘For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die.’
    - (A) for that righteous man, that man of integrity who lives according to the rule of law; well, it is maybe possible that someone would be willing to die for him
    - (B) and, for that good man, the kind man of benevolence or whose life is devoted to service, a person may step forward to die in their place – as the secret service man stepping in front of the president to shield him
    - (C) but us: what are we? ... we’ve covered it: helpless, ungodly, sinners, rebel enemies
  - b. ‘God’s love is proven, rendered conspicuous ... in sending His Son to die, not for the good, nor the

- righteous, but for sinners, those deserving wrath instead of love.' (Hodge)
- c. that shows the preciousness of God's love

## F. Conclusion

1. In the 19th century, a young boy, seeking to leave Ireland for the New World, stowed away on a ship. On the route across the Atlantic, the ship was struck by an iceberg and began to sink. Creeping out of his hideaway the boy saw the last life-boat being entered by the captain. The boat could hold no more. Seeing the boy, the captain stepped out of the boat and let him get in, saying, 'Never forget what's been done for you.' Those words motivated that boy for the rest of his life.<sup>-(8)}</sup>
2. For you who are here this morning, never forget what's been done for you:
  - There was no other good enough
  - To pay the price of sin;
  - He only could unlock the gate
  - Of heav'n and let us in.
  - O dearly, dearly has He loved!
  - And we must love Him too,
  - And trust in His redeeming blood,
  - And try His works to do.<sup>-(9)}</sup>

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Various other English versions of the Holy Bible may be used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in {braces}. The versions are identified as:

ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
ERV	The Revised Version of 1885
NAS	New American Standard version © 1960, 1995 The Lockman Foundation
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
NLT	1996 New Living Translation © 1996 by Tyndale Charitable Trust
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

Further sermons and illustrations may be found at the web-site, [www.holwick.com](http://www.holwick.com). Materials in this sermon from Rev. David Holwick’s database are identified by “Kerux” followed by a sermon or illustration number.

2. ‘The Gospel According to Peanuts’ by Robert L. Short, Bantam Books, pages 30-31
3. From ‘Our Loving God’ by Rev. Brian Bill – Kerux sermons #22199
4. ‘The Love of God’ by Frederick M. Lehman (1868-1953); the last verse is attributed to Meir Ben Isaac Nehorai (died 1096)
5. ‘The Wondrous Cross’ by J. Sidlow Baxter, from The Evangelist, Vol. 66, No. 6
6. The ideas in this section follow those expressed by Rev. Brian Bill in his sermon
7. ‘The Depth of Christ’s Love: It’s Undeserving Objects’ by John Piper – Kerux sermons #4029
8. As yet unpublished Kerux illustration (#108525 by Dick Innes)
9. ‘There Is a Green Hill Far Away’, Cecil Frances Humphreys Alexander (1818-1895)