

Sermon Notes & References
The Sixth Gift: Delivered from Wrath
Romans 5:9-10
March 22, 2009

A. Setting our Focus

- 1. Preaching on hell^A
- 2. The text: ⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

B. The Structure of the Text

- 1. it comprises 2 verses ...
- 2. the parallel statements surrounding 'For if while we were enemies'
 - a. 'Much more then, much more'
 - b. 'having now been justified we were reconciled to God'
 - c. 'by His blood through the death of His Son'
 - d. 'we shall be saved from the wrath of God we shall be saved'^B
 - e. 'through Him by His life.'^C

^A Edwards: Deuteronomy 32:35, Psalm 73:18; Spurgeon: Psalm 7:12
^B Ephesians 2:5, Romans 8:2, 23
^C Hebrews 7:25, Romans 4:25

C. God's Wrath

- 1. The Enormity of Sin
 - a. rejecting the grace of God
 - b. rendering worthy of death^D
 - c. making incapable of standing before God^E
 - d. destroying our intended relation to God^F
- 2. The Reality of Hell
- 3. The Terror of God's Wrath^G

D. Our Deliverance

- 1. Saved by Christ's Death^H
- 2. Saved by Christ's Life^I

E. Application: the tremendous gift, the two choices^J

^D Genesis 2:17, Ezekiel 18:4
^E Job 42:5-6, Isaiah 6:5
^F Isaiah 59:2
^G Revelation 6:9-17, Isaiah 66:24, Mark 9:47-48, Romans 1:18
^H Malachi 4:6, 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10
^I 1 Corinthians 15; especially verses 14, 16-17, 20
^J Revelation 22:3-5

A. Setting our focus

1. 'Hell-fire and brimstone' preaching!

a. in 1741 Jonathan Edwards preached what is probably the best-known sermon – at least by name – ever preached on American soil: 'Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God'

(A) Edwards, we are told, had to silence the congregation first as he stood, and, holding his notes up in front of his face, delivered this message in his normal, subdued tone of voice. His text was from Deuteronomy 32:35: 'To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.' (AV), and, particularly those words, '... in due time their foot will slip', then he quoted Psalm 73:18: 'Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction.' (AV)

(B) He went on to say, 'The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect, over the fire, he hates you, and is dreadfully provoked. His wrath towards you burns like fire. He looks upon you as worthy of nothing else but to be cast into the fire. O sinner, you hang by a slender thread, with the flames of divine wrath flashing about it, and ready every moment to singe it, and burn it in two.'^{—{2}}.

(C) As he preached, men began weeping and clutching onto the arms of the pew for support. Thus began a part of what was known as the 'Great Awakening'.

b. Charles Haddon Spurgeon was given the title 'Prince of Preachers.' Queen Victoria was sometimes numbered among his audience. One Sunday he preached repentance from Psalm 7:12a, 'If he {that is, the sinner} turn not, he {that is, God} will whet his sword; ...' (AV) And using the words of Earnest Baxter: 'Sinner! turn or burn; it is thine only alternative; turn, or burn!' he applied this text.

(A) Thus Spurgeon preached, be the queen present or not

(B) Turn or burn; how would Prince Charles, President Obama or our PM, Harper, react if they sat under such preaching? how would you or I? how our neighbour?

c. back in 2004, during the presidential election, John Kerry said that Saddam Hussein was a tyrant who deserved a 'special place in hell.'^{—{3}} What would people have thought if a preacher had then stepped up and said that President Bush deserved a special place in hell? ... the American congress likewise?

Yet, that is the truth: Garth Hutchinson deserves a special place in hell; every Christian that has ever walked the earth deserves likewise.

d. I am making this point because by doing so, we shall better understand this sixth gift of justification as found in ...

2. Today's text:

a. ⁹ Much more than, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. (Romans 5:9-10)

b. and, except, as shown by the italics, for the translators' addition, 'of God,' other Bible translations are all similar

c. the 6th gift of justification is deliverance from God's wrath

d. we sang a number of hymns and choruses this morning that dealt with and declared the holiness of God; we need to understand how holy God is – how utterly majestic and pure in all His ways – if we are to understand properly the enormity of sin – to understand it not just on an emotional basis whereby we feel remorse, but understand it in the core of our being, in our heart, to see it as totally revolting to the holy God of the Bible

B. The Structure of the Text

1. while in our Bibles our text comprises two verses

a. it is really only a single thought, that being, ...

b. the change in our position with respect to God's holiness that takes place because of the work of Jesus the Christ

c. and, as we find elsewhere in the Bible

d. particularly in the OT poetry in the Psalms and prophets

e. this truth is expressed in parallelism

(A) saying the same thing in two different ways

(B) sometimes in contrasting terms of opposite meaning; here the first part of each verse is in the past tense, while the balance is about the future

(C) sometimes in synonymous terms of the same meaning; helping us understand the passage

2. let's see here how the meaning is reinforced in this way, all these surrounding the pivotal idea, 'while we were enemies'
- a. first there is the repetition of 'much more'
 - (A) in both cases, Paul's argument by the words of the Holy Spirit is the same: from the greater to the lesser
 - (B) that is, if God has done these things which are so much more inconceivable or difficult, namely,
 - (1) dealing with sin that separates so effectively
 - (2) that we can be at peace with God
 - (3) that we are reconciled to God
 - (C) then, 'much more', God will do those things which are, in comparison simple or straightforward, to wit,
 - (1) complete the process of salvation
 - (2) spare us from the punishment that was due us
 - (3) take us to the eternal glory prepared for us
 - b. the next set of parallel thoughts are
 - (A) what God has already accomplished
 - (1) 'having now been justified' and
 - (2) 'we were reconciled to God'
 - (B) both of these were accomplished in the past by God
 - (C) both of these are now in effect
 - (D) on the one hand, we were brought to a position of judicial innocence before God, on the other, we were removed from our state of hostility with God
 - c. then comes the means whereby God accomplished these
 - (A) in both cases, it was by the work of God the Son
 - (1) 'by His blood' – i.e., the blood of Jesus Christ, and,
 - (2) 'through the death of His Son'
 - (B) it is the atoning blood our Lord, Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, that was the means and method, by which God accomplished our justification – the declaration that we are 'Not guilty!' – and our reconciliation – signing the treaty saying we are no longer enemies

- d. from what God has done, accomplished in the past,
 - (A) we now come to what these imply for the future
 - (1) 'we shall be saved from the wrath of God', and
 - (2) 'we shall be saved'
 - (B) the Bible speaks of salvation in three tenses
 - (1) in the past, we were saved from the guilt of sin: 'even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),' (Ephesians 2:5)
 - (2) in the present, we are being saved from its power: 'For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. (Romans 8:2)
 - (3) in the future, we shall be saved from its presence: 'And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.' (Romans 8:23)
 - (C) but in this parallel thought we also find this great truth and assurance – 'much more, then' – we shall certainly delivered from out of all possibility of punishment
- e. and finally, how shall this be accomplished
 - (A) again, the Way is stated
 - (1) it is 'through Him'
 - (2) it is 'by His life'
 - (B) the Way stated here, through Christ, by His life
 - (C) is not just the life Jesus spent ministering on earth
 - (D) nor even the life He gave up on the cross
 - (E) but it is the life He now lives on the right hand of the Majesty on high; this is our assurance,
 - (1) 'Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.' (Hebrews 7:25)
 - (2) and, that the Jesus, 'Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.' (Romans 4:25 AV)

3. thus as we understand these verses, let us return briefly to

C. God's Wrath

1. The Enormity of Sin

- a. the greatest enormity is that of rejecting the grace of God which has, in Jesus Christ, the Son of God incarnate, given
 - (A) a way of justification with God
 - (B) of being accepted by God, reconciled to God
- b. sin renders us worthy only of death
 - (A) God said to Adam and Eve: 'but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.' (Genesis 2:17) – and they ate and died – they became spiritually dead, as shown by their subsequent actions, and eventually by their physical death
 - (B) so God says, 'Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine. The soul who sins will die.' (Ezekiel 18:4)
- c. sin renders us incapable of standing in the presence of God
 - (A) Job, a righteous man by God's own words, yet at the end of the book cries out, 'I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees You; Therefore I retract, And I repent in dust and ashes.' (Job 42:5-6)
 - (B) and Isaiah, seeing the Lord in the temple, testifies, 'Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."' (Isaiah 6:5)
- d. our sin, our falling short of God's standard, our rebellion – this has destroyed our intended relationship with God: 'But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.' (Isaiah 59:2)

2. The Reality of Hell

- a. because men and women belittle sin
 - (A) they also belittle hell
 - (B) hell is the subject of cartoons and jokes
 - (1) cartoons showing the devil with a pitchfork, coals burning, and some wise-crack being made
 - (2) jokes such as hell being the choice place to go because 'all they do in heaven is sing all the time'

(Mark Twain) while all one's friends will be in hell

- b. false cults and sects seek to minimize the impact of hell
 - (A) some deny that it is an eternal punishing, but rather that the result is annihilation
 - (B) some branches of Islam teach that Muslims in hell will be replaced by Christians and Jews
 - (C) some, called universalists, say that a loving God could never punish anyone, and so hell does not exist
 - (D) and, some deny that there is any life after death
- c. yet hell is real, a real place, an everlasting punishment
- d. this is manifest in the Bible in its description of

3. The Terror of God's Wrath

- a. we read of that terror in our Scripture reading from Revelation 6:9-17, of how men will flee that wrath, yet not repent of their evil deeds
- b. this is the uniform picture of God's wrath in the Bible
 - (A) Isaiah ends with these sad words on the final end of the wicked, '[Then they will go forth and look On the corpses of the men Who have transgressed against Me. For their worm will not die And their fire will not be quenched; And they will be an abhorrence to all mankind.](#)' (Isaiah 66:24)
 - (B) in Jesus' day, hell was called Gehenna, after the valley in which Jerusalem's garbage was burned
 - (C) and Jesus himself described the end of the wicked in quoting Isaiah: '[If your eye causes you to stumble, throw it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell, 48 where "their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched".](#)' (Mark 9:47-48)
- c. our sinfulness once put us in jeopardy of this terror: '[For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness](#)' (Romans 1:18) but the sixth gift of justification is that of

D. Our Deliverance

1. Saved by Christ's Death

- a. sin deserves death; eternal death
- b. there is no other conclusion from Scripture

- c. have you ever read a book – such as the Thomas Hardy’s ‘The Mayor of Casterbridge’ – that ends sadly; and you read it again, hoping to find some glimmer of hope in the final pages; yet you don’t find it?
 - (A) Isaiah is like that, ending with the picture of lost men
 - (B) The OT is like that ending with a curse (Malachi 4:6)
- d. but God’s plan of salvation in Jesus Christ has a much better ending: ‘9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him.’ (1 Thessalonians 5:9-10)

2. Saved by Christ’s Life

- a. for, as we have already pointed out, Jesus of Nazareth, sealed in the tomb, did not stay dead
 - (A) He rose from the dead
 - (B) this is of tremendous importance, for first of all
 - (C) it means all of our sin has been dealt with so that we are delivered from the terror of God’s wrath
 - (D) in 1 Corinthians 15, Paul states the case: ‘14 and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. ...16 For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; 17 and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. ... 20 But now Christ has been raised from the dead, ...’ – so our sin has been taken away; that is for sure
 - (E) and, as we read before, ‘He always lives to make intercession for’ us.

E. Application

1. what a tremendous gift, what a cause for praise!

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.
My sin, O the bliss of this glorious thought;
My sin, not in part, but the whole;
Has been nailed to the cross and I bear it no more
It is well, it is well, with my soul!^{4}.

2. But yet there remain two choices for a person

- a. Warren Wiersbe tells about a frontier town where a horse bolted and ran away with a wagon carrying a little boy. Seeing the child in danger, a young man risked his life to catch the horse and stop the wagon.
- b. The child who was saved grew up to become a lawless man, and one day he stood before a judge to be sentenced for a serious crime. The prisoner recognized the judge as the man who, years before, had saved his life; so he plead for mercy on the basis of that experience. But the words from the bench silenced his plea:
- c. "Young man, then I was your savior; today I am your judge, and I must sentence you to be hanged."
- d. One day Jesus Christ will say to rebellious sinners, "During that long day of grace, I was your Savior, and I would have forgiven you. But today I am your judge. Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire!"⁽⁵⁾.
- e. and other is heaven, 'There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.'
(Revelation 22: 3-5)

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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

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2. From Kerux illustrations #322
3. Kerux illustration #5989
4. ‘It Is Well with My Soul’ – Horatio Gates Spafford (1828-1888)
5. ‘Meet Yourself in the Psalms’ by Warren Wiersbe, quoted in Kerux illustration#1984