

Bible Study # 17

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Romans 5

Romans 5

- **Romans 5:1-5** *“Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”*
 - Paul was telling the Church in Rome that if one is **justified by faith in Jesus Christ** it is because he believed what Paul and others had preached about Him, then their baptism was what led them to walk in the ways of Jesus
 - Thus, there was **no more enmity** between the members of the Church in Rome and God
 - This happened because once they were baptized, they were in Jesus and **Jesus is the God-man**
 - That meant that they were then in the perfect relationship with God in Jesus *

Romans 5 (Cont)

- **Romans 5:6-9** *“While we were yet helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly... much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.”*
 - If we stopped reading at this point in the passage we would discover a very strange **soteriology** (the study of religious doctrines of salvation)
 - This understanding was developed during the Protestant Reformation and indicates that Jesus died, and his death is what saves you from the wrath of God
 - It implies that it is his blood being poured over you that saved you

Romans 5 (Cont)

- Paul was just beginning a section where he **explains how a person gets saved**
 - He points out that it all starts when Jesus died
 - Paul will show us how **we attain life through the Baptismal font**
 - If Christ died for us when we were wicked, so much the more should we hope in salvation now that **we are justified by his blood**
- Reading *Rom 5:6-9* we discover a very Lutheran soteriology rather than a Patristic or Pauline understanding *

Romans 5 (Cont)

- **Romans 5:10** *“For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of the Son, **much more, now that we are reconciled shall we be saved by his life.**”*
 - If we are reconciled to God by the death of Jesus and are saved by his life, then his life is his resurrection (that is his resurrected life)
 - In the next few verses Paul completed his argument that **circumcision** and the **works of the Law do not save**, but rather we are saved by faith and the obedience of faith
 - Paul then moved on to explain how faith saves us
 - He began by showing that Jesus is the New Adam and through Him the curses of death and sin (which came through the old Adam) will be undone (i.e. salvation) *

Romans 5 (Cont)

- **Romans 5:11-17** *“Not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received our reconciliation. ...and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ”*
 - Paul was saying that there was the sin and death of Adam and then there was righteousness from the deeds of Jesus
 - He was not saying that we had this problem (sin and death) and Jesus just fixed it by plugging the hole
 - He was showing us the gravity of what Jesus has done

Romans 5 (Cont)

- St Jerome in his *Homilies on the Psalms* said:
 - *“In the transgression of Adam we have all through sin been cast out of paradise. The apostle teaches that even in us who were to come later Adam had fallen. In Christ therefore, in the heavenly Adam, we believe that we who through the sin of the first Adam have fallen from paradise now through the righteousness of the second Adam are to return to paradise.”**

Romans 5 (Cont)

- **Romans 5:18 -21** *“Then as **one man’s trespass led to condemnation for all men**, (through death) so **one man’s act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men....grace also might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.***”
 - How is this possible?
 - Paul develops **his answer** to this question in **Rom 6**

Romans 6

Romans 6

- In **Romans 6** we find Paul's theological explanation of Baptism
- To properly understand this we must understand Jesus' Baptism as it impacted Salvation History
 - Jesus began his ministry by going into the wilderness to be baptized
 - Within the history of Israel a man by the same name led a newly formed nation out of the wilderness across the Jordan and into the Promised Land
 - Thus, as Jesus came out of the wilderness, being baptized in the Jordan and reentered the Promised Land, can be seen as leading a New Exodus
 - Jesus is the New Joshua

Romans 6 (Cont)

- When Jesus entered the waters of the Jordan, the *Spirit* of God descended from the heavens
- When Moses crossed the Red Sea the *ruah* parted the waters, and through it, Israel became a New Creation
- When God remembered Noah, He sent the *ruah* to part the waters that the ark might rest on the mountain
- All of this imagery was based on the parting of the waters of the First Creation over which the *ruah* of God was moving

Romans 6 (Cont)

- In his Baptism Jesus has renewed fallen Israel through the waters of the Jordan and the Red Sea
- He has renewed fallen humanity through the waters of the Flood and the First Creation
- Through His Baptism Jesus has brought about a New Israel, a New Humanity, a New Adam
- Adam has returned to the Garden
- The Old Adam forsook his filial inheritance and marred his image and likeness of God

Romans 6 (Cont)

- The New Adam can say of Himself, *“He who has seen me has seen the Father”* (Jn14:9)
- St. Paul describes Him as, *“... the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation”* (Col 1:15)
- Jesus is the perfect image and likeness of God, and thus upon His entering the Jordan to be Baptized, God His Father proclaims, *“Thou are my beloved Son, with thee I am well pleased”*

Romans 6 (Cont)

- In Christian Baptism, we died and are born again by *water* and the Spirit into the Body of Christ (cf. Jn 3)
- We die with Christ on the cross and are buried in the depths of the tomb
- Being united with Him in death, we are united with Him in life, so that as Christ has died and risen, we also, through the Body of Christ, that is the Church, *walk in newness of life*
- Jesus in the New Israel, the New Noah, the New Adam
- Thus, when we entered into the waters of Baptism, we died with the Egyptians and the wicked in the Flood
- Our sinful nature was destroyed, and the curses laid on Adam in the Garden wiped away

Romans 6 (Cont)

- We arose from the waters of the Flood like Noah from the Ark
- With Israel we reached the opposite side of the Red Sea and crossed the Jordan into the Promised Land
- The ruah of God which hovered over the Ark in the midst of the Flood and Israel in the midst of the Sea now also hovers over us
- As a New Creation, we enter back into the Garden of God, into the presence of our Heavenly Father, robed again in the radiance and glory of divine sonship

Romans 6 (Cont)

- **Romans 6:1** *“What shall we say then? **Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?**”*
 - Paul is proclaiming that as sin increases in the world, God continues to increase His grace to offset this sin
 - The more sin increases the more grace God provides to those who have been baptized into His life *

Romans 6 (Cont)

- **Romans 6:2** *“By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?”*
 - Father Sebastian pointed out that for the most part no one talks about what really happens in a Baptism
 - He asks when has anyone heard about “death” in a Baptismal homily?
 - Unfortunately by not talking about this reality, Baptism gets trivialized and in some cases parents may no longer see it as being necessary leading to a fall away from the Faith *

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Romans 6 (Cont)

- **Romans 6:3** *“Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?”*
 - Look back at what **Paul said in Rom 5:8** *“But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.”*
 - This means that we are saved by the death of Christ
 - We participate in his death through the Sacrament of Baptism
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Romans 6 (Cont)

- **Romans 6:4** *“We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the father, we too might walk in newness of life.”*
 - So what is baptism?
 - It is the way to solve the problem of sin
 - It is how we can participate in the death and resurrection of Jesus
 - This is God’s wonderful gift through which we can enter into this new covenant with Him
 - But this does not happen through circumcision

Romans 6 (Cont)

- The image to see here is that the “old man”:
 - Who was under the wrath of God
 - Spiritually destined to eternal death for all eternity
 - Entered the baptismal font and came out a new man who is united with Christ and thus with God
 - He is saved when he comes out of the Baptismal font and will walk in the newness of life *

Romans 6 (Cont)

- **Romans 6:5-11** *“For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin....So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.”*
 - This is the reason the church traditionally baptized people through full immersion
 - This provided very powerful imagery of one being buried in the tomb and then being raised from the dead

Romans 6 (Cont)

- It is important that we understand our church history
- We often talk about the importance of our patristic fathers and our need to follow what they did, but too often we don't do that
- How many of us are even aware of the way they actually celebrated the sacraments and liturgies?

Romans 6 (Cont)

- Salvation for Paul was salvation through Jesus and the new covenant which unified God and man
- This comes about through the God-man, Jesus Christ
- We become one with Him and a part of His body through the baptismal font
- Our sins are thus forgiven, not merely washed away
- The old man who committed these sins is dead and his sins are gone
- A different person comes out on the other side of the Baptismal font who has become a new creation in Christ *

Romans 6 (Cont)

- **Romans 6:12-23** *“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions....For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life ion Christ Jesus our Lord.”*
 - This section answers the question in what sense are Christians to consider themselves slaves who owe obedience
 - Paul plays upon the idea that a slave is one owned by a master, to whom the slave is expected to render obedient service
 - So he asks if Baptized Christians are slaves to sin or to righteousness

Romans 6 (Cont)

- Paul tells the Roman Christians that they have been baptized and thus identified with Christ in his death and resurrection
- Therefore, they should become as united with him as possible
- He tells them to manifest in their lives the lordship of Christ who has justified them and freed them from the power of sin *