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January 30, 2019: “Justified by Faith—Part III: The Reward for Faithfulness!”

I Prayer

II Overview and Objectives

In continuing our exploration of Paul’s theology of “justification by faith,” we now move to a transitional part of Romans. Actions always have consequences! As Paul explains, in Romans 5 & 6, there are rewards for remaining faithful.

As a follow-up to our close of chapter 4, 5:1 begins with “Therefore.” Similarly, 5:12 begins with “Therefore,” too. Consequently, we can conclude that both sections of Romans 5 (5:1-11 and 5:12-21) addresses the consequences or result of the argument Paul makes in the immediately preceding sections. 4:24-25 concludes with a reference to “those who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.” Consequently, as chapter 5 begins, the “Therefore,” follows as the consequence of/reward for faithfulness in Jesus.

Similarly, after Paul details the rewards for faithfulness, 5:10-11 uses “reconciliation,” a word that, with only two exceptions (1 reference in Matthew and 1 reference in Acts), is ONLY used in the Pauline corpus. Ironically, although rarely used in the Bible, reconciliation is popularly used in society (*e.g.*, The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission; ministries of Racial Reconciliation). Does it have two meanings? How do they relate to one another? In its most theological sense, Paul illustrates reconciliation by detailing how humanity is reconciled in relation with God. This begs the question, “When was the split/separation?” Paul unpacks that in 5:12-21 with comparisons between Christ and Adam (discuss Hebrew term *adamah* [ground or earth] and Genesis 3).

In Chapter 6, Paul suggests there is “victory” in Jesus, even victory over death. If it’s true that “the wages of sin is death,” (6:23), chapter 6 continues with Paul’s theology of justification by faith and suggests that through Jesus, we are able to defeat even death (6:1-14). What does that mean to you? How do you see this played out in the church’s liturgy (*e.g.*, Good Friday’s sixth word, “It is finished,” (John 19:30); Homegoing Celebrations of Life)—discuss? The second part of chapter 6, similar to the second part of chapter 5, is Paul juxtaposing two opposites to make a point. His point leads us toward the second type of “reconciliation?” Now that things are good with God, how do you live a life that shows you have victory over sin? Do you keep sinning? How does reconciliation manifest in daily life for you?

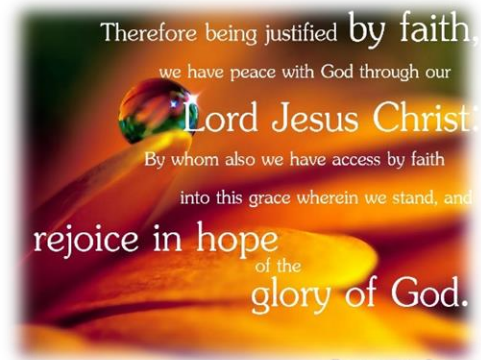
III Reflective Matters for Consideration

As we proceed through chapters 5 and 6, please consider how the following apply to you:

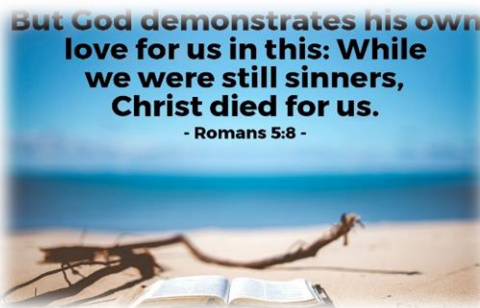
- Are *you* prone to sin? If so why? Where are you weak? How do you become strong? Is there room for Paul’s theology of “power-in-weakness” for you (2 Cor. 12:5-10)?
- How do we overcome the “slavery of sin?” What happens when you become “justified” or, as Paul writes, “reconciled?” Do your outward actions change?
- If you believe there’s “victory” in Jesus, how do you view/define death?

IV Textual Examination (portions of Rom. 5 and 6)

- After “Therefore,” 5:1-5 begins by detailing 3 rewards of faithfulness: (**PAH**) **P**eace with God (not of God; cf. Phil. 4:7); **A**ccess to God’s grace; and **H**ope, which doesn’t disappoint, but is the result of a spiritual journey. How do these rewards manifest/show-up in your life?



- 5:6-9 speak to God’s selfless love for humanity such that God *proved his love* for us through Jesus. What theologies exist surrounding the relationship between God and Jesus and



which of them or combination do you embrace (e.g., Incarnation; Trinity—community or hierarchy; Duality, etc). How do you feel?

- 5:10 uses the word “reconciled” twice and 5:11 uses “reconciliation.” How do you understand their usage in those two verses and what does that concept mean to you?

- In building on Paul’s use of the word “reconciliation,” 5:12 again uses “Therefore.” What is his logic in building a connection between sin and death, as well as Christ and Adam? What does “the law” have to do with this, through 5:17 (pull 1 Cor. 15:20-26)?
- 5:18 also begins with “Therefore,” in making a concluding comparison and/or contrast between Christ and Adam (Hebrew: *adamah*). Paul also uses the contrasting words “**disobedience**” and “**obedience.**” How do these two terms relate to you, in a reconciled state (e.g., some theologies talk about “backsliding” others say, “Once saved, always saved.”) How do you come out?

Romans 5:12-21

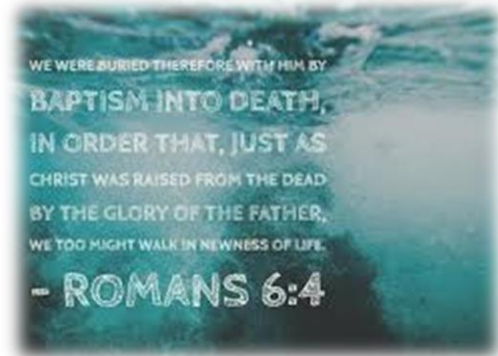
That Which Comes to Man by . . .

Adam

Christ

Sin	Righteousness
Death	Eternal Life
Condemnation	Justification
Disobedience	Obedience
Sin Increased	Grace Abounded
Sin Reigning	Grace Reigning
Death Reigning	Reigning in Life

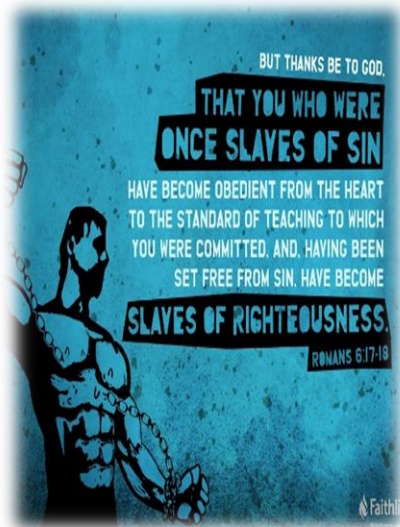
- 6:1-2 pose two rhetorical questions in juxtaposing the relationship between sin and life; better said, the way one lives. Can this be a form of “reconciliation?” In other words, “What happens after the soul is saved? How does one live?” Some might ask, “How can you love God who you haven’t seen, but hate your neighbor who you have seen?” (1 John 4:16-20, paraphrased).



- 6:4-11 speak to dying to sin and being resurrected to life! What does it mean then to have “victory” in Jesus? What is being overcome and how does it relate to you/your faith walk?

- 6:12-14 begins with another “Therefore,” showing the logical connection of Paul’s argument. What is he saying here, in referencing this “mortal newness?” What does that have to do with the way you govern yourself and/or the way you treat others?

- 6:15-19 detail a choice of sorts in being a “slave to sin” or a “slave to righteousness.” If we equate the use of the term “slave” with someone who is held captive to a particular thing (*i.e.*, “I can’t help myself?”), how do you understand Paul’s logic? What is the Calvinist concept of “Irresistible Grace” (NOTE: this is different from Wesley’s theologies of grace)?



- 6:22-23 closes with the gift of eternal life, by being “enslaved” to God, instead of being “enslaved” to sin. Question: Have you reached a point where you “just can’t help yourself,” in that you sincerely want to do good for others? There’s an old expression, “Don’t give reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Cor. 9:7) How does that sentiment show in your actions/behavior? Do you want to reach that point of “peace *with* God?” (Romans 5:1) Is this sort of like “transcendence?”

V Follow-up Questions?

VI Closing Prayer