

“Romans 5”

Romans - the Gospel of God

Romans 5:1-11

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Jeff: Gracious Father in heaven, we are so thankful for You. And we're thankful that when we were yet sinners You sent Your only-Begotten into the world, that while we were in a far-off country He might find us, make us alive, bring us to our senses, and certainly bring us home. Father, thank You for the reconciliation that we have with You through Christ Jesus. Thank You for the Holy Spirit who is a deposit and guarantee of better things yet to come.

Father, as we gather here today and open Your word together, we're mindful that we're brothers in Christ, and what a special bond that is. Lord, we ask that You'll deepen our understanding of what that means; help us. Lord, we ask that You will indeed minister to us by Your Spirit. And Father, we pray that You will open our eyes, illuminating Your truth that we might see it not only as it is in truth, but as it applies to our lives. And Father, we ask that You would do this for Your glory.

We also pray, Father, and give You thanks for Don and for the number of years that You've given to him, and for the ways that he has used his own life to give service to others. And we're thankful for him and for his ministry to us.

Father, we ask that You will bless Bruce and Sig while they talk this week. And we pray, Father, that it would do both of them good in equal measure. Father, we pray as well that You would be with Kevin. And Father, we ask that Your hand would be upon him, especially as he has all these preliminary procedures which are major, in order for him to have the treatment for his cancer administered. And so, Father, we pray that You'll be with him as well and encourage his spirit.

Father, we ask that Your Spirit would be among us, blessing us and strengthening us by grace as we spend time in Your word. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen.

Jeff: All right. Well let's turn together in the Scriptures to Romans chapter 5. And today we're going to look at chapter 5, verses 5-11. And what I would like us to do is to start our reading in verse 1, because verse 5 is really going to fall out of the previous four verses. And yet I think it's transitional of what we're doing today. And so we'll think about all those verses, but especially 5-11. After 5-11 we're going to get into verse 12 and following through the end of the chapter. And there's quite a bit there, a number of important topics that we're going to cover. And we'll probably take two or three weeks as we work through 12 to the end of the chapter in verse 21.

But for today let's turn our attention to chapter 5, verses 1-11. Don, do you have that? Do you want to give the reading?

Don Maurer: Yes.

Jeff: All right, please.

Don: Jeff, do you mean to tell me that after all I put you through this morning that you would let me do that? *(Laughter)* Wow, you are more righteous than I!

Jeff: Well Don, I don't know what to say to that. *(Laughter)* Except go ahead and read. *(Laughter)*

Don Maurer: *“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we*

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stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

“For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

“Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when 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. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.” This is the word of the Lord.

Brave Men: Thanks be to God.

Transcriber’s Note: NKJV.

Jeff: Okay. So today I want us to look at this general outline as we think about Romans 5:5-11. We’re going to think about some introductory topics. And that’s primarily going to come to us through the verse that we’re going to use as transitional, the verse that we ended with the last time—verse 5. And I want us to think about that for a few more minutes. Then we’re going to think about God’s love for us. We’re going to think about God’s work for us on our behalf. Then we’re going to think about what our response ought to be. And our response ought to be rejoicing through Christ. And I want us to think about those topics today as we think about this portion of the text. So first of all let’s think about a few introductory topics.

The question that we have to ask ourselves—the question that we’ve already thought about—is how does the Spirit produce Christ in us? I mean, that’s exactly what He’s doing, because when you go to chapter 8 and look at chapter 8 and that great chain called the golden chain, notice what it says. It says this in verse 28. Now this is chapter 8 of Romans. Romans 8:28: *“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew He also predestined”*—now listen to this!—*“to be conformed to the image of His Son.”*

So this whole point and purpose of salvation is in one sense being looked at from one aspect as conforming us to the elder Brother—conforming us to Jesus Christ. And so the question that we’re asking—and the question at the end that we asked the last time we were together—is how does the Spirit of God produce Christ in us?

Well, you could say any number of things. For instance you could say the fruit of the Spirit. He produces in us the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is the character of Jesus Christ. So you could go to any number of places, and you can find those kinds of references where you can say that this is the way the Spirit does it.

But here in our text—the one we were looking at last time and continue to look at this time—it basically says this: it says that *“suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.”*

Transcriber’s Note: Jeff is reading from the ESV.

Jeff: Now it says that we ought to rejoice in our sufferings and all of that sort of thing. But this is the basic flow: suffering produces endurance, produces character, produces hope. And remember that we talked about that a little last time.

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We won't go into it all. But what we said was that any suffering that is experienced in union with Jesus Christ is in fact suffering for Christ. And that suffering produces the ability to stand. And that ability to stand then produces a granite-like character. And that granite-like character produces hope—hope that does not disappoint. That's the idea. And so that's the process by which—Yes?

Matt Reichart: You mean the kind of suffering that Jesus went through in Isaiah?

Jeff: So for instance, when we think about suffering we typically think about the martyr, right? He's in a third world country who is experiencing Muslim persecution for his faith in Christ, that sort of thing. But what I'm saying is that when a person is in Christ, and their cells go rogue and they get cancer, and they face that cancer as believers, and they endure it in Christlike patience, they are suffering for Christ in a sin-fallen world. That's the idea. And it's that suffering that produces endurance that produces character that produces hope; that's the idea. So that's the idea that we're looking at.

Now what I want you to notice is, this text—the text we looked at the last time--has something of a structure to it. But it doesn't just have that structure that's going to be confined to the text from last time; it actually spills over. But I want you to notice it first; it's in verse 2 and in verse 5.

Look at the text; notice how he begins. When we look at verse 2 he talks about *“through Him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand.”* And then notice this: *“We rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”*

Then look at verse 5. Verse 5 says: *“And hope does not put us to shame.”* He starts with hope and then he ends with hope. So he starts with hope, and then you see that there is suffering and then the whole list. And so hope and then hope enclose this; they bookend the entire process.

So when we think about this process of being made Christlike, we need to understand that it's in the context of forging in us not only Christ but hope that looks to the future, a hope that will find its eyes set upon Christ. Now that I think is important. And that hope does not disappoint; it will not disappoint. That's interesting.

Let me ask you a question. How many of you as you look in your texts of Scripture—let me talk about it loosely for a minute;--how many of you find your translations to read that the hope is a present hope that will not disappoint? And how many of you read it as a future hope that will not disappoint? How many of you read it that way? How many of you have a present hope?

Don Maurer: My translation says, “does not.”

Jeff: Does not. *“And hope does not disappoint.”* It's a present hope; it does not disappoint us; it's present. How many have a text that says, “will not disappoint?” In other words, this is a hope that will not disappoint us in the future?

Ted Wood: What verse is that now?

Jeff: This is verse 5, I think. The ESV says that *“hope does not put us to shame”*; it does not disappoint. That's a present hope.

Ted: Yeah.

Jeff: Now do you want to know the funny thing about it? The funny thing about it is, it's in the future tense. And so it's an interpretive move to translate it as a present hope.

Ted: Well, there goes the ESV.

Jeff: There goes many a translation. *(Laughter)*

Ted: Should our church throw the ESV away?

Jeff: No, don't throw your ESV away. I like the ESV. Yes?

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Matt: Isn't it both?

Jeff: Well thanks a lot for stealing my thunder. *(Laughter)* Oftentimes the hope that is future is the hope that is present, right? I mean, that's the Christian hope.

Remember how I told you the story about buying the bicycle for your daughter that your daughter knows you have? Remember the story I told you about my intern who will record the college game and he knows the outcome? He knows who the winner is going to be. But as he watches the first quarter he looks at the score and it's 27-0 and his team is down. He starts to wonder, did we win? And he knows! I just thought it was so funny when he said that. But the idea is—

Don Bishop: This hope always grows, right? It's a present hope.

Jeff: It always grows.

Don: So it always—

Jeff: It's growing up into the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. As we are conformed to His character our hope grows. And if I can just broaden that out and sort of stretch that out to a number of Christian virtues, when you think about yourself as a young believer, and you think about yourself in the context where you might have felt social embarrassment because of Christ, or because you had your Bible with you when no one else did, or because you were talking about Christ or the gospel and no one else seemed to be interested, you know, that social feeling of awkwardness diminishes the older you get in Christ Jesus, because you start to realize that you don't have eyes for others and what they think; you have eyes for Christ. And those eyes only grow for Him as you stand in Him.

So it's like that with all Christian graces, right? And it's a wonderful thing. But you're right. So these ideas are true. And I want you to think about these things from the perspective of a couple of Old Testament texts. Then I want to pull a little Biblical theology in here.

I want you to think first of all about Psalm 22:5. Take a look at Psalm 22:5 for just a minute. Now what's this Psalm about? This Psalm is clearly a Psalm that is about Christ. When you think about it you don't have any doubt about it. Why? Because this is the Psalm that Jesus quoted while He was on the cross. *“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”*

And one of the things about this particular Psalm that I absolutely love is that it provides us with not just an external picture of the Messiah. But you really have here something of the psychological substructures of the Messiah's mind as He suffers on the cross. You're given a picture, a window into His thinking as He's on the cross in this one. And so here you find this in verse 5; this is what it says:

*“To You they cried and were rescued;
In You they trusted and were not put to shame.”*

Boy, that looks a lot like verse 5 in Romans 5. And that's because that concept is there. But notice what it says:

*“To You they cried and were rescued;
In You they trusted and were not put to shame.”*

In other words, the idea is that “they trusted in You and You delivered them.” And they found themselves in the end not put to shame. That's the idea, right?

Or how about Psalm 22:5? We find something similar.

Ted: That was what we just did.

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Jeff: Sorry; 25:3. (*Laughter*) How about 25:3? “*Indeed, none who wait for You shall be put to shame.*” In other words, what do you get? Again you get the idea that one who waits on the Lord will not finally be put to shame, right? Yes, Don?

Don Maurer: Jeff, what’s the difference between not being disappointed and not being put to shame? It seems that being put to shame would be a worse thing than being disappointed.

Jeff: Yes, there’s a latitude in the translation. In fact, Ted’s going to be disappointed in me, because in Isaiah 28 verse 16, listen to this; we’re going to go there next. “*Whoever believes will not be in haste.*” Now that’s quoted in 9:33 of Romans. And in 9:33 of Romans “haste” is “put to shame.”

Don Bishop: Who does that site?

Jeff: Isaiah 28:16: “*Whoever believes will not be in haste.*” So it’s a latitude in the translation, which is legitimate. There’s a sphere of meaning; this Hebrew word can mean a sphere of things. I think that the idea of “haste” there means to be put in flight because of fear; that idea.

Ted: What makes you think it’s Hebrew? Maybe it’s not Hebrew.

Jeff: In the Psalm?

Ted: In Isaiah. Maybe it’s not in Hebrew.

Jeff: Maybe what’s not in Hebrew?

Ted: What Paul is quoting.

Jeff: Maybe not.

Ted: Maybe it’s going to be the Septuagint.

Jeff: It could be.

Ted: Very easily.

Jeff: And that’s often the case, right? He uses the Greek selection of the Septuagint; oftentimes that’s the case.

Ted: It would be an easy thing for him to do. Rather than translating from Hebrew into Greek, he already had a Greek translation.

Jeff: Yes, and it’s familiar to them; it’s the translation they’re using. Very good. So the idea is —Yes?

Matt: The NASB in Isaiah 28:16 says, “*will not be disturbed.*”

Jeff: Yeah.

Matt: And it says “*disappointed*” in Romans.

Jeff: Yes. It’s the idea of out of fear, having a response of flight. That’s the idea in general. But what I want you to notice is that in all these, whether or not Paul quotes from the Hebrew or the Greek, whether or not he’s actually quoting from Psalm 22 and so on, the point that I’m making is that the references that you find in the Old Testament that sort of bear a similarity to what we’re doing in the New Testament at this point indicate a future hope. In other words, if you put your trust in Him you will not be ashamed; He’ll rescue you. And that’s what you find in Romans 5:5; you find this idea of a future hope.

Now one of the things that you might say is this. Because Psalm 22 is Christological and it’s about Christ, there’s a Biblical/theological argument that could be made that says that in the grand scheme of things the rescue has come in Jesus Christ. And so that rescue has arrived. And so there’s a sense that the rescue is present and that the rescue will be. That is to say, there’s an alreadyness to our rescue in Christ, and that not yetness which is the vindication that will come on the last day.

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So if you’re looking at it from a Biblical/theological perspective, that is, through the Christological lens, the rescue has already arrived. And yet the consummation of that rescue is to come. And yet the experiential aspect of it, the experience of it, is that whether I’m thinking through that Biblical/theological lens or not, I’ve got to wait for this thing, right? I mean, if I’m under it, if I’m experiencing that pressure, if I’m having to endure, I’m under the weight. And so I’ve got to wait for God to bring me through this thing. And I think that’s important for us to think about, especially as we think about the different things we face in life.

I don’t know about you, but frankly there are things that I wish I was out from under. But you know, it’s funny how God does this. You know, I was thinking the other day—

Ted: Every day there are things you wish you were out from under.

Jeff: Yeah, that’s right. You know, I was thinking the other day about a particular thing. And God brought something to my mind; He made a connection in my thinking that I don’t typically make. And I thought to myself, if A. wasn’t true then B. wouldn’t be true. And B. was that peripheral element that I didn’t think of before. I thought to myself that there is some indirect good being served to B. that wouldn’t be the case if A. wasn’t there. And A. is the thing that I’m under. And I thought to myself: Okay, the Lord brings it to mind. Hey, this is why you are here. And if I can say it this way, there’s a sense in which, like you say to your kid, “Now get up and dust it off and get moving,” right? “C’mon, wipe your tears; it’s time to get up. Get out from under it.” There’s a sense in which God says that to us. “Quit your belly-aching”: you know what I mean? Quit your pity-partying for yourself and just get at it. And I don’t know if you need that pep talk or not. But certainly I do sometimes.

Matt: Suck it up, butter cup.

Jeff: Yeah, yeah. *(Laughter)* Anyway, so this is the point. Our claim is that God has and will save us from the day of wrath, and it’s as simple as that.

Well, that’s kind of the setting of the stage for the intro. Do you have anything that you want to poke around in at that point?

Matt: When I was coming here I was thinking about the Flood itself.

Jeff: Yeah.

Matt: And that we power our cars and everything on the bones and all the juice from all the people that God judged. The world doesn’t believe in a universal Flood. But coal and oil come from all those dead people and animals and plants.

Jeff: Say that again.

Matt: The coal and the oil.

Jeff: Oh, I got you.

Matt: The stuff we have is from dead animals and plants. So they’re denying the fact that there was a Flood. It did come. And just as it did then, judgment is coming; it’s just a matter of time.

Jeff: Yes, that’s right.

Matt: We need the boat. And we need to get other people into that boat.

Jeff: Yeah.

Don Maurer: That’s what 2 Peter says, 2 Peter 3.

Jeff: Yes, absolutely.

Ted: Was it about gasoline?

Don: No. Judgment is coming and he relates it to the Flood.

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Jeff: Well I want us to think about this for just a second. If the hope sets us up for God’s love for us in Christ and God’s work for us, it moves down. And I say it moves down because one of the things that we realize, if you go back to Romans chapter 5, this is the fallout of it. *“For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.”* In other words, we were without hope; we were hopeless. And at the right time God rescued us. The rescue came; God did not put us to shame.

Now here in these verses we find the rescue that came. Now there’s an experiential element to this. And the experiential element is captured in the question: How do we know? It’s sort of like my intern. It’s like my intern watching the game and knowing the end and sitting there and saying, “Yes, but did we really win?”, right? He’s looking at the score and he’s wondering if the outcome is really going to be what he thought it was going to be.

And that’s the way we are many times. We sit around and we think to ourselves: Is the outcome really that we win in Christ? And so how do we know that God is building the character of Christ in us? I think that’s a legitimate question, and one that comes out of this text.

There are two answers and an illustration that Paul gives at this point, two answers and an illustration that he gives. So the two answers, first of all, are these. The subjective answer is first. And the subjective answer is this: the indwelling of the Spirit of God.

Look at this; it’s in verse 5: *“because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”*

Now I want to help to give an approximation as to how to read this. When you think about Hebrews chapter 2, look at what Hebrews chapter 2 says. And you can just listen to it if you’d like, but it says this in verse 14. *“Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death He might destroy the one who has the power of death—that is, the devil.”*

Now here’s the question that we all ask. Wait a second! How does the devil have the power of death? Death is the curse that God pronounced upon Adam and his posterity. So how in the world does the devil have the power of death? I’ll tell you how. It’s the way in which the author of Hebrews describes it.

He says, *“and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.”* In other words, the devil has the power of death in that he capitalizes on the fear we have of death, and through that fear holds us in slavery. That’s the idea.

In other words, the devil doesn’t possess the power of death. But he uses the fear of death to manipulate power over us.

Now here’s the thing. I talked to you a little bit about this the last time, about God’s love poured into our lives. And I talked to you about it being habits. In other words we do things over and over again, and habits develop.

But here’s the thing I want to point out to you. What I want to point out to you is that the love of God is poured into our lives because the Spirit of God is present in our lives. In other words, God doesn’t get a syringe out and put it in the love vial and pull the love down, and then say, “Let me give you a good dose of Cupid serum. *(Laughter)* That’s not what He does, right? I know, Don; that was for you, because your birthday is close to Valentine’s Day. *(Don sings)*”

Don Maurer: “Cupid, draw back your bow-ow.”

Jeff: Oh yes; my ears are bleeding again. *(Laughter)* You know, Don does all these ‘70s songs, these pop ‘70s songs.

Ted: That’s ‘60s.

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Jeff: Whatever. *(Laughter)* So God doesn't pull back the bottle of Love Potion No. 9 for us. *(Laughter)* That's not what He does, right? What He does is that He gives us His Spirit. And in giving His Spirit to us He gives us love. That's what the presence of love is in our lives; it's the Spirit of God.

And I think the point is this. The point is that God does not do anything in tiny measures. Notice: He pours His love into us through the Spirit of God.

And you know, you kind of wonder sometimes. You can read these things, and you can try to take them apart for their theological precision, and you think about them in those kinds of ways. But sometimes it's better just to sit back and say, you know, I wonder if Paul is communicating to us this idea that God doesn't do anything small for us. He does things on a large scale for us; He pours His Spirit into our hearts. The Rescuer is poured into our lives in that sense.

And I don't know about you, but that's an incredible thing to think about. But it asks the question that typically we as Christians, at least in the evangelical world and I think definitely in the Reformed world, don't like to talk about. And that means that it's about how we feel.

You know, you listen to all kinds of people who say, “Don't go with your emotions.” Don't you hate being around that person? You say, “The way I feel about this is.” And they say, “Oh, the way you feel about it? Don't you want to say that you think about it?” And you're like “All right!” Is that a little too—

Ted: I'm a little concerned.

Jeff: Okay. *(Laughter)* I don't think that you can think without feeling or feel without thinking.

Jim Hamilton: Of course.

Jeff: Of course you can't. Don't?

Don Maurer: Jeff, I'll tell you what. When I talk to Kevin you can see this, the Spirit being poured into his heart, because so much of his conversation is his relationship with Christ.

Jeff: Yeah.

Don: Despite how he feels, despite all of the troubles and—

Jeff: Yeah, but it's not despite how he's feeling; it's in conjunction with how he's feeling.

Don: Exactly. But despite the physical pain, he's constantly talking about the Lord being in control.

Jeff: Yeah.

Don: The peace that he has, the joy that he has. And you can see that the Holy Spirit is poured into his heart.

Jeff: Yeah.

Don: It's amazing!

Jeff: But you remember what we said when we talked about faith and the definition of faith—*notitia*, *assensus* and *fiducia*. And we said that *notitia* corresponds to the mind, *assensus* to the will and *fiducia* to the affections. And we said that faith is all three of these things working on the whole of us. And so our whole person response involves emotions.

Now I believe in the primacy of the intellect. But I don't believe that the intellect divorces the emotions. I think that's a terrible way to think about it, and I'll tell you why it's a terrible way to think about it, because if you say that I want to divorce the emotions from the mind and will, what you're saying is, I want a faith that the devils have, but not a saving faith, because saving faith involves the affections being reoriented in the right direction, right? When the affections are reoriented in the right direction then they follow the lead of the mind. And so the mind gives

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order and direction to the affections, and so there’s a primacy of the intellect. But there is not an absence of the emotions. And so this is about how we feel.

I mentioned this a little bit to you the last time. There’s a sense in which we can get into woe-is-me moments. God doesn’t love me; God isn’t near me; God isn’t this; God isn’t that. And so you say to people, “Do you have unconfessed sin in your life? Do you need to get that out of the way? Is that a problem? Is that hindering you?”

“No, nothing like that. I just feel distant from Him.”

“Okay. Is that because you’re not doing your devotions? Maybe you haven’t been engaged in them regularly. Maybe you’re too busy and your life is too frenetic and you’re finding yourself absent from the Word.”

“No, none of that.”

“Okay. Well then, look. You need to follow what your mind knows. Your mind knows certain things and you need to just follow them. You need to put your mind on those sorts of things.”

It’s sort of like the guy I’ve told you about before. Robert Dabney writes to his friend Vaughan. And he says to Vaughan, “I’m dying, and I want you to know I’m afraid. I’m wondering about my faith.”

And Vaughan writes back to Dabney and says, “Bob, if you were to go into the woods walking, and you came to a bridge, would you stand there and wonder if you had enough faith to cross bridges in order to cross that bridge? Or would you walk up to that bridge and inspect it, and find it worthy to be crossed? And Bob, that’s what you need to do with Christ. You need to stop asking yourself, ‘Do I have enough subjective faith? Do I have enough emotional capital to trust Christ? Go to Him and see Christ; examine Christ. Find Him worthy to be trusted, and trust Him.’” And that’s the idea, right?

So it’s not divorced from our feelings. But our feelings have to follow the intellect. And so this is about how we feel.

Now there’s an objective answer here. And the objective answer is “*Christ died for the ungodly.*” That is to say, if your subjective aspect, if the feeling aspect, if the sense aspect is waning, then you need to focus on the Object, which is Christ. Christ died for sinners.

Are you a sinner? Yes, I’m a sinner. Do you believe that Christ died for sinners? Yes, I do.

Then what reason do you have to doubt that He died for you as a sinner? That kind of idea has to play through your thinking if your feelings are giving you problems, right? You need to follow the primacy of the intellect in that regard.

So when we ask how we know, well, it’s how I feel and what I think. And it’s funny that Paul gives them in that order. He’s not saying that the emotions have primacy. But what he is saying is that the emotions are legitimate. And I know we’re men. We have trouble expressing our emotions, don’t we?

Ted: Some of us do and some of us don’t.

Jeff: My name is Ted. I have emotions. *(Laughter)*

Ted: I express a lot of emotions.

Jeff: Let me give you this. The illustration is in verse 7. The illustration illustrates what we just heard; look at what he says. “*For one will scarcely die for a righteous person, though perhaps for a good person one will dare even to die.*”

What’s the key there? The key is that people will look at a man whom they respect, a righteous person. And they will look at him and respect him, but not die for him. But a good

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person is a person they often love. And they may die for that person. And so they may die for a good person and love them. They won't die for a righteous person they respect.

And his point is that we were neither worthy of respect, nor were we good. Whew, that was a challenge! And yet Christ died for us when we were His enemies. That's the idea. So the illustration is that here is the best case scenario. Someone may die for a good person. But we weren't good people; we were enemies. And yet Christ died for us. And so that's the idea.

And then this leads to God's work for us. Let me ask you. Any questions on that last aspect that you want to chew on? Matt?

Matt: Going back to the Holy Spirit being poured out on us?

Jeff: Yes.

Matt: I think we all kind of quiver at the thought of the Holy Spirit, that He's alive and really praying for us. And obviously we need Him. Christ commands us to be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. So all of that to say this. Where do we see the Holy Spirit working in the United States—in Pennsylvania, in Pittsburgh, in our churches? Do we see Him being poured out? Do we see people coming to faith?

Jeff: Well that's an interesting question, isn't it?

Matt: And I ask that because last night we invited a local guy. He's a pastor that I know, and his son worked with me five years ago; we have a relationship. He and I continue to share Christ. And he shared that he had basically come to the end of himself. The Wednesday night program was one way where he said that he surrendered and asked the Holy Spirit, “What should I do?”

They have about 25 young people in their 20s and 30s who are active in the church on Wednesday nights. They won't go to church on Sunday. So they have an informal type setting. And they're asking questions and they're coming to Christ. And they're running home and telling their friends and bringing them to Christ. The Holy Spirit is being poured out because this man was willing to pray and say, “Okay, I give up my thing. What do You want me to do?”

Jeff: Yeah.

Matt: And as he is faithful in that little thing, the Lord is working in that whole process. So the idea is not I'm going to see this, or I'm going to see that. But are we being sensitive to the Holy Spirit, and that positive idea of being poured out? And let me say that there's a revival, an awakening going on in our country right now. Are we willing to be a part of that?

Jeff: I'm going to come back to that. Yes?

Gary Craig: I just wanted to say, that brings to mind that revival going on at the university in

Jeff: Asbury. That's what I wanted to bring up. So how many of you know or have heard about this Asbury thing? Okay. So have you heard about the Cedarville thing that's going on? Apparently there's a similar thing going on in Cedarville. And apparently in Florida there's another similar thing going on at a Bible college down there.

Now the question I think that we have to ask is this. This is an easy example to say that this is revival. Now the question that we have to ask ourselves is this: what is a revival? How would we define a revival? Gary, no problem. What's that?

Brave Man: I've been through a hundred of them.

Jeff: So how would we define a revival? In other words,--

Matt: People are saved and come to Christ.

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Jeff: Yes, but there’s something else. Classically when you think about a revival, you think about two things. You think about awakening and you think about conversion. Now these are different things. What’s the difference?

Well when you think about awakening, awakening was a term that was applied to unbelievers. In other words, unbelievers were being convicted of sin—not necessarily saved, but awakened to their sinfulness.

Ted: Kind of like being woke. *(Laughter)*

Jeff: Ted, that was really good; I loved that.

Ted: Being woke comes from the black churches. I’m just saying that it would be like spiritual “wokeness.”

Jeff: Yeah. Let’s not call it that. *(Laughter)* But that’s a great point. But this idea that revival affected all of the culture is important. And it affected all of the culture because the gospel that converts would lead to conversion. But the gospel that converts was permeating the city, the town and the culture. And so people were hearing the gospel and responding to the gospel.

Now this is an interesting phenomenon. And I’m not close enough to make an assessment about it. I hope it’s the beginning of a genuine national revival in our country. It would be wonderful if it was something that led to a revival and a reformation.

Now there are some good things that we’re already seeing. For instance, Asbury turned down media coverage; it doesn’t want media there.

Matt: That’s good.

Jeff: And that’s a good thing; that’s a step in the right direction. But the question is what will this produce? Will this just produce kind of a Christian songfest amongst the young people? Or will it actually lead to the awakening of dead people in the culture?

Matt: From what I’ve heard, these young people are seeking truth and hungry for it. And they’re looking for people who have the answer. And so I would say about these young people, these are not unchurched people attending.

Jeff: That’s exactly my point. When we think about revival we think about a reviving of the church. But the question is, is this a revival that will lead to an awakening? Or is it just a localized sort of wake-up?

Matt: They’re coming to Christ; they’re surrendering their lives to Christ.

Don Bishop: Can you just look at that and say that’s a revival right now? Doesn’t it take a little time to see lasting results?

Jeff: For instance, Jonathan Edwards—and here’s a guy that studied revival and actually gave a series of marks of a true revival. It might be interesting; if this is still going on next week, it might be interesting for us to spend some time thinking about this.

Matt: Here we are; we are saturated with truth. And we have young people out there hungry, seeking for truth. So my challenge is, reach out to a bunch of young people in your life who are saying, “I’m seeking truth.”

Jeff: We ought to do that anyway, Matt; you’re absolutely right.

Jordan Obaker: I don’t know if you saw Pastor Matthew Eberhard. He posted a video on Jonathan Edwards’ marks of revival.

Jeff: Yes. Matthew Eberhard is an Edwards scholar. He actually just got a book deal to write a Jonathan Edwards Study Bible. It’s going to take a couple of years to do that. It will be interesting to watch that because he knows Jonathan Edwards really well. We’ll do that next

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time. We’ll think about the marks of true revival if this is still going on. We’ll try to follow it while we’re here.

David Miller: We don’t stop at conversion either because conversion can be shallow. It should lead to discipleship.

Jeff: Yeah. Well, conversion is lifelong, in the sense that conversion is faith and repentance. Faith and repentance are things where I grow in my faith and I continue to repent. And so those things are natural, or a part of any growing Christian faith. But you’re right; they need to follow Christ.

Matt: *“Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.”*

Jeff: That’s right. Okay. Well we’ll end there and come back next time, and we’ll think about revival.

All right; let’s pray. Father, thank You for this day, for the blessing of life in Christ, for the time You’ve given us to be together. Father, we just ask that Your hand would be upon us for good. Lord, we certainly pray for the young people at Asbury and over at Cedarville. We pray for the college in Florida that’s having a similar experience. Lord, we pray that these would be of You, and we pray that they would bear fruit. And Lord, we ask that You would cause our own lives to bear fruit. We ask it in Christ’s name. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen.