



Five Sermons on Romans 5:
Substitution
(Romans 5:6-8)

Romans 5:6-10

⁶ For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

Romans 5:1-2,11,3-5

¹ Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ² Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

¹¹ More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

³ Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Five Sermons on Romans 5

- Sermon #1: **Justification** (Romans 5:1-2)
- Sermon #2: **Sanctification** (Romans 5:3-5)
- Sermon #3: **Substitution** (Romans 5:6-8)
- Sermon #4: **Propitiation** (Romans 5:9-10)
- Sermon #5: **Reconciliation** (Romans 5:11)

A TALE
OF
TWO CITIES,
BY
CHARLES DICKENS



A Tale of Two Cities

by Charles Dickens (1859)

- “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair.”
- “It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known.”

Romans 5:6-8

“Substitution”

- ⁶ For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.
- ⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—
- ⁸ **but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**

I. Definition of “Substitution”

- **The Substitutionary Atonement of Christ**
- “Christ has taken our place, doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.”
(*Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*)
- “*Atonement* refers to God’s act of dealing with the primary human problem, sin. Both Old Testament and New Testament affirm that sin has broken the relationship between God and humankind. According to Christian theology, God accomplished the way of restoration through Christ’s death. [One explanation of how this atonement takes place is that] Christ stood in the legal place of sinners, bearing the just punishment due us because we transgress God’s laws.” (*Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*)

I. Definition of “Substitution”

- **Old testament symbolic ritual of substitutionary atonement: the “scapegoat”**
- “And Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins. And he shall put them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness. ²² The goat shall bear all their iniquities on itself to a remote area, and he shall let the goat go free in the wilderness” (Leviticus 16:21-22).

II. The Problem: The Need for a Savior

- **A. Human Beings are Inherently Sinful**
- For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for **the ungodly**.
(Romans 5:6 KJV)
- “For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh” (Romans 7:18).
- “sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men” (Romans 5:12).
- (In contrast to such writers as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Ralph Waldo Emerson, who wrote on the inherent goodness of human beings.)

II. The Problem: The Need for a Savior

- **A. Human Beings are Inherently Sinful: *Total Depravity***
- “Total depravity is the first of Calvinism’s famous five points . . . [and] makes up the T of TULIP. The term is misleading because it suggests a moral condition of *utter* depravity. *Utter depravity* means a person is as wicked as he can possibly be . . . [In contrast] the term *total depravity* . . . refers to the effect of sin and corruption on the whole person . . . the body, the soul, the mind, the will, and so forth. . .
- “Perhaps a better term for the doctrine of total depravity would be *radical corruption* . . . from the Latin *radix*, which means “root.” To say that mankind is radically corrupt is to say that sin penetrates to the root or core of our being. Sin is not tangential or peripheral, but arises from the center of our being” (R.C. Sproul, *Grace Unknown: The Heart of Reformed Theology*)

II. The Problem: The Need for a Savior

- **B. Human Effort is Inherently Inadequate**
- ⁹ What then? Are we Jews any better off? no, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, ¹⁰ as it is written:
 - “None is righteous, no, not one;
¹¹ no one understands;
no one seeks for God.
¹² **All have turned aside**; together they have become worthless;
no one does good,
not even one.” (Romans 3:9-12; Psalm 14:2-3)
- “For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:20)

II. The Problem: The Need for a Savior

- **B. Human Effort is Inherently Inadequate: The parable of the rich ruler**
- “And a ruler asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” ¹⁹ And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.
- ²⁰ You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.’” ²¹ And he said, “All these I have kept from my youth.”
- ²² When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” ²³ But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich” (Luke 18:18-23).

II. The Problem: The Need for a Savior

- **C. Human Pride is Inherently Obstinate**
- “Pride goes before destruction,
and a haughty spirit before a fall” (Proverbs 16:18)
- In the pride of his face the wicked does not seek him;
all his thoughts are, “There is no God.” (Psalm 10:4)

II. The Problem: The Need for a Savior

- **D. God's Standard is His Own Holiness**
- “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23)

The Good News!

- God provides a way for sinful human beings to be reconciled to Him through Jesus the Messiah, who came to save us from our sins.
- “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:11)
- “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

III. The Solution:

Salvation through Jesus Christ

- **A. Jesus Takes Our Place of Punishment** (The “suffering servant”)
- But he was pierced **for our transgressions**;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his wounds we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5 ESV)

III. The Solution:

Salvation through Jesus Christ

- **B. We Receive Christ's Righteousness**
- “Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, **should live unto righteousness**: by whose stripes ye were healed” (1 Peter 2:24).
- “The **righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ** for all who believe . . . and are **justified by his grace as a gift**, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Romans 3:22, 24)
- For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.” (Romans 4:3)

III. The Solution:

Salvation through Jesus Christ

- **C. We Receive the Holy Spirit's Power**
- “For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶ that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to **be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being**” (Ephesians 3:14-16).
- “Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us” (Ephesians 3:20).

III. The Solution:

Salvation through Jesus Christ

- **Why? Because God loves us**
- “but **God shows his love for us** in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8)
- “For **God so loved the world**,^[i] that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him” (John 3:16-17).

Application

- “Christ has taken our place, doing for us what we could not do for ourselves. Our part is simply to respond in repentance, faith, and selfless living” (L. L. Morris, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*)
- “This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹ Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another” (1 John 4:9-11).



Let Us Pray

