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Sermon Notes

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## **The Love of God Poured Out**

### **Romans 5:3-5**

#### I. Precious in the Sight of the Lord...

##### A. Will You Be ready When Your Test Comes?

###### 1. God's attitude toward your death

***Psalm 116:15-16 Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints. <sup>16</sup> O LORD, truly I am your servant; I am your servant, the son of your maidservant; you have freed me from my chains.***

###### 2. Paul's attitude toward death

***Philippians 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.***

###### 3. Adoniram Judson, 19<sup>th</sup> century missionary to Burma

"I am not weary of this world, and I am not weary of the work. But when the Lord calls me home, I shall run like a schoolboy on the final day of school."

###### 4. Richard Roberts, minister of God, early 19<sup>th</sup> century... died of consumption at age 36

*[He writes in his journal]* "Frequently, all around me thought me about to expire. My cough was so dreadful, so were the pains I felt in my chest and side; and above all the languor which oppressed me for a while seemed almost overwhelming. But while I was thus sinking I felt more of the consolations and supports of religion than I ever had experienced before. O, with what strong and assured confidence was I enabled to look upon my Redeemer, and how gladly would I have resigned my soul into his hands! What glorious manifestations of His love and mercy did He make to my soul, and how did I rejoice to believe that in a few days more I should be with Him in glory eternal! For the sake of my dear wife and friends, I was willing to live, and saw it my duty to use all proper means to promote my recovery... but for my own sake I had a desire to be with Christ. Thus I lay in sweet suspense, as it were, between earth and heaven, and indeed, so I have remained in general ever since."

*Later on, a friend said to him: "I should be glad to enjoy your happiness." Richard Robarts could not speak at this stage of his illness, but he wrote this on a slate: "Believe constantly on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you may be much happier than you are. Had I been more faithful in this respect I should have enjoyed more consolation and done more for the glory of God."*

*[the account continues]* "In the course of this day he experienced an ecstasy of heavenly joy. His eyes were bathed in tears, and he uttered words of praise, consolation and triumph; it appeared as if he was transported into Paradise. It was evident that he experienced a foretaste of heaven." He said, "Oh, I am happy in my God, in his love. I am going to possess Him forever. I shall enter into that city whose streets are of fine gold, yes, the New Jerusalem from above, the City of the Living God."

*[the final entry]* "Since my last attack three weeks ago the Lord has been near and has manifested His love to my soul in an uncommon degree. I have been deeply humbled under a sense of my unworthiness and past unfaithfulness, but I have felt myself firmly fixed upon the Rock of Ages, and have been enabled to anticipate my departure from the body with unspeakable delight. One thing has much occupied my mind, namely, the great proneness I have ever felt to rest short of all the fullness of God. Often, it seemed within my grasp, often has my soul seemed to take possession of it, but never did I enjoy a constant sense of it, of all the great salvation of God. However, I never gave up the hope of possessing it fully, and I trust that I shall now obtain my heart's desire."

Today's question: what is Robart's talking about?

Or more specifically, what did Paul mean when he said

***vs. 5 "God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom He has given us."?***

#### B. Review

1. Romans 1-4: Justification by faith in Christ alone
  - a. Romans 1:16-17 summary
  - b. Romans 1:18-3:20 universal depravity... all of us under the wrath of God; no escape by good works
  - c. Romans 3:20-3:27 Propitiation through Christ's death on the cross
  - d. Romans 4: Justification by faith alone... like Abraham
2. Romans 5:1-11 Life at peace with God... a life of assurance

a. God labors through Paul to give all who have trusted in Christ a SOLID ASSURANCE

b. LAST TIME:

1. Assurance Reasoned Out in the Mind

2. Assurance Worked Out in the Life

3. Assurance Poured Out in the Heart

C. Today: Assurance Poured Out in the Heart

D. Some Words About Assurance

1. Worked by the Holy Spirit

2. Direct result of faith

3. Not required for salvation

4. Not equally strong for all Christians, nor equally strong at all times

5. Affected greatly by sin

## II. The Gift of the Holy Spirit: Poured Out

A. Holy Spirit: Universally Given to All Justified People

1. Every Christian has this testimony at some level

*vs. 5 “through the Holy Spirit whom He has given us.”*

*Romans 8:9 “...if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.”*

*Romans 8:16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.*

From moment of being born again, the Spirit speaks assurance to us... promising God's fatherly love

2. The Spirit given as a deposit guaranteeing full amount later

*Ephesians 1:13-14 Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance*

Illus. Allowance from future inheritance

3. YET... Not all experience it equally

B. The Indwelling Spirit Responsible for Other Forms of Assurance

1. Reasoned out in the mind

***1 Corinthians 2:12-13 We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. <sup>13</sup> This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.***

- a. Holy Spirit illuminates Scripture & God's promises
- b. Holy Spirit works confidence in our hearts that God's word is true
- c. by the Spirit, we take each promise as directed toward us

2. Worked out in the life

- a. Holy Spirit produces character fruit in us

***Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.***

- b. Holy Spirit enables us to love God & others

***Colossians 1:8 "...he has told us about your love in the Spirit."***

- c. Holy Spirit makes us holy in life as well

***Romans 8:13-14 For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, <sup>14</sup> because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.***

- d. Holy Spirit produces good works through us

Empowered for ministry, gifted by the Spirit, prompted moment by moment to use our gifts

So, all assurance can be traced to the work of the Spirit in our lives

BUT here is even more... a pouring out of God's love!!

C. Pentecost Pouring

**[Peter, quoting Joel 2:28 on Pentecost] Acts 2:17 “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.”**

1. “Poured out” = superabundant effusions; like a waterfall

This is the highest and best form of assurance... it encompasses the others, but goes light years beyond them

This is the true Holy of Holies of private assurance of salvation... something so sacred and spiritual it can hardly be put into words

2. Not reasoned out or worked out... simply experienced directly

#### D. The Indwelling Spirit Pours Out God’s Love

1. Common testimony of the Spirit:

**Romans 8:16 “The Spirit testifies with our spirits that we are children of God.”**

2. Full effusion... super saturation of experience

The Greek word “poured out” shows a river of experience...

Thomas Goodwin: He describes a man and his little child, his son walking down the road and they are walking hand in hand. And the child knows he is the child of his father, and he knows that the father loves him, and he rejoices in that, and he is happy in it. There is no uncertainty about it at all. BUT SUDDENLY the father, moved by some impulse, takes hold of that child and picks him up, fondles him in his arms, kisses him, embraces him, showers his love upon him and then he puts him down again, and they go on walking together.

#### E. Testimonies from Church History

- Blaise Pascal: [17<sup>th</sup> century French philosopher and mathematician; when he died, they found sewed inside his shirt a piece of paper on which was written the following] *This day of Grace 1654; From about half past ten at night to about half past midnight, Fire. God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, Not of the Philosophers and the wise. Security, security. Feeling, joy, peace. God of Jesus Christ. Thy God shall be my God. Forgetfulness of the world and of all save God. He can be found only in ways taught in the Gospel. Greatness of the human soul.*

*O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee, but I have known Thee. Joy, joy, joy, tears of joy. I have separated myself from Him. My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?... That I be not separated from Thee eternally. This is life eternal: That they might know Thee, the only true God, and Him whom Thou hast sent, Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ. I have separated myself from Him; I have fled, renounced, crucified Him. May I*

*never be separated from Him. He maintains Himself in me only in ways taught in the Gospel. Renunciation total and sweet.*

- Jonathan Edwards: As I rode out into the woods for my health, in 1737, having alighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner commonly has been, to walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view that was for me extraordinary, or the glory of the Son of God, as Mediator between God and man, and His wonderful, great, full, pure and sweet grace and love, and meek and gentle condescension. This grace that appeared so calm and sweet, appeared also great above the heavens. The Person of Christ appeared ineffably excellent with an excellency great enough to swallow up all thoughts and conceptions, which continued, as near as I can judge, about an hour; such as to keep me a greater part of the time in a flood of tears, and weeping aloud. I felt an ardency of soul to be, what I know not otherwise how to express, emptied and annihilated; to lie in the dust, and to be full of Christ alone; to love Him with a holy and pure love; to trust in Him; to live upon Him; to serve Him and to be perfectly sanctified and made pure, with a heavenly purity.”
- D.L. Moody: [He had been a Christian, a minister in charge of a mission; he was seeing people converted, but he wanted more] “I began to cry as never before, for a greater blessing from God. The hunger increased; I really felt that I did not want to live any longer. I kept on crying all the time that God would fill me with His Spirit. Well, one day in the city of New York—oh! What a day! I cannot describe it, I seldom refer to it. It is almost too sacred an experience to name. Paul had an experience of which he never spoke for fourteen years. I can only say, God revealed Himself to me, and I had such an experience of His love that I had to ask Him to stay His hand.”

The experience Moody had was so powerful and overwhelming, he felt as if he were going to be physically crushed. It changed D.L. Moody from a good, regular, ordinary minister of the gospel into the dynamic evangelist used so powerfully in the lives of thousands

- **[God can even do this to groups!!]** John Wesley: January 1, 1734 Journal entry: “Mr. Hall, Ingham, Whitefield, Hutching and my brother Charles were present at our Love Feast in Fetter Lane with about sixty of our brethren. About three in the morning as we were continuing instant in prayer the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exulting joy and many fell to the ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from the awe and amazement at the presence of His Majesty, we broke out with one voice, ‘We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.’”

### III. Seeking the Filling

#### A. Christ’s Invitations

## 1. Crying Out to the Thirsty

***John 7:37-39 On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. <sup>38</sup> Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." <sup>39</sup> By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.***

- a. thirsty not just for justification... thirsty for God!!
- b. belief in Christ results in STREAMS OF LIVING WATER
- c. streams flow from within... this is the HOLY SPIRIT
- d. streams flow through us outward to everyone around us

This is the same image as Romans 5:5 "The love of God has been poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom He has given us."

Is this your experience with God today?? Would you like it to be?

- 1) Come to Christ and drink!!
- 2) Believe in Christ and receive!!

## 2. Inviting the Samaritan woman

***John 4:10-14 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." <sup>11</sup> "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? <sup>12</sup> Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?" <sup>13</sup> Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, <sup>14</sup> but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."***

- a. the "gift of God" = living water
- b. not just once... spring of water welling up again and again
- c. salvation not a static experience but an ongoing refreshment with Christ
- d. CLEAR STATEMENT: If you knew what God wants to give you and who I am, YOU WOULD ASK ME...

### 3. Inviting Us

***Luke 11:9-13 "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup> For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. <sup>11</sup> "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? <sup>12</sup> Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup> If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"***

- a. using common knowledge: fathers love to give their children good gifts
- b. using faith-logic: God is a better Father than you are
- c. ASK HIM... He'll not refuse
- d. what will He give?? THE HOLY SPIRIT to those who ask Him

What does this mean? Either this promise is only for that first generation of believers who hadn't received the Spirit yet and says nothing to us... or it speaks a lasting promise to all generations. Ask God and He will give you the Holy Spirit!!

BUT I THOUGHT WE ALREADY POSSESS THE SPIRIT!!

***vs. 5 "through the Holy Spirit whom He has given us."***

***Romans 8:9 "...if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ."***

We do... but this clearly refers to a deeper experience of God's love for you through the power of the Spirit

Christ wants us to pray to our Heavenly father for the Holy Spirit... for Him to be poured out on us afresh

#### B. Paul's Benedictions

1. The Heart Has a Direction!!

***2 Thessalonians 3:5 May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance.***

- a. John Piper calls it a "desire factory"



At this moment, your heart is desiring something... food, cool air, solitude, the PGA golf tournament, deeper understanding of God, time with your spouse, etc.

- b. according to this verse, the heart has a direction
- c. according to this verse, Paul wants God to direct the Thessalonian's hearts

Can He do this? Is He allowed to put a desire into your heart so that you want Him? YES!!! The whole point is that, without His direction, we would NEVER have sought God to begin with

***Romans 3:10-11 "There is no one righteous, not even one; " there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.***

- 2. The Love of God be with you

***2 Corinthians 13:14 May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.***

- a. nothing can separate us from the Love of God (Romans 8:38-39)
- b. YET Paul's benediction is that the love of God will "be with you" as you go
- c. what can this be but a deeper experience of the love of God day by day??

### C. Paul's Prayer

***Ephesians 3:14-21***

For this reason I kneel before the Father, <sup>15</sup> from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. <sup>16</sup> I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, <sup>17</sup> so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, <sup>18</sup> may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, <sup>19</sup> and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

<sup>20</sup> 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, <sup>21</sup> to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

- 1. "To grasp the unmeasurable, to know the unknowable, to be filled with the infinite"
- 2. This is Paul's "prayer exposition" of Romans 5:5
- 3. Step by step

- Strengthened with power in the inner being... WHY?
- So that: “Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith” ... TO WHAT END?
- So that: “you may be rooted and established in love” ... THEN WHAT?
- So that : you may have power to grasp the dimensions of Christ’s love
- So that: you may know a love that surpasses knowledge
- IN ORDER THAT: You may be filled to overflowing with the fullness of God

Summary: We should seek this blessing of the Spirit... we should seek it from God Himself through daily, persistent, hungry, thirsty prayer... asking as a son would his father... asking until we receive

#### IV. Application: Seek Until You Receive

- A. Do you know this love?
- B. Have you ever experienced anything like this??
- C. Ask, seek, knock!!

Thomas Goodwin: “Sue Him for it! Sue Him for it! Ask Him for it! Don’t give up!”

- D. Specific application
  1. Begin setting aside specific time every day simply to ask God for a deeper, richer experience of His love
  2. Ask Him to work holiness in you, for God will not bless disobedient children, or they may the idea that He doesn’t care about their holiness
  3. Put aside earthly pursuits... instead of watching the ball game, or reading your romance novel, or pursuing your hobby, or renting that video, or anything else... give an evening to pursuing God for a fuller experience of His love
  4. Pray carefully, line by line through Ephesians 3:14-21
- E. If you have absolutely no testimony of the Holy Spirit, pouring out the love of God into your heart, it may very well be that you are not yet a Christian... ask God then for salvation instead!!
- F. Result: Streams of living water flowing from us to
  - 1) each other in genuine Christian love
  - 2) the rest of the world in evangelism

***Acts 4:31 After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.***

I want to challenge the people of First Baptist Church, Durham, to a season of extraordinary prayer based on Paul's statement of Romans 5:5 and his prayer of Ephesians 3.