

Sermon for June 14, 2026 – The 3rd Sunday after Pentecost

Romans 5:5b-11 EHV

Theme: **God demonstrates His own love for us!**

- 1) Through the death of His Son,
- 2) For the assurance of our salvation.

God's love has been poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, who was given to us. ⁶For at the appointed time, while we were still helpless, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷It is rare indeed that someone will die for a righteous person. Perhaps someone might actually go so far as to die for a person who has been good to him. ⁸But God shows his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

⁹Therefore, since we have now been justified by his blood, it is even more certain that we will be saved from God's wrath through him. ¹⁰For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, it is even more certain that, since we have been reconciled, we will be saved by his life. ¹¹And not only is this so, but we also go on rejoicing confidently in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received this reconciliation.

“Do you love me?” Have you ever asked someone that question? If so, why did you ask it? Were you afraid that some action on your part might have caused someone you care about to stop loving you?

Have you ever asked God that question? If so, why? Did you do something that you thought God could never forgive? Dear Christian, nothing can ever keep God from loving you. Still, the devil tempts us to doubt.

“LORD, do you still love me?” “I most certainly do.” God answers in Scripture, “Let me show you how much!” With St. Paul as our guide, let us consider how **God demonstrates His own love for us:** 1) Through the death of His Son, 2) For the assurance of our salvation.

Part One: Through the death of His Son

In verse 8 of our sermon text, the Apostle Paul summarizes what the Christian faith is all about. He writes: *God shows his own love for us in this: While we were still*

sinners, Christ died for us. Three times in our text, Paul defines God's love for us as the death of Jesus.

If you love someone, you will be willing to sacrifice your happiness for their benefit. Ultimate love makes the ultimate sacrifice; as Jesus once said, "*No one has greater love than this: that someone lays down his life for his friends.*"ⁱ Yes, Jesus demonstrated a love for us beyond anything we could ever deserve.

But someone might protest, "How is Jesus' sacrifice more special than those made by soldiers or police officers who die in the line of duty? I mean, most of us here would probably be willing to offer our lives to save the people we love. Even for certain strangers, like a child in danger, we might consider dying." This may be true, but let me ask you this: would you consider dying for an enemy that absolutely hates you?

That is what makes God's love so unique: while we were still "ungodly," "sinners," and considered ourselves God's "enemies," *Christ died for us.* To be ungodly means to have no fear or respect for the LORD. All people are "ungodly" according to their inherited sinful nature. Want proof? Just reflect on the attitude of your heart.

Don't you often catch yourself complaining in your mind about things instead of rejoicing in the many blessings God graciously provides for you day after day? Do you take the words and actions of others in the kindest possible way, or do you view what they do with suspicion and mistrust? Which do you find easier: dedicating 5 minutes to reading a Bible verse and saying a prayer, or spending an hour scrolling through your social media feed? Are you willing to make your desires subject to God's will, or do you try to twist God's Word to justify your desires? Our hearts betray our ungodliness, don't they?

Not only are we by nature utterly sinful, but we also cannot improve our relationship with God. The Bible calls us dead in our transgressions and sins.ⁱⁱ You know as well as I do: dead people cannot save themselves. They are dead. Therefore, before Jesus came into our lives, we had no hope of becoming God's friends.

⁸*But God shows his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.* Only after we understand our actual condition outside of Christ, do we grasp the magnitude of God's love for us: while we were still powerless, wretched God-haters, the LORD decided to love us so much that He sent His Son into the world to die for us.

Just think of what that means! Even though Jesus is the almighty God Himself – one with the Father and the Spirit – He humbled Himself willingly for our sakes. Instead of using His divine attributes for His own benefit, He veiled them for a time after taking on human flesh and blood. He did this not only to be like us but also to suffer for us. Taking all our sins upon Himself, He suffered and died for them.ⁱⁱⁱ In other words, *God made him, who did not know sin, to become sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.*^{iv}

God punished His Son for us without our begging or asking. He did this while humanity still hated Him. That is how God shows His incredible love.

And how do we receive this love personally? The first verse of our text tells us: *God's love has been poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, who was given to us.* For many of us here, this first happened on the day our infant heads first felt the blessed water of baptism.^v Through that sacrament, the LORD washed away our sins, clothed us in Christ's righteousness, and put His name on our hearts by giving us faith in Jesus.^{vi} At your baptism, the LORD declared in heaven, "You are my son. You are my daughter. Today I have become your Father."

Every time you hear the Gospel, God pours His love into your hearts. Every time you receive Holy Communion (and through it, the very body and blood Jesus used to win your salvation), God pours His love into your hearts. Because this is true, it is essential for us to use God's Word and Sacraments regularly and not despise them.

"God, do you love me? Sometimes my sinfulness causes me to doubt." Whenever your guilt burdens you like this, look to the cross. God showed His love for you there when Jesus died for you. He loved you, even though you did nothing to deserve it. But that is really the point of God's love: to bring us lost and condemned creatures into a restored relationship with Himself.

Think about what this means for you. You don't have to go through life on this earth afraid of God's righteous wrath over your sins. You can live your life in the peace of knowing you are forgiven, loved, and a child of heaven, as the Apostle Paul explains in the next verse of our text:

Part 2: For the assurance of salvation

⁹Therefore, since we have now been justified by his blood, it is even more certain that we will be saved from God's wrath through him.

The word “justify” is a legal term. It basically means “acquit.” To be justified, therefore, means to be exonerated of wrong.

Imagine standing on trial in God’s courtroom. The judge is the almighty LORD whom you have offended. The prosecutor is Satan, who accuses you before God by bringing up all the ways you have sinned against Him. Still worse, you know you are guilty of everything Satan brings up. You can do nothing but plead guilty and throw yourself at the mercy of the court.

But then your defence attorney enters the room: Jesus, the judge's own Son! He comes with the receipt, showing that He paid full restitution for all the wrongs you had done. He tells the judge, “Yes, my client is guilty of all the wrongs of which he is being accused. But look here at my hands and side: I have personally satisfied the justice that needed to be exacted from my client. My precious blood has paid for everything in full. My resurrection proves your court accepted my payment. Acquit my client according to your mercy and my payment.”

Acknowledging the payment made by His Son, the judge happily acquits you. He declares you free.

If you can understand this illustration, then you can understand what our text means when it says *we have now been justified by his blood*. The almighty God Himself has acquitted you for Jesus’ sake. Clinging to Christ in faith, do you have any valid reason to doubt His love or fear His eternal wrath?

¹⁰For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, it is even more certain that, since we have been reconciled, we will be saved by his life.

Not only did Jesus die to reconcile you to God, but He lives to assure you of that reconciliation: that you are at peace with His Father, adopted into God’s family, and an heir of everlasting life through faith in Him.

Understand, therefore, that Jesus was never meant to be a one-and-done public defender who, after getting you off the hook, wants nothing more to do with you. He lives – continuing to intercede to His Father on your behalf and sending His Spirit to guide you in all your ways. Jesus promises to stand with you in every aspect of life – acting on your prayers and encouraging you with His promises as He leads you through life, safely delivering you to His side in heaven.

As the apostle Paul wrote later in this letter, [If God] *did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also graciously give us all things along with him?*^{vii} And God promises to do just that: give us all things in Christ.^{viii} Because of what Jesus accomplished for us through His death and proved by His resurrection, we can confess confidently with Paul: *In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor rulers, neither things present nor things to come, nor powerful forces, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*^{ix}

“God, do you love me? I feel so unworthy that I am tempted to doubt it.” Whenever such thoughts tempt you, consider this: You will never be good enough to deserve God’s forgiveness. But this is precisely the reason God sent His Son into the world: to show His undeserved love to undeserving sinners, as the apostle John once wrote: *For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.*^x

May this truth lead us to pray: “Dear God, because of Jesus, I know you love me. Thank you for pointing me to His cross and empty tomb to reassure me of your love once again. Please help me live in the joy of your forgiving love – never doubting but always trusting that you will work in all things for my everlasting good.^{xi} In Jesus’ name, I pray.” Amen.

ⁱ John 15:13 EHV

ⁱⁱ Cf. Ephesians 2:1

ⁱⁱⁱ Philippians 2:6-8 EHV

^{iv} 2 Corinthians 5:21 EHV

^v Cf. John 3:5-6, Acts 2:38-39, Titus 3:4-7.

^{vi} Cf. Galatians 3:26-27

^{vii} Romans 8:32 EHV

^{viii} Cf. John 14:14

^{ix} Romans 8:37-39 EHV

^x John 3:16 EHV

^{xi} Cf. Romans 8:28