

Bible e-Study on the book of Romans (5)

Faith & Math

While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! 10 For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! 11 Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. [Romans](#) 5:8b-11

NUGGET – These nugget verses make for quite the formulas don't they? Sinners become justified, enemies become reconciled, and the dead have life. The formula in verses 8 & 9 is: Christ + His death = our justification. The formula in verse 10 is similar: death + God's Son = reconciliation + life. And in verse 11 it's: the Lord Jesus Christ = reconciliation.

There is yet one more formula to make from all this – notice that 2 times it is the death of Jesus that brings about results; and that twice those results are reconciliation. So from verses 8 & 9 we see the result being justification and in 10 and 11 it's reconciliation, therefore justification before God = reconciliation with God all by the power of the death of Jesus, the Son of God our Lord and savior. And for 'extra credit' we also get eternal life! This is wonderful math!

But all this 'math-play' is simply a way for us to see that the death of Jesus Christ is what brings us reconciliation with God. And more to the point, that is essential to see for OURSELVES everyday. It is not wrong for a Christian to boast in what the Lord has done. It is not being immodest to freely take joy in the result of Jesus' death for us. To do otherwise is to say, 'Well I could have done that reconciliation thing on my own, *but, since Christ went ahead and did it, then I guess it's ok.*' Foolishness! No! Look again 8b - *While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.* We could do nothing for ourselves to obtain justification + reconciliation + salvation for eternal life!

Let's let Luther have the last word today: *This is how you must cultivate Christ in yourself, and see how in him God holds before you his mercy and offers it to you without any prior merits of your own. It is from such a view of his grace that you must draw faith and confidence in the forgiveness of all your sins. **Faith, therefore, does not originate in works; neither do works create faith, but faith must spring up and flow from the blood and wounds and death of Christ.*** (Luther, M. (1999). Vol. 44: Luther's works, vol. 44: The Christian in Society I (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.) (38). Philadelphia: Fortress Press.)

APPLICATION -

1. When next you find yourself wondering about your faith, about how genuine it may be or how sincere you wish it was, Luther's words are good to remember. Let me dare you to memorize those words in bold, or put them on a bookmark or sticker where you can see them everyday.

PRAY – Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ – we rejoice in Your goodness, and give glory to You for Your grace! As You have died to take away our sin, to grant us reconciliation and eternal life, may we live daily in the delight of Your gift of faith. In Your holy name we pray, amen.