

The Hope of Jesus and What to Do With It

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

Marin Luther King, Jr.

Background

Quote: The King quote comes from a sermon he gave in 1963 based on Matthew 5:43. This sermon along with others was later compiled into a book and published under the title *Strength to Love*.

Passage: The book of Romans is a Pauline Epistle (letter from Paul). The Apostle Paul wrote it roughly about 56-57 A.D. The key personalities in the book of Romans are the Apostle Paul and Phoebe who delivered this letter. Paul wrote the letter to the believers in Rome, hence the name “Romans”. He wrote it to give them a concrete theological foundation on which to construct their faith and to live for and serve God effectively.

The focus of the “righteousness of God” is foundational throughout the book of Romans. It is threaded through every section of the basic outline of this epistle. Paul reiterates this so that the reader may realize that salvation cannot be attained through man’s good deeds but only through faith in God’s righteousness: *“I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes... For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith”* (1:16-17). You cannot repair your relationship with God through your good deeds; this is only accomplished through faith in the perfect and finished work of Jesus Christ.

Key Verse: v1

Point: Jesus didn't die for us because we are outstanding righteous individuals doing it right. Jesus died for us because God loves us.

Passage

¹ Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

² through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

³ And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance;

⁴ and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope;

⁵ and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

⁶ For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

⁷ For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die.

⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:1-8 (NASB)

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Lesson Notes

Joys and Concerns

Pray

Read the lesson verse

Cover the Background

Ask: What does Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross do in terms of accomplishing the goals set out by God?

Point: Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross was an atoning sacrifice to fulfill the Law, which required a blood sacrifice to set people right with God.

First Reading: Matthew 5:17-20 (NASB)

Ask: If Jesus “fulfilled the law” how then is it grace, an undeserved gift? Why, if we are justified in God’s eyes don’t we deserve this gift of salvation from Jesus?

Point: Human beings are fallen and through our lives, we will continue to make mistakes, do things God doesn’t like, and fail to do things God does like.

Second Reading: Romans 3:10-18 (NASB)

Ask: If we are viewed by God as justified by the fact that Jesus was righteous, and have been given the gift of salvation through his sacrifice how does do we show our gratitude to God for what He has done on our behalf?

Point: We as God’s children, people of God, and followers of Jesus Christ go out and bear fruit in the world based on the seed that Holy Spirit plants in our hearts.

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Third Reading: John 15:1-5 (NASB)

Ask: Re-read verse two in the Third Reading. Does this mean God is going to kill people who do not follow His rules and His ways?

Point: Those branches that do not bear fruit are removed by the vinedresser because they are not healthy for the plant but in the lives of Christians, this does not necessarily mean being killed, though it does mean chastisement in the form of difficulties to help us identify things in our lives that we need to move away from.

Ask: Are all difficulties in life God chastising His children for something wrong they’ve done?

Point: No. There are times when God is seeing where our hearts truly are in preparation for something bigger and/or better.

Fourth Reading: Proverbs 17:3 (NASB)

Ask: Why does God look to “refine” His people?

Point: We are the hands and feet of Jesus and there are things to do for the People of God that only you or I are capable of doing, but to accomplish that task, God needs us to be ready,

Fifth Reading: Matthew 9:35-38 (NASB)

Ask: How do work and difficulties equal hope? Isn’t this just making life harder?

Point: First, we should expect difficulties *because* we follow Jesus (**Sixth Reading: Matthew 10:22-25 NASB**). Second, we should see those difficulties not as moving us away from God but *because* we are moving closer to Him (**Seventh Reading: Revelation 3:17-22 NASB**)

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Ask: We recognize that God loves us as Christians because we have faith in Jesus and that sometimes the things that are difficult in life are God pruning us as His vine, but how does that work hope and what should we do about it?

Point: The pruning of God means He loves us because He is working to help us remove the things in our lives that are not good for us. This is hopeful for those who have faith in Jesus Christ because it means the Creator of the universe has taken an interest in our well-being and is trying to help guide our way.

Ask: What then do we do with the knowledge that God is interested in our lives and is actively working to shape and mold where we go and what we do?

Point: We go into the fields. We work the harvest. We do what Jesus did, which is spread the gospel that forgiveness of sins has come into the world through faith in Jesus Christ.

Eight Reading: Matthew 28:17-20 (NASB)

Ask: How do we go into the world and make disciples?

Point: The “how” is up to you but it revolves around your gifts, and building up your knowledge of God through the study of His word so that you can remain close to the truth.

Ninth Reading: Matthew 5:13-16 (NASB)

Ask: What does Jesus mean when he says “...the salt has become tasteless...”?

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Point: Losing the salty flavor, becoming “tasteless” means losing the distinction between right and wrong, what God says in the Bible is good and bad, what He does and does not like. If Christians stop distinguishing between God’s ways and the World’s ways, what point is there in declaring there is any difference at all?

State: The King James version uses the term “savour” rather than “tasteless”. Review the Greek word used in scripture

Point: Savour and tasteless based on the Greek word *moraino* mean more than just stop being salty. Jesus’ point was that if we become unwilling to distinguish ourselves from the world but claim to follow God’s ways we will become fools and look foolish.

Closing Statement

No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket. God did not set the fire of the Holy Spirit in our hearts for us to look like everyone else. Nor did He light up our hearts so we could act like everyone else in the world. The Worldly people do not follow God’s ways. If we claim to believe His ways are better ways, then the purpose of our light is to show others how to live a life that is a better way. We cannot do that if we stand shoulder to shoulder with those same worldly people and tell them everything they are doing is okay with God, because it is not.

Everything we are doing isn’t okay with God, and that is the point of Jesus’ sacrifice for us; we need His sacrifice *because* we continue to make mistakes. It doesn’t mean we should stop trying, and it doesn’t mean we are bad. It means we are human, no better or worse than anyone else. We need to remember that because that is the World’s number one accusation, that we are holier than thou. No one is righteous, no not one scripture says. We aren’t and they aren’t. If we don’t

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remember that, no one will hear our message, and that will not fulfill the instructions Jesus left with us.

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Scripture

First Reading

¹⁷ "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.

¹⁸ "For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

¹⁹ "Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others *to do* the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

²⁰ "For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses *that* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:17-20 (NASB)

Second Reading

¹⁰ as it is written, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;

¹¹ THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;

¹² ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE."

¹³ "THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING," "THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS";

¹⁴ "WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS";

¹⁵ "THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD,

¹⁶ DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS,

¹⁷ AND THE PATH OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN."

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¹⁸ "THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES."

Romans 3:10-18 (NASB)

Third Reading

¹ "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

² "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit.

³ "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

⁴ "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me.

⁵ "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

John 15:1-5 (NASB)

Fourth Reading

³ The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, But the LORD tests hearts.

Proverbs 17:3 (NASB)

Fifth Reading

³⁵ Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

³⁶ Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.

³⁷ Then He *said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.

³⁸ "Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."

Matthew 9:35-38 (NASB)

CLASS TITLE

¹ Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
Romans 5:1 (NASB)

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Sixth Reading

²² "You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved.

²³ "But whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you will not finish *going through* the cities of Israel until the Son of Man comes.

²⁴ "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master.

²⁵ "It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebul, how much more *will they malign* the members of his household!

Matthew 10:22-25 (NASB)

Seventh Reading

¹⁷ 'Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,

¹⁸ I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and *that* the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see.

¹⁹ 'Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent.

²⁰ 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.

²¹ 'He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

²² 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'"

Revelation 3:17-22 (NASB)

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Eight Reading

¹⁷ When they saw Him, they worshiped *Him*; but some were doubtful.

¹⁸ And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

¹⁹ "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:17-20 (NASB)

Ninth Reading

¹³ "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty *again*? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men.

¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden;

¹⁵ nor does *anyone* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

¹⁶ "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 5:13-16 (NASB)

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Definitions

Greek Strong's Number: 3471

Greek Word: [μωραίνω](#)

Transliteration: mōrainō

Phonetic Pronunciation: mo-rah'ee-no

Root: from <G3474>

Cross Reference: TDNT - 4:832,620

Part of Speech: v

Vine's Words: Fool, Foolish, Foolishly, Foolishness, Savor

Usage Notes:

English Words used in KJV:

lose savour 2

become a fool 1

make foolish 1

[Total Count: 4]

from <G3474> (moros); to [BECOME INSIPID](#); figurative to [MAKE](#) (passive [ACT](#)) as a [SIMPLETON](#) :- become fool, make foolish, lose savour.

James Strong, *Strong's Talking Greek & Hebrew Dictionary*, (Austin, TX: WORDsearch Corp., 2007), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "3471".

Greek Strong's Number: 3474

Greek Word: [μωρός](#)

Transliteration: mōros

Phonetic Pronunciation: mo-ros'

Root: probably from the base of <G3466>

Cross Reference: TDNT - 4:832,620

Part of Speech: adj

Vine's Words: Fool, Foolish, Foolishly, Foolishness

Usage Notes:

English Words used in KJV:

foolish 7

fool 5

foolishness 1

[Total Count: 13]

probably from the base of <G3466> (musterion); [DULL](#) or [STUPID](#) (as if [SHUT](#) up), i.e. [HEEDLESS](#), (moral) [BLOCKHEAD](#), (apparently) [ABSURD](#) :- fool (-ish, × -ishness).

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¹ Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **Romans 5:1 (NASB)**

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