

Rom. 5:6-10 "Time to Die"

For the Children: If you saw some bullies picking on a boy from our church whom you do not like – someone who is mean to you, calls you names – would you help him, or think to yourself, “He deserves everything he gets!”? It’s hard to step in and help people we don’t like, or make sacrifices for them. But think about what the Lord Jesus has done for us: we have treated God far worse than any person has ever treated us. Yet God sent His Son to make a bigger sacrifice and go through more pain than anyone else has ever had to endure - to save us. Now that He has made us His friends, He will continue to help us in this life and the next. For His love toward us is greater than we can even imagine. **Questions:** Why did God wait so long after the Fall before He sent His Son to rescue sinners? What help has God given through His Son? What does this show us about His attitude toward us?

Introduction:

First Point: He Died for Enemies

- 1) The Appointed Time: “At the right time” implies that God had appointed the best time, exercising His sovereign rule over all the factors to ensure the outcome He had planned. Factors include the religious situation in Israel and among the Gentile nations; the spread of the Greek language; and the ease with which the Gospel could be spread within the Roman Empire. The OT also had to be completed before the Messiah could come.
- 2) God’s Gracious Initiative: Man’s condition when Christ died is described as “helpless,” “ungodly,” and hostile – an “enemy” of God. There was no initiative from man or merit in him. Christ’s death was entirely by God’s grace and initiative.
- 3) The Outcome: The result of this death was the justification of sinners – guilt was removed, and sinners were pronounced righteous in God’s sight; also “reconciliation” – sinners were changed from enemies into friends. The language implies a once-off work of God, in which man was passive.
- 4) A Demonstration of Love: That God did this for enemies shows the greatness of His love. Men rarely die for a good person, it is almost unheard of for someone to die for an enemy. Christ’s death was unique, in that it involved an unprecedented degree of suffering for enemies. This stands as an ongoing reminder that there is no love as great as His.

Second Point: He Lives for Friends

- 1) How Much More Help: If Christ made the supreme act of love while we were still enemies, why would we expect Him to do less for those who are now reconciled friends of God?! See Rom. 8:32.
- 2) Salvation by His Life: There is also a contrast here between reconciliation for enemies through Christ’s *death* and salvation for friends by His *life*. His death paid for our sins, but His resurrection life and power is now shared with us, applied by the Holy Spirit. The result is that we are able to resist sin and pursue holiness. He prevents us from returning to the old sinful life, so that we can be sure we will be saved on the Last Day.
- 3) On Our Behalf: Christ died for us - He acted on our behalf. He also lives for us now. He will continue to be “for” us until the End. This, too, is the ultimate in love and loyalty.

Conclusion:

