



REDEEMED

Sermon Growth Guide

March 13, 2022

Redeemed - From the Enemy Camp

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Romans 5:1-10

Key Verse: Romans 5:10 “ 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!”

Big Idea: When we were enemies of God, God sent Jesus to buy us back from the enemy camp. I can’t save myself; I must be Redeemed.



REDEEMED

Foundations

Welcome to week two of **Redeemed**. Christ knew what He was buying when He gave His life on a cross. What has He redeemed us from? This week we see how Jesus buys us back from the enemy camp.

One of Jesus’ most famous sayings is, “Love your enemies,” which is strange to begin with. It feels even more strange to consider ourselves enemies of God. But this is what we are because the creator of the universe has a much grander love ethic than our common one, and it is our inherent disposition to wander into enemy camp. To our detriment, it is there where we often make ourselves the epicenter of our lives instead of God. But it doesn’t have to be that way.

While we were still enemies of God, Christ died for us, which paid the price to buy us from enemy camp and frees us to live at peace with God. And so, we can endure whatever trials we face with hope, boasting in the hope of the glory of God.

Understanding God’s Word

Because we have been freed, we can hope in our suffering. Why is this so? Discuss verses 3-5: “... but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.”

Applying God’s Word

Pastor Tim asks us, “In your actions, in your use of your time, in the use of your money, are you for or against the agenda God is working out in the world?” Host a discussion exploring what these two different realities look like.

Being saved from enemy camp means access to the grace of God. Spend time boasting in God’s grace in your life.

Witnessing God’s Word

Saved to life looks like peace with God. Where have you witnessed peace with God in your life? Where have you seen that peace change how people persevere?

Throughout history, and even right up to this very day, “help your friends and hurt your enemies” has been the way. In the ancient world it was the measure of a person’s influence and their morality—how much they helped their friends and hurt their enemies. That’s how you got on in the world. Jesus wasn’t kidding when he said in the Sermon on the Mount, “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy’” (Matthew 5:43). That was the common wisdom of the day. Help a friend; hurt an enemy. But Jesus went on to say we need to love our enemies. “But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:44-45). Love your enemies. How do you know who your enemies are? I once saw a guy wearing a Las Vegas Raiders shirt. I thought to myself, “Lord, you have called me to follow you. I lay down my life. But this guy...” That’s just a bit of comic relief. It is easy to see enemies on the landscape. The world is at war. There are evil enemies causing destruction. Do you have any enemies? How do you feel about them? What if you were the enemy? What if you were God’s enemy? How would God deal with you?

Help your friends. Harm your enemies. In his book, *Who Is This Man?*, John Ortberg tells how archeologists discovered ancient Roman prayers written on clay tablets. They are not prayers for others. They are prayers against others! They are called “curse tablets” and they ask the gods to exact vengeance on enemies. For example: “Docimedus has lost two gloves. He asks that the person who has stolen them should lose his mind and his eyes in the temple at the place where the goddess appoints.” You know, those might have been some pretty nice gloves, but ... really? Jesus said, love your enemies. It sounds nice. Can it be done? Is Vladimir Putin really supposed to be in my prayers? Am I to genuinely hope and pray that ISIS terrorists turn to grace and sit with me in heaven in

the eternal Kingdom? Yes. Now, I’ll tell you, when you pray for an evil man like Vladimir Putin, you can pray three things. You pray that he is frustrated in his evil devices and plans. You pray that he stops and repents. And yes, you do pray that he bends the knee to Jesus as Lord and as Savior. But it isn’t just about enemies on the global stage. Can I truly wish and work for the best for that coworker or neighbor or family member who has offended me the most? Imagine a different set of prayer tablets: forgiveness tablets. “Decimus has truly insulted me today. I pray for peace in my heart and forbearance toward him tomorrow. Let him know that my love for him endures despite the way he treated me, to the glory of your name, O God.” They haven’t found any of those tablets in the ancient temples.

It is not easy to love your enemy. But when Jesus calls us to it, He also shows us. When we were his enemies, he loved us. In fact he died for us. As we continue our series, *Redeemed*, we ask again: what did Jesus buy with the price Jesus paid? When Jesus went to the cross and died, he knew what he was doing. Jesus didn’t accidentally end up on the cross. Jesus paid a price for us. Jesus knew that he was giving his life for us, and that’s why he came. “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29). said John the Baptist as Jesus came to the Jordan River to be baptized and begin his public ministry. Jesus knew what he was doing. He knew what he was buying with the price he paid. Do we? Jesus loved us while we were his enemies and Redeemed us **From the Enemy Camp**. What amazing love!

“Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1). What a glorious verse! What a glorious state to be in! Peace with God. Justified, made right with God. My debt removed. My sin forgiven. Right with my God through our Lord Jesus Christ. It implies, doesn’t it, that the



opposite could be the case? I could be at war with God. I could be wrong with God. What does it do to creatures like us when we rage and war against our Creator? I could be an enemy of God. Does that sound too strong? Enemy of God. Is that really what I am? "I'm just trying to run my own life here, pastor. What do you mean I'm an enemy of God? I'm not trying to mount an attack on God. I don't hate God. I'm just trying to do my own thing." What does it look like to be an enemy of God? Well, what does God want? What is God doing? The world God made fell into disrepair and self-destruction. God is at work redeeming this fallen world. Are you helping or hurting?

God wants this world to know his love, his glory, his power and his coming Kingdom. God wants there to be a people on the face of this earth who love him with all their heart, all their soul, all their mind and all their strength. Let's flesh that out. He wants a people devoted to gathering weekly to worship him and glorify his name. Why? So that they are fed and encouraged by the Word, strengthened by the sacraments, emboldened by fellowship and supported in prayer to endure suffering with hope. So that God's name and God's glory are on display in this world today as his children gather in houses of worship. Yes, in this time. Yes, in this city. God demands holy worship to the glory of His name. Even you who are still worshipping from home, thoughtfully avoiding the dangers, you are part of this too! Making a point to worship. That's God's agenda. Are you working for that or against that? "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope" (Romans 5:1-4). That's a picture

of an enduring people of God whose devotion displays his glory.

God wants this people filled with his love, so much that the things of this world pale in comparison. He sheds his love abroad in us. "And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us" (Romans 5:5). God wants a people so filled with his love by the Holy Spirit, so full of the Spirit of God and the love of God, that there is no competing love, so overflowing with the love of God that those around us feel his love through us. God wants a people who love the Lord their God with all their heart, all their soul, all their mind, all their strength, and love their neighbor as themselves. Are you working for that or against that? God wants this people reaching the lost and making disciples, sharing the news of Jesus with those who are darkened and hopeless. In your actions, in your use of your time, in the use of your money, are you for or against the agenda God is working out in the world? If you are not for me, said Jesus, you are against me. "Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters." (Matthew 12:30) Which camp are we in? Too often, we are in the enemy camp. Too often I find myself in the enemy camp.

When we walk away from God, we wind up in the enemy camp. We may have walked over there of our own accord, but once we get over there, we also get stuck, trapped, bound. Look at the state of rebellion against God. Still powerless. "You see, at just the right time, when we were **still powerless**, Christ died for the ungodly" (Romans 5:6). Have you ever felt powerless? Stuck? Unsure of how you got there but hopeless to get yourself out? We were still sinners. "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were **still sinners**, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). It isn't that we started behaving and caught God's attention. We were still in our sin, still



actively rebelling against God's law, still actively resisting and frustrating God's purposes in us and in the world. Still sinners. We were God's enemies. "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!" (Romans 5:10) Yes, enemies. Counterforces. Opponents. In the enemy camp. Wearing the colors of the enemies of God. And what did God do? How did God treat us? What did God do to us?

I wonder if you remember in 2009 a soldier who deserted from the Army in Afghanistan. He walked off the post and turned himself in to the Taliban. As a reward for his desertion, the Taliban kept him bound and imprisoned. They beat and tortured him and kept him in a metal cage for five years. His fellow Soldiers thought he had been captured overnight and they launched a campaign to find him and rescue him. They searched towns in hostile territory. They distributed leaflets with his picture. They attacked strongholds and Taliban safehouses to try to figure out where he was. Six Soldiers died trying to find and rescue him. Then they found out he had walked out; he had deserted of his own accord. Wandered over to the enemy camp. What do you do with that? Even just reading about it and remembering it this week I felt my blood going a little hot! You know?

Here is the hard truth, church: that is where we are. We find ourselves wandered away from the Lord our God, wandered away from his Kingdom, from his good land, and captured now by the powers of darkness, bound by the confusion and fog of sin, imprisoned and locked in a misery of our own making. What is God to do with us? Here's what he did. He sent his Son Jesus to rescue us. "You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, **Christ died for the ungodly**" (Romans 5:6). Jesus Christ died for us. Jesus paid the price for us. And look, it wasn't

because we were godly. Jesus died for the ungodly. "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, **Christ died for us**" (Romans 5:8). Not just "for" but "in place of." Jesus took our place as the ungodly deserters we were! He took the punishment that was ours to suffer. When Jesus died on the cross, he paid a price. He knew what he was buying with what he paid. He paid the price we owed for our desertion, for our rebellion, for our wandering away into the enemy camp. He died to pay a ransom and set us free.

If that is what his death did, what about his life? What about his resurrection to eternal life? "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!" (Romans 5:10). What does saved to life look like? Since now we have been saved, justified, forgiven... "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God." (Romans 5:1-2) Peace with God. No more war. Justified before God. No more guilt and shame. Access to grace. A boast in the hope of the glory of God. What now can you endure and still hope? What can you suffer and still hope? What wrongs can you suffer from others, and still forgive? Can you love your enemies? When you were an enemy of God, he sent his Son to die for you. It is time to walk out of the enemy camp. You have been redeemed. You have been set free. You can take up again the mission of Jesus to the glory of God. Drop the colors of the enemy and rise up again under the colors of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. There is nothing you can't endure or suffer with hope, boasting in the glory of the God who saved you and set you free.

