

Holy Wednesday Meditation

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Text: Romans 5:6-11

We don't want to be *weak*. We want to be strong and able and independent. We're afraid of being weak and needy and dependent. So much so that many people would rather end their lives at their own hands, or ask a doctor to do so, rather than be weak.

We don't want to be considered *ungodly*. Without God. Apart from God. Surely all people are with God and God with them. Whatever they believe.

We don't want to be *sinners*. Or at least called sinners. That somehow what I am doing, what I want, the way I am, is wrong. That's judgmental. Who's to say?

And then this: *enemies* of God. Not just harmless, indifferent bystanders. Live and let live. But enemies of God. Against God. Fighting God and His kingdom.

Weak, ungodly, sinners, enemies. That, Paul said tonight, is you. Or, at least, it was you.

Because *at just the right time*, God did not come down to smash us, to wipe us out, or demand justice. At just the right time, *Christ died for the* weak, *ungodly*, sinners, and enemies. Not for the righteous or the good, those we might expect. But for us. For the dregs. For those who have no right to stand before God, pray to God, or who God should pay any attention to at all. This is how God shows His love for us.

It's quite a statement Paul is making here.

This is how God *loves* you. Not by giving you everything you want, but by giving you His Son. And His Son laying down His life for you on the cross. Some want instead God to love us differently - by making our life easy, having us win the lottery, providing us a church. But He has loved us so much better than that; than those things that may not be all they're cracked up to be. He has given us His Son, and His Son died for us.

So that we are *justified* by His blood. It's amazing the amount of time and energy people spend justifying themselves, their actions, their words, who they are, what they want. Perhaps they succeed in this world and life, before men. But not before God. But Jesus has done it for us - justified us. Not by excusing us, but by atoning for our sins with His blood.

And if He did that, Paul says, how much more shall we be *saved* by Him. How much more will He continue His work in us and among us, to justify us not only here and now, but for eternity. To save us from this world of sin and death, and provide for us an eternal

life and home in heaven.

For we are enemies who have been *reconciled* with God. The war is over. There is peace once again between God and man. The peace that had been shattered by the sin of Eden and the tree of sin and death, reigns again through Calvary and the tree of the cross.

Loved, justified, saved, reconciled. That's God's answer to weak, ungodly, sinners, and enemies. He has done for us what we are unable and unwilling to do. He has done it for us in Jesus.

And so in Jesus, baptized into Him, we are not what we once were. Oh yes, our weakness, ungodliness, sin, and enmity still hang around our necks, the Old Adam still trying to drag us down. But that is not who you really are anymore. Who you now are is a beloved, justified, saved, and reconciled son of God. Not because of who you are, but because of who God is. Your Father, who sent His Son, who sends the Spirit; and the Spirit who takes us to the Son, and the Son who takes us to the Father.

And now for us, there is one more thing that Paul mentions. *Joy*. Joy in the midst of happiness. Joy in the midst of sadness. Joy in the midst of suffering. Joy in the midst of ease. Joy in the midst of trouble. Joy in the midst of prosperity. Joy in all times of our life because it comes not from our life or what is happening in our life, but from God; from the Spirit who lives in us. From knowing that there is now nothing in all creation that can separate us from the love of God for us in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:39).

For us who when we are weak we are strong with His strength (2 Corinthians 12:10).

For us who are no longer ungodly but in God.

For us who have the forgiveness of our sins.

For us who have peace with God, for the enmity between God and man has been crushed under our Saviour's heel.

It's quite a statement Paul is making here. And it's all true for us because of these next three days.

In the Name of the Father and of the Son (+) and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.