

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

Paul said, “For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom 5:7–8). My sin rightly deserved your wrath and judgment, but instead of demanding my death, you graciously allowed a ransom payment to be made so that I might be spared. More than that, you provided the ransom *yourself* by the sacrifice of your precious Son! No wonder the hymn writer said, “Amazing love! how can it be, That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me!” Praise the Lord!

Today in Your Word

Today you shared with me the second part of Paul’s letter to the church in Rome. Having established that both Jews and Gentiles are justified by grace through faith in Christ, Paul now explained the results of justification: peace and reconciliation with you. Hallelujah! I rejoice in knowing that you have poured your love into my heart through the precious gift of the Holy Spirit. I no longer need to fear your wrath, for I will be saved by the life of Jesus Christ (Rom 5:10)! My responsibility is to nurture the love you have given me by obeying your commands and yielding to the desires of your Spirit. Paul continued by addressing the question of whether one man could bring life to so many. Indeed, Jesus could, for just as Adam’s sin brought condemnation and death to all men, so Jesus’ obedience brought justification and life to all men (Rom 5:18). Adam was a type of Christ, and just as “in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Cor 15:22). This glorious truth reminds me to treasure the new birth I have through Jesus, for his sacrifice enabled me to leave the family of guilt and death and join the family of grace and eternal life. Paul next addressed the accusation that by emphasizing grace, he was encouraging a lifestyle of sin. “By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?” (Rom 6:1–2). Paul made it clear that the “one who has died has been set free from sin” (Rom 6:7), and their duty was to consider themselves “dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus” (Rom 6:11). This means I have both the obligation *and the ability* to live above sin. I *need not and must not* continue to practice sin, for I am now a slave of righteousness, and the fruit I receive “leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life” (Rom 6:22). Paul went on to say, “My brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ” (Rom 7:4). This raised the question: ‘If we died to sin and the law, are you saying that the law is sin?’ (Rom 7:7). “By no means!” Paul exclaimed. He explained that the law, which was “holy and righteous and good,” could not, in itself, justify the sinner; it could only expose their sinful heart and provoke them to more sin. This led to their condemnation as a law-breaker, and try as they might, they could not free themselves from their imprisonment in sin. Paul himself, prior to his conversion, experienced this very struggle, and he cried out, “Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?” Praise God for the answer: “Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Rom 7:24–25). In Christ there is no condemnation, for what the law could not do, the Spirit could. This means that I am free to walk, not after the flesh, but after the Holy Spirit. You have given me the Spirit of adoption, and He bears witness with my spirit that I am your child. I know that you are working all things together for my good, that I might be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. As I set my mind on the Spirit and walk in the light of the Word, I can rejoice in knowing that nothing can separate me from your love. Hallelujah!

Reflection

Paul said, “I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us” (Rom 8:18). Do I believe this? Am I willing to sacrifice and suffer in order to obey Christ?

Request

Father, I don’t always know what to pray for, and I’m glad that “the Spirit himself intercedes for me with groanings too deep for words” (Rom 8:26). Help me today in my weakness to be more than a conqueror through Christ!

Thanksgiving

How wondrous to know that “He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things” (Rom 8:32). All glory and honor and praise be to you, Almighty God!

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “Glorious Freedom” – Haldor Lillenas.

Meditation Verse: Romans 8:37.