

# Romans 5:6-8

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/rom/rom-5/romans-56-8/>

*Paul is again emphasizing that we are made righteous in God's sight apart from anything we do. Christ did not die for us because we were good people; He died for sinners and people who were not living up to God's standard, which includes everyone.*

Even though in this chapter Paul is turning to the topic of how we ought to choose to live once we have been redeemed and are standing in the grace of God, he reemphasizes that we have nothing to do with causing this redemption: *For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly* (v 6).

God is the One who justifies; we do not justify ourselves. We are too weak—*helpless*. Christ did not die for those who were strong enough to live a life on their own that measures up to God's standard of righteousness. Christ did not die for those who were godly, for those who were living up to God's standard. *Christ died for the ungodly*, which includes every human. Christ died for the weak, which is each one of us.

And Christ died for us *at the right time*. God does what He does at the time He designates. We long for Jesus to return and restore the world, ending death and suffering. God will do that as well—at just *the right time*.

In verse 7, Paul is establishing a basis upon which to answer an additional accusation against his good news message (that God justifies us through faith apart from the works of the law). We will see this accusation in Romans 6:1—Paul's enemies will assert that Paul's teaching means we ought to sin as much as possible.

The reason for this accusation is that Paul teaches that God's grace is unlimited. God's grace expands to exceed sin no matter how much sin there might be (Romans 5:20). Paul's enemies take this reality and assert that Paul's teaching then leads us to sin, because it shows God's grace to be even greater. In chapter 6, Paul will argue that this position is ludicrous, because sin brings slavery, loss, corruption, and death. So even though God's grace is limitless, our best interest is served by walking in faithful obedience.

The reality of God's love and unconditional acceptance of us, through grace, is demonstrated by what God did. God died for unrighteous people. He took on the sins of the entire world (Colossians 2:14).

Paul begins to contrast the unreasonable, excessive grace of God with what we might consider reasonable behavior: *For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die* (v 7).

It might be reasonable to sacrifice one's life for someone who was so worthy that it is clearly better for them to live. Perhaps someone would die for a great surgeon who can save thousands of lives or a great preacher who can minister to multitudes. But who would lay down their life

for a terrible person? That is not reasonable. Yet it is exactly what Jesus did. Jesus died for us when we were standing before Him with nothing to offer that measures up to His perfect standard.

Why would God do such a crazy, unreasonable thing? Paul will tell us in the next verse that it is because of His love for us. God's love vastly exceeds anything that is "reasonable." This amazing, inexhaustible love is the basis for Paul's assertion (that Paul will defend): God's grace is inexhaustible.

Next Paul tells us that God's love is inexhaustible and comprehensive, saying: *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us* (v 8).

There is no sin that is not covered by God's grace, and no amount of sin that God's grace will not cover. *God demonstrates His own love toward us* through this act of dying while we were still in sin. God's provision for our sin was made while we were still sinners, while we were missing the mark. God decided to do something for us before we did anything that lives up to His standards.

It isn't just that God decided to help us out a little. Jesus, who knew no sin, became sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21). Jesus suffered an unjust death so we might be justified through His sacrifice for us, all while we were still sinners.

So, if God did that for us while we were still sinners, does it make any sense that Jesus's death would not also cover our sins after we are justified and standing in the grace of God? Does it make any sense that the love of God pours out upon sinners but not upon His own children? Paul will insist that God's grace covers every sin, no matter who commits it (vv 20–21). It only takes the exercise of faith to gain the immense benefit of that grace.

The phrase *for us* in the phrase *Christ died for us* is a translation of the Greek word "*huper*" which occurs four times in Romans 5:6–8. The notion of "*huper*" is *in the place of*. Jesus died in the place where we should be. This shows that God is for us (Romans 8:31).

### **Biblical Text**

**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.**