

Series: A New Lease on Life (Romans 5)

Bringing Up the Bible's "Midnight Zone" (Or How the Triune God Ultimately Saves Us)

Pastor Dan Seitz—November 15, 2020

Rom. 5:6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. ¹¹ More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

THE "MIDNIGHT ZONE" OF THE BIBLE

FIRST, A CELEBRATION OF JUSTIFICATION (VV. 6-10a) ...

Rom. 5:10 For if while we were enemies we were *reconciled* [Gk.: "*katalasso*" – "*the exchange of hostility for a friendly relationship*"], to God by the death of his Son...

THEN, A BIG SURPRISE (V. 10b) ...

Rom. 5:10 ...now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

THE "MIDNIGHT ZONE": Justification (the not-guilty verdict) that we enjoy *in the present* on the basis of simple trust, will be ratified *in the future*, on the Day of Judgment, in accordance with the quality of life that we lived through King Jesus, or, the quality of life that *King Jesus lived* through us.

THE BIBLE'S "MIDNIGHT ZONE" IN SIX DEEP-SEA "FISH"

FISH 1: Romans says that God created humans for a specific purpose: to "worship and serve" him.

Rom. 1:25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever!

FISH 2: Romans says that ultimate salvation is based on living, though nowhere close to perfectly, the "worshipping and serving" life.¹

Rom. 2:6 He will render to each one according to his works: ⁷to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; ...⁹ There will be... ¹⁰ ...glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good... ¹³ For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified.

¹Similar passages include Matt. 16:24-28; John 5:22-29; Rom. 14:10-12; II Cor. 5:9-10; and I Peter 1:17.

FISH 3: Romans says that no human being has given to God “the worshipping and serving life.”

Rom. 3:9 ...For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin,¹⁰ as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one;¹¹ no one understands; no one seeks for God.

FISH 4: Romans says that King Jesus has died for all rebellious human beings to forgive them of their dereliction of created duty (i.e., to “worship and serve” him).

Rom. 3:23 ...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

FISH 5: Romans says that the risen Jesus Christ now graciously offers *all* people the opportunity to be *fused* to him, and *filled* with his own Spirit, so as to be able to live the “worshipping and serving” life that they were created to live!

Rom. 6:4 We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ...⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.

FISH 6: Romans says that now united to Jesus and energized by his Spirit, all human beings can finally render to God the “worshipping and serving” lives that we were created to live and which God can re-justify on the Last Day.

Rom. 5:17 ...those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

Rom. 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.³ ...By sending his own Son...he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk...according to the Spirit.

THINKING ABOUT THIS OVER A BOWL OF CLAM CHOWDER

UPENDED BY A HUMPBACK (IS THIS GOOD NEWS?)

*The person whom Jesus Christ *died* to make us is the person we're *dying* to be.

A MARVEL-LOUS RE-TELLING OF THE GREATEST STORY

A GIFT FROM ROGER²

² Dan thanks his friend **Roger Ewers** for producing the art for this sermon. If you'd like an unfolded copy of “**The Bible's 'Midnight Zone'**” as a gift, please drop by the church office or email Dan to arrange for a mailing (danielseitz42@gmail.com).