



## The Concept of Preaching the Gospel According to Paul in the Book of Romans 5:8-11

Alvonce Poluan<sup>1</sup>; Kalis Stevanus<sup>2</sup>; Budi Kartika<sup>2</sup>; Hendi<sup>3</sup>; Tan Lie-Lie<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sekolah Tinggi Anugrah Indonesia Surabaya, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Tawangmangu, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup> Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Soteria Purwokerto, Indonesia

E-mail: [apoluan123@gmail.com](mailto:apoluan123@gmail.com); [kalisstevanus91@gmail.com](mailto:kalisstevanus91@gmail.com); [peanevdie@gmail.com](mailto:peanevdie@gmail.com); [hendirina@gmail.com](mailto:hendirina@gmail.com); [tlielie88@gmail.com](mailto:tlielie88@gmail.com)

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### **Abstract**

This article aims to reaffirm the belief in the concept of Gospel proclamation as taught by Paul, especially in the book of Romans 5:8-11, as a motivator for Christians to remain obedient in carrying out the mandate of Gospel proclamation despite the many challenges they face. To address the purpose of this writing, a literature study approach is used, combining exegetical study of the text of Romans 5:8-11. The concept of Gospel proclamation according to Paul is obtained as follows: First: Gospel proclamation is an absolute idea of God in His love; second is the content of Gospel proclamation is about the death of Christ for the redemption of human sins; third is Gospel proclamation is intended for all humanity; fourth is the reward for welcoming the Gospel news is the assurance of justification and eternal life; and fifth is rejection of the Gospel news is making oneself an enemy of God. The theological implications are, first, the motivation for Gospel proclamation is based solely on God's love for humanity; second is the motivation for Gospel proclamation is based on believers' love for God; and third is the motivation for Gospel proclamation is based on believers' love for others.

**Keywords:** *Concept; Motivation; Gospel Proclamation; Romans 5:8-11*

### **Introduction**

God loves sinful humanity and desires to bring them back into His original plan to receive eternal life. The Bible asserts that there is no salvation outside of Christ (John 14:6). The work of salvation through His sacrifice is evidence of God's love to save sinful humanity from eternal punishment. This underpins the belief of believers who have received His work of salvation to continue His love towards those who have not yet believed.

The motivation for preaching the Gospel is closely related to the Christian belief in the Gospel centered on the work of Jesus Christ on the cross, as evidence of God's love that has saved sinful humanity (Sitepu & Stevanus, 2021). The work of salvation in Christ is eternal and perfect, and was done once for all through His death on the cross to demonstrate God's love for humanity. Stephen Tong says that if Christians doubt the belief that the Gospel is evidence of God's love as the only way for humans to receive salvation, then Christians will also lose motivation to preach the Gospel. Conversely, if Christians have a strong understanding and belief that the work of Christ is evidence of God's love, then Christians will still have the motivation to preach the Gospel even when faced with difficult challenges (Tong, 2004). Therefore, it can be said that anyone who has experienced the power of the Gospel will gain great courage to evangelize souls in need of the Gospel.

All challenges that hinder the activity of preaching the Gospel should not dampen the spirit of Christians, let alone stop the activity of preaching the Gospel. Franklin Jabini (Jabini, 2010) states that one of the enemies of the Gospel is persecution as happened in Jerusalem (Acts 7). In addition, there is also a latent danger to preaching the Gospel, namely pluralism (Asadu et al., 2020). Stevanus states that there are many challenges that hinder the activity of preaching the Gospel including religious pluralism or religious diversity and religious fanaticism. Christians must still prioritize preaching the Gospel without disrupting the atmosphere of harmonious relations among religious communities. Religious fanaticism shows irrational and anarchic spirit by using physical force to compel others to believe in his faith and trying to hinder those who have different religions. Undeniably, pluralism and religious fanaticism can cause the movement of preaching the Gospel to become passive and stagnant (Stevanus, 2020a).

Hannas and Rinawaty argue that difficulties, obstacles, or whatever the reasons should encourage Christians to surrender to God to continue preaching the Gospel while seeking Gospel preaching models that are relevant to their context (Hannas & Rinawaty, 2019). Studying models or approaches to preaching the Gospel that are appropriate to the context of the target audience is important and absolute (Stevanus, 2021b). However, an important thing not to be overlooked is the role of the Holy Spirit. Effective preaching begins with a reliance on the Holy Spirit (Roudkovski, n.d.), but also in terms of preaching the Gospel, one must rely on the role of the Holy Spirit. Preaching the Gospel without the involvement of the Holy Spirit will not be effective. The Holy Spirit gives disciples the courage to preach the Gospel as recounted by Luke in the Acts of the Apostles (Stevanus, 2021a). The Holy Spirit will work in and through the lives of believers (Wibowo et al., 2022). Therefore, Christians should continue to be enthusiastic in preaching the Gospel despite many obstacles. Therefore, it is very important for the church to educate its members to remain enthusiastic in the activities of preaching the Gospel, as the lifestyle of Christians as followers of Christ (Arifianto & Stevanus, 2021).

Regarding the challenges and obstacles in the implementation of preaching the Gospel, it is important for the church and Christians to reconstruct patterns of approaches that are more contextual so that the preaching of the Gospel can transform and touch all aspects of human life, not just partially. Jesus' ministry itself has provided an example that preaching the Gospel and social involvement both express God's love for humanity. Jesus was busy preaching the Gospel, but He did not forget to actively engage in ministering to physical needs. When He saw the crowd hungry, He was moved by compassion and gave them food. The story of Jesus' ministry told in the Gospels is very transformative. The church is called not only to serve the spiritual needs or the sinfulness of humanity, but also to encompass the social issues faced by humanity as a whole (Stevanus, 2020b). However, equally important is for the church and Christians to continuously teach from generation to generation about their belief in the Gospel (Romans 1:16-17) which is the fundamental foundation of Christianity and the driving force for the continuation of the activity of preaching the Gospel (Stevanus et al., 2023). It is very important for the church to consistently teach the belief in the finality of Christ as the only answer for the salvation of humanity (Stevanus & Yunianto, 2021).

### ***Research Method***

To address the questions presented in this article, the author adopts a qualitative descriptive approach, utilizing literature review as the primary foundation, and employing an exegetical method towards Paul's letter, particularly in the book of Romans 5:8-11, in order to discover the biblical concept of gospel proclamation within the context and text of these verses. By understanding the concept of gospel proclamation as described by Paul in this text, it is hoped that Christians will be encouraged to proclaim the Gospel with a biblical concept.

### ***Discussion***

#### **The Challenge of Gospel Proclamation According to the Letter to the Romans**

The principle of gospel proclamation according to Paul in the context of the letter to the Romans is based on the gospel being the power of God that saves sinful humanity (Romans 1:16), so it is based on God's initiative, and God empowers the gospel preachers. Even Paul asserts that the righteous will live by faith. Because the righteousness of the gospel stems from the righteousness of God, it brings faith and leads that faith to God, who is the power of salvation (Bosch, 2006). Therefore, the strong message in the text study is about having a strong conviction to continue proclaiming the gospel.

Paul wrote the letter to the Romans so that believers would have a correct framework of thinking about human existence before God. First, the existence of life that began with Adam, in which death reigns, and second, the existence of life led by Christ, which brings eternal life. Life led by Christ is based on faith justified by God and will lead to eternal life (Hagelberg, 2016).

Paul emphasizes the importance of gospel proclamation in Romans 1:16-17, which is the theme of the letter to the Romans. The statement "having a strong conviction in the gospel" should be translated in its Greek form as "for I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." Paul realizes that believers are always tempted to feel "ashamed" of the gospel of Christ because from a human perspective, the gospel of Christ is not boastful, it's news that can easily be scorned.

Believers must understand the purpose of gospel proclamation and recognize that the greatest challenge in gospel proclamation comes from within believers themselves, who sometimes feel timid as Christians to proclaim the gospel. Therefore, there is a need for an encouragement that ignites the spirit based on the correct concept of the value of the gospel for human salvation. Every challenge in gospel proclamation must be deeply examined, and solutions must be found to continue proclaiming the gospel with a contextual and relevant approach to the times.

#### **The Concept of Gospel Expounded by Paul in Romans 5:8-11**

Paul now shifts from theological facts about justification to the lived experience of Christians. In other words, he moves from kerygma to theology, from the truth of God to the love of God (verses 5, 8), from the experience of being a Christian to the adventure of being one. In these eleven verses, Paul introduces in just a few words ideas that he will expand on more extensively in Romans 8:1-39. First, it's worth noting Paul's use of verb forms in this passage. He uses several past tense verb forms to speak about reconciliation and justification. This is something that has already happened. "having been justified by faith" (verse 1), "we have now been justified by his blood" (verse 9), "we have now received reconciliation" (verse 11). However, if our reconciliation and justification are spoken of in the past tense, our salvation is still future-oriented. "we shall be saved from wrath" (verse 9), "we shall be saved by his life" (verse 10). As we have seen even in chapter one, references to salvation in the letter to the Romans

tend to be expressed in future tense. Paul always has in mind the return of Christ and our bodily resurrection in glory.

### **Verse 8a: The Proclamation of the Gospel Is the Absolute Idea of God in His Love**

"God demonstrates His love for us." The word "demonstrates" is translated from the Greek word συνίστησιν (sunistēsīn) which is written in the form of present active indicative verb, third person singular, from the word συνίστημι (sunistēmi) which literally means "demonstrate" or "prove." The present active indicative verb form indicates that the action is actively being done by God. NIV translates it as "demonstrates" while KJV translates it as "commend." David Ibrahim argues that the word "demonstrates" from the word sunistēsīn, means "to provide evidence." Where Golgotha demonstrates God's wrathful revelation against sin and God's love for sinners (Ibrahim, 2011). Origen argues that "He demonstrates" here means "He strengthens," or "He makes attractive," in accordance with the goodness He has shown. Because the fact that "Christ died for us while we were still sinners" gives us hope that through Him, He will save us more, now that we have been sanctified from sin and justified from the wrath that threatens sinners. He, who loves strangers and His enemies so much, that He has given His only Son for us unto death, how much more will He give those who belong to Him and who have been reconciled with Himself to obtain eternal salvation. Now the question of how Christ died for us and in what manner He, being the Lamb of God, will bear the sins of the world and carry our weaknesses and suffer pains for us, (Origen, 2001). Here it is more accurately translated as "entrusts" so that it means God entrusts His love to us because Christ died for us.

The word "His love" is written in its Greek text τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀγάπην (ten eauton agapēn). The modern translation NIV translates it as His love. The word "love" comes from the Greek word ἀγάπην (agapēn), which is a noun form translated as love. The love referred to in this verse originates from God, as indicated by the word which is a form of singular masculine pronoun. So the phrase "God demonstrates His love" indicates a consistency of God's action in entrusting His love to believers, with the death of Christ as its proof. This is an act of proof of God's active love for all people, both those who have been reconciled with Christ and those who have not. Evidence that God truly loves humanity and fulfills His salvation plan for sinful humans. God shows that His very essence is love and proves that His actions are always oriented towards His love. The most fundamental evidence of His love begins with God's initiative to restore His relationship with sinful humans. Pelagius states that God becomes the object of love when He declares how much He loves us. Because when someone does something without obligation, they show love in a special way. What is less than obligation than a blameless master dying for his unbelieving servants, and the Creator of the universe being hung for His own creation? Note that when the apostle says that those who believed in Christ were formerly sinners, it means that they are no longer sinners now, so that they can remember how they should behave (Oden & Bray, 2013). Humans who have reconciled with God will be able to truly enjoy a good relationship with God who is love.

### **Verse 8b: The Content of the Gospel is about the Death of Christ for the Redemption of Human Sins**

The phrase "Christ died for us" is written in the Greek text Χριστὸς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀπέθανεν (Khristos hyper hēmōn apethanen), which is translated by the NIV and KJV as Christ died for us. The word "died" is written from the Greek word ἀπέθανεν (apethanen), which is written in the form of the aorist indicative active verb, third person singular, of the word ἀποθνήσκω (apothnēskō), which literally means "died". In the Greek text, it indicates that Christ experienced physical death once. Meanwhile, the word "Christ" in Greek is Χριστὸς (Khristos), which refers to the Messiah in the Old Testament, who is the chosen and anointed one of God to save Israel. The event of Christ's death on the cross is an event that occurred in the past but its impact is still demonstrated by God until now.

The death of Christ is a accountable reality. Scheunemann argues that the death of Christ is the core of Christian faith and asserts as a sacrifice that substitutes us, aiming for our benefit (Scheunemann, 2022). Origen states that by saying that Christ died for us while we were still sinners, Paul gives us hope that we will be saved by Him, especially after we are cleansed from sin and justified from the wrath of God still present for sinners. He who loved His enemies so much that He bestowed His only Son to die for us, will certainly be much more willing to bestow upon those who have received this grace and reconciled with Him the next grace, which is eternal life (Oden & Bray, 2013). Thus, the phrase "Christ died for us" is a definite reason to answer the question, with what does God show or prove His love for sinful humanity? Namely, with the event of Christ's death on the cross, which happened once in the past, yet its impact remains consistent as evidence of God's love until today.

### **Verse 8c: The Gospel Proclamation Addressed to All Humanity**

The term "still sinners," in the Greek text ἔτι ἁμαρτωλῶν (eti hamartōlōn), expresses a condition applicable to everyone, both those who have believed in Christ and those who have not yet believed. The word ἁμαρτωλῶν (hamartōlōn), written in the normal adjective form in the plural genitive masculine, is derived from the word ἁμαρτωλός (hamartōlos), which literally means "sinful" or "in a state full of sin." This phrase indicates the condition of individuals, whether believers or unbelievers, in a state of sin.

Consistent with the above understanding, Ibrahim asserts that the word ἁμαρτωλῶν (hamartōlōn) outwardly means one who deviates or strays from the goal or target. Generally, this word is used to express the condition of all humanity who have fallen into sin (Ibrahim, 2011). In this section, there is also the doctrine of "substitution" (cf. Genesis 3:21; 22:1-14; Exodus 12:1-7; Leviticus 16, 23; 2 Corinthians 5:21). So the term "when we were still sinners" is a term used by Paul to denote an event where everyone is still in a condition of falling into sin, where everyone is living in deviation or straying from God's purpose and plan.

In verse 8, Paul endeavors to affirm to everyone, both believers and unbelievers, represented by the congregation in Rome who have a background of pluralistic society and some are fanatical about their beliefs. That God has demonstrated His love to all humanity who are still in a state of sin to receive salvation. The evidence of God's love referred to by Paul points to the event of Christ's death on the cross once in the past, yet its impact is still evident today. Christ took the initiative to surrender His life with the purpose of realizing God's love for humanity. This is valid and indisputable evidence.

### **Verse 9: The Reward for Embracing the Gospel is Justification and Eternal Life**

In verse 9a, it is stated "justified by his blood." The word "justified," in the Greek text δικαιωθέντες (dikaiōthentes), is translated by NIV and KJV as justified, while NET translates it as declared righteous. This indicates that "justified" is an action performed by someone more authoritative to declare someone righteous with valid reasons or evidence. The word δικαιωθέντες (dikaiōthentes) is written in the form of a masculine plural nominative aorist passive participle, from the word δικαιώω (dikaiōō), which literally means "having been justified." It implies that the one who has been "justified" experiences a restoration of reputation in their life.

Paul asserts that the one who is "justified" receives something greater than any abundance. The blood of Jesus is the means by which sinners experience "justification." Here, "justification" is associated with the death of Christ, while in chapter 4:25, it is associated with His resurrection. Van den End explains that the death and resurrection of Christ cannot be separated. Justification occurs through the death of Christ because those who are justified are sinners, and the punishment for their sins must be borne by Christ. Justification occurs through the resurrection of Christ because it signifies God's acceptance of Christ's deed. The phrase "by his blood" is written from the Greek word ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ (en tō aimati autou). The word "by" uses the word ἐν (en), which can be translated as "in." Paul intends to

explain that the death of Christ becomes the place of justification, while faith is the means through which we obtain it (End, 2008). Therefore, after stating that we are justified by faith, Paul now says that we are justified by his blood. Origen said, "Moreover now, because by his blood we are justified, we shall be saved from his wrath." By this, he shows that our faith does not justify us apart from the blood of Christ, and the blood of Christ does not justify us apart from our faith. However, between the two, the blood of Christ justifies us more than our faith. Here Paul adds, "much more, now, having been justified by his blood"; to teach that although our faith saves us from the wrath to come, and although our righteous deeds save us, beyond all that, much more the blood of Christ will save us from the wrath to come (Origen, 2001). Thus, the term "justified by his blood" is a special act performed by God towards sinful humanity, which is a greater gift than any abundance. Justification occurs through the death of Christ because those who are justified are sinners, and the punishment for their sins must be borne by Christ. The death of Christ becomes the place of justification, while faith is the means through which humans obtain that justification.

In verse 9b, Paul says, "We shall surely be saved from the wrath of God." The word "saved" is written from the Greek word σωθησόμεθα (sōthēsometha), which is translated by NIV as a first-person plural future indicative passive verb of the word σώζω (sōzō) which means "to save" or "to deliver" or has the meaning of rescuing from danger. While the word "wrath" is written from the Greek word ὀργῆς (orgēs), which is a singular feminine genitive noun of the word ὀργή (orgē) which literally means "anger", "wrath" or "punishment". In this case, it is more accurately translated as "God's punishment". Ambrosiaster states that Paul says this because if God allows His Son to be killed because of sinners, what will He do for those who have been justified besides saving them from wrath, that is, preserving them without harm from the deception of the Devil so that they will be saved on the day of judgment when retribution will begin to destroy the wicked. Because God's goodness does not desire anyone to perish, He has shown mercy to those who deserve to die to enhance the honor and glory of those who understand the grace of God (Oden & Bray, 2013). All humans have sinned and will surely receive punishment (Romans 3:23; 6:23). Humans cannot do righteousness because they have lost the glory of God (Romans 3:23). Only through the grace of God through the death of Jesus can humans be justified from sin, so that they experience salvation. Romans 5:9 confirms that the certainty of salvation from God's punishment at the end of time, only through the blood of Christ which gives the grace of justification to sinful humans.

### **Verses 10-11: Rejection of the Gospel Message is Making Oneself an Enemy of God**

The word "enemy" is written from the Greek word ἐχθροὶ (ekhthroi), which is the masculine nominative plural adjective form of the word ἐχθρός (ekhthros) meaning hostile or enemies. This phrase describes the state of unbelieving humans, being hostile towards God or possessing attributes contrary to God. The hearts and minds of humans are always at enmity with God, resulting in wicked behavior (Col. 1:21). The word "reconciled" is derived from the Greek word κατηλλάγημεν (katēllagēmen), which is the first-person plural aorist passive indicative verb form of the word καταλλάσσω (katallassō) meaning reconciled. Van den End states that this word is first used by Paul in his letter to the Romans, providing the idea that as those justified by God, we have a personal relationship with Him (End, 2008). Origen asserts by saying this, Paul demonstrates that there is no substance that is hostile to God, as thought by the Marcionites and Valentinians, because if there is something inherently hostile to God and not by His will, then reconciliation with Him becomes impossible. ... Christ's death has abolished the enmity between us and God, and brought reconciliation. Because the resurrection and life of Christ bring salvation to those who believe, as the apostle says of Christ: He died for sin, once for all, but He lives for God. Christ is said to have died for sin - not for His own sin, for He never sinned, but He died for sin because through His death He also put sin to death. He is said to live for God so that we also may live for God and not for ourselves or our own will, so that ultimately we may be saved by His life (Oden & Bray, 2013).

The word "saved" is written from the Greek word σωθησόμεθα (sōthēsometha), in the letter to the Romans it shows how we are rescued from the increasing surrender to sin (Rom. 1:18-32). Furthermore, the life of Jesus Christ becomes the foundation of salvation, where His death is the basis of human salvation from hell and by His life, we are delivered from the wrath of God now being revealed against human sin (Hagelberg, 2016). No one can save us except He who loves us so much that when we were still sinners, He died for us. Do we see the basis given to us to hope? Because before there were two difficulties that hindered us from being saved. First, we are sinners, and second, our salvation requires the death of Christ (Oden & Bray, 2013). Sinners are enemies because they show contempt. If we have been saved by the death of Christ, how much more will we boast in His life. Verse 10 provides an explanation that there is a process of elevation before we believe and after believing in Christ. At the time when we do not believe in Christ and have sinful natures always contrary to the will of God, at that time God has reconciled our relationship with Him through the death of Christ, and those who have believed have a peaceful relationship with God so that they have the confidence of experiencing eternal salvation because of the new life, where Christ resides in the life of the believer (Rom. 10:9-10).

Quoting Patrick Henry Reardon, however, the dominant tense form in Paul's description of Christian life is the present tense, "eschatological present." In the present tense, "we live in peace with God" (verse 1), "we stand and rejoice in hope" (verse 2), "we also rejoice" (verse 11). In the present tense, the emphasis is on hope, because the final salvation of justified Christians is still in the future. Like faith, hope is based on the promises and faithfulness of God. The grace we have leads us to the glory to come (Reardon, 2018). Unlike many human hopes, the hope we have in Christ will not be disappointed, because God's love for us "has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us" (verse 5). Christian life flows from the presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts, minds, souls, and bodies of the justified Christians. Therefore, hope has a double meaning. Hope refers to the current reality of the assurance of the Holy Spirit and also to the ultimate goal of the Holy Spirit's longing. The hope in the hearts of Christians, however, is sustained not only by the grace given to us in the Holy Spirit but also by the vivid memory of the price paid by the Son of God for our redemption. He did this when we were still powerless and sinful (verse 6). His death has conquered the power of death (verse 9). The knowledge of what God has done for us in Christ, Paul says, will uphold our hope for the full salvation that awaits us. Reconciled by His death, we will be saved by His life (verse 10). We see the Trinitarian structure in Christian life: the love of our Father has been poured out and demonstrated in the Son and the Holy Spirit (verses 8-11).

### **The Theological Implications of the Gospel Proclamation Concept According to Romans 5:8-11 for Contemporary Christians**

First: The motivation for proclaiming the Gospel is absolutely based on God's love for humanity. The word συνίστησιν (sunistēsin) indicates a consistency of God's action entrusting His love to believers, with the death of Christ as evidence. God's love is a gift that should drive believers to proclaim it. According to Stevri Lumintang, the irrevocable gift has implications in gospel proclamation by giving evangelists confidence in the effective work of the Holy Spirit in applying salvation so that they do not need to be hesitant because the effectiveness of salvation is the work of the Holy Spirit, and evangelists cannot demand recompense from those who have been evangelized (Lumintang, 2006).

God's love is entrusted to those who believe in the death and resurrection of Christ to be passed on to others who do not yet believe, because Christ died for those who are still sinners. Paul describes believers as those who are united with God and (implicitly) with one another through the reconciling impact of the death of the Son of God, a death that demonstrates God's love for sinful humanity. The dynamics of this passage demand readers to acknowledge that we, as believers, are united with one another because we are justified by faith in God who has a relationship with Christ and with us who were once enemies of God (McDonald, 1990).

We have hope, confidence in God, because His love has been demonstrated in His redemption and in our justification. We can confidently hope that we will overcome trials because God loves us and enables us to endure those times of testing. God's love surpasses anything we can imagine. Because of His great love for us, He sent Jesus to die for us even while we were still living in sin (Chukwuedo, 2022).

## **Second: The Motivation for Preaching the Gospel is Based on Believers' Love for God**

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament affirm that God's greatest and foremost commandment is to love God with all one's heart, soul, and mind (Matthew 22:37; Deuteronomy 6:5). This love demands a heart attitude of reverence and appreciation for God, so much so that one earnestly desires communion with Him and strives to obey God throughout life on earth, genuinely caring about His honor and His will.

Preaching the Gospel is a spiritual exercise or discipline that is done comprehensively, not just in the aspect of news but in actions and in one's entire life, manifesting love. Spiritual discipline leads to spiritual maturity. Love can only be attained if both the message and actions align with God's commandments. Therefore, according to Hendi, the life of a believer is like that of an athlete running a race. In the pursuit of salvation, Christians keep running until they reach the finish line to receive the prize. Spiritual discipline itself is an effort or means for someone to cultivate qualities, character, and behavioral patterns related to spirituality that will help them grow towards spiritual maturity (Hendi & Apriliana, 2022).

The sacrifice made by Christ was a conscious act He did to give His life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45). This action was driven by God's great love for the world so that the world may experience restoration by bestowing His only Son to save the world. Thus, God's love was not only the Father's initiative but realized through Christ's sacrifice on the cross. The love motivated by God's heart to save the world was perfectly fulfilled by Christ according to His promise.

Every believer is called to continue the work of God's salvation through Jesus Christ. This task is often known as the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20. God has bestowed His love upon believers, and He wants us to continue God's work of love to all humanity, according to His purpose of coming into the world to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). The purpose of God's salvation of humanity is the most fundamental spiritual need that is not understood by those who have not yet known the Gospel.

Believers will be motivated to preach the Gospel if they love God. Even if they do not directly engage in preaching the Gospel, there will arise a desire or impulse in the hearts of believers to love God by obeying His commandments. According to Hendi, this will happen if every believer delves into the purpose of their salvation, which is to become spiritual beings. Spiritual beings mean growing in Christ (1 Corinthians 3:1-3; Ephesians 4:13, 15; Hebrews 5:11-14; 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18). The result of this growth is "And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:18). Growing towards Christ or becoming like Christ is a spiritual warfare because there are worldly elements still living within us (Hendi & Gulo, 2021).

## **Thirdly: The Motivation for Proclaiming the Gospel Is Based on Believers Loving One Another**

According to Matthew 22:39, the second greatest commandment, which is similar to it, is: Love your neighbor as yourself. The basis for the motivation of believers to proclaim the Gospel to fellow human beings is because of God's love through the death of Christ, which has saved believers from their sins that separate them from God. Believers have a duty to love others who have not experienced the work of Christ's salvation to experience it like believers who have experienced it. Believers who have lived in the work of Christ's salvation, which is evidence of God's love, are obligated to proclaim this

good news to unbelievers so that they too may obtain salvation in their lives. However, not many believers are aware of this. They tend to stay in their comfort zones and do not care about lost souls. The Lord Jesus went out of his comfort zone to proclaim the good news to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well (John 4:3-26). Abraham and Tuhumury explain that Jesus was not afraid of the perceptions that would come from the Samaritans or the Jews. He faced the differences that became barriers to the Gospel being heard and broke down those barriers (Abrahamsz & Tuhumury, 2012). Jesus knew what the Father wanted Him to do, and likewise, believers, by stepping out of their comfort zones to proclaim the good news without considering the differences that act as dividing walls, are doing what God desires.

The approach to proclaiming the Gospel that Jesus did was motivated by His love for the Samaritan woman, who was culturally different and had tendencies towards religious sentiments. Yet Jesus proclaimed the good news to her so that she received the grace of God's love. As a result, it motivated her to proclaim the Gospel to the people in her town, so that many believed in Christ as their Savior (John 4:28-30, 39-42). The motivation she had was because she loved the Samaritans who awaited salvation from God. This should be the motivation that believers should emulate, thus being motivated to proclaim the Gospel.

In contemporary times, fanaticism and pluralism are obstacles for believers to proclaim the Gospel. Both of these are forms of rejection of the truth that God wants to reveal to sinful humanity. As believers, we are obliged to obey the government to maintain tolerant relations among religious communities so as not to be trapped in narrow religious fanaticism. However, on the other hand, believers also must love one another as an expression of obedience to God's command. Spurgeon argues that in the work of proclaiming the Gospel, it should not be separated from the law of love. He emphasizes that in the past, but this in no way diminishes our obligation to love others; in fact, the first commandment encompasses the second. We want our fellow beings to repent because we love them and with full love to proclaim the Gospel. With challenges to proclaiming the Gospel, the church should increasingly have creativity and innovation in developing methods of proclaiming the Gospel so that it continues to move forward in proclaiming the good news, namely God's love for sinful humanity, which has been demonstrated by Christ through His death.

Proclaiming the Gospel is the task of Christian believers aimed at glorifying God. Romans 3:23 shows that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Man cannot glorify God if he does not first receive the grace of love in Christ through faith (Romans 3:24-25). This means all human efforts will be in vain if they do not start with receiving God's love through Christ's sacrifice. Christian believers should be motivated to proclaim the Gospel as an expression of loving one another in the full restoration of humanity, starting from the grace of God's love that brings human life to glorify God.

## ***Conclusion***

Based on the exegesis of Romans 5:8-11, the concept of Gospel proclamation is found as follows: first, the proclamation of the Gospel is an absolute idea of God in His love. Second, the content of the Gospel proclamation is about the death of Christ for the redemption of human sins. Third, the Gospel proclamation is intended for all humanity. Fourth, the reward for embracing the Gospel news is the assurance of justification and eternal life, and fifth, rejecting the Gospel news is to make oneself an enemy of God. Meanwhile, the implications for Christians today are firstly: the motivation for proclaiming the Gospel is solely based on God's love for humanity. Second, the motivation for proclaiming the Gospel arises because Christians love God, and third, the motivation for proclaiming the Gospel arises because Christians love their neighbours.

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