

The Results of Our Justification

The book of Romans has been called the Mount Everest of the Bible. It's called that quite often because it is such an amazing book of theology and Christian doctrine, which must be understood if we are to have a complete understanding of our Christian faith. Surely we cannot know everything about an infinite God, like Paul says in Romans 11:3, **"Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!"** We cannot know everything, but if we are to understand what He has revealed to us in the Bible, we have to understand this book of Romans, the picture of the Christian faith would be incomplete without it. So, it is like Mt Everest, in that the earth cannot be fully known without going to the top of every mountain, and Everest is the tallest. God's revelation in the Bible cannot be known without going through every book and understanding each one of them, and Romans is the "tallest" book of the Bible, in the opinion of many, anyway, and I tend to agree with them. Well, there is a section on Mt Everest called the Hillary Step, and it is here that the would-be climber of the tallest mountain in the world is faced with his steepest challenge; literally and figuratively. Today, Sherpas (the amazing Nepalese natives who serve as guides and workers on climbing expeditions) have tied ropes and bolted ladders into the side of the mountain in order to make this most difficult section more easily managed by the less skilled climbers. This step is named for the first man to reach the summit of the mountain, Sir Edmund Hillary. He did not have the ladders to navigate this section, but he did have the help of a Sherpa named Tensing Norgay. The Step is a sheer rock face that must be traversed to get to the top of the mountain. The climbers must go up this section, which is at over 28,800 feet, when they are completely exhausted from the trial of just getting to that point on the mountain. This rock wall is at an elevation that is higher than any other mountain in the world. Well, chapter 5 is, in my opinion, the Hillary Step of the Mt Everest of books of the Bible. It is here that we come to the place where we move from being saved, to becoming a person who can be used by the Lord. Climbers who cannot make it to the top of the Hillary Step either die, or they are forced to turn around and go back down without reaching their goal. Christians who cannot move from just being saved, to living their lives for the Lord face a similar fate. They will not reach their goal of bringing glory to God with their lives. Today we aren't going to get that far up the Hillary Step. But, when you are climbing a mountain 29,000 feet high every step takes effort, you have got to work for every inch. So, we are going to cover the first two verses in depth and we will see what the benefits of our salvation are. We will see what we get automatically on account of our salvation.

Quick Overview

One of the complaints that people have in large organizations is not having the big picture. This was an almost daily complaint of life in the Navy, especially on deployment. If something that we were doing didn't make sense, invariably someone would quip, "you just don't have the big picture." They meant it as a joke, meaning, just do what you're told, and don't worry about things you can't control. It's the same thing in the airline industry, if the schedulers send us on a crazy trip that doesn't make sense, "you just don't have the big picture," is always the answer. The same phrase is used at

GM I would imagine. Well, when studying the Bible it is a good idea to see the big picture, to know where you are in the big picture, and to see where you are headed within the big picture. Earlier in this series I've said that we need to remember the theme of this book and keep it in the back of our minds. Romans 1:16-17. That is still true, we do need to remember that, as it sums up everything that is going to be talked about. This book is all about faith, and what it means to be a Christian. But, we also need to remember the overall theme of the book, and where we are in that big picture. There is a very good way to remember a basic outline about the book of Romans that I got from J Vernon McGee. The outline is not his, just the terms that he put to each section. Like so many times, the simplest idea is often the best. The first eight chapters of Romans are about doctrine. That is the first "D". Romans 9-11 is about Dispensations. *Dispensations* is a word that means administrations, or how God is dealing with people at a given time. And, Romans 12-16 is about our duties as Christians. So, we have doctrine, dispensations and duties. That is the book in a nutshell. Doctrine is where we are now chapters 1-8, the nation of Israel, their state now, and their future salvation as a nation is chapters 9-11, and our duties as Christians is the end of the book, chapters 12-16.

The next few weeks we are going to be focusing in on chapter 5, so we need to zoom in on that, and get the big picture of this chapter. To use Ross's analogy, we'll take the microscope and zoom in on another area of our study. Here we come to one of the key chapters of the book of Romans, if not the entire Bible. It is a key chapter for the book because it is here that Paul is transitioning from talking about justification to sanctification. Those are two theological words that stand for simple concepts. Justification is being declared righteous, or not guilty of our sin. And, sanctification is, in simple terms, becoming more Christ-like. Now everyone who has heard at least one of these messages on Romans that we have gone through should be able to tell me how we are declared righteous before God. Justification is by faith. Sanctification is becoming more holy, having a more Christ-like disposition, being more loving, more patient and more kind. It is bearing the fruits of the Spirit. One important item to realize is that justification and sanctification are not the same thing. As we will see today, we get the benefits of being justified automatically. We do not bear the fruit of the Spirit automatically. We are not instantly sanctified as we are instantly justified. As we pass from being unsaved to justified, we are instantly transformed in God's eyes, we move from death to life. As anyone who is married here can probably say, just because you are justified, that does not mean that you are sanctified, and living a perfectly godly life. Sanctification is a process, and it is this process that Paul is transitioning to in chapter 5. This is a critical transition, because if we do not make this transition in our lives we will be stuck as babes in Christ, unable to bear the fruit of the Spirit that we are called to bear.

Therefore

Therefore, having been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have received our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

After having read chapter 5, we see that it starts with the word *therefore*. This means that what is about to be discussed is true because of what has come before. So, we really need to grasp the concepts of what has come before to know what Paul is going to talk about

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Comment [1]: For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "But the righteous man shall live by faith."

here in chapter 5. If you could sum up chapters 1-4 in one word what would it be? Faith! More detail is necessary than just one word though.

In chapter 1 we saw our key passage that I mentioned earlier. It is here that Paul spells out the gospel message that he literally gave his life for. He gave his life so that people would hear the good news of Jesus Christ and turn to Him in faith and be saved. Paul went on to show in chapter 1 that the Gentiles were a lost people, and why they were lost. There is one key thought that we need to see about those people described in chapter 1. Here we find the first step in what led to their horrendous sin and debauchery that Paul described. It is in verses 20-21. **For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. 21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.** Really we see three amazing things about God in this passage as well. He has invisible attributes, there are things about God we will never know, they are invisible; He has eternal power, He is omnipotent; and He has a divine nature, He is holy. But, the part I want you to see now is what led to the Gentiles horrible sin of idolatry and licentiousness. Verse 21, they did not honor God, or give thanks. They did not honor the unknowable, omnipotent, holy God, or give thanks to Him in spite of all the great things He had done for them. And, this ungrateful attitude led to horrible sin. Make no mistake folks, the same thing can happen to us.

Next we saw a group of people who thought their good would outweigh their bad. They were the moralists of their day. They were condemned because they did bad, they had sin. Your good cannot outweigh your bad. If your shirt has a stain on it that only covers about six square inches, it's dirty. It doesn't matter that most of the shirt is clean. It has a giant stain. That is the way we are also. It doesn't matter how much good I do, if I have sin, I'm dirty, and need to be cleaned.

Then Paul pointed out that the Law couldn't save people either. In fact, it was never intended to save people, but rather it was intended to drive people to faith. We saw this in chapter 3:19-20, **19 Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God; 20 because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.** The Law was supposed to give people the knowledge of what sin is, so that they would turn to God in faith, and ask Him for forgiveness.

So, the first three chapters of the book are pointing out the fact that all people sin. All people, no matter your race, your creed, your gender, your nationality, or your religion; all people are sinners. **For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.** And, the beautiful truth of these chapters is that we can be cleansed of our sin by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. Romans 3:21-26 is worth reading because it is so crucial to our understanding of these first 4 chapters. 3:21-26, **But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; 25 whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His**

blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; 26 for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. John Piper has referred to these verses as the Mount Everest of Scripture, and he may be right. That is pretty deep stuff. There is so much there. Apart from the Law, we have justification; we are made right apart from the Law. What an amazing statement for someone like Paul, who had devoted his entire life to the Law, and knowledge of the Law. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Christ and his shed blood. We will see the connection of faith and blood in a later sermon on chapter 5. Verse 26 is just awe inspiring. “So that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.” One of the ways we know that God is just is because He has made salvation available to people through faith in Christ, and as it says here, God is the justifier, He does the justifying, we don’t do it, He does, and He does it for those who have faith in Jesus.

Then in chapter 4, Paul puts what he is saying into an example that everyone could understand. He gives Abraham as the ultimate example of faith. Abraham is the father of all who have salvation on the basis of their faith. A lot of times people exchange the word faith for religion. They will ask, “What faith are you?” What they really mean is, “What religion are you?” Religion is not faith. Faith is believing God. Faith is believing that God will do what He says He will do, and trusting Him. A religion is what the Pharisees had when Jesus came to live on the earth. A religion is what the Buddhists and Muslims have. That is a set of rules to follow. That is not true, biblical Christianity. True, biblical Christianity is having faith in the God of the Bible, not being a member of a religion. And that is what Abraham had as we saw in chapter 4. He had faith in the one true God, and he was declared righteous. So, that brings us back to chapter 5, and now we can move on from the first word, therefore.

Having been justified by faith

Here is our focal point again for today, Romans 5:1-2. **Therefore, having been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have received our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.** We are going to really concentrate on these two verses and their parts to see the results of the justification that we have through faith in Christ. On a careful reading you can see that we have three benefits as a result of our justification, and those are; peace with God, introduction to God, and one benefit that is so great we can’t help but brag about it, and that is the hope that we have in the glory of God, we have a future because we are saved. Those are our three points for today, peace, introduction and hope.

Typically, a *therefore* is used in an “if-then” statement. If you ever had a logic class in school, you probably dealt with something like this. If something is true, then something else is true; therefore we can draw a conclusion, this is called a syllogism. And, that is exactly what Paul is doing here. Paul’s “if-then” statement would go something like this; **if** we are sinners, **then** we must have faith in Christ to be saved from our sin, **therefore** we have peace with God, an introduction to God, and a future in God.

We are going to see some really interesting words in this whole passage, and the first one we come across is “having been justified.” That is all one word in the Greek, and it

is δικαιωθέντες. It is two words combined together that literally mean to put a man in right standing. That is what “justification” means; it is to have a right standing with God. Paul has just spent four chapters telling the Roman Christians how to obtain a right standing with God, and we do this today just the same way that Abraham did so many years ago, and that is through faith, and nothing else. We have seen that it is not by works of the Law, as demonstrated in Romans 2:13, 28 and also in Galatians 2:16, 3:11, and 5:4. Obviously, this is one of the main points that Paul wanted to get across to his hearers. We are not justified by the Law: only by faith.

Now this word “having been justified” is very interesting. The whole Greek language is very interesting, in that it is so precise, much more so than English. Here, having been justified, is in the aorist, past, participle tense, that’s a mouthful. This is a complicated way of saying that being justified is something that happened in the past as a snapshot in time. It is not a process, but rather it is something that happened instantly upon our faith. But, there is another very important part of the tense that we cannot overlook, it is the “aorist participle”, you need to see this. The aorist participle means that this happened in the past, and it happened before the main verb of the sentence. The beauty of the Greek language is that it can make these distinctions in one word. “Have” is the main verb in the sentence. The whole main clause is “we have peace.” So, what this means is that we are justified before we have peace with God. You cannot have peace without being justified, and as we see here, you cannot be justified outside of faith in Christ. The main idea I want you to see is that we are justified by faith before we have peace with God. We do not have peace with God before we are justified by faith. There are some serious implications in that, and some disagreement among denominational lines, but here we see that we are justified by faith before we have peace with God.

Verse one says, **Therefore, having been justified by faith.** Faith, we have talked a lot about that so far in Romans, but let’s look at it a little closer here, because it is so critical to the whole argument being made by Paul. As we saw earlier, this is faith in the shed blood of Christ. Again, Romans 3:24 **being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.** Faith is defined by the Collegiate Oxford English Dictionary as, complete trust or confidence. Lewis Sperry Chafer, the founder of Dallas Theological Seminary, summed up faith well when he said, “According to the simplest conception of it, faith is a personal confidence in God.” It is a personal confidence that He will do what He said He will do. When God told Abraham he would have a son, Abraham had confidence that God would give him a son. Last time we saw that this is what made Abraham righteous, or justified, in God’s sight. The Dictionary of Bible Themes describes faith this way, “A constant outlook of trust towards God, whereby human beings abandon all reliance on their own efforts and put their full confidence in him, his word and his promises.” We put so much trust in God that we abandon all of our own efforts when it comes to being saved. There is nothing we can do to save ourselves; we have to put complete trust in Christ to do it for us. This is faith.

We have peace with The God

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God. Here is our first benefit of being justified. We have peace with God. Peace is a very important concept to Paul, as he uses it in every single one of his epistles as an introductory remark. He wishes his hearers peace every single time. If you have never read the introductory

remarks of all of his epistles at one time you should do it. It really drives home the importance that Paul places on peace. And, he isn't just wishing the people a nice feeling, or the absence of conflict. He is wishing them the peace that only people who have been justified by faith can experience. As we will see in the second half of chapter 5, only God can declare war on mankind, only He can impute sin to everyone through the sin of Adam, and, importantly, only God can declare peace with mankind, through the righteousness that is imputed through Jesus Christ. That is in Romans 5:12 and 15 if you want to look ahead. Notice that He declares the peace, we do not declare it, He does. We just get the benefit of having the peace if we are justified by faith. Look at the verse again, we (the ones who have been justified by faith) have peace (have it now, we are the ones who possess the peace, it is real). It is in the present tense. We are enjoying the peace with God right now, and this is something real. It isn't something that we conjure up on our own like a Buddhist monk on a mountaintop. We get this peace with God as a result of our faith. We have been changed positionally from a state of war with God to a state of peace with God.

Another interesting item that we lose in the English is the use of definite articles. Here the definite article "the" is used before the word God. Literally, it reads something like this, Having been justified, therefore, by faith, peace we have with the God. It doesn't sound right in the English that way, but it does emphasize the fact that we have peace with **the** God. We have peace with the God of the Universe, we have peace with the Creator of all that we see, we have peace with the One who sits in judgment of all mankind. We will see this use of definite articles throughout chapter 5. Again, reading the verse literally the way it is written in Greek it says, Having been justified, therefore, by faith, peace we have with the God, through the Lord, our Jesus Christ. I just really love the way that sounds. We have peace with **The** God, through **The** Lord, **our** Jesus Christ. It is just really a neat way to emphasize what Paul is getting at here. We have peace with God through our Jesus Christ, it makes it so personal. Paul uses the definite articles here to emphasize the fact that he is talking about the one and only God, and that is whom we have peace with. This is the peace that passes all understanding, which Paul references in Philippians 4:7.

Through whom also we have obtained our introduction

Verses one and two are all one sentence in the Greek. Most versions have it that way, but I noticed that the ESV makes it two separate sentences. Here in verse two we see that not only do we have peace with the God of the universe but we also have obtained our introduction to Him. "We have obtained" is all one word in the Greek just like "having been justified" is. This is in the perfect tense, which means that it is a completed action that we are enjoying the benefit of now. It was completed in the past when we placed our faith in Christ, through this act we obtained our introduction to God. Now, most versions of the Bible translate this word for *introduction* in the NASB as "access". Access seems like a better word to convey the meaning. The word, it is *προσάγωγην* in the Greek, was used by Greek historians to describe land that troops could access by way of the sea during wartime. So, that would be a beachhead, such as the beaches at Normandy were the access to the continent of Europe for the Allied troops in WWII. It is also used by Paul in **Eph 3:12** to describe the access that we have to God through Christ. That is

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Comment [2]: This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him

exactly what Paul is saying here as well. So, another benefit that we have as a result of being justified by faith is access to God.

Now, we have access to The God. So, not only do we have peace with The God of the universe, but we have access to this same God. What an amazing privilege this is that Paul is describing. Keep in mind that to a Jewish person access to God is something that they did not have. Part of the Law was that Gentiles would be executed if they went past the middle wall of partition in the Temple. This is what Paul references in **Ephesians 2:14** when he says that the middle wall of partition is broken down. The same held true for Jews if they went inside the Holy of Holies without following the proper protocol. In fact, only the high priest was allowed access to this sacred area, and even he was only allowed in one time a year. However, an amazing thing happened when Christ died, and that is that the curtain that separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the Temple tore in two from top to bottom. This curtain was two feet thick, and it tore when Jesus gave His life for the sins of the world. This was to show that now those who place their faith in this vicarious death of Jesus now have access to God. This is an amazing privilege that we should not take for granted. How do we act when we come into God's presence? What are we thinking about when we come into God's presence? What is our heart attitude when we come into God's presence? Keep in mind that this access we have is not like it was for the high priest. We don't just go into God's presence once a year, or even once a week on Sunday. We have this access all the time now. If we are saved by faith we are in God's presence always. The curtain has been torn down; He lives inside of us now.

By faith into this grace in which we now stand

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

This second instance of "by faith" in this passage does not appear in some of the Greek manuscripts, you might see that as a note in your Bible. But it really doesn't matter because even if the sentence is read without it, "by faith" is still implied. Our access to God is on the basis of our faith in Christ. So, we have access to God, and all the grace that He can give to us. Notice also that Paul says that we are standing in this grace that we have, we are standing in the presence of God. What an amazing thought that is. We are able to stand in the presence of God and petition Him, or give Him our requests. Think of the fear and dread that Ester had when she wanted to go before the King. She had the absolute fear of death when she went before him, because he was the sovereign ruler of his territory, and he had the power of life and death over his subjects. Well, consider the power and sovereignty that God has over His subjects. The fact that we can come before Him should humble us immensely. When we put our faith in Christ we become God's children, and He allows us into His presence. He doesn't just allow us, He invites us into His presence, He wants us there. He expects us to come into His presence as His children. Of course, we do this now by prayer. He wants us to come before Him in prayer, and place our burdens upon His shoulders. Jesus said, "Come to me all you are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Peter put it this way in 1 Peter 5:7, **"Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, 7 casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you."** So, now

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Comment [3]: For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall. This too shows that we have peace with God through Christ, and that Gentiles now have access to God through Christ.

we have access to God through prayer, but there is coming a time when we will have access to God face to face, and that leads us into the next benefit that we have because of our justification, and that is hope.

We exult in hope of the glory of God

Finally, we have hope in the glory of God. Before we get into exactly what our hope is, notice that Paul says that **we exult** in this hope. Exult is not a word that we use a lot today, but it simply means to boast, or to brag about something. We see this phrase three times here in verses 1-11, and these are the only three times that this particular phrase is used in the New Testament. Paul does talk about boasting at other times, particularly in chapter 3 when he said not to, or that it was excluded. In verse 27, he says, **Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith.** This is right after the passage that I read earlier from chapter 3 where Paul explained how **God is just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.** I just love that verse, verse 26, it may be my new favorite verse. But, Paul says that boasting is excluded in that case because our salvation is from God, we don't do any good works to earn it. It's clear from the Gospels that the Pharisees were a haughty bunch, and haughtiness is something that the Lord hates according to the Proverbs 6:16-17. They must have been apt to bragging because they were supposedly so good at following the Law, and here in 3:27 Paul says that boasting is excluded on the grounds that Christ has done it all, we have nothing to brag about in ourselves. Back in chapter 5 it is a different context though. Now we are looking at the results of our justification. The act of justification is about us, it is about how we, as individuals pass from death to life. That was chapters 1-4. Now we are transitioning to more important things, like the results of our salvation, what we do now that we are saved, and the glory of God. Here in verse 2 Paul is saying that we do boast about the things that Christ is doing for us. We can't help but boast about it. It's just so wonderful that we can't keep it in, at least that should be our attitude.

What do we brag about? The hope that we have in the glory of God. It's critical to see that hope is always in reference to something in the future. If you think about it, it has to be. You don't hope for something in the past, and you really can't hope for something in the present. Because, in the present it isn't a hope anymore, it is something that is known. You can be in the process of hoping in the present, but you are hoping for something in the future. Paul makes this more clear than I can in Romans 8:24 when he says, **"For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.** That is the process of hoping, but that isn't quite what we are talking about here. We need to see that this is a noun in verse 2 of chapter 5. It isn't a verb. We aren't hoping for something. It is The hope. This is something real, Paul is talking about the future that we have with Christ. This is our hope. See how that is a noun in that sentence. This is our hope. We aren't hoping. Like we are hoping that the Tigers win the World Series. We have **a** hope. He says we exult in hope of the glory of God, we brag about the future that we have with Christ. This is our hope, the future that we have with Christ. There is a passage that shows this idea even more clearly, it encapsulates many of the aspects we are talking about today, and that is in Titus 2, verse 11 says **For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12**

instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope (that's a noun) and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, 14 who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. So, we see there that we have salvation and this should cause us to live a certain way, and that we are to look for the blessed hope of the appearing of Christ. This is our hope, this our future, that when we are saved we will spend eternity with Christ.

This hope is in the glory of God. The Greek word for glory is *δοξες*. This is where we get the term doxology. That is a combination of glory and word, so it means literally, word about glory. The true glory of God can really only be seen in heaven, and just a very few people have had a glimpse of it and then been able to tell us what it was like. Two of those were Isaiah and John, and their accounts are very similar. You can read those in Isaiah 6 and Revelation 4. The scenes that they describe are incomprehensible; we cannot imagine the glory that awaits us in heaven and in the presence of God. This is the glory that Paul is saying that we can boast about. We can boast about our God, and how great He is, and the future that we have with Him in heaven, because He is our Father. There are so many great verses about the hope that we have, but Colossians 3:4 seems appropriate here, **When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.** We are going to see more of this hope next time, so I won't go into it too much here, other than to say that we have an incredible future ahead of us if we have been justified by Christ and His shed blood, and this should cause us to rejoice.

Conclusion

So, today we have seen the results of our justification. We have seen that when we put our faith in Christ we are justified, or made right with God. And, because of this we have some benefits that are just automatic. We don't have to work for these benefits any more than we work for our salvation. We don't work at all for our salvation, and we don't work at all to receive these benefits, God just graciously gives them to us. We have seen that we have peace with God because of our justification. God has declared peace with us because we have put our faith in Christ. We do not declare peace with God, this is a unilateral peace treaty. He does it all. We need to unconditionally surrender to God, and He makes peace with us. Again, this isn't a peaceful easy feeling that we get through meditation on a mountaintop. This is real, lasting peace that we have with the God of the universe. Next, we have access to the same God who saves us. We need to remember how serious that access is. It is no joke to come into the presence of God, as demonstrated by the process that was required by the high priest to go into the Holy of Holies in the OT times. If they did it incorrectly they died. And, we need to remember that as His children we are always in His presence. God is not only omnipotent, but He is omnipresent. He is everywhere. His Spirit lives inside of us if we are born again. It is an amazing privilege to have this access to God, but we should not be flippant about it, or forget just exactly whom we are dealing with when we are in His presence. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. And, finally we saw that the third benefit is that we have a future. There is one distinguishing feature that every lost person shares around the world. Ultimately, it is hopelessness. They have no future, or to put it more bluntly, they do not have a pleasant future. Their future is one of eternal separation from God and

anything good, and I think that deep down they know it. This is why deep down most unsaved people are really not happy. They try to fill their lives with the here and now, through sports, or entertainment, or whatever. You can plug in anything under the sun like Solomon says in Ecclesiastes, and none of it works. They are trying to live their lives now, because they have no hope for the future. Well, the child of God has an amazing future, one that the apostle Paul says we should brag about.

Well, that is the first two verses of the Hillary Step of the Bible. That portion of Everest is a sheer rock face that is about 40 feet high. That doesn't sound like much when it is compared to a mountain that is 29,000 feet tall, but if you think about climbing a 40-foot wall with a 10,000-foot drop off if you fall it becomes a little more daunting. So, today we made it up about 4 feet. We've got a long way to go in this great chapter of the Bible, but it will be worth it when we see the view from the top and realize just how great the salvation is that we have in Christ, and how we can apply it to our lives for His glory.