

Title: The Glory in Trials

Text: Romans 5: 1-5

Date: Sunday, March 15, 2009

Place: Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Princeton, New Jersey

Romans 5: 1: Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3: And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4: And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Romans 5: 1: Therefore

In the chapter before this, the Apostle Paul stated and fully proved that the justification of a sinner is not by works which we have performed, not by any righteousness worked out by the sinner, but through faith in Christ Jesus the Lord.

Look back up at Romans 4: 20: [Abraham] staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; 21: And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. 22: And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

Faith believes God's promise to perform all that is necessary to justify us and make us the righteousness of God. How does it say Abraham gave glory to God? He staggered not at God's promise through unbelief. But was fully persuaded--that is what faith is--being fully persuaded. Fully persuaded that what? Fully persuaded that what God promises God is able also to perform. God promised Abraham righteousness by the work Christ Jesus the Son of God would perform on Abraham's behalf. Abraham believed God's promise, fully persuaded he was able to perform it. Through faith, God imputed--charged or laid to his account--the very righteousness God requires.

Romans 5: 1: Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

WHAT IS IT TO HAVE PEACE WITH GOD?

Peace with God is the opposite of being at war with God. When you do not believe that God is able to perform all the work necessary to justify you and bring you to himself without you helping him then you are in a constant warfare against God. God is your enemy. You fight to deny the very being and perfections of God. You fight to deny that justification is accomplished by Christ

Believer, do you remember being at war with God? Sometimes you tried to deny there is a God, or you wished there was no God, or you fought to imagine that God is no greater than you. We fought to deny that God is holy by thinking he would somehow not be so harsh with us. Thus we denied his faithfulness, despised the riches of his grace and his goodness.

We called him unfair to save whom he will though we considered it perfectly fair for us to make our own choices everyday. We were unwilling to have him to rule over us as King. We wanted to glory in our salvation. Therefore we hated the true and living God and we hated those who worshipped him

But God be thanked, he would not take no for an answer. He came in power and grace and made us willing to trust Christ. How does God make us willing in the day of his power? He revealed Christ to us; he revealed that Christ put away our sin, made us righteous; he revealed that we are accepted by God. You can't fight against that kind of news!

Illustration: When is the last time you heard of someone receiving news that they won the lottery and fighting that news?

Sinners don't fight against the gospel once the good news has been revealed in their heart by God. Have you ever seen anyone fight against the news that they are the victorious! That is what the gospel--the good news is--the ministry of reconciliation by Christ Jesus. That is why it is the dynamite!

Isaiah 32: 17: And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. 18: And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places;

Colossians 1: 20: And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven. 21: And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled 22: In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in his sight:

Romans 5: 2: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, AND rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

First, not only is there peace between us and God because of what Christ did for us, but through Christ we are in a constant state of grace--we stand in God's favor continually. Faith believes that my peace with God is by Christ. Faith also believes that it is by Christ that I continue in the perpetual care of God's unchanging favor. This word *stand*, means, that true God-given faith shall endure because God's grace in Christ Jesus continually makes us to stand. Paul is saying that the believer's perseverance in faith is not from our own power and diligence, but by Christ, by the grace of God. Grace and peace are distinguished from each other. But both are from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I Corinthians 1: 3: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

Galatians 3: 3: Grace *be* to you and peace from God the Father, and *from* our Lord Jesus Christ,

Secondly, to stand in God's grace is to be blessed with all spiritual blessings, but even more, it is to have access to the very fountain of all grace, to the throne of grace, to God our Savior himself. This is the whole purpose of God's grace, to bring us into precious union with himself.

Hebrews 10: 19: Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20: By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21: And *having* an high priest over the house of God; 22: Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. 23: Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;) 24: And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 25: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

Thirdly, knowing that we have peace with God, knowing we have access to his throne of grace, that we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, we also: **Romans 5: 2:...rejoice in hope of the glory of God.** "The glory of God" here means that everlasting glory and happiness which he has prepared for his people, has promised to them, and has called them to by Christ, and will bestow upon them.

1 Peter 1:3: Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4: To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5: Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Psalm 17: 15: As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

Believers rejoice--we glory in God, persuaded that as he promised to justify us and fulfilled it, even as he has given us his continual free favor and access to his throne of grace, so he has promised us eternal life with him and we believe he is able to perform it.

I Corinthians 3: 21: Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; 22: Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; 23: And ye are Christ's; and Christ *is* God's.

Romans 5: 3: And not only *so*, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4: And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

From the first hour we enter into these great blessings that are in Christ, the believer is in a constant warfare with the flesh. We were warring against God and at peace with our flesh and the world but now we are at peace with God and our flesh and the world is our enemy.

Yet, there are seasons when we suffer severe trials. Trials are painful. But notice here, it is the effect which God works through the trial, that makes us glory in the trial: **Knowing that tribulation worketh patience: And patience, experience, And experience, hope.**

These three are the fruits of the Holy Spirit. There have been men who suffered greatly, endured torture and such, who yet have never experienced the power of God's grace. But these fruits--patience, experience, and hope--are fruits of the Holy Spirit produced in our inner man. Let's look at these individually.

1. V3: **Knowing that tribulation worketh patience:**

Patience is the opposite of covetousness, complaining and hastiness; patience is submission to the will of God; patience is being content in whatsoever state I am in; patience waits upon the Lord; patience includes both our attitude toward God as well as those around us during the trial.

Paul told the **Philippians 4: 11:...I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content.** Here Paul tells us how he learned such patience...through tribulation. In Hebrews he tells us what he learned... **Hebrews 13: 5: *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* 6: So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.** So the Lord teaches us patience by teaching us through trials that he will never leave us, nor forsake us. That leads to the next blessing...

2. V4: **And patience, experience**

Experience means proof. As we patiently endure trials it is proven to us that we have no strength, but God's grace is proven to be fully sufficient to the believer, and it is proven to us that this grace comes to us by Christ Jesus our High Priest. This is the perfect work James speaks of when he says let patience have her perfect work. Wait so that you might see that God's love and grace is sufficient to sustain you in the midst of your greatest weaknesses. So are we taught humility, thankfulness, and resignation to the will of God. This is very important for us to understand. Let's see what the Lord proved to the apostle Paul and what he says concerning a trial he endured in the flesh.

2 Corinthians 12: 7: And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. 8: For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

We all hate the pain we suffer in a trial, so we understand why Paul asked the Lord three times for this *thing* to depart from him. When we are in trial, we find ourselves beseeching the Lord that the *thing* might depart from us. The point Paul is admitting here is that this was the opposite of patience. He was not content to suffer this buffeting of Satan; he was not praying for grace; he was praying for *the trial* to be over, for *it* to depart from him. But how did the Lord reply to Paul?

2 Corinthians 12: 9: And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

If we will come to experience--to have it proven to us that we have no strength and that God's all-sufficient grace shall sustain us as he has promised, if we would be persuaded that he is able--then it will not come by the trial being removed, but by his grace which enables us to sufficiently bear it. Only then do we come to experience that as he has promised so he is able to perform. Now Paul is writing this after he patiently endured it and this was proven to him, so listen to what experience says,

2 Corinthians 12: 9:....Most gladly therefore will I rather (key word here--Paul was not rejoicing in his infirmities when he was asking for God to remove the trial--but because God's grace made him patiently endure and proved God's grace sufficient without the thing be removed he said, Most gladly therefore, instead of praying for God to remove the trial, I will rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10: Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

THE SUFFICIENCY OF GRACE IS IN OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST CHRIST JESUS THE LORD.

Hebrews 4: 15: For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin. 16: Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

It does not say that we come with assurance to his throne of grace to have the trial removed, to have the messenger of Satan removed, but that we may obtain *mercy* and find *grace*. Having the trial, the thorn, the messenger of Satan removed is not our help, the *grace of God in Christ Jesus* in the very midst of suffering is our Help in time of need. **For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.**

And what happened in the greatest trial of our great High Priest?

Matthew 26: 38: Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. 39: And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou *wilt*....42: He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done...44: And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

You know how Christ Jesus, Paul's High Priest, knew exactly the feeling of Paul's infirmities when Paul prayed 3 times for the messenger of Satan to be removed? He had been touched with the same feelings. We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, *yet without sin*.

As our High Priest prayed the Father to do his will the Father did just that. But did the Father take away the bitter cup of agony from him? **IF THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN HIS WILL THEN YOU AND I WOULD HAVE NO HOPE WHATSOEVER!**

- His trial accomplished the purging of the sin of all God's elect
- His trial accomplished the reconciliation of his people to God
- His trial justified his people from all things from which the law of Moses could never justify and declared God just in doing so
- His trial redeemed a people from all iniquity

Let that give us some idea of why it is important for us to suffer trials. All our trials are to turn us from this world to our great High Priest just as his was to reconcile God's elect unto himself.

Instead of removing the cup, what was the Father's will to do?

Luke 22: 43: And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

Our High Priest, as the Son of man, not only knows the feelings of our infirmities but he knows the full sufficiency of the grace of God. Now notice this most amazing revelation in the next verse. Luke is not repeating what the other gospels teach but he, like the others, is giving us more knowledge than the others supply.

Luke 22: 44: And being in an agony...

Be sure to make this connection. After the angel strengthened him--after grace proved itself fully sufficient to sustain him--he was yet in agony. The trial and the suffering were not removed. But patience works experience--it proves God's grace to be sufficient.

Therefore, it is my fullest conviction, that the next phrase reveals, not the same petition as before but the thankful assurance which the Faithful One proves in us as he again draws us near to his breast and strengthens us by grace...**he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.**

What is it to pray more earnestly? We all pray, especially for the pain of a trial to be removed. But when Christ makes us to rejoice that by shedding his love in our heart he is giving us something infinitely better than if he removed the trial then though the pain is still present and the trial may rage, we pray more earnestly. Because now we pray, not for the trial to be removed, but we are drawn nearer to God overjoyed for his grace in Christ Jesus.

Here, as always, Christ receives the preeminence in all things. He knows the feelings of our infirmities better than we and he knows better than we the sufficiency of God's grace. So it was that God's Lamb was strengthened and in perfect faith persevered to the cross to accomplish our salvation. And so it is that our High Priest strengthens us by assuring our hearts that we shall never be ashamed of this most excellent hope we have in him.

3. Lastly, how is it that God's grace comes to us and works this great deliverance in our souls? The next verse in our text tells us.

Romans 5: 5:...because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

All of this fruit is through the Spirit, all of this all-sufficient grace wherein we continually stand--comes to us through the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. So then the hope that is ever-increasing is that great joy of knowing that no matter what we face, God loves us everlastingly and is able to deliver as he promised. And God will see to it that we are never ashamed of our hope.

Application: One more illustration: The greatest trial we will face will be death. Yet, God will not remove that trial. Instead, we shall pass through it because our faithful God giveth more grace! Because hope maketh not ashamed--God never disappoints us, never leaves us confounded.

I am convinced with all my heart that it is not the removing of the cup or the thorn or the trial that we are learning to ask God for in our prayers, but for the Spirit of grace, the Spirit of Wisdom who says to the heart in everlasting love and grace, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.

Luke 11: 11: If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if *he ask* a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? 12: Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 13: If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

James 1: 2: My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3: Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4: But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. 5: If any of you lack Wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. 6: But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. 7: For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. 8: A double minded man *is* unstable in all his ways.

Patience worketh experience. It proves to us over and over that God's grace is sufficient, not to remove the trial, but to sustain us though the trial be not removed. The increasing of our hope is to become more persuaded, more convinced that we can find nothing of lasting comfort in ourselves, in this world, but only in Christ Jesus. We become more and more persuaded that indeed if Christ laid down his life for us when we were enemies, much more now that we are reconciled to God, he shall save us by his life. **Romans 5: 6: For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7: For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to**

die. 8: But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9: Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 10: For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. Do you remember what our Savior said to his own before he went to the cross? The Lord Jesus Christ said, **These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world (John 16: 33.)** Therefore, let us rather glory in tribulations, in our infirmities, in suffering, for when we behold the utter weakness of our flesh that is when we behold that we shall be saved by Christ our life through his free and sovereign grace.