

# Peace with God

Romans 5:1-5

We have learned from the book of Romans that Justification by faith alone in Christ alone is:

- Necessary because we have all fallen short of the glory of God.
- Good in that it fully upholds God's righteousness.
- Effective in that from it all the fruit of our salvation flows.

The Reformers rightly taught that if we lose Justification by Faith Alone, we lose the entirety of the Gospel. Without it there is no Gospel.

The prayer of Fanny Crosby should be ours as well:

Jesus, keep me near the cross,  
There a precious fountain;  
Free to all, a healing stream,  
Flows from Calv'ry's mountain.

With Romans 5, Paul makes a transition. He moves from explaining the truth of Justification, to now explaining the proper fruits that flow from having been justified. But as we make this transition, it is so important that we never really move beyond justification.

Paul will take a total of four chapters to explain these fruits. Many of the same concepts and words that Paul will use here in the beginning of Chapter 5 will resurface at the end of Chapter 8. I am going to read our text for today, and then I am going to immediately read several verses from the end of Romans 8:

Read Romans 5:1-11.

Read Romans 8:30-39.

**Romans 8:30-39** those whom he justified he also glorified. <sup>31</sup> What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be<sup>1</sup> against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? <sup>33</sup> Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died - more than that, who was raised - who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.<sup>1</sup> <sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." <sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Hopefully, you can see the common themes in both of these passages. Salvation is not complete until all who have been justified are glorified. For those who have been justified have been loved by God. And nothing can separate them from that love. If God has not spared his

only Son, then how can we possibly think that he will fail to give us any other grace that will lead to our glorification?

The true Christian will experience seasons of doubt. But against all hope, he will in hope believe. And the love of God will keep him and carry him all the way to glorification. Understanding the connections between our Justification, and the rest of our salvation, that enable us to maintain a truly “God-Centered” salvation. Man does not save himself. God alone saves.

And the first and most decisive step in saving man is for God to reverse his judgment towards us.

Therefore,  
since we have been justified by faith,  
we have peace with God  
through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Repeat...

Say together: since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God...

Our justification is a completed act. It is not a process. You are no more justified now than when you first believed. Justification is full and complete and never changes. It does not rest upon the fluctuations of your life. It is grounded in the finished and fully righteous work of Jesus Christ credited to you. But while Justification is a past completed act, its effect is present and ongoing: You now have Peace with God!

What exactly does Paul mean by “Peace with God”? Well, fundamentally he means that God is no longer angry with us. Previously, God held animosity in his heart towards us because he is righteous and holy and we were sinners. This requires that we allow for a combination of emotions within God towards us. On the one hand, prior to justification by faith alone, God is angry towards us as his enemies. On the other hand, as those who have been brought from death to life, we know that God has loved us before the foundation of the world. Even our justification is dependent upon the prior love of God towards us.

Still, there is a distinct and objective change of attitude in God towards us, after we are justified. God’s animosity towards us has been removed.

Some have stopped here in their defining “Peace with God.”

But others, while certainly embracing this objective change of God’s demeanor towards us, have also included our personal experience of internal rest in the overall meaning of “Peace with God.” I think they are right. Surely, one intended consequence of declaring the objective truth is to promote peace in our experience.

**Romans 8:15-16** <sup>15</sup> For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" <sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

As long as you do not make your experience of inner peace the condition of the objective truth, you will be fine. God is not reconciled to you because you have inner peace. You have the privilege of inner peace because God has been reconciled to you.

“If he is at peace with us, we have inward peace. Conscience is only the reflection of his countenance, the echo, often feeble and indistinct, often terribly clear and unmistakable, of his judgment...” Hodge

As Christians, we rightly experience spiritual anxiety that flows from our continual struggle against sin. It is not that true Christians never experience guilt or shame or internal torments of the soul. In fact, I think that these all reflect a conscience that has been awakened to true holiness. But, as those who have peace with God, we have a means by which we can calm those fears.

Calvin writes that if justification were only by our works, then “perpetual inquietude would disturb our miserable souls”. In fact, for the soul that truly apprehends the weight and burden of sin, who sees its evil for what it truly is, there is nothing that is able to bring peace to that heart except the blood of Jesus Christ. The awakened soul never thinks lightly about sin. Sin is his greatest enemy. But God does not intend that his children live in “perpetual inquietude” either.

Since, we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God. God wants you to see his smiling face, and to experience rest of soul.

**Numbers 6:25-26** the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; <sup>26</sup> the LORD lift up his countenance<sup>1</sup> upon you and give you peace.

Countenance: a big word for face.

The smiling face of God should result in your experiencing rest in your soul. The rest of the soul is the fruit of believing the truth of God’s smiling face towards you.

But there is more to our having peace with God...

<sup>2</sup>

Through him

we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, We have obtained access into this Grace.

**Ephesians 3:11-12** <sup>11</sup> This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, <sup>12</sup> in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him. Very simply put, we now have access to a Divine Father, who has lovingly promised to give us “all things”.

Fathers, one of the greatest privileges that you can teach your children is that they have “access to you.”

I know that there may be good and necessary reasons to tell your children to “wait” for your attention. Children must be taught that whining is not acceptable. But, we must also be careful that we do not communicate to our children that they really do NOT have full and free access to us.

As a young pastor, I remember being challenged and encouraged by the model of Jonathan Edwards. Mr. Edwards was a busy pastor and theologian. But he made time for his wife. And he made sure that his children had access to him. He had an office at home. And he spent long hours in study. But his children testified later that he would always put down his books and give them his full and undivided attention. They had access to him, in a way that went beyond the rest of the members of his congregation.

Parents, communicate to your children that they have access to you. Give them your time and attention, as much as possible. You are communicating to them a precious truth that will last throughout their lives. They have been given access to their heavenly Father.

There are many ways that we can deny our children access. But one way is our use of media. If we are giving our attention to our cell phones rather than to our children, they will learn that they do not really matter. This is true for all our relationships, but especially our kids. Put down the electronic device and give your full attention to those you love.

Our access into this grace in which we stand is “through him” – through Jesus Christ. We do not naturally have access into the presence of God. We only have this privilege because of our relationship with Jesus Christ.

Following the Civil War, a dejected confederate soldier was sitting outside the grounds of the White House. A young boy approached him and inquired why he was so sad. The soldier related how he had repeatedly tried to see President Lincoln to tell him why he was unjustly deprived of certain lands in the South following the war. On each occasion as he attempted to enter the White House, the guards crossed their bayoneted guns in front of the door and turned him away.

The boy motioned to the old soldier to follow him. When they approached the entrance, the guards came to attention, stepped back and opened the door for the boy. He proceeded to the library where the President was resting and introduced the soldier to his father. The boy was Tad Lincoln....

Jesus Christ leads you into the presence of a smiling Father.  
Throughout your Christian life, you will have need of God’s strength.  
You will need him to comfort you in trials.  
You will need him to listen to you.  
You will need him to give you the will to keep going.  
You will need him to overcome stubborn and nagging sin.  
You will need him to help you to fulfill your daily duties.

You have access into this grace, through him.  
In Christ, you will not be turned away.

and  
we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

What is the glory of God in which we hope?

- That God will look really, really good.
- “the restoration of the glory lost at the fall” Kruse

What is going to make God look really, really good?

- The final and complete salvation of the elect.

**Romans 3:23** <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

ESV **2 Corinthians 3:18** And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord,<sup>1</sup> are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

**Revelation 21:10-11** <sup>10</sup> And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, <sup>11</sup> having the glory of God,

Because you are justified, you will be glorified.

This is so certain that later Paul will speak of our glorification in the past tense, as if it has already happened.

Romans 8:30 - those whom he justified he also glorified.

It is to God’s glory that you are glorified. Your glorification is guaranteed at the cross. Those whom are justified will most certainly be glorified. None can be truly justified that will not also be fully glorified.

You are not yet glorified. But your glorification does not rest in the strength of your will. Your glorification rests in the strength of Jesus Christ working in you.

The hope that you have is not wishful thinking. It is a certain hope guaranteed by the blood of Christ, and the strength of the Holy Spirit now living in your heart.

To rejoice in this hope is our duty. We are to lay hold of this hope by faith.

We are to believe it to be true and sure, even before it becomes our experience.

The word for “rejoice” is here Kauchamai. And it really means to boast about. Of course, if that boasting is in ourselves, then it is bad. But God considers it our duty to boast about His ability to bring about our glorification.

As we struggle to be more sanctified, it is difficult to boast in glorification. Nevertheless, it is our privilege and duty.

“Our confidence is solely on the merit of Christ, and the gratuitous and infinite love of God. Although this assurance is the legitimate effect of reconciliation, and the want of it is evidence of weakness, still in this, as in other respects, the actual state of the believer generally falls far short of the ideal. He ever lives below his privileges, and goes limping and halting, when he should mount up as with the wings of the eagle. Still it is important for him to know that assurance is not an unseemly presumption, but a privilege and duty.” Hodge.

So far, the fruits of justification sound really good. And they are really good! But the next fruit will not at first seem so good. Of course it is! But it takes some working it through.

3           More than that,  
          we rejoice in our sufferings,  
                  knowing that  
                          suffering produces endurance,  
4                           and  
                          endurance produces character,  
                          and  
                          character produces hope,  
5                           and  
                          hope does not put us to shame,  
                                  because God's love has been poured into our hearts  
                                  through the Holy Spirit  
                                  who has been given to us.

We rejoice in our sufferings! It is important to tie this statement to our justification. Again, the word for rejoice is Kauchaomai – boast. The idea of boasting in suffering is really antithetical to all reason, except gospel reason. How is it that the Christian can boast in suffering, take joy in it?

Let's first be clear at what it is not saying.

It is not saying: That Christians should seek suffering. That Christians should enjoy suffering.

“There is no patience when there is no feeling of bitterness.” Calvin

But what is Paul saying?

Suffering is no longer an indication of the “frowning” face of God.

Before we have peace with God, suffering sends a powerful message that God is indeed angry with our sin. And unless something is done, our present sufferings are only a small foretaste of the eternal sufferings that await us.

But since we now have peace with God, the message and intent of suffering is entirely changed.

“Since our relation to God is changed, the relation of all things to us is changed. Afflictions, which before were expressions of God’s displeasure, are now the benevolent and beneficent manifestations of his love.” Hodge.

This is what the “health and wealth” gospel, does not comprehend?

For them, suffering must be removed. And it must be removed now.

The idea of boasting in present sufferings as a voice of God’s love is incomprehensible.

But for the Christian, even suffering can increase our hope of the glory of God.

Follow Paul’s gospel reasoning: “suffering produces perseverance.” Does suffering always produce perseverance? No. Where it is not combined with faith, it can produce bitterness. But where there is faith, perseverance occurs.

Perseverance is really nothing more than continuing to lay hold of God’s promises in spite of suffering. And so, suffering (when combined with a living faith) produces character. Character can only occur through trials. As we endure trials, faith deepens, and character is the result. Far from being an indication of our final condemnation, suffering actually advances our salvation. Suffering is “good for your sanctification” – your character. And character produces hope. The longer that you continue to cling to Christ, the greater will be your hope in his provision.

Jacob’s hope is strengthened after his night of wrestling with God, “I will not let you go until you bless me.”

The hope that is produced through suffering is the “hope of glory”. The same hope that we already looked at in v. 2.

“Suffering, rather than threatening or weakening our hope, as we might expect to be the case, will, instead, increase our certainty in that hope. Hope, like a muscle, will not be strong if it goes unused. It is in suffering that we must exercise with deliberation and fortitude our hope, and the constant reaffirmation of hope in the midst of apparently “hopeless” circumstances will bring ever-deeper conviction of the reality and certainty for that for which we hope.” Moo

Our hope in the glory of God will not disappoint us? Disappoint is literally “put us to shame”.

Shame occurs when our faith does not actually achieve what we hope it will achieve. Our faith is shown to have been placed in the wrong object.

But unlike when we are shamed when we trust in ourselves, when we trust in God's promises He is the object of our faith. And the shame would not only be ours, but His as well. And this cannot be: God promises that our faith in Him is never misplaced. We will not be disappointed.

Our certainty is grounded in the love of God for us. And the token of that love is God's Holy Spirit – poured into our hearts.

because God's love has been poured into our hearts  
through the Holy Spirit  
who has been given to us.

Up to this point, Paul has been speaking mainly about the work of Christ and legal issues. Now he begins to mention the Spirit. Who gets the Holy Spirit? Only those who have the favor of God.

Who has God's favor? Only those who have been declared righteous.

Do you see how important justification by faith alone is to every other aspect of the Christian life? Without God's favor there is no Spirit. Without God's Spirit there is no "hope of glory". Glory is the goal of life. Your glory means your happiness. Anything which contributes to your glory is something that you can rejoice in. Suffering contributes to your proven character which increases your hope of glory. Therefore you can rejoice in suffering.

What are the fruits of our Justification?

1. Objective Peace with God.
2. Internal Peace with God.
3. Access into grace from the Divine Father.
4. The certain hope of the glory of God
5. The freedom to boast in our sufferings
6. The indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit
7. Confidence of never again being separated from the love of God.

Are you believing in Jesus Christ for your salvation? Believing in and enjoying these privileges are your duty. I am not saying that you will never struggle to enjoy them. Many will struggle hard and wait long to truly enjoy them. But they are your privilege, having been justified. And the pursuit of the enjoyment of your privileges God expects. It is your duty.

Tell yourself regularly, "I have peace with God through Jesus Christ."

"God gives me free and full access to him and the grace that he gives."

"God will one day be perfectly glorified in me, because he will complete my salvation."



“My sufferings are now expressions of the love of God towards me, and are intended for my good, for my growth in sanctification.”

“God has placed his very own Spirit within my heart. I am forever joined with the God of the Universe. And his Holy Power lives in me.”

“I cannot be separated from the love of God.”

And thank Jesus often!