

1. **Introduction**: The time available for last lesson was short. We finished only about half of the prepared lesson. The next Sunday was a Congregational Meeting. We will begin today with final comments on Romans 5:1-2.
  - The first 4 chapters are relatively general in nature and include the offer of salvation to all, an explanation of the righteousness apart from the Law made available to all who have faith in Christ, and an explanation of the nature of the salvation available to those who believe.
  - Verses 5:1-2 tell us the following (chapters 5-8) are aimed at those who believe in Christ.
2. **Romans 5:1-2**: ***“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>2</sup> Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”***
3. **“Peace with God”**: This is the spiritual blessing from which all other spiritual blessings flow both in this life and the life to come.
  - God enabled peace between Himself and those who would believe at the cost of the suffering and death of God’s Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.
  - Through Christ we were justified before God (declared legally righteous, thereby obtaining peace with God) and we also ***“obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand.”***
  - **Grace**: The usual definition for God’s grace is “the free and unmerited favor of God.”
  - This is a very general description of the consequence of God’s attitude of love toward His human creatures. In this sense, grace lies behind God’s entire plan of salvation (Eph 2:8,).
  - Keep in mind, God’s grace (including redemption) is always consistent with God’s Law.
  - There are abundant specific examples of God’s grace. In verse 2, Paul points to one specific example – ***“this grace in which we stand.”*** What instance of God’s grace is designated by “in which we stand?”
  - It is our state of justification and pardon. In God’s grace we stand before Him as justified, pardoned people. That is a powerful, wide-reaching distinction.
  - As unredeemed sinners, we were condemned to God’s wrath. But now, justified and pardoned by grace through faith, we stand sheltered in God’s grace.
  - The Greek word translated as “access” in 5:2 is used in two other places in the NT.
  - **(1.) Eph 2:18, “For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.”**
  - **(2.) Eph 3:12, “In whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in Him.”**
  - Verse 5:2 is focused on access to God not teaching about prayer. Both our common access to God in prayer and the confidence with which we are enabled to approach God are benefits of justification. There is no barrier between God and believers.
  - Believers access to God is direct. We do not have to go through a mediator (like a priest), because the one true Mediator between God and people (the Lord Jesus Christ) opened

the door to heaven for us, giving us, as believers, access to the Father once and forever. Our Mediator now sits at the right hand of the Father interceding for us.

- We approach God directly with confidence He will hear us and respond to our prayers. Not that He will always say yes to our prayers. He knows all things and knows what is best for us in the long run of our mortal life plus our everlasting life in heaven with Him.
  - We strive to pray in accordance with God's will, praying not our will but God's will be done. We don't know all the facts. We might inadvertently pray wrongly (for example we may not be aware of unintended consequences that will occur if our prayer is granted).
  - Because of our limited knowledge, we pray that in all things not our will but God's will be done. We have confidence that He has the knowledge and wisdom to know what we need, and He has the power and authority to bring to pass whatever He wills.
4. **Another Benefit of Justification:** In addition to peace with God and direct access to Him, justification provides another powerful benefit that is a cause for rejoicing.
- ***"We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God."*** Our hope in the glory of God signifies that we are convinced God's purposes for us will never be frustrated.
  - Justification is permanent and inevitably leads to glorification and life in God's presence.
  - Though we do not yet possess glorification (and cannot in mortal life because we cannot eliminate sin from our life due to the persistence of our sin nature), it is a certainty that we will (8:30) ultimately obtain glorification.
  - It is called hope because glorification is not yet made manifest. Biblical "hope" does not signify a tenuous situation or permit doubt. The good work God has begun in us and on our behalf, He will complete. The final mortal-life step of that work is glorification.
5. **Romans 5:3-5:** ***Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup> 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.***
- These verses are reminiscent of James 1:2-4.
6. **James 1:2-4:** ***Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, <sup>3</sup> for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. <sup>4</sup> And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect, complete, lacking in nothing.***
- We know sufferings (tribulations) are common experiences of all human-kind. Jesus said
7. **John 16:33:** ***I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.***
- Suffering may be self-inflicted; some suffering is a result of God's corrective actions aimed getting us back on the path of righteousness when we stray; some suffering (as seen in Job) may be the consequence of Cosmic Warfare; but some suffering comes from the world aimed at believers simply because they follow Christ.
  - The last is the kind of suffering Paul primarily has in mind. We see that clearly in Romans 8:35-39 and other places talking about problems Paul experienced as he

carried the gospel to the world (1 Cor 4:9-13; 2 Cor 1:4-10; 11:23-30; 12:7-10; 2 Tim 3:11-12; 4:13-16).

- Ordinary earthly aches and pain, fears and frustrations, deprivations and disappointments of everyday life are not what Paul is talking about.
- In the passage, the Greek word translated as “sufferings” primarily means “pressures.”
- “Pressures” signify opposition and persecution directed toward believers from a hostile, unbelieving world as the believers seek to spread the gospel. Jesus recognized this kind of opposition would occur.

8. **Matthew 5:10-11**: *“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>11</sup> Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”*

- Ordinary worldly trials can provide similar benefits in producing endurance, character, and hope when they are dealt with from a Christian perspective.
- Simple examples from today’s world of opposition and persecution include being forbidden to speak about Christ or to have a Bible in a classroom, being forbidden to pray during public functions, and in general forcing people to do things they believe God forbids while refusing to allow them to do things they believe God requires of them.
- Persecution today includes bodily harm and even murder of Christians simply because they are Christians.
- Being steadfast in obedience to God when trials and tribulations occur is rewarded with perseverance which is a powerful attribute both in accomplishing everyday goals and withstanding persecution.
- Perseverance in pursuing a godly life develops character, increasing our desire to be like Christ.
- Because we have been justified, we know from Scripture we will ultimately be glorified.
- Our hope in that future glory will not disappoint us, *“because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”*
- Unrealized hope can be disappointing, but the hope of the justified that they will be glorified is hope guaranteed by God.
- God’s love for believers is that very same love that sent the Son of God to become incarnate, to live a perfect life under the Law, and to die to pay the full penalty due for the sins of believers.
- God’s love in a believer’s heart changes their attitude, changes what is important in their life, changes relationships, and increasingly “tightens” their relationship with God.
- Notice that though Paul begins this passage with “sufferings,” he ends with “hope.”

9. **Romans 5:6-8:** *For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.  
<sup>7</sup> For one will scarcely die for a righteous person – though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die – <sup>8</sup> but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

- Paul is amazed God's love for us is so great that He sent the second Person of the Trinity to become incarnate and die for sinners (Jn 3:16, Gal 2:20).
- When Jesus died to save sinners, who would believe, from the punishment due their sins, they were enemies of God, disobedient rebels, sentenced to death by the Law, and powerless to save themselves.
- That description doesn't describe lovable people of high intrinsic value. God's redeeming love for His rebellious human creatures was so great that Jesus Messiah died to save them.
- Paul points out what a shocking behavior that was from a human perspective. Even for a righteous person, it is unlikely any human person would choose to die to save them from death and certainly not for a rebellious, law-breaker.
- Maybe to save someone who was of great importance to you (like a child), you might choose to die in an attempt to save their life. But to die for rebellious sinners – not likely!
- Why would God decide to save sinners who had no power or skills to save themselves from the wrath due them? The answer can only be found in God's abounding love even though there is nothing obviously lovable about rebellious sinners.
- Though we perhaps are often perplexed by tragedies and calamities that befall us, we should remember that only God's love for us keeps us from experiencing the full extent of God's wrath at sin. We are guilty!
- Never doubt God's love. He proved His love by sending the Son to become incarnate adding a human nature to His divine nature so that He could die to pay the death penalty due our sins.
- God sends the Holy Spirit to live within believers, pouring God's love into our hearts.
- Jesus' ministry on the cross is past, but He Lives! His accomplishments continue to bring sinners salvation. The Holy Spirit sustains those saved.

10. **Next:** Begin with Romans 5:9.