

1. **Introduction:** In Romans 1-4, we learned that the gospel is the power of God for salvation to all who believe. The righteous shall live by faith.
 - Without redemption, unrighteous humanity is subject to a downward spiral ending with God’s wrath against sin leading to Him giving unrepentant sinners over to unrestricted expression of sinful desires – allowing them to behave as they wish.
 - No one is righteous of themselves! Perfect obedience to the Law could earn righteousness, but no one is able to perfectly obey the Law (doing the right thing for the right reason). God graciously provides righteousness apart from the Law through Christ to all who have faith.
 - Those who believe and have faith in Jesus Christ are justified like Abraham (he believed God). Being “justified” means God declares a person legally righteous before Him.
 - God’s promise to Abraham about the future rests on grace received by faith.
2. **Begin a New Section:** Verses 5:1-2 begin a new section of the letter (chapters 5-8) aimed specifically at believers.
3. **Romans 5:1-2:** *“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ² 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.”*
4. **“Peace with God”:** Being justified by God brings peace with God which 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.
 - Because of Christ, when we believed, we were justified, declared legally righteous before God and obtaining peace with God. We also *“obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand.”*
5. **Grace:** The usual definition for God’s grace is “the free and unmerited favor of God,” 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 2:8-9).
 - 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 does he mean?
 - He means our state of justification (declared righteous) and pardon (freed from the death penalty due sins). 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.
6. **Romans 5:3-5:** *Not only that, but 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.*

7. **Suffering:** These verses by Paul are reminiscent of James 1:2-4.
8. **James 1:2-4:** *Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³ for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴ 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.
9. **John 16:33:** (Jesus said) *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, a result of God's corrective actions aimed at restoring us to the path of righteousness, or (as seen in Job) it may be a consequence of Cosmic Warfare, or be from the world aimed at believers simply because they follow Christ.
 - The suffering Paul has in mind in 5:3 is "that inflicted just because of following Christ." That becomes clear in 8:35-39, and other places, about problems Paul experienced (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 means. 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. Jesus recognized this kind of opposition would occur.
10. **Matthew 5:10-11:** *"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹ Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."*
 - Worldly trials can develop endurance, character, and hope if they are dealt with Biblically. Such trials include being forbidden to speak about Christ or to pray or to have a Bible in a classroom, or in general the forcing of people to do things they believe God forbids while refusing to allow them to do things they believe God requires of them.
 - Persecution may include bodily harm and murder simply because a person is a Christian.
 - God rewards steadfast obedience in the face of trials and tribulations with perseverance, a powerful attribute, both for accomplishing everyday goals and withstanding persecution.
 - Perseverance in pursuing a godly life develops character which increases our desire to be like Christ.
 - Because we have been justified, we know we will ultimately be glorified (Romans 8:29).
 - Our hope in 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. It is a sure thing.
- God’s love for believers is the very same love that led the Son of God to become incarnate, so that He could live a perfect human life under the Law as the God-Man Messiah, and in His human nature 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.
- Though Paul begins this passage with “sufferings,” he ends with “hope.”

11. **Romans 5:6-11**: *For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person – though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die – ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. ¹¹ More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.*

- 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, He saved them from the punishment due their sins under the Law and God’s wrath. Unrepentant sinners are enemies of God, disobedient rebels, sentenced to death by the Law, and powerless to save themselves.
- This is not a description of lovable people of high intrinsic value. Yet, God’s redeeming love for His rebellious human creatures was so great that Jesus Messiah died to save them.
- From a human perspective, dying to save rebels from their sin was shocking behavior.
- Even for a righteous person, it is unlikely anyone would choose to die to save that person 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 to save their life. But to die for rebellious sinners – not likely!
- Why would God decide to save sinners who had no power or ability to save themselves from the wrath due them? The answer can only be found in God’s abounding love for His sinful creatures even though there is nothing lovable about sin.
- When sinners repent and believe, does God love them for that reason? No! When Christ died for us, we were (1.) sinners, (2.) ungodly, (3.) enemies of God, and (4.) powerless, weak, helpless to save ourselves. Yet, for love of us, Christ died for us (was punished in our place).

- Though we perhaps are often perplexed by tragedies and calamities that befall us, we should remember that it is only God’s love for us that keeps us from experiencing the full extent of God’s wrath at sin. We are guilty sinners!
- What was the importance of human sinners that caused God to send His Son to die to pay the sin-penalty for people in rebellion against Him? The motivating force could only be internal to God. There was nothing lovable or lovely about sinners. Who can doubt the love of God?
- God proved His great redeeming love for His sinful human creatures by sending His Son to become incarnate as the God-Man, retaining His divine nature but adding a human nature that enabled Him to die in our place, paying the death penalty due our sins.

12. **The Next Step:** Thus far in chapter 5, Paul has focused on what God has already done for us through Christ. We have been declared righteous before God based on Jesus’ perfect obedience to the Law during His incarnate life, we have peace with God and stand in His grace. We can rejoice in sufferings as well as in our hope for the future glory of God. Yet, there is more!

- There is a tension between what Christ accomplished in His first coming and what remains to be done in His second coming. Yes, we have already been saved by Christ from the guilt of our sins and the judgment of God upon those sins.
- But we have not yet been delivered from indwelling sin (though that is happening through the ministry of the Holy Spirit in sanctification). Nor have we been given a new body suitable for the new world that is coming.
- At the end of history, there will be a day of reckoning (Rm 2:5): ***“But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed.”***
- On that day, God’s righteous wrath will be poured out on those who rejected Christ, but those justified by faith are no longer subject to condemnation and will not be subject to God’s end times’ wrath (the wrath due our sins was borne by Christ on the cross).
- God will complete the good work He begins in His adopted children. We have been saved from condemnation; we are being saved from indwelling sin; we will be glorified and be like Christ morally. God will complete our salvation – we are now saved, and we shall be saved.
- We rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have now received reconciliation.
- We rejoice in God’s grace, mercy, love, wisdom, power, and immutability (unchanging nature).
- He knows what we need. He has the power to accomplish what we need. He loves us and will do what we need. He changes not! The salvation He has begun, He will complete.

13. **Next:** A special topic on “Answers to questions about salvation.”