

I. Justification by Faith

A. Today, our primary focus will be the first half of Romans 5. However, three weeks ago when we were talking about Abraham's faith, we did not finish Romans 4, and so we need to finish Romans 4:23-25 before working our way through Romans 5.

B. Prayer

C. Romans 4:22-25 . . . Therefore it was also credited to him as righteousness. [23] Now not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him, [24] but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, as those who believe in Him (*God*) who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, [25] He (*Jesus*) who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification.

1. Paul's main point in vs 23-25 is that righteousness will be credited to us, just as it was credited to Abraham – IF we have the same kind of faith as Abraham, that is, a faith that produces a life that is in agreement with what it claims to believe.

2. And Paul also uses these three verses to affirm, again, that God's method of justifying us is through the redeeming work of Jesus Christ – whom God sent into our world and gave over to the powers of evil so that through Christ's death and resurrection the devil's power over us will be broken and our penalty for sin paid.

D. This brings us to Romans 5.

1. We can split Romans 5 into two parts, with each part starting with the word "Therefore." The first section begins with vs 1 and ends in vs 11. The second section goes from vs 12 to vs 19. In my opinion, the last two verses of Romans 5 lead us into Romans 6.

2. The primary focus of Romans 5:1-11 is that justification by faith brings us into right standing before God and a reconciled relationship with God. However, within this section Paul says several other things related to justification by faith that deserve individual attention.

3. Romans 5:12-19 is an explanation of how the redeeming work of one man, Jesus Christ, is universally applied to everyone who believes.

II. Romans 5:1-11

- A. Romans 5:1-2 . . . Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, [2] through whom also (*Jesus Christ*) we have obtained our introduction by faith (*as opposed to earning it ourselves through good deeds*) into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.
1. As we saw in Romans 4:23-25, God credits our faithful obedience as righteousness just as He credited Abraham's faithful obedience as righteousness. And it is this credited righteousness which is the basis upon which God justifies us. And it is this justification which brings us into a state or condition of being at peace with God.
 2. Why? Because justification removes our "rebel" or "enemy" status, which we gained by serving Satan, and by living like the world, and by following our fleshly desires. And I want to also remind you that justification goes even further, for it protects us from the wrath of God against sin and sinners.
 - a. Now in case you have not thought of yourself as having been an enemy of God, let me remind you that Paul speaks of us as having been enemies of God (Romans 5:10), and as being hostile toward God (Romans 8:7-8).
 - b. James says essentially the same thing when he says that whoever wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God (James 4:4).
 3. Therefore, we start out as enemies of God, which means there is no such thing as peace between God and us – and that is a troubling reality, for it is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands – or come under the judgment – of the living God (Hebrews 10::31). But, if we will repent, put our faith in the redeeming work of Jesus Christ, and proceed to live a life of faithful obedience, God will justify us and in so doing, remove the enemy label, and free us from His wrath, and bring us into a state or condition of being at peace with Him.
 4. Paul then concludes this short section with "and we exult in hope of the glory of God."
 - a. To exult in something is to inwardly feel and openly express great joy in ways that often include exuberant shouting, jumping for joy, and even crying because of joy. In other words, exultation is rejoicing times ten.
 - b. And in this context, what we are exulting in is the hope of the glory of God. In our day, the word hope is commonly used to express a strong desire for something that is uncertain, such as,

I hope I get an iPhone for Christmas, or a raise in this down economy, or an A on the test I did not study for.

- c. But as it is used here and in many other Bible passages, the word hope speaks of a strong desire for something, along with the confident expectation of obtaining it. In other words, hope is the certainty that what we desire to be true, is, and what we expect to come true, will.
 - d. Now, what is the conviction or certainty that Paul says we are looking forward to? It is being conformed to and fully experiencing the glory of God – as much as we can in this life by being conformed to the likeness of Christ, as well as fully and eternally in the life to come by living with God forever.
 - e. John put it this way: “Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is” (1 John 3:2).
 - f. Paul, in speaking about the Spirit’s help for living the Christian life and especially in the face of trials and tribulation, says: “For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified” (Romans 8:29-30).
5. Once again – what we confidently expect to come true in this case is that having been justified and given the gift of eternal life, we will begin being glorified and one day be fully glorified. Therefore, the normal Christian response to being graciously justified by faith so as to have the expectation of being glorified, is exultation.

B. Romans 5:3-5 . . . And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; [4] and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; [5] and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

1. The essence of vs 3 is this: Not only do we exult over our justification and the expectation of being eternally glorified by God, but we also exult over our tribulations. Why? Because tribulations are God’s transforming tools for bringing about our sanctification – which is vital to our glorification.

- a. Notice, Paul links justification and sanctification with glorification, and he links them, not just theologically, but also emotionally. They are something normal Christians get excited about.
 - b. In other words, just as it is common for Christians to rejoice over being justified, saved from Hell, and promised eternal glorification in heaven, so it is normal for Christians to feel the same exuberant joy over being sanctified. And the reason for this is that the normal Christian understands that sanctification is just as vital to our eternal salvation and eternal glorification, and just as vital to loving and pleasing God, as justification.
2. The word tribulation speaks of afflictions, trials, persecution, injustice, sickness and various other kinds of physical sufferings, relationship troubles, and hard times.
 - a. Now you may be wondering, who naturally or commonly jumps for joy when passing through a time of tribulation?
 - b. And generally speaking, the simple answer is, no one. Most people do not jump for joy when tribulations come their way.
3. However, as Christians, though we may like a trouble-free life, we want God himself, and we want to love God and to please God and to be with God forever.
 - a. Here is how it works: Because we love God, we love pleasing God, and because we love pleasing God, we love righteousness because that is what pleases God, and because we love righteousness, we exult over our tribulations knowing that they are powerful tools in the hands of God to transform, step by step and area by area, until we are righteousness in all our behavior.
 - b. Now it is true that tribulation brings suffering and loss. But it is also true that those who grow in righteousness through the sufferings of tribulation soon see that the value gained makes the cost, by comparison, seem trivial.
 - c. And to prove that the profit overshadows the cost, Paul lays out a progression of spiritual benefits that come when we remain faithful to God while enduring times of tribulation. And the spiritual benefits Paul speaks of are, (1) perseverance, (2) proven character, (3) hope, and (4) the heartfelt conviction that God loves us – which is a conviction that comes through the work of the Holy Spirit making us aware of God’s great love for us.
4. Paul goes on to speak of God’s great love for us in vs 6-10, but before looking at that, I want us to look at Paul’s list of spiritual benefits in order to better understand their value to us.

5. Christian perseverance is the steady, patient endurance of what God wills or allows – including trials and tribulations – so as to remain faithful to God and God’s standard of righteousness in spite of the difficulties and challenges encountered.
 - a. It is times of tribulation, testing, and sorrow that require Christian perseverance, for in those times we are easily tempted to step back into old, fleshly and worldly patterns of thinking and behaving as a means of dealing with the hard times.
 - b. And it is perseverance, that is, a steady, patient faithfulness to God and His righteousness, that progressively strengthens our faith, shows us where we still need to change, pushes us toward godliness in more and more areas, and further conforms us to the likeness of Christ.
 - c. And as a reminder, God never leaves us on our own to deal with life, He has given us everything necessary for life and godliness, and He continues give us His presence, His strength, and His protection so that we are never tempted or tired beyond what we can bear. In addition, He gives us prayer, the scriptures, and the church for encouragement, support, and added help.
 - d. Therefore, though perseverance can seem incredibly hard in difficult times, God makes it possible to persevere.
6. The next two words, proven character, refer to character that has worked hard at remaining faithful to God in spite of being repeatedly tested by tribulations. It is by remaining faithful that our character gains a stability and dependability of faithfulness that enables it to consistently remain within God’s boundaries of righteousness in spite of the circumstances.
7. Hope, as it is used here, means confident trust that God’s gift of justification and eternal life will come into our possession and will be experienced by us sometime in the future in spite of the current circumstances.
8. So the process Paul is presenting works like this: perseverance in the face of tribulations produces the kind of Christian character that remains faithful to God in the midst of trials and tribulations which in turn gives us solid ground upon which to fully expect that we are justified and are being glorified and will one day enter in to eternal life.
9. Finally Paul says that hope does not disappoint, or in other words, confident trust in God will not leave us disappointed that we trusted

in Him. Such confident trust, when built on faithful obedience in the face of trials and tribulations, will produce the expected outcome.

- a. Now without question, there are many Christians who can attest that their confidence that tribulation brings invaluable spiritual profit has always proven true. They have never been disappointed.
- b. However, if experience has not yet convinced you, then Paul speaks of another convincing reality, which is, the love of God which has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.
- c. In other words, we can know that the sanctifying work of tribulations will produce the expected outcome because – as we remain steadfast and faithful through tribulations – the Holy Spirit gives us a heartfelt conviction that God loves us.
- d. Paul put it this way in Romans 8:16-17 . . . The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, [17] and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.

10. Paul moves on from here to tell us the degree and extent of God's love for all humanity, and especially God's love for those who live by the obedience of faith.

- C. Romans 5:6-8 . . . For while we were still helpless (*still in rebellion against God and still owing the penalty for sin*), at the right time (*God's selected time and therefore the right time according to His plans which He made before He created the world*) Christ died for the ungodly (*plural*). [7] For one will hardly die for a righteous man (*singular*); though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. (*Paul contrasts Christ dying for all sinners with one unique person possibly dying for one good person.*) [8] But God demonstrates (*shows us the existence, the quality, and extent of His love*) His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (*plural*). (*If it is an extreme expression of love to give your life in place of a one good person, what must it be to give your life in place of many unrighteous, rebellious persons? Therefore, Christ's giving His life for many sinners is proof of God's/His great love for us.*)
- D. Romans 5:9 . . . Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. (*God's love goes beyond dying in our place, it provides justification to those who repent and live by faith, and it treats us as if we have no sin to pay for, which*

in turn puts us in a position with God that saves us from His wrath on sin and sinners.)

- E. Romans 5:10 . . . For IF while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.
 - 1. In other words, while we were still God's willful enemies, He willingly sacrificed His only Son to redeem us from the penalty of sin and reconcile us to Himself.
 - 2. And if God would go to those lengths to reconcile us to Himself, we can be certain He will do even more to save us completely and eternally now that His son is seated at His right hand (Romans 8:28-39).

III. Conclusion

- A. Romans 5:11 . . . And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.
 - 1. This is the third acknowledgment of what normal Christians exult over. The first two have to do with what God does for us. This third one has to do with exulting in God, himself, because of the reconciled relationship He makes possible for us to have with Him.
 - 2. And why would we exult in God over a reconciled relationship with God? Because God and fellowship with God is our goal, not heaven over hell. Heaven over hell is simply the guarantee that we can be with God, in the presence of God, and in intimate, uninhibited fellowship with God, for eternity. It is God himself who is the treasure in the field (Matthew 13:44), and it is in being with God himself that we can enjoy that treasure now and for eternity.
 - 3. Therefore, it is the normal Christian way to exult in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, for it is Jesus Christ who has made the way for us to be reconciled to God.
- B. What makes you jump for joy?