

Covenant Life College  
Paul's Letter to the Romans  
Week 5, Session 6 – Robin Boisvert  
Romans Chapter 5  
The Blessings of Justification (Romans 5:1-11)

*Review*

Though Paul did not found nor had even visited the Christians at Rome, he writes to them as one set apart for the gospel and who is committed to it because it transmits God's power that brings salvation. The gospel has this power because it reveals God's justifying work. Those who respond in faith become right with God. Justification through faith is the theme of the first major section of Romans.

In Romans 3, Paul sets out this doctrine of justification by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. But how can a holy God justify the ungodly (4.5)? Isn't that a miscarriage of justice? "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis 18.25) The answer can only be found in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. The sinless Son of God took our place as substitute and died a death we should have died. His death was for the penalty of sin and propitiated the justified wrath of God.

In Romans 4, Paul uses the example of Abraham to prove his point. "Abraham's justification was not an isolated instance, but Abraham was the proto-type believer, the father of the faithful, so that for us as well, we are justified in precisely the same way that Abraham was— through faith and the imputation of righteousness—the righteousness of Christ that is imputed to our account."<sup>1</sup> It is neither by works, nor circumcision nor the law that man is justified before God, but only through faith in Jesus Christ, our crucified and risen Savior.

Now, in Chapter 5 we have reached a major transition point. The first word, *Therefore*, signals this. Also, there is a significant shift in tone. No longer does Paul seem to be arguing with an opponent. He becomes more pastoral. The dominant theme of Chapters 5 through 8 is the hope of sharing in God's glory.

Romans 5.1-11

*Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 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. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 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. For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly, For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—*

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<sup>1</sup> R.C. Sproul, taped message, "Romans 4.23-5.1/5.2-5, Ligonier Ministries, Orlando, 1984.

*though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. 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. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.*

## **I. Peace with God (5.1)**

A. Movement from a former state of hostility to reconciliation. This is primarily an objective condition, not a subjective feeling.

B. “The pursuit of peace is a universal human obsession, whether it is international, industrial, domestic or personal peace. Yet more fundamental than all these is peace with God, the reconciled relationship with him which is the first blessing of justification. Thus ‘justification’ and ‘reconciliation’ belong together, for ‘God does not confer the status of righteousness upon us without at the same time giving himself to us in friendship and establishing peace between himself and us.’”<sup>2</sup>

## **II. Access to God (5.2a)**

A. After the fall, man no longer had immediate access into the presence of God.

B. Tabernacle, Temple restrictions

C. At the time of the crucifixion, the veil of the Temple torn from top to bottom (Matthew 27.51). See also Hebrews 10.19-22.

## **III. “... this grace in which we stand” (5.2b)**

A. “We are firmly and immovably established... The state into which the believer is introduced by Christ, is not a precarious one. He has not only firm ground on which to stand, but he has strength divinely imparted to enable him to keep his foothold.”<sup>3</sup>

B. “Justified believers enjoy a blessing far greater than a periodic approach to God or an occasional audience with the king. We are privileged to live in the temple and in the palace.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> John R.W. Stott, *Romans*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, 1994, p. 139.

<sup>3</sup> Charles Hodge, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, Kregel Publishers, Grand Rapids, 1882, p. 207.

<sup>4</sup> Stott, *Romans*, p. 140.

#### **IV. Joy in anticipation of future glory (5.2c)**

A. The meaning of glory—doxa – heaviness, weightiness; has to do with the intrinsic significance and dignity of God.

B. The end result of justification is glorification.

C. There is JOY in this hope. The verb “rejoice” used here is very strong. It means to exult boastfully. Paul said earlier (3.27 ff.) that there is no place for boasting. But that refers to boasting in ourselves, our works, our keeping of the law. We may not boast in those things, but we ought to boast in what God has done.

#### **V. Joy, even in the midst of trial (5.3-11)**

A. We also rejoice in sufferings—not the sufferings in and of themselves—but in what they produce.

1. Suffering produces endurance (perseverance)—the very endurance we need in the midst of suffering is produced by suffering. It will not be more than you can bear (1 Corinthians 10.13).

2. Endurance produces character, proven character.

3. Character produces hope (which does not disappoint) because God’s love has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. God’s love is subjective and objective in nature. It was demonstrated on the cross (5.8).

4. Our condition at the time Christ died for us—weak (5.6), ungodly (5.6), sinners (5.8), enemies (5.10).

5. The logic of Paul’s argument—if he displayed such love and reconciled us to himself by dying for us when we were his enemies, how much more will be saved through his life!

6. Joy in God alone

“Christian exultation in God begins with the shamefaced recognition that we have no claim on him at all, continues with wondering worship that while we were still sinners and enemies Christ died for us, and ends with the humble confidence that he will complete the work he has begun. So to exult in God is to rejoice not in our privileges but in his mercies, not in our possession of him, but in his of us.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Stott, *Romans*, p. 148