

**Romans:  
Justification by Faith  
Means Peace with God**

**Romans 5:1-2**

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If you have your Bibles, I'd invite you to take them in hand and turn with me to Romans, chapter 5. Throughout Romans 1 through 4 Paul has shown that God's promises are obtained by faith. Beginning in Romans 5:1 he draws out the consequences of that great truth for the believer. And so today we are coming to a new section in Paul's argument in the book of Romans. Here in Romans 5, verses 1 and 2. This is God's word. Let's hear it reverently and attentively.

"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand. And we exalt in hope of the glory of God."

Amen, and thus ends this reading of God's holy and inspired word. May He add His blessings to it. Let's pray.

Our Lord and our God, as we consider Your word this day we ask for those who know and love the Lord Jesus Christ that they would find out more of the greatness of His loving heart and His redeeming designs. And for those who do not know Jesus Christ and have not trusted in Him for this life and the life to come, we ask that the very picture of the extravagance of Your gifts to Your people would be used by the spirit to draw them to Christ. In Jesus' name, we ask it, Amen.

There are lot of people today that are on the market for peace. Who's against peace? Everybody wants peace, but there are more peaces out there than you might imagine. P-e-a-c-e-s, I mean, not p-i-e-c-e-s. What kind of peace is it that you are looking for? What kind of peace do you want? What kind of peace do you need? How are you going about getting it? Paul, in this great passage, wants to tell us about the one great peace that we all need but lack for want if we are apart from Christ; and have in full if we have trusted in Him. And in this verse, this man who has been so often rejected, who has been betrayed, who has been beaten, who has been cast out, who has been turned away, who has been undervalued is exultant and joyful and emphatic and assured. And you need to

be asking yourself why is he like that? I mean, all you have to do is read those two verses again to yourself, and they brim with confidence and assurance.

And you have to pause, and you have to ask how can this marginal man, how can this man who is one of a tiny number of disciples in this vast empire and in this even vaster world of his own day, how can he be so confident, so emphatic, so joyful in the face of all the opposition? Of all the trials, how can he have this kind of joy? What's the reason, what's the basis for that kind of assurance and exultation?

Paul has a very simple answer. Justification and its consequences. Paul has not spent three chapters telling you about justification for nothing. It's because of what God has done in justification, and because of the consequences of that, the implications of that for every believer. That Paul can be so assured, so confident, so emphatic, so joyful in the face of every circumstance. So if that's the case, and if he's telling us about the peace that we need, let's pray attention to him for a few minutes and listen to three things that he tells us are the result, or the implications of being just, of being declared right with God. The first one you'll see right there in the first verse.

### **I. Justification results in our experience of the peace of God.**

Paul tells us there that justification brings peace with God. Justification results in our experience of the peace of God. In the very first words of verse 1, Paul sums up his whole argument from Romans 1:18 all the way to Romans 4:25 in one phrase. "Therefore having been justified by faith." Well, there it is. The sum of everything that he's been saying for three chapters. And throughout the opening section of the book, he's been aiming at showing us the righteousness that we need in order to stand before God, in order to fellowship with God, in order to be accepted by God is provided to us in the gospel; and it's received by faith. And he's explained how that works, and he's explained how that's a biblical truth; it's not something that he's made up, it's seen in the pages of the Old Testament, all the way back in the dealings of God with Abraham. Hundreds of hundreds of years before Paul wrote or lived. And he's explained to us then how it is that God justifies, accepts us, declares us to be righteous by the blood of Christ, and we receive that by faith.

Now, beginning in chapter 5 he wants to tell you the implications of that. In chapters 5 through 8 Paul works through successive implications of our being just, of our being declared righteous by God. In Romans 5 he tells us that if you are justified, then you are free from the wrath of God. In Romans 6 he tells you that if you are justified, you are freed from the dominion of sin. In Romans 7 he tells you if you are justified, you are free from the domination and condemnation of the law. In Romans 8 he tells you that if you're justified, you are freed from the curse of death. So successively he's walking you through all the benefits which

God has packaged for you in Jesus Christ. And as you have received His free justification, you have also received those benefits.

And here, in Romans 5 where Paul is talking about our being freed from wrath, he introduces in verse 1 this great result of justification, that is, that we have peace with God. Now we need to be clear on what Paul means by that. I said there are a lot of peaces on the market out there. There are a lot of folks that are looking for tranquility. They are going through circumstances that are very trying, and they would like a little psychological and emotional relief. They'd like a little peace. Paul is not, however, talking about tranquility. Peace with God means the cessation of hostility between God and man, not simply the tranquility of mind, which we're looking for. That tranquility indeed flows from that cessation of hostility between God and man, but it is primarily that objective truth that Paul is speaking about.

In other words, the peace being talked about here is real and objective, it is not merely perceived and subjective. It is not a change of feelings, that Paul is talking about, it is a change in God's relationship to us. Peace with God means an objective change in God's relationship to us. You remember those words that we've heard about for many chapters from Paul? Just as guilt and condemnation indicate how things stand between the unrepentant sinner and God.

Now, those two words are two good words to describe the relationship between God and the unrepentant sinner. Guilt and condemnation. We are guilty, we are deserving of condemnation. So also, peace and justification perfectly describe the relationship between God and the redeemed believing center. Now, not just then, but now. And so to be justified means to have this standing of peace before God.

So the background of understanding justification, the background of understanding peace is understanding the center's alienation from God. If you don't understand that you are alienated from God, if you don't understand that sinners are alienated from God, it won't be good news to you that there's a reconciliation. If we think everything is hunky-dory, then it's not good news to announce that there is now peace with God. But if you understand the reality of things, if you understand that you are under God's righteous condemnation, that you are far from Him, then this is the greatest news that could ever occur. If we miss that, we miss everything. If we miss the alienation, if we miss the reconciliation to that alienation provided by God, we miss everything.

Peace with God denotes a relationship to God. Peace of mind may flow from it, and often does flow from it. But the peace of God is itself a new relationship with God and not merely a state of mind. This peace is absolute because it's divine. Nobody can take it away from you, because nobody gave it to you. God gave it to you. It can't be changed by circumstances. It's non-circumstantial. It's not brought about because things are going well. It's not brought about because the

Dow is up. Thank heavens. It's not derived from that. It's not derived from a cessation of hostility in your family life. It's not brought about because you've just gotten a raise and a promotion at work. It's not brought about because things are going well in your neighborhood. Its not even brought about because things are temporarily going well in the life of the congregation and nobody's backbiting. It is given to us by God. It is a new relationship. The alienation which was there before has been dealt with, and Paul says it has been dealt with through Jesus Christ.

This peace is accomplished with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through His mediation, His person, His work. We deserve condemnation. We had no way of making reparations, and God makes the reparations in the person of His Son. Imagine a nation or nations going to war against a nation or nations. The reason for the war were the wicked and cowardly and wrong deeds of these other nations. They were entirely at fault. At the end of the war, when the treaty of peace is being established, after the unconditional surrender has been made, the victorious side announces that no reparations will be demanded. But, that in fact they and their former enemies will enter into a joint partnership for peace, and they, those who are the conquerors, will invest in those who were the conquered in order to build them up in a life of justice and righteousness. You can hear a little bit of the background of the peace treaty between the Allied and the Axis powers at the end of the Second World War there, can't you? And that's precisely what God does here. We can't pay the reparations. They're too great. And so He has paid the reparations, and He has done all that is necessary to establish peace and to bring us into the participation of fellowship and friendship with Him.

Imagine that you are estranged from a friend. It is a serious estrangement. You are entirely at fault. Perhaps it's your wife, perhaps it's your husband, perhaps it's a close friend that you have had for many years, perhaps it's a business colleague. You are at fault. You're bothered by it, but the breach on your part has been so serious that you see no possibility for the relationship to be restored. And then suddenly, the offended party does all that is necessary to re-establish the relationship and grants it to you. God does that in Jesus Christ for all who trust in Him. That is the objective peace that Paul is talking about here. Does it lead to a wonderful subjective sense of what God has done for us? Yes, and we seek in every way to encourage that was we study God's word and study His truth. But the great fact which is prior to our emotional and psychological peace is this objective deed that God has done to reconcile Himself to us and us to Him. So Paul says, "Peace with God results from our justification." We're no longer His enemies. We're not simply His friends now. We're His children.

## **II. Justification results in communion with God.**

Secondly, however, he goes on to say in verse 2, that "justification means access

to the greatest grace." Justification brings peace with God, but it also results in communion with God. Even in this present age, notice how Paul speaks in the present tense, "though whom also we have obtained." Even in this present age through Christ we have gained access into personal fellowship with God.

By faith in Christ and through His redemptive work, we have been given introduction into access to the very presence of God. In the old covenant, only the priest once a year, twice on that day entered into the very presence of God. In the new covenant as the author of Hebrews reminds us, through Jesus Christ we have access into the very holy of holies. By Christ, Paul says, we have received a king's invitation.

I wonder if any of you here today have been invited to sup with dignitaries. I suspect that there are a lot of you, in fact, who have been invited to various festivities where you are to be a part, perhaps even at a table of honor with some dignitary. I wonder if there are some here today who have been invited to sup with a president or with a monarch. I suspect that there are some here today that have been invited to do so. Paul is talking about more than that. Paul is not talking about you being given a table for one night at some festivity with the king of kings. He's talking about you being given intimate access into the private chambers of the king of the universe. You've been granted an ongoing access to God. Perhaps many of you read just a few days ago in the local papers about some Mississippians who were called together to counsel and advise the president-elect. Think if you were given this privilege, you were going to be given the ear of the president-elect. And over the next four years of his service, you are going to be advising him on crucial issues and sharing your heart with him. Think of the honor of that. Well, Paul is saying that we now have the privilege of going into the throne room of the one true God and pouring out the desires of our hearts in accordance with His will and fellowshiping with Him. We have communion with God.

As Moses was bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt and into the land of Canaan, it's very clear that for Moses, Canaan wasn't the big show. God was the big show. Canaan was nice, but what Moses really wanted was to see the face of God. Moses wanted intimate access into the fellowship. You know the Israelites miss that point sometimes. They are oftentimes given the option, "Okay, you can have Canaan without the presence of God. What do you want? Okay, all for Canaan," and they were ready to go. But not Moses. Moses would have rather have done without Canaan, if only he could have fellowship with God; to see him face to face. And at one point in the wilderness, he even asked God to reveal Him his glory. The audacity of that request. And you know what God does? God passes before Moses, and He shows him His back. And we're told in the Old Testament that there was no prophet like Moses to whom the Lord spoke face to face. And Moses desired that above all else, even above Canaan. It's a good thing, too, isn't it? Moses never got Canaan, but he got God. I wonder whether God in His goodness decided not to give Canaan to Moses, because it would

have been very disappointing. But God was not. And you see what Paul is saying here. It's not just Moses who gets God. It's all those who are justified by faith, who have access into the very presence of God. It's one of the implications of justification. If your great desire is truly to glorify and enjoy God forever, well then the apostle Paul is saying that justification brings that about. The enjoyment of God forever.

### **III. Justification means a certain future hope of glorification.**

But he's not done. There's a third thing here that Paul says is an implication of our justification. You see it at the end of verse 2. Justification means the final hope belongs to us. That final hope of glory is ours. Justification means a certain future hope of glorification. Justification means peace with God. Justification means communion with God, but justification means a certain hope of that future glorification.

I want you to notice how Paul continually says "we" in this chapter. It's actually begun in the verses immediately prior in Romans 4, verses 24 and 25 where Paul has been talking about what is ours. Here he says, "We, we, we, we have this, we have this, we have this." What better way for Paul to make the point that the promises of God in Genesis 12 and 15 and 17 to Abraham belong to you if you trust in God through Jesus Christ. They're your promises. We have peace with God. We have access into this grace in which we stand. We have this certain hope of future glory. Those promises are for you. They're not just for Abraham. When you are studying Genesis 12 and following, you're not just studying interesting Bible history, you are studying God's word of promise to you. Paul is saying, "It's yours."

Well, what does he mean that we exult in hope of the glory of God. What does he mean the glory of God? This phrase, you see, assures us that the future glory is one that we will share in the consummation. We will participate in the glory of God's own glory in the end. The lost glory of God's image will be restored to us in full. What Adam lost for us in the fall will be restored to the full, so that we are once again what God made us to be without any defect, without any imperfection, absolutely righteous, absolutely splendid. It's called glorification. But what does glory of God mean? Why does Paul talk about that kind of glorification and use the language, "We exult in hope of the glory of God." Does he say that because God is the author of glorification or does he say that because God is the author of His own glory? Well, those things are true, but I suspect that he means something more here. His focus is on something different.

Remember that the entire New Testament, and especially Paul, emphasizes that in the consummation God's own glory is going to be manifested. In the consummation God Himself is going to display, He is going to unveil His glory. In this world God's glory has been veiled. Our sin has blinded our eyes as to how

glorious He is. This fallen world has blinded our eyes to how glorious He is. It's veiled some of His glory. Even Jesus Christ to a certain extent is veiled to our eyes in this world, though he is the manifestation of the glory of God. When He came, His own received Him not. But then God's glory will be open for all to see. Everyone will see just how glorious He is and even our glorification will be a part of that. Our glorification is ultimately going to glorify the God of glory.

You remember in the Garden, Satan tempted Eve and Adam to believe that God was not good, that God was not truthful, and that God was not worth serving; that he was actually cheating them out of the fullness of life. Satan was determined to convince them that God was not worth living for. He wasn't glorious. And you remember Job. Satan implanted circumstances in the life of Job in order to produce thoughts in the mind of Job to discount the glory of God. So that Job would say, "All this pain, all this trial, all this loss; not even God is worth going through this." Because Satan desires God's people to think that God is not worth living for. And in the end the glory of God is going to be revealed. And everyone who has trusted in Jesus Christ will know that God was worth living for, and that His glory is beyond all question and all description. And the apostle Paul is saying, "You will be there, and you are going to be exhibit A that God is worth living for.

Now that's glorious news for a believer. To be looking forward to that final day of judgment and consummation, with the pure hope that it is going to be the day of your vindication and the day of the revelation of the glory of God. But my friends there's a problem, and the problem is for the unbeliever. Because when that glory is revealed, it will be too late for all those who have not trusted on God in Jesus Christ. It will be too late for all those who are not justified. And so now is the time, now is the day of your salvation, now is the day to cast your hope on the Lord. And then all these things will be true.

Have you noticed here how Paul says justification has implications for your past, for your present and for your future? You have peace with God. That peace with God refers to the alienation that you had with God because of your sins. Those past sins have been dealt with. You have access into the presence of God. Right now you have it in this age. You have this certain future hope of glory. See the implications of God's work for you are past, present and future. But now, now is the day that you receive salvation. Now is the day to trust in God. And when you do, you, too, will find blessings past, present and future flowing from the redeeming work of God in Jesus Christ to all who trust in Him. But that you must do. You must trust in God.

Now if you already trust in God, use this final hymn that we are going to sing to reinforce the glorious things that God has done for you in Christ's past, present and future. But if you haven't trusted in God, use this hymn as a prayer to God that He would open your eyes, to behold the truth about yourself, that you're alienated, and the truth about His grace that He has reconciled all who trust in

Him through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. And use it to pray, to trust in Him.  
Let's pray.

Our Lord and our God, the peace which passes understanding is just that. That you have granted us enemies, renegades, radicals, peace, communion and the hope of glory is beyond all thinking. And that's precisely what You have done. We praise You for it in Jesus' name, Amen.

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