

Unit II. Faith and Salvation

Seeking Reconciliation

DEVOTIONAL READING: Isaiah 53:1-12

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Romans 5:1-11

PRINT PASSAGE: Romans 5:1-11

KEY VERSE

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:1, KJV)

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Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:1, NIV)

Lesson Aims

As a result of experiencing this lesson, you should be able to do these things:

- Identify the relationship between faith in Christ and justification in the sight of God.
- Repent of personal failures to obtain the peace that God gives.
- Celebrate your justification through faith in Christ.

*Key Terms

Access (verse 2)—Greek: *prosagóge* (pros-ag-ogue-ay'): a bringing to; to have contact with.

Glory (verse 2)—Greek: *doxa* (dox'-ah): praise; honor; the unspoken manifestation of God.

Grace (verse 2)—Greek: *charis* (khar'-ece): a gift or blessing brought to man by Jesus Christ; kindness.

Hope (verse 2)—Greek: *elpis* (el-pece'): expectation; trust; confidence.

Justified (verse 1)—Greek: *dikaioó* (dik-ah-yo'-o): shown to be righteous; declared righteous.

Peace (verse 1)—Greek: *eiréné* (i-ray'-nay): oneness; quietness; rest; peace of mind.

*(Word Study Supplement—Refer to page 2)



The Biblical Context

In the first part of chapter 5, Paul examined the meaning of righteousness by faith. This week's lesson deals with the effects of the righteousness by faith upon the believer. It addresses reconciliation and justification by God through our faith, which we claim and should proclaim in God. The lesson will bring new meaning to the song and thought of amazing grace. The lesson is from the opening chapters of the book of Romans, where Paul makes plain the need for salvation from sin for all of humanity, Jews and Gentiles alike. After Paul makes plain the need, he transitions to revealing the remedy for our sin state in chapter 4 as he reintroduces us to Abraham by shining a light on his justification of righteousness by his faith in God (see Romans 4:3). Though the Law is established, it is a guide for holy living and does not make one righteous, for it is by faith and not works that we are saved and counted as righteous in the eyesight of God. Just as Abraham walked by faith, we too are called by God to do the same.

Introduction

Broken relationships usually involve someone's being hurt or disappointed. Many people live with the pain, guilt, and regret over the actions that cause personal, professional, spiritual, or family relationships to unravel. Countless relationships fail due to a simple misunderstanding, an accident or unintentional failure, words or actions that occur in the heat of the moment, or because of a calculated plan of retaliation or deceit. Many fathers and mothers live with regret of an estranged or lost son or daughter and wish for a rekindled relationship with their children. Meanwhile, many adults reflect on a troubled childhood, wishing they could reverse the regrettable actions of their youthful years and follow a different path. Although the work of healing broken relationships may not be easy, the truth is that many persons could find reconciliation if just one person was willing to make the first move. People endure years of unnecessary silent frustration and desperation because they have refused or neglected to be reconciled to those whom they

once loved or cared about. Writer Max Lucado has said that "behind the frantic expressions of the faces of humanity is unresolved regret." Eventually, the task of living joyfully will include seeking reconciliation with others. The task becomes easier for those who understand the work of Christ to reconcile us to God the Father. The fact that Christ made His greatest sacrifice on our behalf, while we were yet sinners (see Romans 5:8), should move us to seek reconciliation with those with whom we have experienced betrayal, conflict, or misunderstanding.

ANALYSIS OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT

On Trust (Romans 5:1-5)

KJV

THEREFORE BEING *justified* by faith, we have *peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 By whom also we have *access* by faith into this *grace* wherein we stand, and rejoice in *hope* of the *glory* of God.

3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

NIV

THEREFORE, SINCE we have been *justified* through faith, we have *peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

2 through whom we have gained *access* by faith into this *grace* in which we now stand. And we boast in the *hope* of the *glory* of God.

3 Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance;

4 perseverance, character; and character, hope.

5 And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

The thought of "having been declared righteous by faith" has been a recurring theme from Romans 3:21. Paul reconnects to the theme again here by reminding the reader that those who have been justified by faith have peace with God through Jesus Christ (**verse 1**). This peace allows us access to God, in whom we trust, by faith (**verse 2**). Because of this authenticated access, we are strengthened to rejoice and celebrate not only our hope in God (**verse 2**) but also to "glory" when confronted with worldly pressures as we understand that this process is actually strengthening our faith and hope in God (**verses 3-5**). Do not wallow in your sufferings, but shout "GLORY" to God! In all your suffering and tribulations, be mindful that they are not without a reward. Consider for a moment that your trials are akin to steppingstones, creating a pathway to the other side. Testing brings the response of endurance. Endurance produces character. The outcome of all of this is hope, a hope that trusts in the Lord and produces no disappointment. This trust acknowledges that even though our hope is centered on God and the future He has planned for us (see Romans 8:24-25), it has a far greater implication in the important possession of the presence of God by His love poured into us by the Holy Spirit. The abundance of this love in the heart of the justified saint flows outwardly into humanity through outreach and is the one true distinguishing sign of Christians as stated by Jesus Himself (see John 13:34-35). This love, poured out into our hearts with a very present hope that does not disappoint and need not be ashamed, has its supreme example as that of God's love for us. Trust Him through the fire—for something far greater is being forged.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Share a time when you were very overwhelmed and could only trust God. How did you feel and handle the situation?

On Time (Romans 5:6-8)

KJV

6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

NIV

6 You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.

7 Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die.

8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

God's love is so amazing that it allows His grace to reach us just when we need it most. Paul continued lifting up the awesomeness of our God by sharing how at the right time and in the fullness of time, when humanity was at its weakest point—with a world filled with wickedness, idolatry, and corruption—Christ died for the ungodly (**verse 6**). Those who were considered outcasts and unworthy of God's love were counted in the all-encompassing love of our God. To drive home the uniqueness of the sacrifice of Christ, Paul pricks at our human nature. It is extremely rare for a person to die for someone whom we consider righteous (**verse 7**). It is more likely that we would consider dying for someone we count as a good person—though not necessarily die for the person but “might” consider doing so (**verse 7**). Dying for a good person would fall in line with dying or sacrificing for a cause that a person feels is just and worthy. Consider the mindset or the thoughts of those who marched and died for civil rights with the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Medgar Evers, Dorothy Heights, and others. International examples would include those who died in the cause while fighting social injustices with Mahtma Ghandi/Gandhi and Nelson Mandela. Keeping this in mind, how much rarer is it that someone would put his/her life on the line for someone we consider ungodly, foul, or just an unapologetic, out-and-out sinner? Yet, this is exactly what God did. God proved His love for us by sending Christ to die in our place while we were still sinners (**verse 8**). God did not wait for us to get our religion right to demonstrate how much He loves us. He chose to die for me, you, our children, our children's children, and a future generation yet to be conceived while we are still weakened by sin. It is this amazing grace offer that God continues to present through Jesus Christ.

?WHAT DO YOU THINK?

We all have on-time testimonies about God's grace manifested in our lives. Why do you think people fail to sincerely seek reconciliation with God and others?

On Testimony (Romans 5:9-11)

KJV

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

NIV

9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!

10 For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!

11 Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Paul now seeks to pull the message together by sharing that since we are made righteous by the blood of God's Lamb, Christ Jesus, we are saved from God's wrath (**verse 9**). His atoning blood justifies us, placing us in right standing with God. Christ is more than the buffer between God and humanity—He is the bridge. Jesus has paid my debts and wiped the slate clean, and now I can come into God's presence without fear of death. With Christ living in us, we have access to the benefits and blessings of God, allowing us to live better and more productive lives on earth until our time comes to dwell with God forever in Glory. Paul drives this reality home by stating that if, while we were enemies of God (wrapped in wretched sin), God reconciled us back to Himself by the blood and death of Jesus, how much more then shall our lives be saved by the life of Christ (**verse 10**)? This new life is highlighted even more by Paul as he emphasizes the joy we have in God through Christ because we received the gracious gift of atonement which Jesus paid for us all (**verse 11**). We have been saved from sin's ending our relationship with God. We have escaped the penalty of death, permanent separation from God, allowing us life eternally. Paul concludes with the testimonial joy we should all share to the world. He gives approval to boast and tell others that "God so loved me, that Christ died to pay the penalty for my sin." We who are now reconciled with God can facilitate this same reconciliation by loving God and loving one another.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

How can our testimonies draw others to Christ?

A Closing Thought

As you consider the Amazing Grace of God on your life, consider the many people who work outside of a relationship with God. God has saved us to be glorious displays of His love in the world. Because of all God has done for us, we should wake up every day asking, "What more can I do?"

Your Life

This week, meditate on your faith and salvation. Consider how God has reconciled you back to Him and the many times He saved you from sin and shame.

Your World!

This week, after you have thoroughly meditated on your relationship with God and His amazing grace upon your life, consider three people with whom you have never shared the Good News of Jesus Christ. Introduce them to Jesus through your testimony(ies). Pray for a strategic focus and delivery that will guide them to Christ.

Closing Prayer

Dear Lord, we are so grateful for Your reconciling power. Help us seek reconciliation with others just as we have done with You. May we be the bridge to help someone get closer to Christ. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

Conclusion

(Preparing for Next Week's Lesson)

While reading the background Scripture, consider this thought: "From where do we seek confidence?"

Home Daily Bible Readings

MONDAY , July 26	"Obey God with Heart and Voice"	(Deuteronomy 30:6-14)
TUESDAY , July 27	"God's Salvation Is Announced"	(Isaiah 52:1-10)
WEDNESDAY , July 28	"Call on the Name of the Lord"	(Joel 2:28-32)
THURSDAY , July 29	"Gentiles Believe by Faith"	(Galatians 3:6-14)
FRIDAY , July 30	"For the Salvation of the Gentiles"	(Romans 10:1-4)
SATURDAY , July 31	"Regret for Not Hearing Christ's Word"	(Romans 10:18-21)
SUNDAY , August 1	"Salvation Is for All People"	(Romans 10:5-17)

Notes
