

**Romans ch. 5 v. 1-5**

*Additional Reading from Psalm 103*

Introduction

Previously have looked at the crucial issue of how men and women in sin, with no righteousness of their own, can be accounted and blessed as righteous people. It was a free gift to us – but not a cheap one because it cost the creator and judge everything that was most precious to him, to purchase what was made over as a gift to us.

This gift is received by faith. Reliance upon another is the only way of salvation. We may be all very well with these theological terms, but what will it do for me now and in the future, will it last and continue to the end, will it make any practical difference to my daily life, will it stand the wear and tear of human need? The answers to these questions are found in chapter 5. We find

- (1) The major blessings which it brings.
- (2) Practical value in daily life.
- (3) How can we be sure?

Major Blessings of Justification

We have peace. We have obtained access into this grace. We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. On closer examination these relate to the three tenses of salvation, they relate to past, present and future.

(a) **We have peace with God** (5:1). Some versions translate verse 1 as “We have peace” εχομεν , and others as “Let us have peace” εχωμεν – only one letter difference in the Greek, and it makes no practical difference. Peace with God is a foundation need. No blessings without this need is met. While past sins shut us out from his presence and expose us to his wrath, we have no hope of anything. Sin question must be settled. Need to come to position of peace with him. Because of Christ’s sin-bearing death, old hostility is put away, wrath is taken away, the gulf is bridged, and therefore we are at peace. There is nothing between us and God. **“Having made peace through the blood of his cross”** (Colossians 1:20).

We cannot enjoy the peace of God until we have peace with God. Our basic need is not the peace of God, or peace of mind, or just peace. It is peace with God that is based and grounded on atonement. He bore our sin by his death – propitiation. **Now there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus** (Romans 8:1). Justice is satisfied. The accusations of conscience are at an end. Fear of death and judgement has gone.

*“The terrors of law and of God  
With me can have nothing to do.  
My Saviour’s obedience and blood  
Hides all my transgressions from view”  
(A.M. Toplady)*

*“The blood of Jesus whispers peace within”*

Have we got there?

(b) **We have obtained access by faith into this grace wherein we stand** (5:2). Our present position. The NEB translates this “We have been allowed to enter the sphere of God’s grace”. The Greek word *προσῳγωγή* implies ushered into the presence of royalty. Jesus has ushered us into the presence of God (we have no right into God’s presence as we are) and in his presence we find grace and sheer undeserved favour and kindness of God. Continual supply for continual need. In position and state of grace. God sees us in a new way. He looks on us now with favour, with a smile not a frown. He delights to receive and bless us. All we receive is from his grace. An abundance is waiting for us. All the riches of his grace and glory are at our disposal.

Hence there need be no anxious care, **he is able to supply all our needs according to his riches in glory** (Phil 4:19). We are in a position to pray with confidence and assurance knowing we are heard because we are in this position of grace. We are princes and children of the King, therefore we should act on it. **Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord** (Romans 8:39). All this should banish doubt, uncertainty and hesitancy, because we are standing in grace.

(c) **We rejoice in hope of the glory of God** (5:2). The glory of God is heaven – our future. The sight of God himself. “Beautiful vision” In heaven God is to be fully revealed. To see his glory and share in it. This is our “hope” – not a vain wish, but absolute confidence and certainty. J.B.Philips translates this as “in the happy certainty of glorious things he has for us in the future”. We are so sure, we can rejoice in it already. The very prospect should thrill our being. It is the final goal of our faith, the real objective of salvation. Face to face with God. Need to make more of glorification.

*“Then let our songs abound  
And every tear be dry  
We’re marching through Immanuel’s ground  
To fairer worlds on high”*

So beautifully balanced summary of Christian life in relationship to God – peace, grace and glory.

#### Practical value in daily living

This is alright for Sunday but what about Monday morning at 9am. **We glory in tribulations also** (5:3). The Greek word *θλίψις* means pressure. There are all kinds of pressures on the Christian – want and need, persecution, sorrow, difficulties, unpopularity and loneliness – all pressures from godless and hostile world. There is no more revealing test of our profession than the way we react to troubles and tribulations. The hour of crisis and the time of real need is the acid test. If our faith does not help us then, it is no use. What have we got to fall back on when “*troubles like sea billows roll*”? When tribulations come, it is not enough to say we do not grumble or that we put up with it in a spirit of resignation. We are told to glory in our

tribulations. That is fantastic. Not glory in spite of them or in the midst of them, but glory in them, because of them and on account of them!

Elsewhere Paul said **I glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me** (2 Cor. 12:9). It does not mean that we like our tribulations. That would be unnatural, like psychological oddities. But we are to glory in the experience because God's purposes are promoted in moulding our character. **Tribulation works patience** (5:3) or fortitude. Not just passively endure, but actively overcome. Steadfastness. Thrown back on the Lord for more strength. **Patience or steadfastness works experience** (5:4) or character – reveals that we really are Christians.

Character produces hope. Maturity brings hope of future glory. Ripening character is evidence that God is at work on and within us. Therefore increases assurance of coming glory. Affliction and tribulation bring about more certainty than ever. Hence we glory because we are more certain of coming glory. As we have fresh experiences of his strength and grace in all our trials, we find further proof of his gracious purposes for us. Practical proof is so convincing.

#### Grounds of assurance

But could it be that this hope is just wishful thinking? Has it got real substance to it? **Hope maketh not ashamed** (5:5) ie. It does not disappoint us. It is no mockery. How can we be so sure? **Because God's love has been poured out in our hearts through his holy spirit who was given to us.** The solid foundation on which we rest our hope and glory is the love of God. We believe we are to arrive home and get safely to glory because we see God's hand forming our character and also because of a sense of his love to us in our hearts.

God's love has been poured out and flooded our heart through the Holy Spirit. Vividly and inwardly aware that God loves us. There is a parallel with Romans 8:16 **The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.** This sense of flooding is permanent, sense of the love of God is continual. Direct and immediate assurance of the love of God. Highest form of assurance available to us. Direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the heart, giving absolute certain knowledge and therefore heirs of coming glory. cf "earnest" and "foretaste".

Can be a Christian without this assurance though not without the Holy Spirit. Hence Paul's prayer for the Ephesians that they **might know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge** (Eph. 3:19). This is indeed something to be prayed for. Someone once said the greatest thing we can desire is our salvation, the sweetest thing we can desire is assurance of salvation. **How much more will our heavenly father give the holy spirit...** (Luke 11:13).

*"O love divine how sweet thou art  
I thirst, I find, I die to prove  
The greatness of redeeming love  
The love of Christ to me"*

To hope is not a disappointment. The man with hope is not only going to overcome these trials but glory in them. Assurance helps a man to bear trials, face death, support

in pain, a strong and decided Christian. Down the ages men of God have smiled in the face of cruel men putting them to death. The secret – they knew exactly where they were going. So certain of coming glory. We may experience difficulties, but with this hope – never be put to shame, feel ashamed or be disappointed.

### Conclusion

- Justification brings peace, grace and glory.
- It extends to daily life.
- The work of God in our lives is confirmed by assurance through the Holy Spirit.