

Justification by Grace Through Faith: The Application (Part 3)

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[0:00] Well, let's take our Bibles tonight and open them to Hebrews.

! No, not Hebrews, Romans. Romans chapter 5. And let me go ahead and read, starting with verse 1, and then we'll just kind of go on down to about where we're going to stop tonight.

And we'll be far. We'll be far. Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand. We now stand. And rejoice.

Rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance.

[1:11] Perseverance, character, character, hope. Now, hope does not disappoint. Because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

And I've read five verses. And we're not going to get that far tonight. But Paul's subject, just to remind you, keep it right there in front of you as we look at Romans.

His subject is, the larger subject is justification. Justification by grace through faith. That's what he's talking about here. And that's what we've been talking about as we've been looking through these, well, the first four chapters.

And I don't know how many Sunday nights ago it was that we got into chapter 5 and looked at a verse or two there. That's the subject. And he's showing us here in chapter 5 its application.

Justification is application to our lives. And it's manifold. Works itself out in so many different ways. Different things.

[2:24] Different realities. Different blessings. And so I would say that what he's saying here is, this is what happens to us. Those of us who are born again.

Those of us who are justified. This is what happens to us. This is the result of it. These are the benefits of it. That is justification applied to our lives.

Now, to review just a little bit. It's been a while since we've been looking at Romans. At least on Sunday nights. You may have been studying it on your own. I don't know.

But to remind you that the first four chapters of this marvelous book. This marvelous letter to the Romans. The first four chapters were written in a sense for all believers.

Excuse me. All readers. Both believing and unbelieving. There's a message for both here. But chapters 5 to 8 were written for those who are believers.

[3:28] Written for those who are already saved. They are addressed to those who have been saved by grace through faith. And the opening words of chapter 5 make that very clear.

Therefore, he said, having been justified. Having been justified by faith. That is all we could say. Since we have been justified by faith.

So you know the audience that is directed toward those who are justified. Those who are saved. Since we have been justified. We have, he says.

We have what? Well, a bunch of things. A whole host of things that we have. Glorious things. Wondrous things.

And Paul identifies many of them. And I wouldn't say that his list is exhausted. Though I guess it's probably pretty close. Maybe it is. A whole list of things he's going to describe for us.

[4:32] Throughout chapter 5. And really beyond chapter 5. And all of these things are glorious possessions. Belonging to born again followers of Jesus Christ.

Alright. And what are they? Well, we've already identified a couple of them. In verses 1 and 2. And let's just review real quickly. So we kind of keep this running.

As we go along. And keep all of these square in our minds. And really we need to review. Because the first few are foundational. And all of the rest of them.

As they unfold for us in chapter 5. Build upon that. The foundation. And so the first one is peace with God. Peace with God.

That's what he says in verse 1. And therefore having been justified by faith. We have peace with God. And peace with God. Was of course accomplished.

[5:33] And declared. Through the redemptive work of Christ. You cannot. See you cannot have peace. In any context. In the spiritual sense.

And not even in the secular. Or worldly sense. You can't have peace. Until there is clear victory. You can't have peace without victory. That is victory over the enemy.

The enemy must be defeated. And for us. It is sin. Death. And Satan. And that is what Jesus Christ accomplished.

Through his death and resurrection. He accomplished victory for us. And. Therefore peace. And so. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Peace. Peace has been established. Between the believer and God. Alright. Peace. With God. Now that's again. The foundational gift of justification.

[6:28] Of our salvation. A foundation upon which all the other benefits rest. The second one. Is access to God. He says.

Therefore having been justified by faith. We have peace with God. Through our Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 2. Through whom. That is through Jesus. We also. We have access.

By faith. We have access. And so. Because we have peace with God. We now have. Free. Unlimited. Access to God.

That's not a cell phone commercial. Okay. Access to God. Peace with God. Access to God. And then third. Grace. From God. Or maybe.

Grace. Before God. Verse 2. Through whom also. We have access. By faith. Into this. Grace.

[7:23] Grace. In which we stand. Grace. In which we stand. We have a. Firm. Immovable.

Permanent. Standing. A standing. Of grace. With God. Not because we deserve it. Not because we. Did any particular thing. To earn it. But it's God's grace. And it comes through Christ. And it's firm. It's immovable. It's permanent. It's a standing. A standing. A standing of grace. Do you know where you stand. With God. I hope you do. Looking at me.

With real blank. Faces. I hope that's not an indication. Of something missing there. Do you know where you stand. With God. Well through faith.

[8:20] Faith. In. In the redemptive work. Of Christ. You stand. Justified. Before God. Again. Not to belabor the definition.

But. You stand. Before God. As though. As though. You. Had never sinned. Against him. I know that's hard to. Hard to get a hold of.

We're talking. I'm talking about. Of. Of. Of. Of. Of. Some. Idea. That you. Could reach a place. Where you stop sinning. We're talking about.

A position. A standing. Before God. The way God. In his grace. Chooses to see you. He chooses to see you. In Christ. Because he's placed you there.

And so that's what justification is. Is that. As if you'd never sinned. Against God. As if you had never. Ever broken. Any of his laws. As though you had always. On the positive side.

[9:17] As though you had always. Obeyed. Every law. That he gave. Everything. Obeyed him. In all things. That's what it means. To be justified. And.

Your hope of heaven. Is dependent. Upon that standing. It is. And that's what the Bible means. When it describes Christians. As those who are in Christ.

In Christ. Fourth. Hope. In God. Again. This is just for you. Hope in God. Verse 2. And.

We rejoice. We rejoice. In what? In hope. Of the glory of God. Hope of the glory of God. Now. See. Our salvation. That we have. Is anchored. Firmly anchored. In hope. Not a hope so. Not a hope maybe.

[10:15] Kind of thing. And you're not just really sure. You're just hoping so. And that's how we use the word hope. Typically in our language. But hope in the sense of something sure. And it's anchored in it.

And. And really. In three. Three. Tenses. It's. Our hope is anchored in a past event. Which is the cross. And the resurrection.

Because through Christ. We have peace with God. That's. That's our. Our past hope. We have peace with God. Because of a past event. And. Nothing else needs to happen. To accomplish that. Or. Nothing. Needs to happen again. To. Keep that intact. We have peace with God. Because. Our hope is in a past event. The cross. The resurrection.

It's also anchored in the present. And we see. We see that. Here. In these benefits. Of our justification. Anchored in the present. Because Christ. Because through Christ.

[11:14] We have access to God. Our hope is in that. Every day. That we have access to God. Not. I hope. We still do. It is. I know I do. That's. That's what this hope is.

I have access to God. Not because. I'm worthy. Or. Because. God just. You know. He's in a good mood. On a particular day. But we have access.

And limited access. That's. That's our hope. Anchored in the present. And. And also. We can add to that. Because Christ. Because through Christ. We have. A standing. An eternal standing. Of grace. Before God. And. That's. Our hope. In. That's anchored in the present. And really. In that sense. That leads us.

On into the future. Because. It's an eternal hope. Of. Of a standing. Of grace. Before God. That cannot. End. Cannot. Be done away with. But.

[12:12] But then. It's also. Anchored in the future. Our hope. Is anchored in the future. Because. Through Christ. We have the hope of glory. Hope of glory. That's to say. One day.

We shall be robed. In righteousness. And. We shall be clothed. With the glory. Of God. And we shall behold him. In all of his glory.

That's. A tremendous hope. And it's not a maybe thing. It's a sure thing. These are the benefits. The. The. The results of. Of.

Our justification. By grace. Through faith. Now we're ready to move on. Forward. That was all review. Ready to go forward. And this is a big one.

And it may. At first glance. Seem out of place here. You say. Preacher. I thought you were talking. About benefits. And now you're going to talk. About tribulation. That's the next thing.

[13:07] On the list. Big thing. And we may not like it. At first. But. But. It's part of the list. Peace with God. Access.

To God. Grace. From God. Hope. In God. And then. Fourth. Glory. In. Or in parentheses. As a result of.

Tribulation. And glory. In the sense of. Of. Rejoicing in it. Now. He said that just. I just don't know if I.

That I find that. Tribulation. Suffering. You see. Our problem is. Is.

Geometry. Geometry. Geometry. See. If I can. Explain that. You were to take a piece of paper. And draw a line on it. And.

[14:01] That line. Representing. Eternity. And then. With your pencil. Put a dot. On that line. Somewhere. Anywhere on there. That would.

Represent. Where. You are. Where you are. On that line. Of eternity. And I mean. Where you are. From the time you were born. To the time.

That you die. That dot. Represents. In fact. That's a bit ambitious. Because. It would not even show up. As a dot. On the line. Of eternity. That's where.

That's where you are. Now. If you live. For the dot. This is the best way. I think we can illustrate. If you live.

For the dot. And that's it. And everything. In your life. Pertains. To the dot. The way you live.

[14:59] The. Aspirations. You have. Your hopes. Your efforts. Your energies. The way you react.

To the things. That occur. In the dot. If all of it. Is wrapped up. With the dot. Then you do not have. A perspective. Of eternity.

And therefore. You're not going to understand. What Paul is saying. And you're not. Certainly not. Going to buy in. To the idea. That tribulations. Sufferings.

Afflictions. Are part of the. Benefits. Of justification. Part of the. Wonderful.

Glorious. Results. Of our. Our. Standing. Before God. You're not going to see that. And even if you.

[15:55] See that. Tonight. Because things. Are going pretty well. For you now. Tomorrow. You may. Not see it. And if. You know.

Next week. And the week after. Tornado comes through. And blows our town away. As it did. In some parts. Of the south. This last week. Suddenly. You're going to grapple. With this idea. Of looking beyond. The dot. Eternity. Looking into eternity. Now we do live on the dot. Alright.

The dot is where we live. That's where we are. Right now. And the things that happen. You know. They're happening. On the dot. And. That is in our. Our life span.

But there is more. Than this dot. That we call life. Or. Paul. In Paul's work. He didn't use the word dot. He used vapor. Mist.

[16 : 53] Really. A word that. Describes. What happens. When you're boiling water. With a teapot. And you see that. Steam coming out. And it just. It looks kind of. Like smoke at first. And then it just. Disappears.

It's gone that quick. That's how. Paul described the dot. And so. If. We need to understand. That there's more. To this dot.

That we call life. In fact. For a believer. The best. Is yet to come. You see. And. Isn't that good? And the older we get. And the more afflictions. We. Endure. The more we understand that. There is something. There is more than this. There's got to be. And.

And really. It's not just more. It's the best. The best. Is yet. To come. And so. The question is. Why can't we seem to handle.

[17 : 49] Many of the things. That go on in this life. This. Speck. That we. This speck. That we. We. We. We. We. We. And we. Seem to handle. Those things. It's because.

We're. Looking at it wrong. And we're looking at what God. Not looking rather. At what God has given us. In. In Christ. And we don't realize.

The glorious hope. Of the future. We don't keep that. Ever before our eyes. Not that we're living with our heads. Up in the clouds. you know as the old adage goes you know so heavily minded you know earthly good I think probably most of us could stand to be a little more heavily minded but I'm talking about you know just living up there in our minds up in the clouds in heaven you know in that sense but we're not really looking there not keeping that before us this glorious hope of the future that's out there in eternity that is the best that's yet to come and we're not looking out there and seeing and knowing and hoping that we're going to one day that we will one day see him in all of his glory we're not looking at it that way well look at our text and it seems as you consider this kind of dramatic shift here or it seems like that to us it doesn't seem like that it's not that way with Paul as you look at this kind of move toward you know from the hope of the glory of God that brings us up there into the clouds you know into heaven and then move to tribulation it it seems so abrupt and yet and yet

I would suggest to you that Paul is anticipating his readers here the way they're thinking you know and they might be thinking what some of you are thinking I mean we we kind of like to stay there in that first part of the chapter and so Paul's anticipating that you know if I have eternal peace with God and unlimited access to God and I have an eternal standing of grace before God and if I if I have a hope of the glorious future with God if I have all of those things through Christ then how do I live while I'm down here how can I bear the pain of living in this world this world of suffering and hardship and tribulation how can I do that well like it or not the answer to what God accomplishes the answer is what God accomplishes through tribulation believe it or not it's the answer what God is doing to that and so rather than it being a curse or rather than it being you know the you know just the nasty part of life that you just have to accept it's actually a gift from God

I tell you it's difficult to see it this way but in verses 3 to 5 and we're not going to get all the way through these Paul reveals four and I might really add a fifth we'll get to that next time hopefully but at least four answers to to to this dilemma this this problem first God enables us now don't miss this God actually through justification God actually enables us to rejoice in our tribulations to actually rejoice in and if you don't believe that you don't believe the Bible sometimes I don't believe it it's right here and other places in scripture not only that but we also glory in tribulations not only all these good things that's how we might put it but also God allows us to glory in our tribulations he grants that to us that we could actually glory in it that is rejoice in our tribulations now the word tribulation just to make sure we understand here war tribulation is the

[22 : 31] Greek word flips us it's a good thing nobody's sitting down here and it means this and don't think that the definition is going to somehow soften it some to make us feel better about it it means literally a crushing stress or press upon us that's what it means not just a hard time but

literally a crushing pressure upon us that's what it means to be burdened down heavily to be troubled to be under a severe stress of some kind that's tribulation and don't confuse this as some have with the great tribulation it seems that some form their eschatology concerning the tribulation and whether or not

Christians are going to be going through it or going to be spared it based upon kind of a carte blanche application of the word tribulation everywhere appears in the Bible yeah Christians are going to have tribulation but we're not going through the great tribulation praise God 1 Thessalonians 5:9 I think makes that pretty clear that we are not destined for the wrath of God wrath of God in the sense in the context of the tribulation we're not to confuse it with that but while we are here on this world walking on this planet living in that dot our dot we are going to suffer we're going to have tribulation it's going to be a part of our human experience and we should not be surprised about that because the Bible says very clearly this is going to happen Jesus himself said John 16:33 these things I have spoken to you that in me you may have peace and we like that part in the world you have tribulation but take courage for I have overcome the world now some of you are thinking well when

Paul mentioned tribulation for the believer he's talking about persecution and he is but not just persecution it's more than that that word tribulation involves persecution but it also involves suffering of every conceivable kind and everyone on this fallen earth and that's where we live every one of us are going to have to suffer we're going to experience suffering it comes primarily the primary answer is that it comes from original sin started way back there in the garden of Eden when Adam sinned Adam and Eve sinned our parents sinned and fell and this world is a fallen world there's sin in this world and while I'm here on this earth I'm going to suffer not only because of original sin but because of my sin sometimes and on an ethic because of other people's sins we do suffer because of other people's sins we live on a fallen planet now certainly persecution is a part of the tribulation

I might come back to that for a minute and you know the apostle Paul if anybody! knew a thing or two about persecution and listen to what he wrote in 2 Corinthians 4 verses 8 and 9 we are afflicted in every way he said every way but not crushed we are perplexed sometimes we are perplexed but not despairing we are persecuted but not forsaken we are struck down but not destroyed it's a tremendous verse 2 Corinthians 6:4 let me add that one to it if you are jotting these down but in everything commending ourselves as servants of God we are servants of God we belong to him and how did he commend himself in that sense in much endurance in afflictions in hardships in distresses in beatings in imprisonments in tumults in labors in sleeplessness in hunger this is how Paul described his life and it was somehow a part of his commendation to them as a servant of the Lord that's what identified him as a servant of the Lord does that identify you as a servant of the Lord well yeah we do suffer I don't think we could compare ours with Paul in fact I would dare not do that if Paul were to appear here and you know and I could just have a little chat with him I would not dare say to him Paul you just don't know how hard it is to live a Christian life here you know I mean people actually laugh at us Paul would say they laugh at you that they say bad things about us too Paul and Paul I think very soon we may be losing our tax exempt rights Paul says that is that is well no

[28:15] Paul you just don't know the half of it I wouldn't try to compare our suffering our persecution with the apostle Paul but the apostle Paul when he was giving a letter of commendation that bore witness to his work as a servant of God he said we're doing it in much endurance and infliction and hardships and distress and beatings and imprisonments and tumults and labors and sleeplessness and hunger I don't know that any of those would apply to us not directly 2nd Corinthians 4:17 the apostle Paul makes really an amazing statement about all the afflictions that Christians can suffer not just persecution about all tribulation that he had endured even persecution he said this in momentary light affliction he described momentary light affliction that sounds more like how we would describe our sufferings momentary light affliction but you have to understand his point here for momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison that's an amazing statement

I don't think you got it let me read for momentary light affliction is doing something it's producing something what it's producing for us an eternal weight of glory he put that juxtaposed to the momentary light affliction he's talking about this light it's producing in us something eternal an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison you understand what Paul is saying he's saying

well actually he's giving testimony the fact that he doesn't live in the dot doesn't live for the dot dot's a part of it and you know he understands that and he did live out his life in the dot you know initially as a persecutor of Christ but when he was saved a mighty preacher missionary and an apostle born out of due season he didn't live for the dot in the dot but he didn't live for that dot without any mind of eternity he was living on the line that is everything in his life made sense in light of eternity was connected somehow with that in his mind and so he sees suffering in light of eternity no matter what the suffering is whether it's a failure of health and I think there's some pretty good evidence to suggest that

Paul had some failing health issues and certainly if you don't find it in scripture he was man of course he did die a martyr's death but I'm sure he had the normal kind of human affliction those are included in this and all the other things and he suffered in light of eternity and Paul realized that what he goes through what he was going through here was working out a far greater work for all eternity and so he calls it a momentary light affliction not attaching to his affliction some flippant kind of designation not suggesting to you that maybe some of the afflictions that you have come into your life are somehow minor trivial or they're somehow not significant that's not the idea he's just lumping it all together and saying that this momentary light affliction can't compare to what it's producing and will produce and what

I will one day realize in eternity that is you know this full weight the eternal weight of glory in fact I think we understand here in this passage in 2 Corinthians 4 that Paul was actually taking pleasure in this affliction now that just does not make sense to us at all because we live in the dock can't look beyond the dock he actually gloried took pleasure in 2 Corinthians chapter 12 verse 10 therefore he said I am well content with weaknesses insults!

distresses persecutions difficulties for Christ's sake but when I am weak he is strong he is strong and say that might identify another feature of our problem why we have such a problem with tribulations not only that we don't refuse to look beyond the dot but in a sense we're too strong in fact I think that's part of America's problem we're too strong that is in our own strength and Paul said just the opposite when I'm weak he is strong you see Paul really tells us and I've kind of focused more on Paul but of course Peter said some things about suffering and tribulation and of course in the gospels

[34 : 59] Jesus said some things about that I've kind of focused on Paul because Paul was the one who wrote Romans and Paul really told us over and over and over in scripture something about tribulations about sufferings that we need to understand Philippians 129 let me give you this one for to you it has been granted now pay attention to that word for to you it has been granted for Christ's sake not only to believe in him we like that but also to suffer for his sake been granted by the way the word granted here means gift that is to suffer for his sake for the sake of the Lord is given to us as a spiritual gift did you know that it's actually a gift I feel like everybody likes to talk about spiritual gifts and the church kind of at large kind of goes in and out of this infatuation about spiritual gifts and as a good infatuation we need to learn what the

Bible says about spiritual gifts and we need to discover what ours are we like to talk about spiritual gifts you know we like to talk about tongues some do I don't like to talk about miracles healing you know maybe even the gift of prophecy that is in the sense of you know being able to speak our mind that's what a lot of people think when they think about the gift of prophecy you know I just speak whatever's on my mind I've got the gift of prophecy I just don't like it is black or white no gray area here so I'm sorry I just have that gift you know what I mean and so we like to talk about all those gifts those spiritual gifts you know so we can talk about miracles and healings and all these things no let's talk about this one it has been granted to you to suffer for

Christ's sake in that sense it's a gift to all of God's children all of us now how in the world can Paul feel this way about tribulation well we go back to Romans chapter 5 verse 3 and we see a second thing and this is where we'll end it tonight not only God enables us to glory or rejoice in our tribulation but second God grants us the knowledge that tribulation brings about perseverance now he not only grants us the perseverance but I'm emphasizing the fact as Paul emphasizes here the knowledge of that the knowledge that tribulation brings about perseverance look at verse 3 again not only that but we also glory in tribulations and then what's that word there at least in most translations knowing some of you have your

Bibles open that's good knowing that tribulation produces perseverance we know that do we do we well let's think about this word knowing the word knowing in fact Paul really had at least three words

Greek language that he could have used that in our language would have been all three of them would have been translated know or knowing participle but the word knowing here does not refer to something we learn and so in that sense even though I hope to be teaching God's words so that we can understand and teaching is something that we need to do and God uses teaching to add to our fund of knowledge in our head that's a certain kind of knowing or knowledge it's that I've gone to school and I know certain things

I've learned certain things now that's not the word he uses that's the word ginosko in the Greek language and it means to learn knowledge the word that Paul used here is the word oida oida you're going to very quickly forget that but the idea with that word is an intuitive knowledge at least it can be used in that way and he in a sense used it in this way here an intuitive knowledge what does that mean it means that Paul is saying I've got a built in knowledge about something a built in understanding I've got a built in knowledge the world does not have it but every believer has it a built in knowledge that's oida you don't search the pages of scripture to find this knowledge in this sense though aspects of this knowledge are taught in scripture and we can expand our understanding of it and application of that knowledge this is something that's there that God has put there in us and we know it we just know it it's the same word by the way that Paul used in [40:58] Romans 8:28 that famous verse where the Bible says for we know we know that God causes all things to work together for good to them who love God to those who are called according to his purpose we know that all things work together for good we didn't learn that we know it as believers that's why I say again to you that all these things that Paul is listing in chapter 5 including tribulation and what that tribulation works is a benefit it's it's a gift from God it's it's what comes to us through our justification and this knowledge and what is it we know we know he's saying that tribulation produces perseverance we know that even in some sense not in the sense of an intuitive knowledge but in some sense even the pagan world knows and has applied that biblical truth and they know that perseverance is something that helps us grow even they know that but we know that in a greater way tribulation produces perseverance now the idea there is not that tribulation kind of moves us toward that or it just kind of kind of creates something or maybe through the tribulation we begin to understand or know that that that that and realize that we're now stronger than we were before the idea here is very interesting the word produces is a very specific word and it does not mean in the sense of of refitting you for something or changing something in you it means to work something out of you that's the idea brings about or to work something out fully out and so here's the idea when you put pressure see when you put pressure on something that's filled with something you put pressure on it and you squeeze it what's on the inside is going to come on the outside it's going to come out and so when the believer goes through tribulation and suffering of any kind in this life he knows that the thing tribulation will squeeze out of him or her is primarily something we desperately need now it does squeeze some other things out that we don't need too but the idea here is to bring out fully out in us what God has already placed there and what is it it's perseverance a patient enduring a perseverance a steadfastness and this is the gracious work of God through tribulation tribulation works out something that is already within me there is the ability placed in me that God puts there within me that I never had before

I was saved and when you put pressure on me it causes that ability to be worked out so that people can see it and so that you can see it I can see it and again what is it it's the ability to bear up under whatever comes my way to persevere to endure it whether it's the death of a family member a tornado that blows everything I own away including my family members or some traumatic experience at work or the loss of a job or downturn of the market or some financial system that wipes away your retirement whether it's turmoil in the family of every conceivable kind and there are many kinds that are horrendous and hard whether it's you know an incurable disease and I guess we could go on and on with it whatever it is that I've got to face while I'm here living in this dot I understand I know that it's squeezing out of me something I desperately need at that time and it's perseverance a patient endurance and then that produces a couple of other things that we'll have to wait till next time to see God produces in us a godly character and God fills us with hope and that hope is attached to something else see all these are kind of linked together that kind of builds as we go along