

Justification by Grace through Faith: The Application (Part 2)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 20 March 2011

Preacher: Don Coleman

[0:00] Romans chapter 5. Romans chapter 5 and let me read verses 1 through 11. That's the larger text.

! A smaller portion of it will be our focus tonight. Romans chapter 5 and let me read verses 1 through 11. Romans chapter 5 verses 1 through 11. Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have what?

Peace. Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have what? Access. Depends on your translation.

Access by faith into this grace in which we stand. And rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations.

Knowing. By the way, do you do that? Okay. Glory in tribulations. Knowing. At least we should know. That tribulation produces perseverance.

[1:20] Perseverance. Perseverance. Perseverance. 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.

For when we were still without strength in due time, Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.

But God demonstrates his own love toward us in that while we were yet still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

[2:29] All right, we'll stop right there. Now, you know, I think you know, that not everything you read in the Bible is addressed to any and all readers.

Not specifically addressed. Now, hold on before you get concerned about that. Paul is addressing a certain group of people.

And so when you read the Bible, especially the New Testament, especially as you get into the epistles that were written to the churches primarily, then you understand that not everything you read in the Bible is addressed to any and all readers.

I heard a story some years ago about a certain florist shop that had hired a new delivery boy. And on his first day on his own, he got a few things mixed up.

He had two deliveries to make that day. One was to a grand opening of a bank and the other was to a funeral home. Well, when the dignitaries arrived at the bank and the guests and the potential depositors or patrons arrived at the grand opening of the bank, there in the foyer they were greeted by a beautiful spray of flowers with a ribbon on it that said, Rest in peace there at the bank.

[3:56] That would be kind of a bad thing for a new bank to have there at the opening of their location. Stranger yet, at the funeral when the family and friends passed by the casket to view their loved one, their dead loved one, there beside the casket was a kind of a beautiful flowery wreath with a banner on it that said, Good luck in your new location.

Now, that was probably more accurate than the mix-up at the bank. But the point is, of course, they were mixed up. And one was meant for a certain group and the other meant for another group.

And sometimes we get mail that's kind of mixed up and we get letters that are intended for someone else, addressed to someone else. And I won't ask you if you've ever opened up those letters to read what's in them.

You would never do that, of course. And so I'm just saying to you here on the front end, just by way of introduction, that this letter of Paul's to the Romans contains several parts.

And we've just kind of, you know, barely, really barely into the letter. The first four chapters we've already looked at. And those first four chapters were written to specific readers, but really more in, not specific, but general readers.

[5:17] The first four chapters were written to all readers, really. Saved and unsaved. Believing and unbelieving. Chapters 5 through 8, though, were written for those who have already been saved.

Already been justified by grace through faith. They're addressed to those who have been saved. Already saved. Now, the opening words of verse 1 make that, I think, pretty clear.

When it says, therefore, having been. Do you see that there? Having been. Or you might have a translation that renders it, since we have been.

Been what? Justified by faith. Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, he goes on to say, we have.

Have what? Well, we have a number of things. I would say a whole bunch of glorious things. And Paul identifies them. And that's kind of what we're working our way through here.

[6:21] Wonderful, glorious benefits. And all of these things, a couple of them we've already looked at. We're going to look at a couple of them tonight. And in the course of our working our way through this text, we're going to discover and identify a number of other wonderful things.

These things are exclusive possessions belonging to born-again believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, I must hasten to add, people can read someone else's mail.

Right? I mean, it does happen, doesn't it? Read somebody else's mail. Or, maybe better yet, sometimes a person will receive a letter containing some good news they want to share with somebody else.

Like, suppose you got a letter this week that informed you, said this letter is to inform you that your uncle so-and-so has died, left you a very large inheritance, including a palatial estate and millions and millions of dollars.

Wouldn't that be a great letter to receive? It might happen. Now, if you received a letter like that this week, don't you think you'd kind of like to read that to some friends of yours?

[7:33] That wasn't addressed to them. But you'd kind of like to read it to them. You might want to read it to some of your enemies. Certainly, you might want to read it to some of your creditors, you know, if you got a letter like that.

Well, this portion of Paul's letter is addressed to those who have been justified by faith, to those who now possess blessings, glorious blessings that really defy description.

I'm going to make a humble attempt. We're talking about benefits that are lavished upon us by a gracious God. And we might call it an official inheritance notification.

But a real one. That really does apply. And it is one that you might want to read to some others. So though it might not be addressed to everyone specifically, it ought to be shared with everyone so that they might also receive that inheritance.

Now, what does this inheritance consist of? Well, it consists of a number of wonderful things, as I've said. And we've already looked at two of them. And I kind of emphasized those two.

[8:46] When we were reading or I was reading through the text. Number one, peace with God. Glorious thing. Peace with God.

The second one, access to God. Also, wonderful. Glorious. Peace with God and access to God.

And just maybe by way of review, you know, peace with God was certainly accomplished and declared through the redemptive work of Christ at the cross.

And you, you know, you cannot have peace in any context until there's clear victory. Let's understand that about peace. I mean, in any context. In any sense of the word.

There's no peace without victory. There must be victory over the enemy. The enemy must be defeated or there's no peace. And with us, it, the enemy is sin.

[9:45] Death. And Satan, we could add Satan in that list. And that's what Jesus Christ accomplished on the cross. Victory for us. So that we could have peace with God.

Kind of the Baptist anthem. Oh, victory in Jesus. I mean, that, you know, really identifies we Baptists more than any of the hymn we sing. Oh, victory in Jesus, my Savior forever. He sought me and bought me with His redeeming blood. He loved me ere I knew Him. And all my love is due Him. He plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood. The flood of His blood. Beautiful, wonderful hymn. Yeah, just tremendous. And the result, peace. So, see, peace, through the cross of Christ, peace has been established between the believer and God.

And I would say, not just because Paul began there, but that is the foundational gift of salvation. Peace. Peace. A foundation, by the way, upon which all the other benefits that he's going to lay out here for us in the text.

[10:59] All those benefits are going to be resting upon this foundation of peace. Like the second one we discussed last time. And that is access to God.

Because, you see, the peace, we have peace with God. And because we have peace with God, we now have free, unlimited access to God.

Kind of sounds like a cell phone deal, doesn't it? Much better than that. Access to God. Now we're ready to consider a third.

Peace with God, access to God, and third. And these are, in a very real sense, progressive. Third, grace from God.

Grace from God. Verse 2. Through whom also we have access by faith into what? Into this grace in which we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

[12:02] The grace in which we stand. Now, in reality, grace is behind it all. Grace is what accounts for all of the glories of salvation.

Grace is behind everything. Grace, how would we define it? God's unmerited favor. One of the most common definitions, short definitions. I think it does it justice.

In fact, I would say that even extends to some degree, varying degrees, to all of mankind. I mean, even the air we breathe. The life we have.

The rain that falls. We got a lot of it yesterday. I understand. We weren't here. We were in Tulsa.

But we got a lot of it here. Even the hail. Well, I don't know if the hail.

Well, that's part of God's grace. But the things that we enjoy. Life and air to breathe. And the rain and food. And to varying degrees. God's unmerited favor is directed toward all mankind.

[13:15] But, of course, in a specific sense. In relation to the redeemed. God's unmerited favor. In fact, I like this definition. And I've shared this with you before.

And you've probably heard it before. It's not original with me. But just taking the word grace.

G-R-A-C-E. God's riches at Christ's expense.

God's grace. So, you see, in a sense. In a very real sense. Grace is behind all of this. Grace. But I want you to take a closer look at verse 2. Because Paul is being very specific here.

And it may not appear so on the surface. Or you might just kind of pass over it. Without noticing it. But would you notice there in verse 2. He says, we have access by faith.

That is, it's on the basis of faith. We have access by faith into. And then what's the word there? This. This grace.

[14:21] This grace. That is, Paul adds, attaches to grace here. A demonstrative pronoun.

This. Being very specific. In fact, in the word order in the Greek text. It comes after the word grace. He's saying, grace. This particular one.

In a sense. That's what he's saying. This grace. This particular grace. This specific grace. Now, listen. The full weight of the meaning of grace is behind it.

It's all a part of this. But Paul's reference here in the text. Is to a specific outcome of God's grace. A very significant outcome of his grace.

Is his point. Is his point. And to that. Before we identify it. Before. To that. Let's add. What he says next in verse 2.

[15:19] We have. What? Access. By faith into his grace. And then what does he say? In which. We stand. Or more literally.

In. In which. We. Now. Stand. Now. Stand. Stand. Stand. Stand. Stand. That's a very important word.

In our understanding. Of the grace. The specific. Outcome of grace. That Paul. Is referencing here. That is ours.

It's a benefit of our salvation. Well. That's really kind of jumping ahead. It. Is. Our salvation. It's a specific thing.

This. Thing. We're standing. We stand in. And the word. Hístemi. Means. To. To be firm. To stand. [16:16] A position. That is. Immovable. Literally. Immovable. No way. It can be violated. No way. It can be. Destroyed.

It's. Immovable. It's. Permanent. A standing. That is. Permanent. Can you imagine that? This. Grace. In which. We stand.

Is. Immovable. It's. Permanent. Now. What is Paul talking about? What is. This. This. And that's the word he uses. This. Firm. Immovable. Permanent.

Standing. Of grace. He's talking about our salvation. Our salvation. Our justification. Specifically. That. Aspect. Of salvation. Salvation. Really. Encompasses. The whole thing. Even that part. That we have yet. To realize. Though it's ours. And it's a reality.

[17:11] In the mind of God. All the way. To heaven. All the way. To eternity. All the way. To glorification. All of that. Is part of salvation. In the. Biggest sense. And so. As I've said. Many times before.

And you understand. That salvation. Is a past thing. A present thing. A future thing. But. Specific. A specific. Feature. Aspect. Of our salvation.

Is justification. And that's been. Paul's subject. Here in these. Chapters. That's what he's talking about. When he says. This. Grace. In which. We stand. Where do you stand with God?

Where do you stand with him right now? Well. We're kind of. Out of sorts. A little bit here. And maybe in a. The sense of fellowship. In the sense of communion.

Maybe it's not what it ought to be. And maybe. Maybe you're concerned about that. And you ought to be. But that's not your standing. So. Because you're standing. With God. Is not dependent upon you.

[18:13] So. Where do you stand? Well. Through faith. In the redemptive work of Christ. You stand. Justified. Before God. You know.

I don't want to. I guess I resist. The belaboring that. And I don't think it is belaboring it. This is. Paul's subject here in Romans. So. He's spending several chapters.

Really laying all that out. And at this point. We're. We're. We're seeing how it applies. How it. How. How. How it. Becomes. What it becomes. In our lives. Through the benefits.

Of our salvation. So. I'm not belaboring it. But we need to understand. This. About. Salvation. About. Justification. That's why we stand.

Before God. That's how you stand. Before him. If you placed your faith. In Jesus Christ. His redemptive work. At the cross. You stand justified. Before God.

[19:08] And that includes. God seeing you. Now. As though you had never sinned. Ever. I know it's difficult to. Get our minds around that. Because we know we have sinned.

And we know we do sin. And we do. Sin every day. And we're going to sin tomorrow. And the next day. Until Jesus comes. We're going to. And it's difficult for us. To comprehend. That God.

Would place us. Before him. In a position. Where he sees us. As though we had never. Ever sinned against him. And not only that.

And I think justification. Takes it. Takes it a step further. He sees us. As though. We had all. On the positive sense. As though we had always. Obeyed him. He sees us.

Like he sees his son. Jesus. Who never sinned. Who always perfectly. Obeyed. The father. And we have been placed in him.

[20:05] In fact. That. That's the. What the bible means. When it describes Christians. As those who are. In Christ. In Christ. We're in. Being.

The. Speaking of the. Sphere of Christ. We're in him. And so when God. The father. Looks at us. He sees Jesus. Sees us. We're justified. In him.

As though we had never sinned. As though we had always. Perfectly obeyed. I like the way. Boyce put it. And I quote. By the mercy of God.

We have been brought. Into the grace. Of justification. That's this standing. And that is the grace. He says. In which we now. Have the privilege.

To stand. Before. Before. We were standing. Without. As children of wrath. Now. We are standing. Within. Not as enemies.

[21:03] Or even. As pardoned. Criminals. But rather. As sons. And daughters. Of almighty. God.

That's tremendous. Let me illustrate it this way. And I've used this illustration before. But I. Think it really. Defines it in the right way.

Imagine. A father. Just any father. Coming home after work.

And. He. Comes to his house. And. There. The first thing he notices. Is that the front door of his house. Is in shambles. It's obvious that somebody.

Has. Has. Kicked the door in. Someone has come into his house. Forcefully. And he comes on into the house. Very quickly. And very frantically. He looks around.

[21 : 59] And things are. Disheveled. And. It's obvious that some violence. Has taken place in his home. And he's. Now. Looking for his wife. And his son. And he looks to the house.

And finally. Finds. Both of them. In. One of the rooms. And. There. He sees his wife. Cradling in her arms.

Their son. And he's dead. As she. He says. What. Has happened. As she.

Relates to him. The. Terrible. Tragic. Story. Someone broke into their house. And killed.

Their only son. Murdered. Terrible. Terrible. Well. Suppose. That father. Gets on the phone.

[22 : 56] And calls. All of his friends. Many of his. His friends. And they. Kind of form a posse. And they go out. And search down this guy. And they find him. And when they find him.

This father. Takes. This man. By the. Shoulders. And with his bare hands. He. Kills him. You killed my son. And he.

Kills him. What would that be? That would be. Revenge. But suppose. After they find the guy. He takes him.

By the arms. And he says. You. Killed. My. Son. You murdered him. And then he takes him. And turns him over. To. The chief of police.

Back there. Got that right. Didn't I. This time. And. Tom Holland. Takes the man. In custody. And eventually.

[23 : 50] The man. Is tried. Before a judge. And jury. And found guilty. And. The death penalty. Is exacted upon him. And he dies. For the crime. That would be.

Justice. In my opinion. It would be. That would be justice. Suppose. This father. Finds the man.

And. And he takes him. By the shoulders. And looks at him. Eye to eye. And he says. You.

Murdered. My. Son. And I.

Forgive you. I forgive you. You are. Free to go. That would be.

Mercy. Now. Follow me. That would be mercy. Mercy. But. Suppose. He said.

[24 : 46] To this fellow. You murdered. My son. And I. Forgive you. And then. Suppose. He takes.

This man. To his home. Takes him. To his. Little boy's. Bedroom. And says. This. Was my son's. Bedroom. All of his. Things. They now. All belong. To you. This is your bed. Your room. Your house.

And he takes him. Into the. Dining room. And shows him. The table. Where they. Where they. Sit.

As a family. And have meals. Together. And he says. This chair. Right here.

This is my son's. Chair. It's now yours. And every time. We sit. To eat. Together. Together. You will sit. With us. And.

[25 : 41] We're going to go down. To the. Courts. And have your name. Changed. Legally changed. To. To our name. You'll have our family name. Now. And you.

From this point on. Are one of my sons. That's grace. That's grace.

Not any of us. Could do that. God can. And did. With me. My sin.

Put his son. To death. And in a sense. God sent out a search party. The Holy Spirit. And he found me. And he graciously.

Forgave me. And. Made me one of his children. That. Is. This. Grace. In which.

[26 : 45] We stand. And even. More than that. Because no illustration. That could be. Devised by man. Could fully.

Fully. Realize. A reveal. And illustrate. The depth. Of this. Grace. In which we stay. Peace with God.

Access to God. Grace from God. And then forth. Hope. Hope in God. He says there. In verse 2.

and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Hope. The tremendous, wonderful blessing for the believer. Part and parcel of the whole that ought to engender in us a confidence and assurance of our salvation.

[27 : 51] It's hope, hope of the glory of God. I was reading a commentary on Romans by Donald Gray Barnhouse and if you ever could get a hold of a copy, it's a four-volume set, I would

recommend it.

It's a tremendous commentary on Romans and he's done some commentaries on some other books of the Bible. And I was reading it and he was relating a personal story about one of his first trips to China.

And it just kind of caught my attention. I'll tell you why here in a minute. But he related how he was able to travel extensively around the country, various parts of China.

And he traveled with a missionary to China. And one of the trips, he wrote, was by railroad from Peking, northwest through Mongolia, he said, and into the province of Shansai.

I'm not sure if that's how it's pronounced. And he said during one part of that journey, the train went through for several hours along kind of a shelf that followed some hills.

[29:02] And so from the train, they were able to look out into kind of the plains there. And they could look as far as the eye could reach.

And as they were driving, they noticed all of these farmhouses and little villages and such there kind of dotted around that region of China. And as they were looking at that, he said they pondered a couple of questions.

He and the missionary. And one of them was the obvious question, how do we evangelize these remote villages? And so they talked about that for quite some time.

Then they pondered a second question. If some were to trust Christ, what doctrines should be taught them first?

That's an interesting question. And the reason why this story caught my attention because I have pondered those same questions. Trips to Ukraine. Working with some of those remote, kind of remote villages, farm communities, little villages and little bitty churches.

[30:19] And to be there to visit with and to preach to these small little congregations made up of many of them fairly new believers.

And what do you teach them first? And traveling through China, by railroad too, and looking out and seeing these little farmhouses and little villages and thinking, boy, how do you get the gospel out there?

And then, you know, what do you teach them? And so this is the very question these two were pondering, Barnhouse and this missionary. And they're an important question because there are a lot of important doctrines to teach new believers, aren't there?

Which ones should you teach them? Where should you begin? And ultimately, Dr. Barnhouse said that God led him to Ephesians chapter 1.

And because, you see, Paul pondered the same question. Same question when he administered to the city of Ephesus. And if you remember anything about his experience there in Ephesus, you can read about that in Acts.

[31:38] You might remember that the city there in Ephesus, the people there were highly revered and worshipped the goddess Diana. And they were initially, initially the gospel was just out of hand rejected, in fact, violently opposed by the city, by the people in Ephesus.

And so much so that Paul had to flee the city. But some Ephesians were saved. They were saved, ultimately, because we know that Paul wrote them a letter.

He wrote the believers a letter. And it was very, I think, we're to understand historically, chronologically, it was very shortly after his visit in Ephesus. And he wrote a letter to them.

And what did he write them? Well, a lot of things. But in Ephesians chapter 1 and verse 15, Listen to this. Therefore, I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints. I mean, listen, we're talking about a group of people who ran him out of town. Whose God was Diana and a host of other gods in their pantheon.

[32:55] He said, But when I heard about your faith, I did not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.

The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that, and here's the crucial phrase, that you may know. Know what?

Well, several things he lists here, but notice what's first on the list. That you may know what is the hope of His calling.

What's that hope? That's what I want you to know first. The hope of His calling. What are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints?

And what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe according to the working of His mighty power? But first on the list was hope. That's the first thing he wanted them to know. [34:02] Hope. Hope in God. The hope that God had given to them. It's not something that you go out and find and get. Now, we're going to see next week how there are some things that God gives us and allows to take place in our lives that will cause that hope to flourish and become more real.

But we need to acknowledge this hope and learn about this hope and get all that we can out of this hope as it applies to our lives. And this is what he prayed they would have and this is the idea here. Hope. Hope. Hope in God. Now, what is hope? Well, I think I've shared this before in our study of Peter because Peter speaks about hope.

I really believe that primarily hope should be understood as faith that reaches to the future. Near future, immediate future, as well as ultimate future.

Hope is really faith that reaches out into the future. You see, if we could think about the whole spectrum here, faith looks to the past, to a past event.

[35:16] The cross, right? Faith looks to the past, but faith also continues into the present because we live by faith. The justified will live by faith.

But then it begins to mix there with hope. There's faith and hope. Faith in the present. Hope for the immediate future. And it's kind of a mixture of faith for now and hope for what comes next.

And we continue in a state of hope. That's not a hope so, but a certain hope, a sure hope. And we live in that hope. But that hope reaches out to the future.

See? We hope in glory. Ultimate glory. The glory of God all the way to the end. And see, this then is a tremendous benefit for the believer.

One that I think Paul wants to emphasize or punctuate in a very special way. In fact, he says that this is a benefit of our salvation that we ought to rejoice in.

[36:19] To rejoice in. That's what he said. Rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. See, listen. Our salvation that we have is anchored by a sure anchor that cannot let loose, cannot give way.

It's anchored in hope. Our salvation is anchored in hope. Anchored in a past event, the cross, because through faith in Christ we have peace with God.

Anchored in the present because through faith in Christ we have access to God. See how these benefits of our salvation are progressive.

They're all tied together. Romans 7.25 says, Therefore he is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through him since he always, always, always, always, now he doesn't repeat the word, I'm repeating it for emphasis, but this is the idea.

He always, lives to make intercession for us. That's what we're anchored in in the present. And then it's anchored in the future.

[37:39] Because through Christ we have hope of glory. That's a very real hope. We like to talk about that and like to hear sermons on that.

Future, the ultimate glory, I'm not sure we understand that as a part of our salvation. And it is. And we hope, and we've been given that hope.

The hope of glory. That is to say that one day we shall be robed in righteousness. One day we shall be clothed, literally clothed, in the glory of God.

One day. that's the hope God has given us. And it's sure. And it generates and produces a confidence in our life and assurance in our life right now.

Because it's sure. And one day it will be a reality. Now in the mind of God it's already done. Already a reality. In fact, by the way, that's the ultimate good that is promised us in that beloved passage in Romans 8, 28.

[38:58] And we like to apply Romans 8, 28 to all sorts of other ultimate good things that God is working in our lives. And certainly that's true. But in the context of Romans chapter 8, verse 28, we'll just listen to it.

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose, for, and it goes on from there, for whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Moreover, whom He predestined, these He also called. Whom He called, these He also justified. That's where we are right now. Whom He justified, these He also glorified.

What then shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against it? That's the ultimate good. Now God has good in store for us every step of the way.

And we ought to understand and live with the understanding and the hope that all things that are going on in our lives, all things, bad things, good things, are for our ultimate good.

[40:16] And that reaches out into the ultimate, ultimate, ultimate, our glorification. And by the way, I have made or pointed this out to you before, but all of those wonderful things, called, justified, glorified, all given to us in the past tense as if they were already done.

And in the mind and heart of God, they are done. They are done. That's why it's the hope of glory. The hope of glory.

Not a hope so, but a sure thing. So justification, then, by grace, through faith, the application of it in our lives, peace with God, access to God, grace from God, hope in God.

Thank you.