

ROMANS – LIVING BY FAITH
MAN’S RUIN & CHRIST’S REDEMPTION – Chapters 4-7

LESSON 16 – SO WHAT’S NEW ABOUT YOU? – Romans 5:1-1

In this section of Romans, Paul tells us what we have because we’ve been justified by faith. These verses of chapter 5 are some of the most triumphant verses in all the Bible. What began four chapters ago as a description of the lost condition of mankind now changes into an explanation of benefits of being a child of God.

This section of Romans is the next step for those who were once hopelessly lost sinners but now have received through faith the righteousness of God. This is the story of the true believer who was once under God’s wrath but then was saved by faith.

Paul lists for us seven benefits of being justified by faith...

We Have a New Peace

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

Everything Paul has said in the last four chapters is just the opening act for what he is about to introduce here in chapter 5. He begins by referring us again to our justification. Paul tells us that our justification is a fact that happened in the past. It is a done deal! God declared us righteous and will never change His mind. It is because of what He did that we have the wonderful blessings that unfold in this chapter.

The phrase, “through our Lord Jesus Christ” begins and ends this section. Before we met Jesus, we were prisoners of our own sin and according to chapter 1, God gave us over to our own desires. But now, “through our Lord Jesus Christ” we are at peace.

But what is this peace?

Paul describes this condition as one of reconciliation instead of wrath. Our strife with God has ended and the power of wrath is past.

Philippians 4:6-7, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

So in Christ we have peace.

We Have a New Principle

Romans 5:2, “Through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.”

Now that we’ve been justified, a new principle is working in our lives. We now have access into the grace of God. This word access is only used three times in the New Testament and each time it’s used, it refers to the believer’s access to God through Jesus Christ.

Grace is the underserved and unconditional love of God. Grace is God pursuing us until He finds us and then keeping us forever after that. As believers, we are now under grace and not under the law. A new principle of living is ours.

We Have a New Promise

Romans 5:2, "And we boast in the hope of the glory of God."

Our salvation is anchored in the past because Jesus has made peace with God for all those who trust in Him. Our salvation is anchored in the present because by Jesus' intercession every believer stands securely in God's grace. Our salvation is also anchored in the future because God gives every one of His children the promise that one day they will be clothed with the glory of His own Son.

We used to fall short of the glory of God but now we boast in it and according to Paul, this is a reason for celebration.

We Have a New Process

Romans 5:3-4, "Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope."

It is natural for us to be happy when something is positive, but it's not natural for us to be happy in sufferings and tribulations.

This life of peace that Paul introduced is not a life free from difficulty. In these verses, Paul talks about suffering and struggle in the Christian life.

When Paul refers to suffering, he's talking about the idea of being under pressure. This pressure results from the conflict of faith and its enduring benefits and a fallen world under satan's influence. This is a common theme with Paul and he was qualified by his personal experience to speak to this issue. Paul tells us that as believers, we can rejoice in our tribulations. This is what Jesus was teaching in the Beatitudes.

Matthew 5:11-12, "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven"

Paul says that we have joy in tribulation because we know something. It's very important to know something when you face trials and tribulations. It's what you know and Who you know that will get you through with a sense of joy.

There are three steps in the process of development.

Step 1 – From Tribulation to Perseverance

Suffering brings us perseverance...or the ability to stay under pressure. We naturally want to get away from pressure, but suffering teaches us to stay under it.

1 Peter 1:6-7, "In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed."

Step 2 – From Perseverance to Character

When we learn to stay under pressure, it produces a quality in us that is described as character. Paul is speaking of character without impurities. It is the maturity of the grounded Christian as opposed to the immaturity of the shallow Christian.

James 1:2-3, “Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.”

Step 3 – From Character to Hope

This character then strengthens our hope in God.

2 Corinthians 12:9, “But he said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.”

Romans 8:18, “I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.”

We Have a New Power

Romans 5:5-8, “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. You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

These few verses are considered by most Bible scholars to be the greatest explanation of God’s love for mankind found in the Bible.

This is the first time the Holy Spirit is mentioned in Romans. He will be discussed in detail in chapter 8.

We Have a New Plan

Romans 5:9-10, “Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him! 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!”

God did the harder thing in dying for us when we were His enemies. Will He not do the easier thing in living for us now that we are His? One writer said it this way, “If God gave a great gift to enemies, will He give anything less to His friends?” Seeing what Jesus did in dying to save us, just think about what He’s doing in living to sustain us.

We Have a New Purpose

Romans 5:11, “Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.”

God put His love on the line for us by offering His Son in sacrificial death while we were of no use to Him.