

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

INTRODUCTION

A. Outline of Romans

1. Introduction (1:1-17)
2. The need for God's righteousness (1:18-3:20)
3. The provision of righteousness from God (3:21-5:21)
 - a. A description of justification (3:21-26)
 - b. Introductory comments on justification by faith in Christ alone (3:27-31)
 - c. A defense of justification by faith from the Old Testament (4:1-25)
 - d. Peace with God (5:1-11)

B. Review of Romans 4:1-25

1. Abraham and David were justified by faith because it is a gift and can't be earned by works (1-8)
2. Circumcision is not the basis of justification because Abraham was justified before he was circumcised (9-12)
3. The worldwide promise to Abraham came before the law so it came by grace through faith in God (13-17)
4. Abraham's faith was based on hope in our faithful God. Difficult circumstances did not weaken but strengthened his faith as he glorified God (18-22)
5. Everyone with the faith of Abraham is justified by God Who delivered Jesus to death for our trespasses and raised Him up for our justification (23-25)

ROMANS 5:1-11, *PEACE WITH GOD*

A. Christians have peace with God and hope in future glory due to justification by faith (1-2)

1. Peace with God is due to justification (1-2a), *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand,*
 - a. *Therefore*
 - 1) What follows rests on what preceded in Romans 3:21-4:25.
 - 2) Note Romans 3:28, *For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.*
 - 3) Paul already addressed the fact that *faith* is the human means of access to the grace secured by Jesus.
 - b. Peace with God accompanies justification.
 - 1) *Peace*
 - a) Its meaning is not simply the cessation of hostility, it implies removal of the divine wrath against sin.
 - b) It is tied to the Hebrew *shalom* which emphasizes *well-being, prosperity, salvation.*
 - c) Here, it is being in a relationship of peace with God instead of enemies.
 - d) A theological term for *peace with God* is *reconciliation.*
 - 2) It is interesting to note that a human judge can declare a man innocent but that does not mean that the judge has a personal interest in that individual.
 - a) God not only declared righteous those who placed faith in Christ alone but made peace with them, as well, bringing them into His family.
 - b) C.E. B. Cranfield, *He does not confer the status of righteousness upon us without at the same time giving Himself to us in friendship and establishing peace between Himself and us.*
 - c) 2 Corinthians 5:18, *All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.*
 - 4) Some important Greek manuscripts have *Let us have peace with God* instead of *since we have peace with God.*
 - a) Peace with God is tied to justification based on the work of Christ. Romans 4:25, *who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.*
 - b) *Let us* carries the thought of *Let us keep on having peace with God.*
 - c) John Witmer, *A believer is not responsible for having peace in the sense of making it but in the sense of enjoying it.*

- c. Jesus is the reason Christians have access to the grace of justification and peace with God.
 - 1) *obtained access*
 - a) It means opportunity to address someone of higher status.
 - b) Ephesians 3:12, *in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.*
 - c) Ephesians 2:17-18, *And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.*
 - d) Some believe it means *landing-stage*, the foundational position of right relationship with God.
 - e) John Stott on a Christian's access to God, *Our relationship with God, into which justification has brought us, is not sporadic but continuous, not precarious but secure. We do not fall in and out of grace like courtiers who may find themselves in and out of favor with their sovereign, or politicians with the public. No, we stand in it, for that is the nature of grace. Nothing can separate us from God's love.*
 - 2) *grace*
 - a) It is *by the unmerited favor* of Jesus Christ that Christians have access to justification and peace with God.
 - b) Tom Constable, *Our present position in relation to God is all grace, and our justification admits us to that position.*
 - c) I believe Paul not only is speaking of the grace of Christ but also grace which is specifically *justification and peace with God.*
- 2. Christians rejoice in the glory of God due to justification (2b), ***and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.***
 - a. *rejoice*
 - 1) It may be translated as boast, as well.
 - 2) It means *favorable boasting which is not self centered but God-centered.*
 - b. Paul is taking the reader from the landing-stage of justification to the consummation of glorification.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 4:17, *For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,*
 - 2) Colossians 3:4, *When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*
 - 3) 2 Thessalonians 2:14, *To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*
 - 4) John Witmer, *Because of Christ, Christians eagerly anticipate the time when they will share Christ's glory, in contrast with their falling short of it now.*
 - c. Moving forward, most of Romans will address the issue of sanctification, conformity to the image of Christ.
- 3. Notes on Romans 5:1-2.
 - a. It reveals that in light of justification, believers are also reconciled to God with a hope toward glorification.
 - b. John Stott, *The fruits of justification relate to the past, present and future. 'We have peace with God' (as a result of our past forgiveness). 'We are standing in grace' (our present privilege). 'We rejoice in the hope of glory' (our future inheritance). Peace, grace, joy, hope and glory. It sounds idyllic. It is—except for Paul's fourth affirmation (suffering).*
- B. Christians rejoice in present sufferings because hope is strengthened based on God's love (3-5)
 - 1. Rejoicing in sufferings is because they produce endurance, character and hope (3-4), ***Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,***
 - a. *Not only that*
 - 1) We not only rejoice in the glory of God but in sufferings, as well.
 - 2) Douglas Moo, *No sooner has the Apostle pointed to 'the glory of God,' as a light shining afar to cheer the believer on his course, than he thinks of the contrast between that bright distance and the darkness that lies around him here. . . This means not merely that we are to exult "in the midst of" afflictions but that we are to exult "in" the afflictions themselves: that is, to view them as a basis for further confidence in our redeemed status.*

b. *sufferings*

- 1) It means *distress brought about by outward circumstances, namely, persecution*.
 - a) 1 Thessalonians 1:6, *And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit,*
 - b) 1 Thessalonians 3:3, *that no one be moved by these afflictions. For you yourselves know that we are destined for this.*
- 2) Some would say Paul is speaking solely of persecution due to one's faith in Christ.
 - a) It is better to assume that Paul is speaking of all afflictions that are a result of living in a fallen world. God works all things (including afflictions) together for good so we can rejoice in our future hope.
 - b) William Barclay, *All kinds of things may press in upon a Christian—want and difficult circumstances, sorrow, persecution, unpopularity and loneliness. All that pressure, says Paul, produces fortitude.*
- 3) C. E. B. Cranfield, . . . *the exulting in tribulations to which this verse refers is not an exulting in them as in something meritorious on our part . . . but an exulting in them as in that to which God subjects us as part of the discipline by which He teaches us to wait patiently for His deliverance.*

c. The benefits of rejoicing in sufferings with a view toward sanctification.

- 1) Suffering produces *endurance*.
 - a) It means *perseverance, steadfastness, especially, in the midst of toil and suffering*.
 - 1] James 1:3-4, *for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*
 - 2] Romans 15:4, *For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*
 - 3] William Barclay, *Endurance is not the spirit which lies down and lets the floods go over it; it is the spirit which meets things head on and overcomes them.*
 - b) John Stott, *We could not learn endurance without suffering, because without suffering there would be nothing to endure.*
 - c) Warren Wiersbe, *As we go through tribulations, and depend on God's grace, the trials only purify us and help to get rid of the chaff.*
- 2) Endurance produces *character*.
 - a) It means *the quality of being approved, by testing, proven character*
 - 1] Philippians 2:22, *But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel.*
 - 2] James 1:3, *for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.*
 - b) Douglas Moo, *Endurance, in turn, will, if our attitude is right, produce a tested character.*
 - c) William Sanday and Arthur Headlam, . . . *the temper of the veteran as opposed to that of the raw recruit.*
- 3) Character produces *hope*.
 - a) It means *expectation*, especially here, it means *Christian hope, pertaining to matters of God's promises*.
 - 1] Romans 12:12, *Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.*
 - 2] Romans 15:13, *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.*
 - b) John Witmer, *As believers suffer, they develop steadfastness; that quality deepens their character; and a deepened, tested character results in hope (i.e., confidence) that God will see them through.*
 - c) When one has been approved by God through sufferings, hope in the glory of God is affirmed. Sanctification always leads to glorification.

2. Hope will not disappoint because God's love is bestowed on Christians by the Holy Spirit (5), ***and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.***

a. *and*

- 1) In the Greek is better translated as it was in verse 4 which is the same construction, *not only that*.
- 2) It stresses that one can confidently hope in the glory of God.

- b. *shame*
- 1) It means *disappointment that comes to one whose hope is shown to be vain.*
 - a) Romans 9:33, *as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."*
 - b) Psalm 22:5, *To you they cried and were rescued; in you they trusted and were not put to shame.*
 - 2) Tom Constable, *This hope . . . will not suffer disappointment because God loves us and enables us to withstand tribulations.*
- c. Hope is sure because God's love is poured into believers' hearts by means of the indwelling Holy Spirit.
- 1) Another benefit of justification is the indwelling Holy Spirit.
 - a) Romans 8:9, *You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.*
 - b) Douglas Moo, *The confidence we have for the day of judgment is not based only on our intellectual recognition of the fact of God's love, or even only on the demonstration of God's love on the cross (although that is important; cf. vv. 6–8), but also on the inner, subjective certainty that God does love us.*
 - c) Grant Osborne, *The Spirit is the supreme gift that makes it possible for us to experience the depths of God's love.*
 - 2) *God's love has been poured into our hearts*
 - a) *Because* gives a reason why our hope is secure, the love of God placed in our hearts.
 - b) *Poured* means *to fully experience.*
 - c) Titus 3:6, *whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior.*
 - d) William Barclay, *When our hope is in God, it cannot turn to dust and ashes. When our hope is in God, it cannot be disappointed. When our hope is in the love of God, it can never be an illusion, for God loves us with an everlasting love backed by an everlasting power.*
 - 3) It is accomplished by the Holy Spirit.
 - a) Galatians 4:6, *And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"*
 - b) John Witmer, *The Holy Spirit is the divine Agent who expresses to a believer the love of God, that is, God's love for him. The reality of God's love in a believer's heart gives the assurance, even the guarantee, that the believer's hope in God and His promise of glory is not misplaced and will not fail.*
 - c) C. E. B. Cranfield, *The proof that our hope will not disappoint us in the end is the fact of the amazing generosity of God's love for us—a fact which we have been enabled to know and understand by the gift of His Spirit to us.*
 - d) Warren Wiersbe, *Before we were saved, God proved His love by sending Christ to die for us. Now that we are His children, surely He will love us more. It is the inner experience of this love through the Spirit that sustains us as we go through tribulations.*
- C. Christians have experienced God's love demonstrated by Jesus Christ's death for them while they were sinners (6-8)
1. Christ died for the ungodly in the midst of their weakness at the right time (6), ***For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.***
 - a. *For*
 - 1) It looks back to verse 5 which speaks of God's love.
 - 2) It describes the depth of God's love which called for His Son to die for the ungodly.
 - b. *while we were still weak*
 - 1) Here, the word *weak*, means *morally weak, unable to do good.*
 - 2) Sanday and Headlam, *incapable of working out any righteousness for ourselves.*
 - 3) C. E. B. Cranfield, *He did not wait for us to start helping ourselves, but died for us when we were altogether helpless.*

- c. *At the right time*
 - 1) The emphasis Paul is making is probably not that it was the right time because of conditions. It is true that conditions were ripe where Roman civilization brought peace and a road system which enabled spreading the Gospel. The Greek language became the means of communication throughout the region. Also, Jewish synagogues were spread throughout the region promoting monotheism and a coming Messiah.
 - 2) Paul is refers to the appearing of Jesus Christ, God's intervention in Christ.
 - a) Galatians 4:4, *But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,*
 - b) Mark 1:15, *and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*
 - c) C. E. B. Cranfield, *It was at the time appointed by God in His sovereign freedom that Christ accomplished His work.*
 - d. *Christ died for the ungodly*
 - 1) *for*
 - a) It is the word which means *in place of*.
 - b) Jesus' death was substitutionary, a death in place of the weak and ungodly.
 - c) Romans 4:25, *who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.*
 - 2) *ungodly*
 - a) It means *living without regard for religious belief or practice*.
 - b) Romans 4:5, *And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness,*
 - e. C. E. B. Cranfield, *What Paul is here concerned to bring out is the fact that the divine love is love for the undeserving, love that is not the result of any worth in its objects but is self-caused and in its freedom itself confers worth upon them.*
2. His great love was shown in dying for the ungodly in contrast to humans who might die for a good person (7-8), ***For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.***
- a. *for*
 - 1) This introduces a contrast between verse 6 and verse 7.
 - 2) The contrast is between divine love in verse 6 and human love in verse 7.
 - b. *righteous person . . . good person*
 - 1) Some believe these are synonymous with *good* giving further explanation to *righteous*.
 - 2) It is better to see Paul giving an increasing personal attachment.
 - 3) The *righteous* would be a morally upright person but with no personal relationship.
 - 4) The *good* would be a person better known like a financial supporter or relative.
 - 5) The best case for a human is based on the value of the person. Maybe, a human would die for another person who meant something to him.
 - c. *but . . . Christ died for us.*
 - 1) The contrast is with God who allowed His Son to die for sinners.
 - a) In verse 6, Jesus died for those who were morally weak.
 - b) In verse 8, those for whom Jesus died were those who were *living consciously in opposition to God's will*.
 - c) Jesus died for those who were neither righteous nor good.
 - 2) The *for* is the same word used in verse 6. Jesus died in place of sinners as their substitutionary atonement.
 - a) John Witmer, . . . *God's love contrasts with human love in both nature and degree . . . Though a few people might possibly be willing to die to save the lives of good people, though that is rare, Christ went well beyond that. He died in the place of the powerless ("feeble," v. 6), the ungodly (v. 6; 4:5), sinners (5:8), and even His enemies! (v. 10).*
 - b) Douglas Moo, *The main point of this verse is clear enough. Paul accentuates the love of God manifested in the cross of Christ by reminding us that the pinnacle of human love is the giving of one's life for a person one is close to—a spouse, child, or combat buddy—whereas God sent his Son to die for people who hated him (v. 8).*

- d. The God of the Old Testament and the New Testament is love,
 - 1) William Barclay, *Jesus did not come to change God's attitude; he came to show what it is and always was. He came to prove beyond question that God is love.*
 - 2) John 3:16, *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*
- D. Christians are justified by the blood of Christ and will be saved by Him from future wrath, resulting in rejoicing (9-11)
1. Justification results in exclusion from the wrath of God (9), ***Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.***
 - a. *Since, therefore*
 - 1) Paul is tying verses 6-8 to verse 9.
 - 2) He is providing another blessing of justification, exclusion from God's coming wrath.
 - b. *justified by his blood*
 - 1) Romans 3:25a, *whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.*
 - 2) Hebrews 9:22b, . . . *without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.*
 - 3) A Christian is one who has been justified by the blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
 - c. *much more . . . God's coming wrath*
 - 1) Paul proclaims that since Christians have been justified by the substitutionary atonement of Christ, surely, Christians will be saved from God's coming wrath.
 - a) 1 Thessalonians 1:10, *and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.*
 - b) Romans 8:1, *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*
 - c) Tom Constable, *Having done the harder thing, namely justifying us when we were yet sinners (v. 8), how much more will He do the easier thing, namely delivering us from coming wrath.*
 - 2) What is God's coming wrath?
 - a) It is Tribulation wrath, 1 Thessalonians 1:10, *and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.*
 - b) It is eternal condemnation, Revelation 20:6, *Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.*
 2. Christians who were reconciled by the death of Christ will be eternally saved by His life (10), ***For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.***
 - a. *For if*
 - 1) *If* should be understood to mean *since*.
 - 2) Paul declares another blessing of justification.
 - 3) Christians are not only saved by the death of God's Son but, also, kept by His resurrection life.
 - b. *how much more*
 - 1) Again, Paul uses a technique called *from the weightier to the lighter*.
 - a) Sinners who are now described as enemies of God are justified by Jesus' death.
 - b) Justified sinners are kept by Jesus' life, sanctification begins with justification and will be completed in glorification.
 - c) Tom Constable, *Having done the harder thing for us, delivering Christ to death to reconcile us to Himself, God will certainly do the easier thing. He will see that we share Christ's risen life forever.*
 - 2) The same God Who saved me is the same God Who keeps me.
 - a) *Once saved, always saved* shouldn't be a concept that is berated. It should be cause for rejoicing.
 - b) Tom Constable, *We have salvation in the present and in the future because our Savior lives. He is still saving us. This verse shows that we are eternally secure.*

3. Christians rejoice in God through Jesus Christ who provided reconciliation (11), *More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.*
 - a. *More than that*
 - 1) It could be translated *in addition to*.
 - 2) Not only is future salvation assured, as noted in verse 10, but Christians can also rejoice in God in the present.
 - b. *rejoice*
 - 1) It literally means *boast*.
 - a) Boasting is not acceptable except when we are boasting in the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - b) John Stott, *For Christian exulting in God, according to Paul, is quite different from Jewish bragging about him. The latter was a boast in God as if he were their exclusive property and they had a monopoly interest in him, whereas the former is the opposite. Christian exultation in God begins with the shamefaced recognition that we have no claim on him at all, continues with wondering worship that while we were still sinners and enemies Christ died for us, and ends with the humble confidence that he will complete the work he has begun. So to exult in God is to rejoice not in our privileges but in his mercies, not in our possession of him but in his of us.*
 - 2) Focusing on all God has done for us, is cause for boasting, and a means of overcoming discouragement when trials are at hand.
 - 3) C. E. B. Cranfield, *It is through Christ, through whom we have already received the gift of reconciliation with God, that we exult; for this gift which we have received through Him is ground enough for ceaseless exultation.*
 - 4) John Stott, *It seems clear from this paragraph, then, that the major mark of justified believers is joy, especially joy in God himself. We should be the most positive people in the world. For the new community of Jesus Christ is characterized not by a self-centered triumphalism but by a God-centered worship.*

CONCLUSION

- A. The blessings of God based on justification for every Christian.
 - 1) Peace with God (1).
 - 2) Access to the grace of God which includes sanctification and peace (2a).
 - 3) Ability to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God (2b).
 - 4) Ability to rejoice in afflictions (3-5a).
 - 5) God's love experienced through the indwelling Holy Spirit as well as Christ's death and resurrection (5b-8)
 - 6) Deliverance from God's future wrath (9)
 - 7) Salvation that continues through sanctification to glorification (10)
 - 8) Ability to rejoice in God for Who He is and what He has done (11)
- B. Gary Wiley, *Paul reveals that justification implies reconciliation. Those who have been declared righteous by God have peace with God. The removal of God's wrath brings personal relationship with Him. On the basis of reconciliation, sanctification may be expected.*
- C. Everett Harrison, *The newborn child of God is precious in His sight, but the tested and proven saint means even more to Him because such a one is a living demonstration of the character-developing power of the gospel. When we stand in the presence of God, all material possessions will have been left behind, but all that we have gained by way of spiritual advance will be retained.*
- D. Warren Wiersbe, *Totally apart from Law, and purely by grace, we have a salvation that takes care of the past, the present, and the future. Christ died for us; Christ lives for us; Christ is coming for us! Hallelujah, what a Saviour!*