

Romans 5 – Peace with God, We have ACCESS

I have been anxious to get up here and go through Romans 5 with you today, because there is so much richness to it, and I hope I can communicate to you some of the glorious riches those of us who are in Christ have been given. We now have **access to the grace of God**, and all the rights and privileges thereof. This includes being children of God, having the Holy Spirit in us, the hope of glory!, and rejoicing in our sufferings! (Wait, what was that last part?) We'll get to that...

Peace with God

*1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, **we have peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 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.*

*6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. 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. 11 More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.*

- God shows his love by dying for us while we were his enemies
- Faith in his death saves us from God's wrath and reconciles us (peace with God)
- His life in us saves us (sozo) – complete salvation

I was a wretch. Sin separated me from God. I was his enemy, living for myself and against everything he was. But God! He reconciled us by dying for us when we were his enemies. But that is just the beginning. **Reconciled through his death, saved by his life.**

If you are ever tempted to think God doesn't love you, memorize Romans 5:8:

but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

This settles it, right? He gave his full measure of devotion at the moment when we were his enemies. It cannot be any deeper than that. The problem comes when we measure God's love by circumstances of our own lives. We can sometimes be trapped by:

- only seeing the negative things going on
- comparing our lives to others we see (especially their fake online presence)
- not being grateful of everything good in our lives. Yes – count those blessings!

Focusing on the negative, comparison, comparison instead of gratefulness are all things that steal our joy. God calls us to rejoice in the hope that we have, as well as in our sufferings. (We'll come back to that.)

God's plan of Salvation

The next section gives us some theology behind all of this, and it sets up the foundation for why we can have freedom in Christ.

*12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and **death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned**— 13 for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. 14 Yet **death reigned** from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.*

*15 But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, **much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ** abounded for many. 16 And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. 17 For if, because of one man's trespass, **death reigned** through that one man, **much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life** through the one man Jesus Christ.*

*18 Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, **so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.** 19 For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. 20 Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, 21 **so that, as sin reigned in***

death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Is it fair that we inherited a sin nature from Adam?

Let's wrestle with this question a minute. Recognize that we all still sin, so we are all guilty of our own doing, but God set this plan in place for our good. Adam was a representative of all humans, and so all humans die. But now those who choose to follow Christ are transferred over to life.

In Adam, all die; in Christ, all can live.

Rom 11:32 For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all. 33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

Now you do have to receive his grace. It's not automatic. (No universal salvation)

*17 For if, because of one man's trespass, **death reigned** through that one man, **much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life** through the one man Jesus Christ.*

How do we receive this grace? Believing on Jesus (the evidence, his life, death, and resurrection, the signs of those following), turning in repentance, and putting our faith (trust) in him. **Committing our whole life to follow him, knowing his way is better.**

The question is are you in Christ? What is the cost of being a disciple?

- If you love me, you will obey my commands (Jn 14:15)
- The apostle John assures us that "his commands are not burdensome" 1 Jn 5:3
- We must love one another (Jn 13:35)
- You will bear much fruit (Jn 15:8)
- You will walk (live) as Jesus walked (1 Jn 2:6)

Will you do any of these things perfectly? No, of course not. But this is what you are committed to becoming. The good news, again, is that for this to happen, only your cooperation is needed.

Access to the Grace in which we Stand

And this is where our future hope also becomes a present reality. Not only are we hoping for a future salvation with Jesus forever, we begin to experience that joy now as we experience the glory of God working in us.

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By Faith	Grace in which we STAND
Justified - Have eternal life	Hope of the glory of God
Have Peace with God – reconciliation, two opposing parties brought together	The Holy Spirit in us
Saved from God's wrath	God's love poured into our hearts
Given access→	Being made righteous as we walk as children of God

ACCESS granted – We have the privilege of approach to God's very presence.

Eph 2:18 – we have access to the Father

Eph 3:12 – we can now come boldly and confidently into God's presence

Heb 10:19 And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven's Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. 20 By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place. 21 And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God's house, 22 let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water.

*Heb 4:16 So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. **There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.***

Grace is more than a one-time pardon; it is the new realm believers inhabit. – Bible Hub

We do not visit grace, we breathe it. Every thought, prayer, and action occurs within the atmosphere of unmerited favor. We can boldly and confidently come before the Creator of the universe to find grace to help us. When? When we need it most!

So we come to God boldly knowing we are coming under the blood of Jesus, not our own holiness. We can be 100% confident of that access. And then we approach with humbleness and thanksgiving.

Php 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Jam 4:6 But He gives us more grace. This is why it says: "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Jam 4:8a Come close to God, and God will come close to you.

What does this access to grace provide for us?

- No condemnation (Rom 8:1)
- Adoption as children of God (Rom 8:15)
- The Holy Spirit praying for us (Rom 8:26)
- God not withholding any good thing (8:32)
- Transformation and freedom

2 Cor 3:17 For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18 So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.

This is the hope of the glory of God in verse 2. That as we see him, we become like him. We have access which opens the door to the Throne Room of God. We have the Holy Spirit working in us to set us free from sin and death to become more and more like Jesus by giving us new desires and by renewing of our minds by the Word of God.

God's Spirit in us changes our hearts

God's Word changes our patterns of thinking

The 2 combine to change our outward life. There is another thing that Jesus uses to change us. The trials and circumstances of this life that bring suffering.

Rejoice in our Suffering?

I want to close today by talking about the crazy statement Paul makes in verse 3.

Rom 5:3 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 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.

We joke about these things as Americans, because it seems preposterous to us. Who rejoices in suffering? No one wants to suffer willingly. We try as adults to do what we have to so we can avoid suffering. Rejoice in the hope of the glory of God? Sure – I want to see triumph, and healing, and wholeness. We all do. Yet we need to realize that in this period of time we will not see the fullness of all that. Why? Because we do not see Jesus fully and clearly yet.

Can Jesus bring dead things to life? Absolutely. He raised Lazarus from the dead, but at some point in history, Lazarus died again.

Can Jesus heal any disease we may have? Absolutely. But I don't see a scriptural promise that God will heal everything all the time for everybody.

Many Christians today, all over the world, are subject to terrible suffering, even martyrdom, and we should not expect our lives to be free from trouble.

So why do we rejoice in our sufferings? Because it is part of God working in us to produce Godly character.

Suffering → Endurance → Character → Hope → Vindication

Suffering is not an end in itself, and we should not seek it out. But when it comes into our lives, we should embrace it and rejoice. Paul, obviously, suffered greatly as he spent his life traveling, making disciples, and starting churches throughout the Roman Empire.

- Chased out of towns
- Whipped
- Beaten with rods
- Stoned
- 3 times shipwrecked
- 24 hours in the open sea
- Danger in his travels
- Sleepless nights
- Sometimes without food and shelter
- Carrying the concern for all the churches

In the end, Paul says this:

2 Cor 11:30 If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness.

Sometimes our life feels like Jesus is sleeping while our storm is raging. If you are here today and you are in a time of need, please, we want to pray with you. That is what having access to the grace we now stand in means. We can approach God with great confidence that we are accepted into his presence by the blood of Jesus and can ask for anything, knowing that if we ask according to his will, we will receive it.

But let us also learn to embrace our difficulties and sufferings with gratefulness and rejoicing because it is something God is allowing for our benefit.

The Upside-down Christian faith

So much of the Christian faith in this life seems completely upside-down.

- Learn to trust your life into the hands of a God you cannot see.
- If you want to be happy – learn to rejoice in your sufferings
- To be free – become a slave to Christ (Rom 6)
- To fulfill the Law – die and be wedded to Christ (Rom 7)
- A child of God will realize his earthly life is dead - and then become alive in Christ
- We are co-heirs with Christ (if we suffer with him)
- The only way to overcome evil is by doing good. (Rom 12)

Don't be discouraged that you have struggles as a follower in Christ. It doesn't mean you are failing. In fact, **it may be a sign that you are on the right track!**

Are you "In Christ" today? If you aren't sure if you are, fully commit your life to follow Him today. Why delay?

If you are In Christ, **do you fully understand the access you have to grace** every moment of every day? Are you taking full advantage of it? (Do you really understand it?)

Are you suffering today? Learn to rejoice in that. Jesus is not sleeping through your storm; He is shaping you within it.

Don't kid yourself, there is a cost to following Jesus. Following Christ means dying to yourself and living for Christ, but without a doubt in my mind, nothing we forsake compares to joy of knowing Christ and hope of future glory with him.