

Intro: I read the story about a woman who stopped at the corner deli to buy a chicken for supper (Leadership Journal, Fall 94, 43). The butcher reached into a barrel, grabbed the last chicken he had, flung it on the scales behind the counter, and told the woman its weight. She thought for a moment, and said, "I really need a bit more chicken than that. Do you have any larger ones?" Without a word, the butcher put the chicken back into the barrel, groped around as though finding another, pulled the same chicken out, and placed it on the scales. He announced, "This chicken weighs one pound more." The woman pondered her options, and then said, "Okay, I'll take them both."

This morning, we are going to talk about results, as we turn our attention to Romans 5:1-5. Our actions produce certain results. So do God's. We live in a "result" oriented society. From the stock market, to the box scores, people are interested in results.

The last word of Romans 4 is the word "justification"--"Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." We who know Jesus Christ have been justified. Justification is a great theme in the first chapters of Romans--2:13 "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." 3:20 "Therefore, by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight." 3:24 "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." 3:28 "Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law." 4:5 "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly."

The point is this. If we have believed in Jesus Christ, we have been justified. Justification is the act of God whereby He declares a sinner to be righteous based on the merit of Jesus Christ. Justification is linked to Christ alone. A person is justified by faith in Christ, not by achievement or performance. God justifies the ungodly. God declares undeserving people to be right with Him. It's amazing, yet true. If we know Christ, we have been justified by God.

Which raises an important question. So what? What difference does justification make in real life? Suppose your neighbor says to you, "I'm not interested in Christianity. It's all pie in the sky, by and by. I want something that will make a practical difference in real life. I'm interested in results."

Can you answer this question--What are the results of justification? What are the implications of being justified? Those are valid questions. The Bible addresses those questions in the first five verses of Romans 5 (Lloyd-Jones preached 26 sermons on Romans 5 alone!).

Proposition: In Romans 5:1-5, we discover three results of justification.

***Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

- I. Result #1: We have peace (1).
- II. Result #2: We have access (2a).
- III. Result #3: We have joy (2b-5).
 - A. It affects our attitude towards our future hope (2b).
 - B. It affects our attitude towards our present trials (3-5).
 - 1. Trials produce patience.
 - 2. Patience produces character.
 - 3. Character produces hope.
 - 4. Hope produces confidence.

I. Result #1: We have peace (1).

V 1 "Therefore." Chapter five is a pivotal chapter in Romans. Biblical scholars have debated whether chapter five finishes out the section of Rom 1-4, or begins the new section of Rom 6-8. In a sense, it does both. In ch 5, Paul pulls together the truths of chapters 1-4, and says, "Therefore. In light of what I've just said, here is the bottom line. Here are the implications."

V 1 "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Notice that word "justified." It's a participle which summarizes the truth of chapters 1-4. We have been justified. It's an aorist participle which means this event took place in the past. It's a passive participle which indicates someone else justified us, that of course was God.

Here's the first result of justification. People who have been justified have. What is peace? I listen to the news and hear about the signing of a "peace" accord in the Middle East. I hear about the bloodshed in Rhanda and know there is a need for peace. I hear about the rampant rise of domestic abuse in our country, and know there is a need for peace in homes. But what kind of peace does Paul have in mind? Peace with God.

Here, peace is not a subjective feeling, but an objective state. It's the opposite of "enmity." Notice v 10, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." To say we have peace with God is to say we are no longer enemies of God. We are no longer alienated from God. We are no longer strangers to God.

Don't miss this. Peace is not an emotion I conjure up, or a feeling a drug can induce. Peace is a condition that is the result of my standing with God. The world offers "techniques" designed to produce peace. Some people turn to a cocktail or a can of beer or drugs in their search for peace. But those are false substitutes for peace. Isaiah 48:22 says, "There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked."

How can we experience the real thing? The text says, "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Jesus said in Jn 14:27, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Notice the world offers a counterfeit peace. Jesus offers the real thing. His peace brings tranquility to our soul. He gives us peace with God. He assures us that all is well between us and our Maker.

Warren Wiersbe offers this helpful insight (527), "Condemnation means that God declares us sinners, which is a declaration of war. Justification means that God

declares us righteous, which is a declaration of peace." Friend, the white flag has been raised.

I like the way the Phillips version paraphrases Rom 5:1, "Let us grasp the fact that we HAVE peace with God." Beloved, if we have been justified, peace with God is something we have, right now. It belongs to us. It's like money in the bank. Yet likewise, it does us no good until we live in the light of it.

So when we talk about the results of justification, here is the first. Peace. The second result grows out of the first.

II. Result #2: We have access (2a).

V 2 "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand." To have "access" is a beautiful thing. Two weeks ago, while taking a class on "Legal Issues" at Grace Seminary in Indiana, we took a field trip to the court house. I drove separately, and by the time I arrived, the group was already inside, in the legal library. I did not know where that was, so I started walking down a hall and came to a sign that read, "General public not permitted beyond this point." That corridor was "off limits" to me. I had no right of "access." Later, however, after I found the group, we walked right past those signs, following the lead of our teacher. He was an attorney.

When the Jews entered the Temple, they encountered a veil that reminded them that the holy presence of God is off limits to unholy people. There was also a wall in the Temple area. If a Gentile went beyond that wall, he could be killed. Access was a big deal. Yet when Jesus died, He tore the veil (Lk 23:45) and broke down the wall (Eph 2:14; see Wiersbe, 527). Because of Jesus' death, we have access.

The Greek word for "access" is rather illustrative. It's the word used for introducing or ushering someone into the presence of royalty. By faith in Christ, Paul says, we have access to the King of the universe. In later Greek, this word was used for the place where ships would come in, a harbor, a haven (Barclay, 73). Through Christ, the presence of God has become a secure harbor for us.

In one of H. G. Wells' books, there is a story about a man whose life was falling apart. His mind was so strained with anxiety that he was in serious danger of having a complete nervous and mental breakdown. He went to his doctor. His doctor told him the only thing that could save him was to find the peace that fellowship with God can give. The man responded, "What! To think of that, up there, having fellowship with me! I would as soon think of cooling my throat with the milky way or shaking hands with the stars! (Barclay, 72)"

To many people, God is some far off, disinterested "Force" of fate. But not to those who have been justified. We have access. Eph 3:12 says, "In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him." Heb 4:16 says we have access to the throne of grace where we can obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. We have access to the very presence of God.

But Rom 5:2 is even more specific. To what are we told that we have access? "We have access by faith into this grace in which we stand." We have access to grace. Grace is God giving us what we do not deserve. Grace is the unmerited favor of God. Grace is the key to every resource we need in life (II Cor 8:9 "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He were rich, He became poor, that ye through

His poverty might be rich"). Grace is the key to strength (II Tim 2:1 "My son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus"). Grace is the key to growth (II Pt 3:18 "But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ)." We could not live without grace (see: Rom 5:15, 17, 20, 21).

I need this reminder often. I have access to grace. And so do you. How? Through faith in Christ. We tap into all of God's benefits through faith. Yet frankly, it's easy to stop living by faith and start coasting in spiritual "autopilot." We're prone to ignore faith and bypass access into grace.

A friend of mine told me he heard Haddon Robinson speak several years ago. Haddon Robinson is one of the great authorities on preaching in the world. He was a key leader at Dallas Seminary for years, and was looked to with great reverence and respect by the Christian community in Dallas. But he left his position of security and prestige in Dallas, and moved to a new position at a seminary in Denver. In Denver, he was largely an unknown. In Denver, he had to start all over. My friend related that someone asked Haddon Robinson the question, "Why did you leave Dallas?" He paused, thought for a moment, then said, "I'd forgotten what it was like to walk on water." (In other words, I'd forgotten what it was like to live by faith in God, to trust God for the impossible).

Christian friends, are you living by faith or by sight? We have access to grace. Are you tapping into that grace? Are you trusting God for the impossible? As we do, we'll learn to experience a third result. Being justified, we have peace, access, and...

III. Result #3: We have joy (2b-5).

V 2 "And rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." People who have been justified have reason to rejoice! We have joy! What does that mean? Joy affects our attitude. It affects our attitude in two areas.

A. It affects our attitude towards our future hope (2b).

V 2 looks to the future. We "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." The "glory of God" is our hope, our aspiration. We live with the hope that one day, we will be privileged to see God receive what He deserves--the glory due unto His Name. We also live realizing that one day we will benefit from that glory. We will be transformed into His likeness.

We read about this in I Jn 3:2-3. "Beloved, NOW are we the children of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this HOPE in him purifieth himself even as he is pure."

Peace with God takes care of the past. Access to God takes care of the present. Our hope in the glory of God takes care of the future (Wiersbe, 527). No wonder we have cause to rejoice!

We need not fear the future. We have hope. We can rejoice when we think of what's ahead. But until then, what happens? Do we just grit our teeth and endure? No. Joy affects our attitude in a second area as well.

B. It affects our attitude towards our present trials (3-5).

You see, we have not only a hope for the future, but also a help for the present. I am amazed at Paul's attitude towards suffering. If you'll turn to Colossians 1, you'll notice four incredible truths related to Paul's view of trials and suffering. One, it's a privilege to suffer (24, "Who now rejoice in my sufferings"). Two, our suffering often benefits someone else (24, "my sufferings for you"; see also 2 Cor 1:5-6). Three, our suffering identifies us with Christ (24, "and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh"). Christ suffered first. When we suffer, we link with Christ in a special way. Four, God uses our suffering to enhance His program in the Church (24, "for His body's sake, which is the church").

Do you know what that means? It means we need not fear trials. Paul didn't. Ponder his aim in life, as shared in Phil 3:10, "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings."

Now, plug all of this into Paul's statement in Rom 5:2-3. "We rejoice in hope of the glory of God. AND NOT ONLY SO, but we glory in tribulations also." Did you catch that? We can have the same view of our present trials as our future hope. We can rejoice in both.

Don't water down the shocking announcement in v 3. Paul DIDN'T say, "We tolerate tribulations. We endure tribulations. We get by tribulations." No, he said, "We GLORY IN tribulations."

How can that be? Because of the next word, "knowing." We can have joy in trials because we "know" four certainties about trials. It's like a chain reaction.

1. Trials produce patience.

The word "tribulation" in v 3 is a vivid word. Literally, it means "pressure"--anything that "presses in" on us. Figuratively, it denotes oppression, affliction, even tribulation. It can refer to distress brought on by outwards circumstances. It can also refer to trouble of mind, spirit, and heart (e.g. "anguish").

Beloved, we need not fear trials in life. Not because they will not happen. They will. Even to Christians. Christians lose jobs. Christians endure broken family relationships. Christians lose their health. Yet Christians can "glory in tribulations." Why? Because we know that trials produce something good.

How do we know that? The word "worketh" in v 3 means "to bring about, to achieve, to accomplish, to produce" (in Rom 4:13 "the law WORKETH wrath"). What do trials produce? "Patience." Perseverance. Patient enduring. A Korean Christian once shared that when he and his friends were under great persecution from the Communists, they would say, "We are like nails; the harder you hit us, the deeper you drive us (Briscoe, 114)." That's perseverance.

Here's where the chain reaction starts. Trials produce patience. Then...

2. Patience produces character.

That's what v 4 says. The word translated "experience" is a common Greek word. It's used of metal which has been passed through the fire so that all the impurities have been removed. Remember what Job said? "When He has tried me, I shall come forth as gold (23:10)."

Trials produce patience. Patience produces character. Thirdly...

3. Character produces hope.

Trials need not blow us out of the water. In fact, as those who have been justified, trials generate hope in us. Trials bolster our sense of anticipation.

Trials can reveal whether a person is a genuine Christian or not. Lloyd-Jones wrote (61), "The way to test between the true and the false is to observe what happens in the hour of crisis, in the time of real need. A faith that does not help us when we need it most of all is not the Christian faith; for this never fails."

If we have truly been justified, three certainties are undeniable. Trials produce patience. Patience produces character. Character produces hope. Finally...

4. Hope produces confidence.

V 5 says, "And hope maketh not ashamed." Now we have reached the pinnacle of spiritual maturity. Trials do not "disappoint" a person who has learned the meaning of joy. When we learn to see trials from God's vantage point, trials strengthen our character. They also increase our confidence in God.

Several years ago (story told by Tim Kenoyer), Moshe Diane, Israel's great military genius traveled to New Dehli, India. Moshe Diane was the man who led Israel to the miracle victory in the Six-Day war. The press in New Dehli asked Moshe about the incredible win. He responded with these words, "The God Who was, is. The God who did, does." Hope produces confidence.

Have you ever noticed how two people can go through the same trial--yet one goes to pieces, while the other shines like gold? Why is that? It's because the latter has learned to cooperate with God in the process.

We must never forget that God is doing something IN us as well as THROUGH us. Most of us are too performance oriented. God is concerned with a process. We think, "I could serve God better IF I had better health." "I could have done a better job raising my kids IF I had a better job." God says, "Wait. I allowed that trial to come into your life for a reason. Don't resist Me, trust Me. That trial is part of the process. I'm using it to shape you, to mold you."

James sums up the process in James 1:2-4, "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing this that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

Here's the process. Trials produce patience. Patience produces character. Character produces hope. Hope produces confidence. We know this. And this knowledge enables us to experience joy in the midst of trials.

Objection: "Must we endure trials alone?" No. God has equipped us with two resources--the Love of God, and the Spirit of God (see: the end of v 5).

Conclusion:

What difference is Jesus Christ making in your life? If we have faith in Christ, we have been justified. If we have been justified, the Bible says three results are true. We have peace with God. We have access to grace. We have joy, a joy which affects our view of the future as well as the present. May we live in light of these results.