

## XXVII. Romans in Biblical Perspective

### *The Gospel of God*

#### “Five Gospel Blessings of Justification by Faith Alone – Part 2”

Romans 5:1–5

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I would like to start by reading the illustration Paul gives about Abraham who was saved as a Gentile by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone to set up our text for this study. This is the Word of God that is infallible, inerrant and sufficient for all the matters of life in Christ. Romans 4:18–25 to 5:1–5 says [18] *In hope he (Abraham) believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.”* [19] *He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb.* [20] *No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God,* [21] *fully convinced that God was able to do what He had promised.* [22] *That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.”* [23] *But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone,* [24] *but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in Him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord,* [25] *who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.*

[1] *Therefore (in light of Christ being delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification), 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.*

The grass withers, the flower fades, the Word of our God abides forever and by His grace and mercy may His Word be preached for you.

In the calling to preach you have to preach the Word, to preach the Word you have to get into the Word and I can't believe I get a salary to do that. It is so astonishing and astounding. As I have been preaching on this exposition of Romans – this glorious exposition of the Gospel of God – it seems that every time I get to another paragraph I'm astounded at how more rich, glorious, and overwhelming it gets. That is where we are now where Romans 5:1–5 is a launching pad but I need to back up for a moment.

I would like to recommend to you a book by R. C. Sproul titled the Holiness of God which is an exposition of Isaiah 6:1–8. Every time I come to that passage, I am astonished because we were called, on the assembly of the Lord's Day, this is to be repeated every time. We have been speaking to one another, ‘Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty’ and have come into His presence in worship. God has personally come into the presence of His people in worship and two times in the Bible the heavens are parted and we're able to look, not at the copy of the holy of holies, but the Holy of Holies – the throne of God.

One of those times comes from Isaiah 6. The train is the sign of majestic authority and power as the train fills the temple. There is the pillar of cloud – the shekinah glory of God – that just fills it up. The angels created as messengers and ministers of praise in the presence of God, are equipped to sing of the holiness of God. Holy (in the normative), holy (in the comparative),

holy (to the superlative) and yet angels who have never sinned, in the presence of God are equipped with wings that cover their eyes, sings that keep them suspended in air lest they touch the presence of God and wings that cover their feet lest they offend the holiness of God. Even the inanimate objects like thresholds have enough sense to tremble in His presence and He has been present here. We have been in His present even in these moments. There is the sound of joy and the aura of reverence. How many times in our worship, in the name of joy descend into triviality or in the name of reverence descend into morbidity, yet there is a vitality of those two threads woven together in the presence of God when He is given praise by His people, because they are in His presence.

Have you ever noticed whenever a theophany or Christophany – a preincarnate appearance of God, usually in the Old Testament and denoted by the phrase ‘the angel of the Lord’ – what happens to those who encounter it? Or when you get to the incarnate presence of God and the ministry of Christ and periodically the Kingdom of power breaks in, we call it a sign, wonder and miracle, what did the people do every single time? When the presence of God and His power were displayed they fell on their face because the next words you would always hear is ‘get up and do not fear.’ This is the God of glory and I do not believe we will have revival, influence, impact for Him in this world, nor the ability to stand for Him in this world and understand His attributes of grace and mercy, until we understand His majestic holiness. A big God produces a great testimony for God.

Here's the amazing thing. Because Christ was delivered up for our sins and raised for our verdict of innocent (justification) we now have peace with God, the blessings of the Gospel and that's where Romans 5 gives us five crucial legacy blessings of the Gospel that flow from the atoning death of Christ where He bears our sins on the cross and the triumphant resurrection of Christ that declares our justification. Paul now having shown us God's solution in Romans 4 where the Reformation solas surface from for we're saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone for the glory of God alone and the Scripture alone is our only rule of faith and practice.

Now we get to Romans 5 and we're ushered into as it were, an office. Let's say a lawyer's office. Praise God for Christian lawyers for it is an astounding testimony of the sufficiency of God's grace. The lawyer reads for us from the death, the will and here's your inheritance. We don't have a full list of our inheritance through the death and resurrection of Christ in the New Covenant will and testament of God for His people, but five essential legacy blessings are given. In the last study I gave you one and in this study I will give you two. I would challenge you to meditate and marinate on God's Word in this text to find the last two in the coming week before the next study for it will bless you.

The one we looked at in the last study was peace with God. Because Jesus died on the cross and took our sins upon Himself removing our guilt as He gives us His righteousness it starts out in Romans 5:1 by saying ‘Therefore, having been...’ Note the declaration. If you are in Christ and Christ is in you we are not waiting to see how well you will do as to whether you will be justified, because that was done for you when Christ went to the cross and was raised. The gates of heaven have been opened because you have the righteousness of God. ‘Therefore, having been justified...’

We try to fulfill the Great Commission and we are somewhere between zero and one hundred percent effective, through evangelism and discipleship. We want you to grow and sometimes your steps will be three forward and two backward, sometimes one step forward and two backward, etc. There will be this uneven journey yet pilgrim's progress in the journey of grace in your life. No matter how much you grow in God's grace and by God's grace you will

never by more right with God than you are right now. What you do for Jesus does not add to your justification. The blood and righteousness of Christ has justified all who are in Christ. One might be thinking, 'then why should I do things?' That's simple, because you love Him who first loved you and He says if you love Him you will keep His commandments (John 14:15). You may be more intimate with Him, know more about Him and be more effective for Him but you will never be more right with God than what He did at that cross when He was delivered up for your sins, was raised and gave you His righteousness. When He came out of that tomb all of His people were redeemed by His blood and righteousness and we add nothing to it. He has done it all and all to Him I owe, as the hymn says. So, you now have peace with God because of this.

The reason peace with God is such a blessing, is prior to your conversion you were at enmity with God. The Bible is clear on this for you not in neutrality prior to your conversion. Our sin is the assault weapon against the holiness of God and the glory of God. Our sins were a declaration of our warfare against God and therefore God was at war with us and our sin. We were in opposition to Him before converted, but when the Spirit of God gave you conviction of your sin, and sight of the sufficiency, majesty and love of God who gave His Son that you might not perish, now you lay down your arms, repent of our sins and put our trust in Christ alone. When that happens now Christ is our peace.

This is seen throughout the book of Isaiah but I love the picture of this in Isaiah 53 when the Messiah is prophesied. He is the wonderful Counselor, the almighty God, everlasting Father, the Prince of peace. Because we have peace with God, then in life's challenges the Bible tells us we have the peace of God that guards our hearts and minds. This is an inherited blessing from the death and resurrection of Christ.

Just in case we miss it Jesus underlines it for us as right before He goes to the cross, He takes His Disciples to an Upper Room. They are in the Upper Room from John 13 through John 17. In that Upper Room He establishes the Lord's Supper, give them the new commandment to love one another as He has loved them, sends the Spirit upon them for their special calling of their Apostolic ministry as He anoints them with the power of the Spirit, does the High Priestly prayer with its seven glorious petitions, washes their feet including the one who would betray Him (Judas Iscariot) and He unfolded a piece of the inheritance as He looked at the Disciples and said in John 14:27, *[27] Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.* He goes on to say in John 16:33, *[33] I have said these things to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.*

You have peace with God but you are not at peace. We who used to be at war with God with our sins are now at peace with God and are at war with our sins for we are on a mission to kill sin. We are now in spiritual warfare. We want to kill our sins because we love Christ, but that's not all for now He is going to give us another legacy in this Romans 5 text. Here is the Romans 5:1–5 text which says *[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.*

The second legacy/blessing is that we have access through Christ to God, through Christ we have standing with God. This blessing is for those who are saved by grace alone through

faith alone in Christ alone. Why is this a blessing to have access to God? The reason this is a blessing, if you're not in Christ, by Divine decree, you do not have access to God nor do you have standing with God. God Himself has made that clear in His Word. On the contrary, you have no access to God or His presence because of your sins. He drives that away and because of our sin nature you do not want access to God or desire to have standing with God.

We are currently in a season in our nation where all these cases are flying up to the Supreme Court – some they are taking and some they aren't due to various reasons. Sometimes they turn down cases on the grounds of those who brought them who have no standing in this court. This really begins to penetrate my heart as I think through it because there is coming a Day when by command, we will all stand in the final court of judgment, but on that Day one who is not in Christ will have no standing and will be under judgment. There is only one way of access by God's grace into His presence and that's Christ. There is only one standing in the presence of God and that is in Christ, otherwise we don't have access or standing, but by His grace there is a way to have access and standing.

Where does this lesson begin? It begins in the Garden of Eden in Genesis. In the Garden there is Adam and Eve and God is with them, the presence of God. Then Adam and Eve sin against God. Instead of wanting access to God they wanted access to being God. Instead of standing before God, they wanted to stand as God. So, they listened to the serpent, took the fruit and they ate and what does God do at the end of Genesis 3? He drives them out of His presence. Genesis 3:24 says *[24] He (God) drove out the man (Adam and Eve), and at the east of the garden of Eden He placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.* There the Garden is like the holy of holies – the felt dwelling place of God. They are not only driven out but an angel is sent to keep them out. There is no access or standing and have already revealed in sin that they don't want that access or standing. What they want is to be God and stand as God in the deception of sin.

I could go through many examples of this but I'll just fast forward to Moses. God by His grace delivers His people from bondage. He takes them to Mount Sinai – known as the mountain of God – and it is here where God begins to peel back His work of grace for people to have access and standing with God and they must have a mediator. God sets aside Moses as He brings him up on Mount Sinai into His presence to give him His Word, His very law, but God tells the people not to come up or even touch the mountain, no access, but He is bringing a mediator. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. Do they want that access and standing? No, for while Moses is up there getting the law, they are at the foot of the mountain breaking the law as they engage in the orgies of the worship of Baal in rebellion against God.

God's longsuffering continues as He sets up a Tent of Meeting as they are in the wilderness. There the presence of God comes into the Tent of Meeting. He instructs them to put the Tent of Meeting in the middle of the tribes and put the tribes in a circle so each tribe has access. Again, we see His grace for they can't come into that Tent of Meeting and in the middle of that Tent is the holy of holies, but He brings a mediator again and it is Moses. What do the people do? Again, they play the harlot and go after the gods of the nations. You see this in Exodus 33 for they take the Tent of Meeting and move it outside the camp.

That is kind of the way we look at access and standing, isn't it? It almost sounds like 21<sup>st</sup> Century current evangelical Christianity. We don't want God so close it affects our lives but we'd like to have Him nearby in case He is an additive for our life. By the way, we'd love to have a pastor who would go talk to God for us and come back to tell us things that He says, but to have Him in the midst? I have often wondered what would happen, not a circus or funeral home experience, if the felt presence of God was in the gathering of His people. I know one

thing that would happen for the book of Corinthians tells us – when the unbeliever comes into your worship service they will fall on their face and say ‘God is in the midst of these people.’ This isn’t a concert or corporate meeting to pump the shareholders. This is different – God is in the midst of these people.

The people of Israel just wanted God nearby so God said to Moses, ‘Don’t worry Moses, you’re people have sinned so strip them of their idolatrous ornaments, I’m sending you and the people to the Promised Land, will give you all milk and honey, will give you an angel, you will have military and economic success, but I’m not going with you.’ Thankfully Moses says in Exodus 33:15–16, *[15] And he (Moses) said to Him, “If Your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here. [16] For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people? Is it not in Your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?”* Away with the prosperity gospel, not our economic, military, national or political success for how are people to know that we are God’s people? Is it not for You being in our midst, for that’s the only way and a people who love His presence.

We could continue to see how Israel continued to play the harlot and God cut them off but then God is not going to stop fulfilling His promises, so He sends not a sinful mediator who needs his own mediator, like Moses, but now He sends His Son. There is one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus (I Timothy 2:5) and He comes into the world and lives that righteous life. He goes to the cross and is delivered up. It is not a model death or an exemplary death but He is delivered up for an atoning death, where He is dying to make us one with Him and Him with us that we might have union with Christ. We don’t just have access but He abides in us and He was raised for our justification.

So, we who were at enmity now have peace with God. We who had no standing, by His grace now stands because of our God. We who had no access now have access because He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross, that we would be atoned and in Him, with Him as our sins are removed and forgiven. We are in Christ and Christ is in us. We now have access and standing in the holy of holies, because Christ came from the holy of holies to our sin-stricken world and heart to save that we might have peace with God, access to God and standing in Christ.

Here is the takeaway. We who had no access to God nor standing before God and who had no desire for access or standing before God because of our sin, now having been justified by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone we irrevocably have and desire both access to God and standing before God now and for all eternity. The reason we have access and standing before God is because we have the righteousness and power of God in Christ that gives you that access and standing. This is why Paul says in Romans 1:16–17 *[16] For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. [17] For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”* The power of God has come upon you to change your heart and now you want and desire Him and His presence.

What if people apostatize or walk away from God? That doesn’t change this. The Bible says that those who profess faith but walk away never possessed faith. It’s not that God’s promises have failed. It’s that their profession was not a possession. John says it this way; they went out but they were never really one with You, in Christ. But for those who have been saved by God’s grace alone through saving faith in Christ alone, irrevocably has peace with God. Tomorrow when things start falling apart, go in the name of Christ to your God, for you have access and standing. Go, led by the Spirit to the Word of God for you are His and He is yours.

Romans 8:38–39 says [38] *For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, [39] nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.* There is no charge against you, no condemnation for Christ took it away at the cross. His Spirit is within you and now He is yours.

To have peace with God, access to God and standing with God you have to be in Christ by faith. You will never believe in Christ (God) until you believe Christ (God) – when He says if you're not with Me you're against Me. You can't save yourself. Your works won't save you. Abraham believed God (Genesis 15:6, Romans 4:3, Galatians 3:6) and that's why Abraham believed God's promises, fulfilled in Christ. Then when you believe Him and that He is able then you come to the One in whom all the promises are yes and amen. You believe by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

This (access to God, standing before God) ought to affect your worship on the Lord's Day, the way you live your life – under the eye of God, in the presence of God – and it ought to effect when you falter and sin for Jesus has opened the way for you to confess your sins and if you do then you have the promise in I John 1:9 which says [9] *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* You can go to Him every morning through His Word and prayer and come right to the holy of holies for the way has been sprinkled clean by the blood of Jesus. This should affect everything in life.

When the challenges of a broken world hit you – sickness, death, adversity, confounding decisions to make, etc. – then you flee to Him because you have access to Him and standing before Him so call upon Him. He says 'Come unto Me...' and then He give us that glorious blessing of wisdom, peace and insight, all because of what He did for us on the cross. I just love Jesus and I want you to love Jesus.

Today, you are either His enemy or you are in Jesus for there is no in-between and that's what He says. I want you to be in Christ so if you want to pray with someone about this, please call us at Briarwood at (205) 776-5200 for we'd love to talk and pray with you about this. I long for you to believe in Him. I don't want you to keep tasting an exhilarating sweetness of a momentary sin and its ultimate despair. I don't want you to worship the impotent, life destroying gods of this world that cannot deliver, except death. I want you to come to Him and have life, living water, breath, everlasting life. In Christ you have access to it. Come to Him.

This is one of the reasons I love the Getty hymn, *In Christ Alone* and this is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this hymn (2021). From the first time I heard it I loved it – it was Biblical, the music, the theology and everything. You go right through the Christian life in verses 1, 2, 3, and 4. It is a phenomenal hymn. Not long after it was written and it hit its fame the mainline Presbyterian denomination and another denomination wanted to purchase the rights to put it in their new hymnal. It would have been a pretty big check. By the way, Stewart Townend did the lyrics and Keith Getty composed the music to it. Before they would give the check they said they would like to make one edit to the song.

There is a line in the song that says, 'Til on that cross as Jesus died, The wrath of God was satisfied... and denomination wanted to edit it after the part of Him going to the cross that 'The love of God was magnified' for it still rhymes and it's true. Mr. Getty said 'no' for theological reasons and told them to keep their check. The reason we know the love of God was magnified was because of what He went to the cross to do and that was to satisfy the righteous wrath of God against our sins, so we could have peace with God. That particular verse that contains that line is my favorite verse from the hymn/song. It says;

*In Christ alone, Who took on flesh,  
Fullness of God in helpless babe!  
This gift of love and righteousness,  
Scorned by the ones He came to save.  
'Til on that cross as Jesus died,  
The wrath of God was satisfied  
For ev'ry sin on Him was laid  
Here in the death of Christ I live.*

Because of what Christ did, we live in peace with God, with access to God and standing before God. I don't need the wings to cover my feet. On that Day, by grace alone, through faith alone in Christ alone, in the presence of the Thrice Holy God, we stand to the glory of God now and forever. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the moments we could be together in Your Word. I pray Father, that no one will leave this study at enmity with You, with no access to You, with no standing before You, but today will come by grace alone through faith alone to Christ alone and His peace will be their peace. They have access to You through the blood of the cross and they have standing for they are clothed with the righteousness of Christ. Thank You for the righteousness of God and thank You for the power of God that changes the hearts of men and women so no longer do we want our sin but we want a Savior, the Savior – Christ our Lord, in whose name I pray, Amen.

#### Power Point

Five Gospel Legacy Blessings for All Who are Justified by Grace Alone Through Faith Alone in Christ Alone

1. We have Peace with God.
2. We have access to God and Standing with God.

#### Life Takeaway

*We who had no access to God nor standing before God because of our sins and who had no desire for access to God nor standing before God...*

*Now having been Justified by Grace alone through Faith alone in Christ alone...*

*Irrevocably, both have and desire access to God and standing before God now and for all eternity.*

#### In Christ Alone

*In Christ alone, Who took on flesh,  
Fullness of God in helpless babe!  
This gift of love and righteousness,  
Scorned by the ones He came to save.  
'Til on that cross as Jesus died,  
The wrath of God was satisfied  
For ev'ry sin on Him was laid  
Here in the death of Christ I live.*