

Romans 5:1-5

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[0 : 00] Romans chapter 5 is where we are this morning. Last week we did verse 1 and we're going to read verse 1 through verse 5.

! Romans chapter 5, verse 1 says,! 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. And we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 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.

Let's pray together. Father, we know it is a privilege and a great opportunity to meet together with our brothers and sisters, with your saints.

Lord, we know that you have called us all here for a purpose, for a reason. We know that your word does not return void.

[1 : 26] So God, as we read your word, and as your word is preached, I pray, God, that your word would not return void. That hardened hearts would be softened.

That soft hearts would be more receptive and more obedient to what you have told us and taught us. That those in here that don't even know you would come to know you because they have heard from you this morning.

That you have called them to yourself this morning. I pray, God, that the words that are spoken would be your words. That you would be exalted on high.

That people would leave here not feeling good, not having this emotional experience, but being one mind, one spirit, praising you as we leave this place, desiring to exalt you alone.

Thank you for this opportunity and this time. I pray that you are pleased and you are honored. In Jesus' name, amen. Assurance is a word that isn't used as much as it is practiced or worked towards.

[2 : 49] For example, college students. You guys go to college to get a degree so that you're assured a good, well-paying job. Parents raise kids a certain way to assure that their children turn out to be good, obedient, and polite students, employees, and citizens.

Some parents bring their children or take their children to church to assure that their kids will grow up and become Christians. Some of you may have been those kids. People live a healthy life in order that they can be assured to live a long time.

The truth is that all of that is circumstantial at best. When we really think about it, there's not a lot of things that we can be assured of. The old saying, there are only two certainties in life, death and taxes, carries with it a little more weight because it's almost true.

But, if you are a Christian, if you are a child of God, then there are several things that you can be assured of. Because as Romans 4, 21 says, we can be fully convinced that God is able to do what He promised.

As Abraham was fully convinced that God was able to do what He had promised. Our text this morning is about assurance. Now, not assurance of salvation, like you're doubting your salvation, although that comes into play, but more about our salvation being secured forever in Christ.

[4 : 35] Assurance that we have in and from justification by faith. In fact, Romans 5 and Romans 8 are about this very topic of assurance.

The assurance we have in Christ and the things that we are assured of because of Christ. So, as a quick review of Romans up to this point, chapter 1 is all about the Gentiles being sinners.

Us, non-Jewish people being sinners without hope and guilty even though we don't have the law. Chapter 2 is about the Jewish people being guilty because they do have the law. They are held accountable to that law. Chapter 3 is all about us, everyone guilty. All of us, sinners, cursed, deserving of death.

Chapter 4, justification by faith to any for all who are made right before God. And chapter 5, assurance of being justified by faith.

[5 : 45] So, this is where we settle. This is where we begin our study on assurance. So, because we have been justified, because Christ has died, we've been justified by faith, we have five things from our text that we can be assured of.

One of them was our topic last week. We talked about peace. Peace with God. We can be assured that we stand at peace with God. No longer enemies. No longer at war with God because of Christ. This morning, we have four more. We are assured access to God. We are assured a future glory. We are assured that suffering will come.

And we are assured that God loves His children. So, our first point this morning. We are assured access to God. This is verse 2.

It says, Through Him, being Christ, being Jesus, Thanks, Nick. We have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand.

[6 : 53] So, not only do we have peace with God, verse 1, but we are also given access to God through Jesus Christ. Access can also be translated introduction.

Now, if I want a face-to-face with the Queen of England, those of you who don't know, I was born in England, so let's say I'm considering citizenship there.

And I want to do as much research as I can and I want to meet the Queen and talk to her and see what she has to say about me being a citizen. There would be a long process for me to have to go through for me to be able to even have a face-to-face with her.

On top of the process, I'd have to learn proper etiquette. Where to stand, where to bow, how to touch her, all these things.

And then when the meeting time happens, when I get to face-to-face, of course, I would be escorted to the Queen of England and introduced by one of her trusted counsel.

[7 : 54] I would need someone to intercede for me and then I can be introduced. The same is true for us with God.

Of course, on a totally different level. Because of Jesus Christ, we have been given access to God and been introduced by Jesus to the Creator of the universe.

Now, this introduction isn't because God didn't know us. It's because we couldn't have access any other way. Like the peace we have been given with God, we needed to have peace with God because we were enemies at war with Him.

Being sinful creatures has thwarted any thought that you or I could have fellowship with Him. But Christ has given us that access. In verse 2, verse 1 says, 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. Another way to say this verse is through Him, we have been put in this gracious relationship with God.

[9 : 10] This gracious relationship. A relationship founded on grace. Where grace abounds. Grace gives us peace with God. Grace gives us access to God.

Because of grace, we are no longer under the law. Because of grace, we have a Heavenly Father. Grace gives us hope of our future glory. Grace secures an inheritance.

Grace empowers us to live fearless and victorious. Because of grace, we can glorify God with all of our lives. Because of grace, we can be image bearers of God as we were created to be.

Because of grace, we have been made alive. And because of grace, we can rejoice in the valley and on the mountaintop. We stand in this grace.

It is the umbrella that covers us from a storm that will not end. And we rejoice in the storm because grace upon grace is given through Jesus Christ. We have been given access to God through Jesus Christ.

[10 : 19] And if we could stand with Him in His presence, as if we could stand in His presence. In the Old Testament, throughout the Jewish traditions, access was given to one person.

No one but the high priest one time a year. The way that Paul is describing our access throws the Jewish teaching out of the window. There's something better because of Christ.

God is no longer a far-off object of worship. He's no longer this God that we cannot touch or see. He is our friend, our Father, and our Lord.

And now we can just walk into the presence of God. Turn to Hebrews chapter 4. I want you to see this. If we can walk into the presence of God, if that's the case, then our prayer lives should be good.

We should have fellowship with God like we do with our spouse. Like we do with our teammates. Or like we do with our brothers or sisters of fraternity or sororities. Or our bunkmates.

[11 : 34] We should have that fellowship with Him because we have been given access to Him through Christ. In Hebrews chapter 4, starting in verse 14, says, Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God.

Let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

So because of Christ, the writer of Hebrews is setting us up for verse 16, Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

So, after reading that and knowing that we have access because of Christ to God, what's wrong with your prayer life? What's wrong with my prayer life?

Why don't we pray with this kind of confidence? We have been assured of this kind of access. Let us go boldly before God with reverence and proclaim grace boldly to those around us.

[12 : 48] So not only are we assured access before God, but our second point is we are assured a future glory. This is the second part of verse 2 of chapter 5.

It says, By faith into this grace in which we stand and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

That is, that we have hope of the moment when we will be glorified as God is glorified. The word rejoice isn't just to be joyful or sing or anything like that.

It can be translated as boast. So another way to say it is, we are joyfully confident. So if we were to say this text again, we are joyfully confident in the hope of the glory of God.

We have been assured that we will share in the glory of God. We will be made perfect. We will be made sinless. Without suffering.

[13 : 56] Without pain. Here is why this is a big deal. In Romans chapter 3, verse 23 says, For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

In other words, we have been made unable to achieve to the glory of God. We are unable without Christ. And now because of Christ, we are promised that we will share in God's glory.

See, Jesus Christ has given us peace. We have peace with God. He's given us access to God and He's assured us that we will share in His glory.

It's truly a one-sided relationship. God has done all the work. It is no wonder we have hope or are supposed to have hope in what's to come.

Because He's done everything up to this point. John Stott defines Christian hope as this. He says, a Christian hope is a joyful and confident expectation which rests on the promise of God.

[15 : 05] A joyful and confident expectation which rests on the promise of God. God has done it. So if we have this hope then, if we have this hope of future glory of what's going to happen, how does that change your life or my life?

How do we live differently because of that? See, if you're truly born again, if you are a Christian, then you will have a desire to please God, to do what will bring most pleasure to Him.

So a follow-up question is, do you have that desire? Do you have the desire to please God? If you do, then whatever it takes to please Him, you're going to do.

You will obey His Word. You will do as He says. Hebrews 4.12 says, God's Word is living and active, sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

If that's what the Word of God does, then just listening to it isn't an option. Just hearing it isn't an option. If we know that we have been assured of future glory, how does it change our life?

[16 : 29] It frees us to be bold. It frees us to proclaim Jesus Christ. It frees us to live for the Gospel and sometimes to die for the Gospel.

It's why Paul says in Philippians, for to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. To live isn't just happiness or pleasure.

It is Christ because what He has done because He is far better far better than this world and because of what we have been assured of in Christ which is future glory. And to die isn't tragedy. It isn't the end but gain because of what Christ has been assured, what we have been assured in Christ, what He has assured for us.

So not only are we assured access to God because of Christ and not only are we assured future glory, but guys were also assured that suffering will occur.

[17 : 32] Verse 3 and 4. Verse 3 and 4 says, I'm going to read verse 2, Through Him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

Verse 3, More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings knowing that suffering produces endurance and endurance produces character and character produces hope.

Anyone who preaches to you and says that if you know Jesus, that if you come down here and you pray a prayer and you know Jesus, if you accept Jesus, you will have a happy, fulfilling, best life now.

They are lying to you and being unbiblical. In fact, the Bible promises suffering instead of happiness. Your life will be fulfilling, but it might not be with the BMW or the vacation home. And that's okay because Christ is far better. We can be assured that as a Christian, we will suffer. Let's step back for a minute.

[18 : 46] What Paul has done is he's looked out towards the horizon. He's looked out and he tells us what he sees. He sees peace with God. Children of God are going to have peace with God.

He sees access with God. They now have access with God. He sees the future glory, the future perfection that is going to occur someday.

He sees all these things that are going to happen for us. He sees in the future. And as his eyes come back, as his eyes kind of come back to where he is, he sees suffering.

He sees hardship. He sees hate towards Christians. He sees hate towards Christ. He sees all the things that he himself has experienced and he himself has actually been a leader of.

And he sees it and he knows that he must reassure the Christian to stand firm. Reassure the Christian to be bold and keep a lookout at the horizon of what's to come.

[19 : 54] I remember vividly when I was a kid, I'd been riding my bike for a few years. And in Chicago, we had, even the neighborhoods had the hard square curbs so you couldn't just ride your bike in it.

You either had to jump it or go to where a sidewalk came, you know, where it's nice and smooth. I remember I'm riding my bike down the road and I'm wanting to get onto the sidewalk so I'm waiting for that moment where I can because I can't get up on the curb yet.

And I'm staring at the corner. I'm staring at this curb going, I don't want to hit that. I don't want to hit that. I actually want to go there. And I don't want to hit that. I don't want to hit that. And what do I do? I hit it.

I slam into it and fly off my bike. It's vivid to me because I do that driving as well. I don't hit curves, but there's things like in the road and I'll say, I don't want to hit that.

I don't want to hit that. And I'll end up hitting it because I'm staring at it instead of staring down the road. You guys know what I'm talking about, don't you? You've all experienced that. So, lesson here, don't fall, don't be ahead of me, I guess.

[20 : 59] Don't be in the road when I'm driving because I'll stare at you and hit you. It's the same way though for us as Christians. If we look out and say, oh, this looks really hard.

We're going to suffer. What are we going to do? We're going to be defeated in that suffering. We're not going to rejoice in that suffering. We're not going to be happy about it. We're not going to treasure it.

As we'll see in a moment, the suffering leads to good things in our lives. We're going to be defeated by it. We're going to hit that curb and fly off our bike. See, as we look and see through the lens of the Word of God, we see that suffering is in our DNA as a Christian.

It's going to happen. But we should be focusing on the horizon. And that's what Paul is trying to do for us in this text.

The first part of verse 3 is fascinating to me because he says, so, end of verse 2 says, rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Rejoice in what's going to happen.

[22 : 09] And then verse 3 says, more than that, we rejoice in our suffering. More than rejoicing in what's going to happen. More than rejoicing in God perfecting us.

rejoice in our suffering. The same word is in verse 2. Rejoice. So be joyfully confident in your suffering. 2 Timothy 3, verse 12 says, it says, indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

persecuted. All who desire to live a godly life in Christ will be persecuted. To rejoice in suffering is not a new idea for Paul.

This isn't something that he just made up. Jesus taught this very idea in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapter 5. In chapter 5, verse 10, he says, blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.

[23 : 28] For so they persecuted the prophets who were for you. He repeats it twice. Blessed are those who persecute you for righteousness sake. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you.

There's importance here. There's weight here to what Jesus is saying. And now Paul is repeating the very same thing. Now this suffering in Romans isn't necessarily pain, although some people may suffer pain.

It could be. The word refers to olives or grapes being in the press. Being squeezed for all its juices. That's the picture here of this word. So instead of just pain and sorrow, it's more of being under pressure from tribulation and from persecution. And then Paul tells us why we need to rejoice in our suffering.

Why we need to be happy, to be joyful, to be joyfully confident. Because suffering produces endurance.

[24 : 38] endurance. Spiritual fortitude. Stick-to-itiveness. Like a marathon runner. So like in Hebrews 12, 1, let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

When you need to build strength or endurance in your body, you exercise, you practice, you do specific exercises for specific goals. If our goal is to live a life that is pleasing to God, then suffering helps in that goal.

Because suffering produces endurance. A fruit of the suffering is endurance. Now, a question arose for me in my studies about this topic.

It says in verse 3, More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance. My question was, does it matter if I rejoice in my suffering or after my suffering?

Is this preposition important? In. Is it important? Yes. It was a quick answer. It didn't take me very long to find the answer.

[25 : 52] Yes, it is important. Paul uses the preposition in, so it's in our suffering. So hindsight may be easier to rejoice in, but the call here is for us to rejoice in it while going through it.

And it doesn't mean this stoic determination to get through this rough patch or to make the best out of a bad situation.

It doesn't mean that. It means to know that what is occurring is for my good and God's glory. And if your goal is to live a life that is pleasing to Him, then you're going to be okay with that.

You're going to rejoice in that suffering. It brings God glory when we do this. It pleases Him. But not only does suffering produce endurance, but endurance produces character and character produces hope.

Straight from the text, verse 4. And endurance produces character and character produces hope. So the fruit of endurance is character. Character here is a person tested by trial and proven.

[27 : 08] Tested and proven. So parents and young people who want to be parents someday, if you want kids of character, lead them to Christ and let them go wherever He calls them.

For suffering will come and character will be formed. for us, so in those moments of hopelessness and defeat, in those moments of sorrow and hardship, we endure and are found proven by the trials to be men and women of character.

And character produces hope. It is the experience of coming out of a time of testing that produces hope, which, of course, is opposite of the Disney movies, is opposite of what a lot of us think or have been taught.

See, because we say we hope to get out of the situation, or we hope to win the lottery, or we hope to not get caught. But true godly hope is formed in the testing and hardship.

A quote from one of the commentaries I read this week says, Our confidence in God's ability and willingness to bring us through difficult times leads to an ever brighter hope for that which lies beyond.

[28 : 36] Hope is not superficial optimism, but the confident assurance of that which will surely come to pass. This hope comes through suffering.

And because hope comes through suffering, we can be assured we will suffer. it's not a topic we like to talk about. It's not a topic we like to celebrate, but it's biblical.

And if it's biblical, then it's going to be taught here, and we're going to touch on the subject. But here's the good news. It's not only are we assured access to God, which is great news.

Not only do we have future glory awaiting us, not only are we assured to suffer, but we're assured that God loves His children.

Though we may suffer in it, through it, God loves His children. Verse 5 says, 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.

[29 : 43] Hope does not put us to shame. It never disappoints. It does not let the believer down. So what God says will occur, it will happen, and we can rest in our hope of it.

We are quick to speak of God loving His children with reference to Jesus Christ on the cross. His death. And a lot of times it ends there.

Jesus loves sinners. He died for sinners. And it ends there. But it's just not that. It's also not an intellectual understanding of God's love.

Well, I know that God loves me. It's not that. It's also an inner, as John Piper would say, down to the bones, feeling a subjective certainty that God does love us.

To the point that Paul is trying to make clear in this text is by saying God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit has been given to us, is that we can be certain, is that we can be assured, down to our bones with every fiber of our being, that God loves us.

[30 : 56] We may not understand it, we may not be able to comprehend all of it, but we know without a doubt that God loves us. If you were a child of God, God loves you.

we can be certain of it. And it says that love has been poured into our hearts.

It's like an extravagant overflow, an abundance of love. It doesn't say that God shares His love, He pours it into our hearts. So as we suffer, as we trudge through life's lowness, we know that God loves us.

We are assured of it. So when doubts creep in, when the enemy attacks, we have assurance of God's love for us. As I said before, we may not understand it, but we know it.

God loves His children. As we look out on the horizon, we can be assured of a few things. As we look out far out to the horizon, we can be assured that we have access to the Creator.

[32 : 06] so we can pray to Him. We can fellowship and we can approach the throne with boldness because of Christ. We have assurance of our future glory.

And we can hope with joyful assurance because it will happen. We too can be fully convinced that God is able to do what He has promised.

chapter 4 verse 21. We have assurance that suffering will occur. It isn't a question of will it. It's when will it.

We will suffer. But suffering produces endurance. And endurance produces character. And character produces hope. Hope that will not disappoint.

And we have assurance that God loves His children. We have proof that He does by the Holy Spirit. God loves us when He created us. Loves us as He calls us.

[33 : 06] Loves us as He saves us. And as He glorifies us in the end. If God loves us, let us love others with the same certainty and fervor as our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 5 14 says, For the love of Christ controls! Another version compels us. For the love of Christ controls or compels us.

Let's pray that all of us, member or not, visitor or regular, new believer or old believer, be controlled by the love of Christ who suffer for us that we can have life.

Life abundantly And life assuredly!