

Romans 5:1-5

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 18 September 2011

Preacher: Chris Steward

[0 : 00] Romans chapter 5. Two things before we get started.

! I preach from my manuscript, and if you would like a copy of it, I can give that to you to make your morning a little easier.

So come see me, give me your email address, and I'll send that to you. It's my writing, so don't judge me, please. The second thing is, if you don't take notes and you want to listen to sermons, on our website, ChristFamilyChurchNGA.org.

ChristFamilyChurchNGA.org. Our sermons are all on there. And again, I'm not trying to say you have to listen to me or Nathan. Just as a resource, it's out there for you to use if you missed something.

Alright, so Romans chapter 5. One verse this morning. Verse 1. Before we dig in, John Lennon wrote. He said, Imagine there's no heaven.

[1 : 27] It's easy if you try. No hell below us. Above us, only sky. Imagine all the people living for today. Imagine there's no countries.

It isn't hard to do. Nothing to kill or die for. And no religion too. Imagine all the people living life in peace. You may say that I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one.

I hope someday you'll join us and the world will be as one. Imagine no possessions. I wonder if you can. No need for greed or hunger.

A brotherhood of man. Imagine all the people sharing all the world. You may say that I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one. I hope someday you'll join us and the world will live as one.

John Lennon may have been a dreamer, but his dream was peace. And we as humans desire to have peace. Since the fall though, Genesis chapter 3, we've been unable to find any type of peace.

[2 : 37] We have desired it. Look around the afternoon TV schedule. Most of you guys don't do that, I know. But look around. Show after show is filled with conflict resolution counseling.

Host after host trying to help people find peace in their situation. With their families. With their neighbors. And sometimes with themselves. The TV is filled with these shows because people are looking for peace.

And John Lennon, imagine all the people living life in peace. Peace between people is important. In fact, the gospel demands it.

The gospel teaches us to love others as we love the Lord. It tells us to live generously. It demands radical living. Radical loving for the glory of God.

Jesus, our example, lived a radical life. A life that pointed everything to the work of the Father. Not what He was doing, but always to what the Father was doing.

[3 : 42] And we as image bearers of God must do the same thing. The Bible teaches two main types of peace. Peace with others. In the church and outside of the church.

Peace with God. A peace that has everything to do with what God has done and nothing with what we have done. Peace with God is the grandeur of the two.

It trumps the other peace. And that is, of course, if you are comparing the two. Both are important.

And this peace is our subject this morning.

I will be asking and answering questions about this peace. Like, why do we need peace with God? What is it? What is it not?

And finally, what do we do with it? Why does this or how does this change our life today? Alright, Romans chapter 5. I am going to start reading in verse 22 of chapter 4 to kind of put it into context.

[4 : 38] And we will read through verse 5. Verse 22 says, That is why his faith was counted to him as righteousness. Him being Abraham.

But the words it was counted to him were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord.

Who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification. 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.

[5 : 40] Pray with me. Father, I thank you for this day, this day that you have made. I thank you that the breath I breathe, I thank you that the sunlight we see, the cooler weather, is all your grace to us.

evidence of you being at work. God, I pray and I ask now that you would speak to us. That you would speak clearly to us, that we leave here different because your word has been revealed to us. I thank you for your word as we set it in our laps and read it in front of us. I thank you that that is your word to us. God, we pray and plead that you would speak.

Holy Spirit, penetrate the hardened and hardest hearts in this room. Soften those hearts. Soften all of our hearts so that we can be receptive to your word. And that we can walk out of here with our faith strengthened, at peace with who we are because of who you are.

In Jesus' name I pray this. Amen. Romans 5 verse 1 is the text this morning. And it says, Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

[7 : 03] Now before we jump into peace, I feel it's important that we establish, if we haven't already, what does justified by faith mean? So that we all are on the same page.

And this is our launching pad. This is where we're jumping from. And if it's where we're jumping from, I need to make sure that we're all jumping in the right direction with the same trajectory. So what is justification by faith apart from works?

Well, it's what Paul has been writing about for the last chapter and a little bit. First of all, justification by faith for the believer is a one-time event.

Okay? It is a one-time, once and forever. It isn't an action that we have to constantly come back to, like repentance or confession. So once you have been justified, that's it.

Done. Forever. Justification also is that moment that we have been made right before God because of Jesus Christ's righteousness. And that righteousness was given to us, and from us our sin was taken away.

[8 : 12] So because of Christ, we stand forgiven, righteous, and holy before God. And apart from Christ, we have none of those traits.

None of those things. Justification by faith is the act in which God declares that in Christ, in Christ, He regards us as if we had never sinned at all.

That's good stuff. He pronounces that we are just and righteous in Christ. Our sins are forgiven.

We are clothed by the righteousness of Christ. And it is God who declares it. Not us. It is God who declares that. Apart from Christ, it is impossible.

It is impossible to be righteous. Justification by faith, apart from works, is an action by God, through Jesus Christ, on our lives, apart from anything and everything that we think we deserve or have done.

[9 : 20] So verse 1 of chapter 5 says, Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, now we can move on, right? Now we can... What is the result?

Being justified by faith is a single moment. We need to understand this. It is a single moment. The implications last forever. Now Paul, it's almost like a change in direction for Paul as he's writing this letter.

The first four chapters have been instructional. This is who you are. This is why you can't do what you think you can do. This is why what you do doesn't matter. We're all sinners. We come to chapter 5.

And he changes his tone a little bit. It goes from instruction to almost a celebration. Some commentaries and scholars say that this next paragraph, or a couple paragraphs, is written as a celebratory song.

It's as if Paul was writing this first section, and he's realizing the truth that he just got done talking about, writing about, and he's filled with awe and wonder.

[10:31] And now he rejoices in the result of God's work. This is where we sit in chapter 5. Paul is celebrating by saying, since we have been justified, since God has brought death to life, since He has done it, oh, what a great God.

Since we are standing as if we've never sinned, we have peace with God. Peace with God. We also have access to His grace. And we rejoice in hope.

Hope from God, rooted in God, because of God, for His glory. This is what Paul is writing. He says, what a great God who shows us mercy daily.

And as you keep reading, you go all the way down to verse 11. He says, more than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. He is celebrating this justification by faith. He is celebrating what Christ has done. And He's revealing to us now, you've been justified and this is what it looks like after.

[11:38] This is what your life, this is the result of being justified. So the question is, the question is, why do we need to have peace with God?

That's our first question. Why do we need to have peace with God? Our first point. In chapter 1 of Romans, verse 18, Paul writes, God's Word says, For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

All men, women, and children, every person who has ever lived or will live is born into ungodliness and unrighteousness. And it's not just born into, it is ungodly and unrighteous.

We are ungodly and unrighteous. In verse 10 of chapter 5, it says that we are enemies with God.

That we were enemies before being justified.

Before Christ, we were at war against God Almighty. We fought against Him and His truth. In verse 6 of chapter 5, it says we were ungodly. Verse 8, it says we were sinners.

[13:06] God does not fellowship with, partake in, or entertain any unrighteousness. Which is why, in verse 18 of chapter 1, it is His wrath, not His righteousness, not His holiness, not His love that is against the ungodliness and the unrighteousness of men, but it is His wrath.

Because God cannot fellowship, partake, and entertain. And He must judge. Because that is who He is. John says in 1 John, that if we love the world, then we are at enmity with God.

We are enemies. We are of opposition with God. Because we are born into this world, condemned, loving the world, born into ungodliness and sin, we are enemies with God.

And you guys can picture war, two sides fighting against each other. That's who we are, the Lord Christ. We are fighting against God and His plan.

That's what sin is. And that's what sin is. Ephesians 5, 6 says, Let no one deceive you with empty words. For because of these things, which are found in verse 5, which are sexually immoral, impure, covetous, and idolaters, the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

[14:30] I know some of you might be thinking, God created us. And He said it was good. And we're created in God's image. All true.

But chapter 3 of Genesis thwarts all of that. Chapter 3 of Genesis is the fall where sin comes into the picture.

And we have been corrupted since that time and fought against God. So because of sin, because of no matter what bad thing you do, big or small, because of sin, there is a need for peace with God.

Sin is the barrier that we cannot get over or around. It is in us and corrupts every part of our lives.

Flip back to Romans 3. It corrupts so much of our life that Romans 3, verses 11 and 12, the last part of 10 says, None is righteous.

No, not one. No one understands. No one seeks for God. All have turned aside. Together they have become worthless. No one does good. Not even one.

[15:50] It sounds harsh. But it's the truth. We were created originally, Adam and Eve were created to fellowship with God.

They were created to have community with God. But because of sin, that fellowship and that community has been broken. And until we trust and place our trust in Christ, who makes us righteous, we are at war with God.

So until you trust and are justified by faith, you are at war with God. That's the reality. Christ is the Prince of Peace who gives peace to those who don't deserve it.

Who haven't earned it and who frankly don't even seek it from Him. We seek peace, but we seek it in all other places except in Him. So, why do we need peace with God?

Because of our sin. Because we are at war with God. So our second point this morning is what does peace with God look like? So what does this peace look like?

[17:01] What is it? So because our justification, verse 1 of chapter 5, therefore, since you have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The justification is a once and forever action. It's done. This peace with God is as well a once and forever action. Peace is the result of being justified.

or me. Peace is the result of being justified. Okay?

We have peace with God because of Christ and no other. Anyone who places their trust in Christ who believes in Him will no longer be an enemy, but be eternally at peace with God.

This peace is an eternal assurance of God, His promises and His salvation for us. Okay? Now, since it's an eternal peace, an eternal assurance, hear me clearly, there is nothing that you do or can do to break the peace with God that you have in Christ.

[18:20] Nothing. Now, if that isn't freeing and empowering, then check your pulse and see if you're alive. Nothing you do will break the peace that you have with God.

You have peace because of Christ, not because of you. Now, what other religion out there can say that no matter what you do, no matter what you say, no matter what you think, you're loved and have peace with God.

There isn't. There isn't another religion. And it's not like I'm leading you down a path here that, okay, I made the decision. Well, it's not like you weighed the pros and cons between Buddhism and Christianity or Islam and Christianity.

You didn't. You didn't want to be a Christian. You didn't want to serve God. God chose you. He called you and He made you righteous because of Christ and not because of something you had done.

The glorious beauty of the Gospel is that you did not choose. That's what grace is. Not choosing, but Him choosing you for no reason.

[19:39] Your salvation is rooted and founded in Christ. And there is nothing that changes the peace that you have with God. So here are a few characteristics of a life that fully understands their justification and their peace with God.

First thing is, a man who understands his justification is a man who knows that God loves him even or in spite of his sin. A man who knows that God loves him in spite of his sin.

Before Christ, we may ask the question, how can God love me? Why would God want to love me of everything that I've done?

We may ask those questions. We may be troubled Troubled by the wrath of God. Why? How could God love me? Why would He want to bless me? But now, we can look at Christ, we can look at His death and resurrection and say, I know He loves me.

I don't understand it, but I know He loves me. It's not a feeling or a sentiment. We know solid facts leading to a strong faith with evidence that God loves Him.

[20:56] In chapter 5 of Romans, down in verse 6, it says, For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

That was us before Christ. 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 and that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Since therefore we have now been justified by His blood, much more shall we be saved by Him from the wrath of God. 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.

More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have now received reconciliation. reconciliation. God loves us and we know it because we have peace with God, because we understand our justification and our standing before God.

we cannot have peace without Christ. The second characteristic of a man who understands His justification, who gets and understands His peace with God, he can answer the accusations of his conscience.

[22:23] There's going to be a moment, there's going to be moments, plural, when we doubt. I guarantee it. that doubting leads to questioning.

Questioning along the lines of how could all this be true? How can it possibly be true that God has forgiven me? How can I be at peace with God who knows exactly what I've done?

But a man who understands His justification, a man who is at peace with God, can answer these questions and squash the doubt.

So, for you, can you answer those questions? Do you fully understand where you stand with God? Do you fully understand your justification?

Do you fully understand the peace that you have with God now? Because of Christ and not because of anything you've done. If you can't answer these questions, then you're going to be miserable and unhappy and that peace is not going to feel like peace.

[23 : 29] it's not going to be freeing. It's going to be enslaving to you. So, can you answer those doubts and those questions that will arise?

So, not only can He answer the questions from His conscience, but thirdly, can He answer the accusations of the enemy? John Newton wrote the hymn Amazing Grace.

And before writing that hymn, He was a man engaged in slave trade and slave trafficking, it is said that there wasn't a sin that He did not commit.

And God's grace was shown to Him as He trusted and believed in Jesus Christ. See, the devil was given artillery, ammunition, rock after rock to throw at John Newton because of his past.

To bring his past back, to haunt a man changed by grace. He could, the devil could raise up his past, throw it in his face, and then say, do you still claim to be a Christian, forgiven and at peace with God?

[24 : 35] John Newton had his answer. An answer that all of us can use to silence the devil. John Newton wrote in his hymn, Approach My Soul to Mercy See.

He wrote, Be thou my shield and hiding place that sheltered near thy side. I may my fierce accuser face and tell him thou hast died.

In other words, what can I tell my accuser? I can't tell him I'm a good man. I can't tell him about my past or even my present or what I'm trying to do. There's only one way of silencing the enemy.

I can my fierce accuser face and tell him thou hast died. The only way to silence the enemy is to bring to light not what we've done but what Christ has done for us.

Revelation 12 verse 11 says, And they have conquered him, the enemy, by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony. For they loved not their lives even unto death.

[25 : 45] A man who understands his justification will be able to give answers to the enemy who accuses and questions. But not only that, a man can do all of these things while in sin.

While fallen in sin. A man can answer these questions, these accusations. That's my fourth characteristic of a man who understands his justification and peace.

When a temptation is too strong and you fall, when you've been living a victorious life and fall in sin, can you employ the argument that I have been describing?

Can you say, I stand in Christ and in Him alone. I am at peace with God. Can you say those things? Can you see out of your sin or are you defeated and blinded by your sin?

I find in my own life that this is the hardest of times to proclaim the truth. It's the moments that I'm most vulnerable to the enemy and his schemes.

[27 : 01] And yet, these are the times that we should be boasting about what God has done. These are the times proclaim the truth. Because in the truth there is freedom.

There is comfort. There is victory. See, the temptation in these situations is to just doubt. It's to doubt our own justification. It's to doubt everything.

Doubt the very foundation of our faith that we believe. See, when you do that, you're giving evidence that you do not understand your justification or your peace with God at all.

When you do that, you say, I'm not getting it. Listen carefully. You cannot be just one minute and not the next.

If you are made righteous, if you are made justified, that's it. You are justified forever in Christ.

[28 : 06] It is in the moments of sin and after that we must remember the truth. of God's Word. And as chapter 4, verse 21 says, be fully convinced that God will do what He says He will do.

If He says He forgives, He forgives. If He says He will never forsake, He will never forsake. So, why do we need peace with God?

Our sin. What does peace with God look like? I've given you some characteristics. Our third point this morning. What peace with God is not?

What is it not? A man who has a false peace is resting on his own faith rather than on Christ and His work.

See, they look at their own faith instead of what Christ has done. Churches are filled with people like this because it isn't usually rooted from an intellectual ascent.

[29 : 09] It's rooted in a false faith. They would define faith by simply believing and salvation by simply confessing. pulled from a verse like Romans 10.

10. And with the mouth one confesses and is saved. See, there's teachings in our churches today and in the past that all you have to do is say that Jesus is Lord or all you have to do is say a prayer. A magic prayer. And the problem, though, is that's not biblical. Read the rest of Romans chapter 10. And if they if a person speaks a prayer, if they initiated, then then they're the instigator and not the recipient.

It's not a prayer. It's a it's a person in Jesus Christ. And if you're if you're the instigator and not the recipient of God's grace, then who needs Christ?

Who needs the Holy Spirit? For the person who instigated, decided, and it happened. And all they have to do is look at the faith that they have created and not what Christ has done.

[30 : 26] And that is a false sense of peace. Peace with God is not a feeling. It's not an emotional peace.

It's not a balanced life. Or however new age thing you want to say. having peace with God does not give you a happy life or a perfect life.

In fact, having peace with God will actually make this life more difficult because you are now a Christian proclaiming Christ with the title that you take.

you are now a cross bearer and a person with Christ who is hated and will be hated by this world. Peace with God is more about the life to come and less about how comfortable you are in this life. man who has false peace is only interested in forgiveness and not in righteousness.

[31 : 36] He doesn't want to go to hell. So he wants to be forgiven. He's not concerned with being holy and walking in holiness.

So he lives a negligent life without concern for the commands of God. He ignores warnings like Hebrews 12 verse 14 to strive for peace with everyone and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

He is only interested in forgiveness and cares nothing about living the Christian life. Well, I've been saved. I can live however I want now. The last characteristic of false peace is not caring enough when you fall into sin.

You take it much too lightly. A person with a false peace isn't shaken by their sin. It doesn't affect them.

Jesus and his blood are more of a security blanket and less a relationship and a right standing before God. When this man does fall into sin he would say something like it's alright the blood of Jesus covers me.

[32 : 59] Now and he continues on in his life he continues living and just goes on doesn't confess doesn't repent now all of us should do this when we're in sin we should say Jesus blood covers me it's I'm still okay but then we should confess!

that sin we should repent of that sin not move on with our life and take care of it later or say we'll take care of it later we should there should be some mourning over our sin not tears but we should be saddened by and moved by the sin that we have committed because a holy God has paid for that sin Matthew says blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted you will only be comforted by Christ and his work on the cross because you have peace with God alright so our last point is how should we now live knowing this peace we have with God so what do we do in light of having peace with God and I've touched on some of those things here's some practical what do we do now the first thing is we must always be aware of our sin and the sin around us we must always be aware must be a seriousness over sin if you know and understand the peace that God has given you then you've been given a glimpse into hell you've been given a small picture of what you deserve and in light of that you now see the grace that God has shown you and given you and if you know that then you won't be lighthearted about sin you won't be frivolous about your actions and those actions of others around you so we must always be aware of our sin we must always be in awe of the grace that God has shown us amazement and wonder will be the songs that we sing we'll proclaim the good news because of what God has done we'll echo the words of

Charles Wesley and his hymn and can it be that I should gain an interest in the Savior's blood died he for me who caused his pain for me who him to death pursued amazing love how can it be that thou my

God should die for me echoing the amazement and they awe in the wonder of what God has done not only that we must also be humble now this of course isn't something that we just can do or be we can't just be humble we can act humble but we cannot be humble and it comes from being amazed and in awe of what God has done when we when we realize the truth about who we are who we were who Christ is humility is the only logical response see what can you and I boast in nothing justification by faith destroys boasting it is all by grace and finally we must always keep a watch on our lives always being aware of the traps of the enemy because we have been justified and we have peace with

God always keeping our eyes open keeping a watch on our lives this peace with God is freeing Romans 8 1 there is no condemnation there is no death no fear of man this peace with God is assurance there is nothing that can change God's love for us turn over to Romans chapter 8 nothing can change God's love for us Romans 8 verse 31 says what then shall we say to these things if God is for us who can be against us he who did not spare his own son but gave him up for us all how will he not also with him graciously give us all things who shall bring any charge against [37 : 49] God elect it is God who justifies who is to condemn Christ Jesus is the one who died! than that who was raised who is at the right hand of God who indeed is interceding for us who shall separate us from the love of Christ shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword verse 37 no in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us imagine there's no countries it isn't hard to do nothing to kill or die for and no religion to imagine all the people living life in peace nothing to kill or die for because Christ has died for us all and no religion too it isn't a religion that gives peace it is a man who lived a sinless life living life in peace the only peace that matters is peace with

God it trumps all others Christ is the prince of peace do you have peace with God do you have peace with God let's pray together father father i thank you for your word i thank you that that in it we are challenged in it we are comforted in it we are convicted in it we are encouraged and in it we find victory thank you for this morning and this great opportunity to meet together with our brothers and sisters i pray that you would continue to move among us continue to speak to our hearts about this peace that we have with you what a great truth to know that no matter what

I do what I say cannot change the grace and love that you have for me and cannot change the peace that I stand in Christ and not any work of my own I pray that you are pleased and honored by the rest of this morning the songs that we sing are honoring and worshiping of you but more than that the hearts that are singing those songs will be pleasing to you pray God that you are pleased as we celebrate and partake in what we call the Lord supper celebrating what Christ has done I pray that no one in here takes it for granted but we all reflect and examine the love that you have shown us in Christ and it is his name I pray Amen