

AT PEACE

ROMANS 5:1-11

INTRODUCTION

One lyrical theologian rapped the following lyrics: *"It feels so good to be justified..."* (Shai Linne). Wait a minute! Justification is something I can feel? In truth, yes. To be justified means to be made right with God and, if that truth does not produce all kinds of joy and delight in the soul I am not sure that soul is justified. We make Christianity out to be singularly about what we think, etc. Paul shows us in this session that justification produces affections consistent with it. When we truly know what justification we, ourselves, will say: *"It feels so good to be justified..."*

JUSTIFIED WITH BENEFITS (ROM . 5:1-5)

As I look at this section we can identify these benefits in two categories: *relational* and *character*. Relationally, we have and should rejoice in the *peace, access and hope of glory* we have in Christ (Romans 5:1-2). *Peace* refers to the absence of eternal conflict between God and those who have faith. *Access* speaks to the removal of barriers that once prevented us from nearness to the Lord. *Hope of glory* pertains to this newfound eternal joy that is now, but not yet fully yet. Now, to understand Paul at times we need to read him backwards. In this light Paul is saying this: *because we have a sure and steady hope of glory opened to us through Christ* (Romans 5:2b), *we now have access to Him at all times* (Romans 5:2a) *because anything that prevent our peace with Him was crushed by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ* (Romans 5:1). These benefits are the foundation for our *character* benefits: *afflictions* and *endurance* (Romans 5:3-5). *Afflictions* relate to those experiences we go through because of our faith and endurance is the internal resolve not to quit or give in. Again, let's read Paul backwards: *because you know that endurance is being fueled by your afflictions rejoice and do not give up in the tough times. Rather, let the hope, access and peace you have with God in Christ be your focus and joy.*

JUSTIFIED THROUGH HIS DEATH (ROM . 5:6-8)

What is amazing about the gift of God to us in Christ Jesus is that He gave Christ to and for us *"while we were still helpless"* (Romans 5:6). *Helpless* refers not simply to our weakness to do anything that pleased God but also to our resolved will to only do that which offended Him. We are never so weak as when we willingly go against the will of God. That God did this at the *right time* (Romans 5:6) is not because there was ever a *wrong time*. Paul's language speaks to the Lord's sovereign design to rescue men when He wills; at the time that He determined to do so. To die for the ungodly is amazing when it is contrasted against the reality that, as Paul says, *"For rarely will someone die for a just person — though for a good person perhaps someone might even dare to die"* (Romans 5:7). In other words, people would rarely give their lives for another individual who is *morally* good and doing the right thing. So, who would give their life for those who are actively and aggressively going against them? God Himself!; and He did so without condition — *"while we were still sinners"* (Romans 5:8) and by demonstration — *"Christ*

died for us" (Romans 5:8). We should rejoice, not that the Bible says God loves us, but that He proved it!

JUSTIFIED EQUALS RECONCILIATION (ROM . 5:9-11)

Paul begins with a shocking truth: *"How much more then, since we have now been declared righteous by his blood, will we be saved through him from wrath"* (Romans 5:9)? What is both shocking and compelling in this verse is that Paul is saying this: ***"We are saved by God from God"***! How incredibly mind blowing is this thought! God the Son's blood was shed for us so that we could be saved from God the Father's wrath! All of this *"while we were enemies"* (Romans 5:10). It is the life of the Son that saves us as He lives His life through us (Galatians 2:20). If God would go through such extraordinary lengths to reconcile us to Himself, while we were in the heart of our sin, it is assured to us that He will keep us to the end. The Lord has done this for you and I. He has come to the place of our depravity and rescued us who were not seeking rescue. He came and got us and then, in peace, showed us our pit of depravity crushed under the weight of His cross. We can truly be at peace.

CONCLUSION

What sin are you struggling with now? What thought(s) or past event(s) shake you to the core at the very thought of it? Christ wants you to know that He has won and conquered death and sin...yes, even that one that seems to always shake you. Be at peace in Him.