

Restored Relationship
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Allen Power

Romans 5:1-11; 18-21

Opening: Let's do some review of what we've learned in Romans 1, 2, & 3.

- What did Paul say is humanity's problem?
- In chapter one, what did Paul say is God's POWERFUL PRESCRIPTION?
- In Romans 2, what did we learn about the religious/moral person who feels "self-righteous?" How did we tie in a magnifying glass versus a mirror?
- Based on Romans 3:23, what is the "verdict" on all humanity?
- Look at the next verse (3:24) what is God's solution/gift?

So, we know the problem. We know the verdict. And we know God's solution. Now Paul is going to tell us what changes when we receive that solution.

THE POINT: Through Christ, God has changed our relationship with Him—and that changes everything about our past, our present, and our future.

(ESV) — 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.

- Paul gets us from the bad news to the good news with one word: THEREFORE.
- When we trust Christ, our war with God is over—we have peace with Him.
- *"I didn't know I was at war with God!"* More on that shortly in verse 10.
- "We have" peace – this happens immediately, we don't have to earn it.
- This is different than the "peace OF God." That comes from peace WITH God.
- God didn't just forgive our sin and send us off hoping it all works out.
- Verse 2: Christ has given us "access" to a special place called "grace."
- Paul said once we are saved we "stand" in God's grace; eternal security forever.
- That should cause us to "rejoice in the hope of the glory of God" because:
 - My Past – Forgiven and I have Peace with God.
 - My Present – Give me access to God's "place of grace"; His favor.
 - My Future – I have the "hope of glory" for eternity with Him.
- As we said, through Christ, God has changed our relationship with Him—and that changes everything about our past, our present, and our future. That is a LOT to rejoice about in just the first two verses of Romans 5!
- The Bible is not a book of "happily ever after" fantasies. Scripture gets "real" because life on this earth is real. Peace with God doesn't mean everything in life suddenly goes right. It DOES mean we can also rejoice in suffering.

3 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, **4** and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, Wow! That kind of takes the "shiny" off verses 1 & 2. What is Paul's point?

- How does God use suffering in our lives? What outcome does He want for us?

1 Peter 1:6–7 (ESV) — 6 In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, **7** so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- Learning to rejoice under pressure is a training program directed by God to help us grow more like Christ. Like “basic training,” it’s hard but God uses the pressure to build endurance, character, and hope. Speaking of “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. **6** For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. **7** For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— **8** but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

- Every human being has wondered: “Does anyone really love me?”
- A Christ-follower has the strongest evidence that God loves us: “...while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” We could just sing the doxology at this point!

1 John 4:19 (KJV 1900) — 19 We love him, because he first loved us.

- Don’t measure God’s love by today’s circumstances; just look back to the cross.
- We were weak and ungodly sinners yet “at the right time” Christ died for us.
- He didn’t die for “good people”; there are none. He died for the “ungodly.”

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

- Christ died to spare ungodly people from God’s wrath, but He did even MORE.

10 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. **11** More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

- Back to that term “enemies.” The unsaved would think, “*I don’t hate God. At the worst I am neutral on God.*” [Like my Daddy and the Army after WWII]
- Here is an illustration of how we are born as enemies to God. Think of two armies at war. A soldier doesn’t have to personally hate every other soldier on the other side. He is identified as an enemy by his uniform.
- Sin was our uniform and it was one we could not remove ourselves.
- When we trust Christ we are clothed in His righteousness.

Isaiah 61:10 (ESV) — 10 I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness...

- We were born wearing the uniform of fallen humanity, but God clothed us in a “robe of righteousness”—and He did even MORE.

1 John 3:1 (ESV) — 1 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are...

- And God doesn't merely change our standing. Scripture says we're a “new creation,” (2 Cor. 5:17) and His Spirit continues making us more like Christ.
- God makes His enemies His children and transforms us by His Spirit.
- For the rest of the chapter, Paul describes the contrast between Adam and Christ: Adam's sin brought condemnation and death; Christ brings grace, righteousness, and life.
- Verse 20: Paul's bottom line: “Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more”. Sin doesn't get the last word—grace does.

So, What's the Takeaway?

- Back to verse one and that word “therefore.” [Bridge image]
- As you look at this illustration, since we have been justified by faith, what does a follower of Christ have that we didn't have before?
- “We started on this side as sinners separated from God. But because of Christ, we crossed Paul's ‘therefore’ bridge. Our past has been forgiven, our present is lived in grace, and our future is secure in hope.”
- Through Christ, God has changed our relationship with Him—and that changes everything about our past, our present, and our future:
 - OUR PAST - Our guilt has been dealt with.
 - OUR PRESENT - We stand in grace.
 - OUR FUTURE - We have the hope of glory.
- We were God's enemies. Thanks to Jesus, we're family.
- As the old song says, *“Praise God, I'm a child of the King.”*