

Lent 3  
March 19, 2017

*"Peace with God through Jesus"*

---

## ROMANS 5:1-11

---

**T**herefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup> through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup> Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; <sup>4</sup> perseverance, character; and character, hope. <sup>5</sup> And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us. <sup>6</sup> You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. <sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup> Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! <sup>10</sup> For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! <sup>11</sup> Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

I like to think that given enough time I can fix anything. I grew up watching my dad fixing old farm equipment and keeping it running. It seemed to me as a child that my dad could fix anything. Realistically though my track record on fixing things that are broken is not all that great.

Now let's talk about the biggest problem we all face in life that we cannot fix ourselves. We are talking about the problem of sin that puts us under God's wrath and punishment. There is no way we can begin to fix that problem of sin. There is no way to get rid of it. That's the bad news. Now here is the good news.

The good news, the best news you could ever hear in your life, is that your God has fixed your problem of sin through Jesus his Son. Jesus took your sin upon himself, was punished in your place, and now you have peace with God. You can be sure of God's love for you in this life and for all eternity. Let's take a closer look at these words in Romans chapter five that speak to us about this amazing blessing of **"Peace with God through Jesus."**

### **What a special blessing this is**

Of all the blessings that you can count in your life, the best blessing of all is this peace you have with your God through Jesus. "Therefore since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." You have this blessing of peace with God because through Jesus and your faith in him you have been justified. The word "justified" means "declared not guilty."

In the previous chapters the Apostle Paul has made the strong point that there is no way we can be justified or forgiven before God by trying to observe the law. If I think I can fix my problem of sin by trying to live a better life, I just become even more conscious of what a failure I am. Romans 3 says, "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory." Sin is falling short of God's glory. Think of

this arrow being shot at a target. A holy and perfect God expects us to hit the bull's eye every time. Romans 3 says all have sinned or missed the mark, but then it says "all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."

Being justified through Christ and through faith in Christ we have peace with God. The night of his resurrection Jesus appeared to his disciples who had been so unfaithful to him and said to them, "Peace be to you." Then he showed them the nail marks that were still on his hands. By showing them these nail marks he assured them that he had paid for their forgiveness and they were now at peace with their God.

This past week Norm Larson called and we had such a nice talk. He says "hello" to the dear people at Star. He said he is so thankful for all the blessings the Lord has given to him in his life. You could say the same for your life. When we count our blessings we have to say that our greatest blessing is this peace with God that we have through Jesus.

Because of this peace we have with God through Jesus we have access to God's grace. "Through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand." When you hear this word "access" think of a door that leads into a room and the room is filled with God's grace, his undeserved love and kindness for you. God's grace is on the floor. God's grace is on the walls. God's grace is on the ceilings. You live your whole life in that room because of Jesus. You are surrounded by God's grace 24/7. Because you have access you can boldly pray to your God and you know he will answer your prayers according to his will. This access is yours because you have peace with your God through Jesus.

Because you have this amazing peace with God through Jesus, you can rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. This means you can eagerly look forward to the time in the future when you will be raised to life again on the last day and be in the place Jesus has prepared for you. Have you ever been disappointed in life? Sure you have. Be honest. It happens all the time. But you won't be disappointed when Jesus takes you to the place he has prepared for you. Then God will wipe all tears from your eyes. This is our hope and it is real. It is the hope of glory Jesus prayed for when he said, "O Father, give me the glory I had with you before the world began."

Because you have this amazing peace with God through Jesus you can survive the times of suffering and testing that come into your life. "Not only so, but we rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance, perseverance, character; and character hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us."

Notice the sequence. Suffering produces perseverance, perseverance produces character, and character produces hope. Think of the college basketball players who have put their bodies through intense physical training with the hope that they might make it to the Final Four. The Lord your God allows you to experience pain in this life. Through that suffering he produces perseverance or endurance. By relying on his strength, not yours, you develop character. Through all you go through, you have this amazing hope that your God will work out everything for his glory and for your good.

The basketball players have high hopes of making it to the Final Four but most of them will not have their hopes realized. Dear Christian because you have peace with God through Jesus your hopes are already realized. Your hope does not disappoint you because God has poured out his love into your hearts by the Holy Spirit. You live with the hope that you are child of God whatever problems life may bring you. You have this hope today and tomorrow and the next day. And if you begin doubting this or forgetting, the Holy Spirit, who is your Comforter, keeps this hope alive

in you. Romans 8 tells us the Holy Spirit testifies to us that we sons and daughters of the Lord our God.

I am going to quote a familiar verse of the Bible to you and then ask you an important question based on this verse. Here is the verse from Psalm 23, "Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life." Is this just a nice thought or is this a real hope that you have that will not disappoint? Oh, you know the answer to this question. The hope is real and it will not disappoint us because we have peace with our God through Jesus.

How can I be sure that I have this peace with God through Jesus? How do I know for sure that this is mine? I can be sure because it does not depend on me. It depends on what Jesus has done for me. Let's look closer at the next verses to see what a sure blessing this is.

### **What a sure blessing this is**

"You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly." How I know that Jesus died for me personally? It says it right there. It says he died for the "ungodly." There is no question that I am in that category. I can take any slice of my life this past week and find that I have not always been godly. In fact I have been ungodly, a sinner. As Paul said, "Christ Jesus came into the world to die for sinners and I am the chief." My name is written in the contract, it is in the will. It says it so clearly, "Jesus died for this ungodly guy named Steve Degner.

And how do I know this peace is for me? "Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were sinners Christ died for us." People die to save other people who are nice and even those who are not so nice. But Jesus comes and died for us while we were still sinners. The United States Navy recently named one of its destroyers the Jack H Lucas for a man from WW2 who threw his body on two grenades to save his buddies who were in a trench on Iwo Jima. Miraculously he survived. He wanted to save his buddies. Jesus came to give his life for sinners. That's how I know he gave his life for me.

How do I know this peace is for me? "Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him. God's wrath will be poured out on people on judgment day. There is no hope of escaping his wrath without Jesus and without being justified or forgiven through his blood. Didn't the choir sing, "What can take away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus." What can save me from the coming wrath? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Not only are we saved by his death and reconciled to God, we are also saved by his life. "For if when we were God's enemies we were saved through the death of his Son how much more shall we be saved through his life." Because of the peace we have in Jesus we can say, "I have been saved. I am being saved. I will be saved." We have been saved by Jesus death. But now we are being saved by his life. Because we have peace with God we are now going to war against anything evil that pops up in our lives. We are not alone in the battle. As Martin Luther wrote in his great hymn, "But for us fight the valiant One, Whom God himself elected." We can say with the Apostle Paul "We are more than conquerors through him who loves us."

Because Jesus is alive at the right hand of the Father, he is making intercession or praying for us. Because he is alive he is able to take our problems and bring blessings to us from these problems. Because he is alive he will be there for us when our last hour of life comes and we can pray as Stephen did when he said, "Lord Jesus receive my Spirit." Because he is alive he will be there to raise us to life again on the last day.

There are so many blessings we have in life for which to thank the Lord each day. Of all the blessings we can count, the greatest blessing is this peace with have with God through Jesus. I don't have to fix this problem. I can't fix this problem. Jesus did it all for me. Amen