

**Romans 5: 1-11**—<sup>1</sup>Therefore, 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.

**<sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,**

- Paul begins the fifth chapter with “Therefore.”
- The primary effect of justification for us is peace with God.
- What is this peace?
  - Is it peace of mind? Peace from conflict?
  - Answer: peace with God
    - Some may think, “What’s the big deal. I didn’t know we were at war.”
    - Humanity has a built in hostility towards God
      - Deep down within us our natural inclination is to hate God.
      - But when we come to Christ (i.e. repent) the war is over. God sign a peace treaty.
  - The peace that we experience in this world is always a fragile peace, a peace that comes with uncertainty, a peace that may not last. But when God declares peace, when he declares us just, the war is over. And it is over for ever.
    - God may at times respond with discipline, but never again does He lift up the sword against his children.

- This is the first fruit of justification
- <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.**
- When I believe in Jesus, his righteousness is imputed to me and I have access to God. It is a grace in which I *stand*.
    - **The first fruit of justification is peace w/ God. The second is access to God.**
  - We rejoice in what God is going to bring about at the second advent of Christ—glorification.
    - Since we will receive a reward for those things done in the body we can be joyful even in difficulties.
    - **Piper:** “For redeemed sinners, every good thing—indeed every bad thing that God turns for good—was obtained for us by the cross of Christ. Apart from the death of Christ, sinners get nothing but judgment. Apart from the cross of Christ, there is only condemnation.”<sup>1</sup>
- <sup>3</sup>**Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance;**
- What is the connection between being able to rejoice in the glory of God and the rejoicing in suffering?
    - God has promised to redeem every pain that we experience.
    - **Don’t Waste Your Life:** “God’s glory shines more brightly when he satisfies us in times of loss than when he provides for us in times of plenty. The health, wealth, and prosperity ‘gospel’ swallows up the beauty of Christ in the beauty of his gifts and turns the gifts into idols. The world is not impressed when Christians get rich and say thanks to God. They are impressed when God is so satisfying that we give our riches away for Christ’s sake and count it gain.”<sup>2</sup>
    - **Piper:** “The extent of [a person’s] sacrifice and the depth of his joy display the worth he puts on the treasure of God. Loss and suffering, joyfully accepted for the kingdom of God, show the supremacy of God’s worth more clearly in the world than all worship and prayer.”<sup>3</sup>
    - **Dietrich Bonhoeffer:** “The cross is not the terrible end to an otherwise God-fearing and happy life, but it meets us at the beginning of our com-

<sup>1</sup> John Piper, *Don’t Waste Your Life* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2003), 51,

<sup>2</sup> Piper, *Don’t Waste...* p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad: The Supremacy of God in Missions* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), p. 71.

munion with Christ. When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.”<sup>4</sup>

- **Piper:** “It will not do to take our own comfortable lives and make them the measure of what we allow the Bible to mean.”<sup>5</sup>
- **Philippians 1: 29** “For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him.”

### **The Martyrdom of Polycarp:**

- 1 Now when Polycarp entered into the arena there came a voice from heaven: "Be strong, Polycarp, and play the man." And no one saw the speaker, but our friends who were there heard the voice. And next he was brought forward, and there was a great uproar of those who heard that Polycarp had been arrested. 2 Therefore when he was brought forward the Pro-Consul asked him if he were Polycarp, and when he admitted it he tried to persuade him to deny, saying: "Respect your age," and so forth, as they are accustomed to say: "Swear by the genius of Caesar, repent, say: `Away with the Atheists'"; but Polycarp, with a stern countenance looked on all the crowd of lawless heathen in the arena, and waving his hand at them, he groaned and looked up to heaven and said: "Away with the Atheists." 3 But when the Pro-Consul pressed him and said: "Take the oath and I let you go, revile Christ," Polycarp said: "For eighty and six years have I been his servant, and he has done me no wrong, and how can I blaspheme my King who saved me?"
- 1 But when he persisted again, and said: "Swear by the genius of Caesar," he answered him: "If you vainly suppose that I will swear by the genius of Caesar, as you say, and pretend that you are ignorant who I am, listen plainly: I am a Christian. And if you wish to learn the doctrine of Christianity fix a day and listen." 2 The Pro-Consul said: "Persuade the people." And Polycarp said: "You I should have held worthy of discussion, for we have been taught to render honour, as is meet, if it hurt us not, to princes and authorities appointed by God. But as for those, I do not count them worthy that a defense should be made to them."
- 1 And the Pro-Consul said: "I have wild beasts. I will deliver you to them, unless you repent." And he said: "Call for them, for repentance from better to worse is not allowed us; but it is good to change from evil to righteousness." 2 And he said again to him: "I will cause you to be consumed by fire, if you despise the beasts, unless you repent." But Polycarp said: "You threaten with the fire that burns for a time, and is quickly

<sup>4</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: The Macmillan Col, 1963), p. 99.

<sup>5</sup> Piper, *Let the Nations ...* p. 76.

quenched, for you do not know the fire which awaits the wicked in the judgment to come and in everlasting punishment. But why are you waiting? Come, do what you will."

- 1 And with these and many other words he was filled with courage and joy, and his face was full of grace so that it not only did not fall with trouble at the things said to him, but that the Pro-Consul, on the other hand, was astounded and sent his herald into the midst of the arena to announce three times: "Polycarp has confessed that he is a Christian." 2 When this had been said by the herald, all the multitude of heathen and Jews living in Smyrna cried out with uncontrollable wrath and a loud shout: "This is the teacher of Asia, the father of the Christians, the destroyer of our Gods, who teaches many neither to offer sacrifice nor to worship." And when they said this, they cried out and asked Philip the Asiarch to let loose a lion on Polycarp. But he said he could not legally do this, since he had closed the Sports. 3 Then they found it good to cry out with one mind that he should burn Polycarp alive, for the vision which had appeared to him on his pillow must be fulfilled, when he saw it burning, while he was praying, and he turned and said prophetically to those of the faithful who were with him, "I must be burnt alive."
- 1 These things then happened with so great speed, quicker than it takes to tell, and the crowd came together immediately, and prepared wood and s from the work-shops and baths and the Jews were extremely zealous, as is their custom, in assisting at this. 2 Now when the fire was ready he put off all his clothes, and loosened his girdle and tried also to take off his shoes, though he did not do this before, because each of the faithful was always zealous, which of them might the more quickly touch his flesh. For he had been treated with all respect because of his noble life, even before his martyrdom. 3 Immediately therefore, he was fastened to the instruments which had been prepared for the fire, but when they were going to nail him as well he said: "Leave me thus, for He who gives me power to endure the fire, will grant me to remain in the flames unmoved even without the security you will give by the nails."
- 1 So they did not nail him, but bound him, and he put his hands behind him and was bound, as a noble ram out of a great flock, for an oblation, a whole burnt offering made ready and acceptable to God; and he looked up to heaven and said: "O Lord God Almighty, Father of thy beloved and blessed Child, Jesus Christ, through Whom we have received full knowledge of thee, the God of Angels and powers, and of all creation, and of the whole family of the righteous, who live before thee! 2 I bless thee, that Thou hast granted me this day and hour, that I may share, among the

number of the martyrs, in the cup of thy Christ, for the Resurrection to everlasting life, both of soul and body in the immortality of the Holy Spirit. And may I, to-day, be received among them before Thee, as a rich and acceptable sacrifice, as Thou, the God who lies not and is truth, hast prepared beforehand, and shown forth, and fulfilled. 3 For this reason I also praise Thee for all things, I bless Thee, I glorify Thee through the everlasting and heavenly high Priest, Jesus Christ, thy beloved Child, through whom be glory to Thee with him and the Holy Spirit, both now and for the ages that are to come, Amen."

- 1 Now when he had uttered his Amen and finished his prayer, the men in charge of the fire lit it, and a great flame blazed up and we, to whom it was given to see, saw a marvel. And we have been preserved to report to others what befell. 2 For the fire made the likeness of a room, like the sail of a vessel filled with wind, and surrounded the body of the martyr as with a wall, and he was within it not as burning flesh, but as bread that is being baked, or as gold and silver being refined in a furnace. And we perceived such a fragrant smell as the scent of incense or other costly spices.
- 1 At length the lawless men, seeing that his body could not be consumed by the fire, commanded an executioner to go up and stab him with a dagger, and when he did this, there came out a dove, and much blood, so that the fire was quenched and all the crowd marveled that there was such a difference between the unbelievers and the elect. 2 And of the elect was he indeed one, the wonderful martyr, Polycarp, who in our days was an apostolic and prophetic teacher, bishop of the Catholic Church in Smyrna. For every word which he uttered from his mouth both was fulfilled and will be fulfilled.<sup>6</sup>
- **Martin Luther:** "If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved; and to be steady on all the battlefield besides, is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *Apostolic Fathers*, Kirsopp Lake, 1912 (Loeb Classical Library) *Martyrdom of Polycarp*, <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/martyrdompolycarp-lake.html>.

<sup>7</sup> Martin Luther, [http://www.albatrus.org/english/potpourri/quotes/martin\\_luther\\_quotes.htm](http://www.albatrus.org/english/potpourri/quotes/martin_luther_quotes.htm).

- **Piper:** “Christ died for us so that we would not have to die for sin, NOT so that we would not have to die for others... The call to suffer with Christ is not a call to bear our sins the way he bore them but to love the way he loved. The death of Christ for the sin of my selfishness is not meant to help me escape the suffering of love but to enable it.”<sup>8</sup>

**<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.**

- God has poured out his love into our hearts.
- God gives us not simply a love for each other but a love for himself and a love for Jesus. The supreme test of whether or not a person is a Christian is whether or not he has an authentic love in his heart for Jesus.
  - Does he love Jesus at all? Without this work of grace, without this work of the Holy Spirit, people do not love Jesus.
  - How is the love planted in our hearts?
    - Answer: by the Holy Spirit

**<sup>6</sup>You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.**

- The whole emphasis of this passage is that God did not wait for us to become righteousness before he brought about our redemption.

Righteous man:  
one who generates respect

Good man:  
one who evokes affection

- The point is that Jesus did not die for people who are either righteousness or good.
  - Fallen man is not kindly disposed toward God, and the conclusion is found in verse eight.

**<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.**

- While we were being actively disobedient to, rebellious, hostile ignoring refusing to submit, refusing to love, refusing to worship... at that time Christ died for us.
  - **Isaiah 53: 2-3**—“He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to

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<sup>8</sup> Piper, Let... p. 77.

him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. <sup>3</sup> He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. <sup>4</sup> Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.”

**<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!**

- “I was saved,” “I am saved,” “I will be saved”
- Is the term “saved” equivalent to “justification?” Answer: No
  - *Justification* is one step in the process of salvation
  - *Salvation* covers the entire Christian experience
  - Justification occurs the moment I believe—at that point I am brought into a state of salvation; but my salvation is still to be finalized through my sanctification and glorification.
- ***Salvation has multiple aspects:***
  - Predestination
  - Calling
    - General Calling
    - Effectual Calling
  - Justification—reconciliation
  - Regeneration
  - Faith & Repentance—Conversion
  - Adoption
  - Sanctification
  - Glorification
- Very often Christians are only aware of their part in salvation (faith and repentance—both of which are gifts from God). As a result their understanding of salvation is deficient.

**<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!**

- In other words, God does not just give us a clean start and then, as it were, give us a push out into the world with the hope that we won’t fall off the bike.
- Rather, he continues to hold us and guide us (preserving us).
  - He does this because Christ always lives to intercede for us.

**<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.**

- Not only has Christ's death meant that we are justified at the present, but Christ's resurrection life, which is promised to us in the future, will save us from the wrath of God in judgment.
- Reconciliation is not something that is going to happen in the future
- As a result we are encouraged to rejoice not only in the work of God, but in the person of God.