

Romans: The Fruits of Justification Pt.1, Romans 5:1-5, 8/16/20

Now that I have a teenager in my house it is essential that I stay on top of the ever-evolving vocabulary of insider language, especially online. So here's a quick crash course on teen insider text terminology. Let's start basic- **GIF**- graphic interface format. Here's an example. You might send this **Nacho Libre GIF** as a sarcastic response to how the quarantine has been for you.

LOL- Don't get this wrong, it is Laugh out loud. My dad thought it meant lots of love and kept getting weirded out when people were responding to him with LOL.

BAE- Before anyone else

TOPE- Totally Dope.

SMH- Shaking my head

ROFL- Rolling on the Floor Laughing

IRL- In Real Life

HIFW- How I Feel When

OMDB- Over My Dead Body

PAW- Parents are Watching

KPC- Keeping Parents Clueless

What Paul has been doing in these 4 chapters in Romans is teaching us **"gospel insider" terminology- depravity, redemption, propitiation, faith, and the big one- Justification**. The last word of chapter 4 is justification, and if you remember- this gospel insider word- Justification- means **to be declared righteous by God through faith in Jesus Christ**. And now, in chapter 5, he's going to start showing you what a difference justification makes IRL- In real life. There is a shift in Christian culture of the downplaying of the importance of theology and doctrine. Oh these things divide us or we should just love each other not worry about doctrine. But Paul couldn't disagree more. It is your theology and doctrine- what you really believe to be true about God and us- that forms your practice, how you respond to culture and particularly, as we will see here, how you face suffering.

Four Fruits of Justification: Peace with God. Privileged access to God. A Preview of our future. Purpose in our pain.

#1 Peace with God

Romans 5:1 *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Peace with God is different than peace of God, which we studied a few weeks ago in Philippians 4:7. That peace is an experiential, subjective sense of calmness of heart. But peace with God means **an end to the hostility between us**. It's an objective reality for those who have been justified. I point this out because a lot of people think that the primary purpose of religion is to give you therapeutic feelings of peace, and so they'll say things like, "Well, I'm glad Christianity gives you that, but I get those feelings from yoga or specialty coffee or a drug or rubbing

essential oils on my neck while listening to Enya.” You should base your feelings on what you know to be true in reality: I feel peace in my heart because I know I have peace with God, not visa versa. Without Christ, you might feel peaceful but you're not at peace with God. The peace that person is experiencing without Christ is the same peace as somebody sitting on a lounge chair, sipping champagne on the deck of the Titanic. Did you know that until salvation, there is a war raging on between God and us? Our sin is a rejection of God’s rightful rule in our lives, and in doing so, we claim rule over our own lives. This is why Paul says in Romans 1:18, "Therefore the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against ungodliness..." and he goes on to show how mankind has rebelled. Sin is cosmic rebellion against the King of the universe and so we are at war. But in justification through faith in Jesus Christ, God has declared that the war is over because His Son has made peace and the result is an objective, legal peace. *Isaiah 53:5 He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. The punishment for our peace was upon Him and by his stripes we are healed.* Before I came to Christ I had no peace. I was running from God and felt the weight of my rebellion. When I trusted Jesus in May 2000 one of the first confirmations was a sense that the war was over. I ran up the white flag and peace filled my soul.

Are you at war or at peace with God? How do you know?

#2 Privileged Access to God

Romans 5:2a through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.

The word **access means- to draw near** and in the context it is to draw near to God, or be in the presence of God. Let me tell you why this was a revolutionary concept at this time. 2,000 years ago in paganism and Judaism, the idea of intimacy and access with God was unheard of. Did you know that the Greeks didn't want to get close to their gods? In the Greek and Roman pantheon of gods, their gods were angry and often at war. They were to be placated, not approached. Don't get in their way and hope they leave you alone. Even in Judaism there were layers and barriers between people and God as seen in the **design of the temple**. Only the High Priest could get this kind of access to the presence of God and only once a year under very specific circumstances and it was terrifying. **Niagara Falls**- 750,000 gallons per second, and the power generated from the falls is enough electricity to power 3.8 million homes. I have never been there- but I'm told that for many the sheer power of the falls gives some the feeling that even with the safety rails, they don't want to get too close. If God is so holy, so immensely powerful and holds all of life in his hands, how much more so may we feel that we don't want to get too close to God. Maybe that defines your relationship with God...fear of His power or what he might do and so you try to placate, or stay far away, and just hope he leaves you alone.

[Slide] But Paul says that the gospel changes all that. At the death of Jesus, the veil of the temple that separated the humanity from God's presence was torn from top to bottom. God ripped the veil as a symbolic way of communicating- through Jesus, you all can get close without fear. Here in Romans Paul calls it access into his grace, that is we now have a privileged, favored access to God. This goes beyond peace with God which was the ending of hostility.

Justification is not merely the removal of a negative that is hostility, it has a positive aspect, renewed relationship.

It's like how a child feels with a parent they know loves them. It is the experience of knowing we are a child of God. When our kids were toddlers, if they would fall and hurt themselves they would run crying into our arms...more accurately, they would run passed me to Shannan's arms. This is the kind of access when have to God through Christ. Ask yourself: **What is my attitude in approaching God?** Do you feel like he generally disapproves of you or is angry with you? Or maybe that he's not really listening, or not that concerned with what is going on? Or do you come with the awareness that he is a tender Father who couldn't love you any more than he does?

#3 A Preview of our Future

Romans 5:2b And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.

The word hope in English is pretty weak. Hope means we want something without certainty. We hope the Sixers win the title or we hope there is a vaccine by Winter. But the Greek, **hope means conviction.** The Christian hope is not a hopeful wish, it is a hope filled certainty. Why? Because of the resurrection! The resurrection demonstrates that God not only promises to one day restore all that is broken and give us life beyond the grave but he has the power to do so because Jesus rose from the grave. That's the hope of the glory of God that Paul says we boast in, we celebrate and rejoice in.

Now notice these three benefits of justification are the **three tenses of our salvation.** In Christ we have been freed from our past rebellion and we have peace with God. We are free in the present to enjoy personal access in a loving relationship with God. And we get a preview of the future freedom in the awesome presence of God's glory forever.

This leads us right into the final fruit of Justification: **#4 Purpose in our pain.**

Romans 5:3-5

³ Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴ perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵ And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Paul says we glory in, rejoice or celebrate in our sufferings. Notice he doesn't say we celebrate our sufferings. That's masochism. Paul says we can still have joy despite of and even through our sufferings. This is uniquely Christian and this is very different from what the world calls happiness. **Happiness to the world is getting control of your life so that you keep your circumstances favorable.**

Do you know there is a Happiness.com? You need five things to be happy.

-Be in possession of the basics- food, water, shelter

-Get enough sleep

- Have relationships that matter to you.
- Take care of yourself and people around you.
- Have work that really interests and engages you.

Do you realize how ridiculous that is? Most people, in most places, in most times will never have all these things. What about them? Engaging in interesting work? Most don't. At some point relationships end, or people die, or you don't have your health? So are you doomed to a life of no happiness? Yes, according to the world's definition. But joy is still available to all! In fact, this joy can actually grow through hard times. This is what Paul is saying we can rejoice because we know that God has purpose in our pain.

The word for sufferings, also the word tribulations- Latin, **Tribulum** was a big piece of wood with spikes that ran through it and they would run it over grain to separate the wheat from the chaff. It'd be tied to an animal, drug over the grain, the chaff would be separated from the kernel, the nourishing part, the wheat. So trials, tribulations do that for us. It's a good analogy. It separates what's unimportant and what's important. You go through tribulation, you go through trial, it's not for nothing. They produce.

Paul shows us the **supernatural chain-reaction** that suffering can bring about in the life of the believer who has peace, access and hope- Suffering produces **perseverance- this word means focused endurance**. Like the marathon runner who pushes through the pain and exhaustion because they know the finish line lies ahead. That perseverance leads to **character. This is testedness**. It means character that has gone through the furnace of affliction and had the impurities burned away.

Character produces hope. Suffering removes from us rival sources of confidence and hope just like the chaff is removed from the wheat. Our suffering reminds us that our hope is not in our health, our government, our security, family, our status. Christian hope is an incredibly powerful force. It can get us through the darkest, most disappointing, the most painful times in our lives. D.A. Carson- "I'm not suffering from anything that a good resurrection can't fix."

Hope leads to a greater **experience of the love of God**, like a parent for their child, that is poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. The Spirit, who is given to us at the moment of our justification, provides assurance of God's love in a tangible way in trials. The Spirit provides grace to believe, to stay calm, to feel peace, to hear his whisper- it is going to be OK, I am with you.

[Slide] It is one thing to talk about, it is another to hear a real story about this experience. Marty Marcus Video

Reflections from Romans For You. Consider a recent experience or trial that you have had. 1- did it lead you to focus and persevere? Did it help you sift out the unimportant from the important? Did you draw your attention more on prayer and what God has done for you?

2- How did your suffering produced testedness? Did you follow through despite your fears? Did it make you spiritually/emotionally stronger?

3-Did it lead you to a deeper sense of hope in the bright future God has for you? Did you experience God's presence and love? Did you find a greater closeness, a sense of nearness?

Title Slide

Facebook

Giving

Connection

Prayer- Title Slide