

Blessings! What blessings were poured out upon Abraham for his faith. He was counted righteous for simply believing God. Justified! Justified by faith! Faith that believes on Him that raised up “Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” His resurrection is proof positive of our justification. He was successful in substituting Himself for us. Our sins were fully paid for by Him on the cross. We have peace with God! He has made our peace with God. People, sometimes on their death bed, speak of making their peace with God. That is not how peace with God is obtained. God is angry about our sins and someone has to pay. But in His love He has provided His one and only begotten Son as our Substitute. Yes, He accepts substitutes, but only One qualified, His own Son. We are not speaking of peace in our hearts here but peace with our awesome Creator God whom we have offended. When we realize our peace has been made with Him then we certainly have peace in our hearts but here we are speaking of peace towards us in God’s heart. When He sent His One and Only into the world the angels proclaimed “peace on earth, good will toward men.” He rightly could have and should have come to judge the earth as promised in the Old Testament at it’s close, Malachi 4. But Love prevailed, as Planned, and Jesus was born of a virgin, the Woman’s Seed, to bruise the head of the god of this world.

Genesis 3:15, 2Corinthians 4:4. The “peace on earth” proclaimed at His birth did not settle in and the world soon crucified God’s Sent One. But, marvelous grace, that was in the Plan. The crucifixion generated by the hatred in people’s sinful hearts opened the way for **peace with God** for any and all that put their trust in Him and His death for them. Justified by faith. No condemnation! At total PEACE WITH GOD!

But that is just the beginning. That just opens the doors of blessing. Justification took care of our bad standing with God. Now we are in good standing with God. Now we have access to God. And we have access by faith into this GRACE wherein we stand. Not just safe from judgement, but blessings flowing from God’s grace to us now in this scene where His Son was crucified. And furthermore we now rejoice in hope for future blessing in the very presence of God, when He is glorified before all Creation. This is sure! As sure as God is dependable. As sure as His love. Not only safe from future judgement, we rejoice in hope of future glory.

Given this peace with God and hope of glory we might think we are “on easy street.” Paul immediately brings us down to earth and to earthly troubles experienced by all people on this sin cursed planet. But **now** we glory in tribulations. Glory in troubles? We rise above them. They are but stepping stones to the future. By faith, troubles are now endured. They are temporal. Hope

looks beyond. Like Abraham did. Our endurance works experience, an increasing log book of God’s gracious upholding in the face of troubles. Abraham came to know and trust God in ways he never would have without the troubles he faced and endured. His hope was greater at the end of his life than when he left his homeland by faith. This hope establishes our hearts so we are never ashamed. That is, God never lets us down. After all we are His now. Our hearts are full of something new and different. Something we never knew of, much less ever had, the LOVE OF GOD! The Love of God in our Hearts! Shed? Bucket loads, not drips or a trickle. Abroad? Not just into a little corner of our hearts but throughout. How? By God the Holy Spirit. He was given to us. Unasked for. Not earned. Not even thought of. But given anyway. To each believer, upon our trusting in the Lord Jesus’ death for us, without hesitation or delay. Elsewhere He is spoken of as sealing us, the stamp of God’s ownership upon each believer, Ephesians 1:13,14; & 4:30. He is the One who brings God’s love into our hearts. Not only an inward sense of it but the driving force of it that moves us to love God, worship Him, walk with Him, live for Him and to bless others. All this was given to us, to each believer, God’s unannounced bonus that accompanies our justification.

What is the depth of this Love that has been shed abroad in our hearts? Look back to the Cross. Paul takes us there next. There we see the depth of God’s Love and the extent of His mercy and grace. Paul now personalizes to our hearts what we have learned and believed in Romans 1- 4.

While we were without strength! — Helpless to do anything to please God or to enable us to save ourselves.

In due time! — The cross was not a surprise to God, an afterthought or panicked reaction to His creation gone bad, but the culmination of God’s grand Plan to redeem fallen man and in so doing reveal to the whole intelligent creation His true nature — LOVE.

The ungodly — no merit, no leaning toward God, no appeals for mercy or help.

Not because we were “righteous” in any way.

Nothing in us to call down His love and blessing. Certainly we couldn’t be called “good.” Only God is good, Matthew 19:17. While some might dare to die for a good man, there is none good no not one, Romans 3:12.

But it was while we were yet sinners, people characterized as doing things and thinking things that displease their Creator god or are heedless of His rights as their Creator,

CHRIST DIED FOR US!

What blessings flow from the marvelous fact that we are justified by His blood and are reconciled to God by His death. First, we shall be saved from wrath. Being justified by faith we will never bear the judgement of God for our sins at the Great White Throne, for Jesus bore that for us on the cross. But this statement rather seems to speak of our being **saved from** wrath, the wrath soon be poured out upon the whole earth. Upon His **enemies**. We will not go thorough that. Why? Because we have been reconciled to God. How? By the death of His Son. There could be no greater motivation for God to accept us. (God didn't have to be reconciled to us but we did to Him.) In what state were we? When we were yet enemies. But now are no longer counted among His enemies. Therefore we are here assured we will never be subjected to His wrath when it comes upon His enemies. But there is yet more. Having been reconciled by His death we are saved by His life. Not His godly walk on earth but His Resurrection life. This seems to signal the way of deliverance from the power of sin that Paul will reveal next.

Yet furthermore, being reconciled by the death of His Son and justified by His blood, nothing stands between us and God. Nothing stands in the way of His blessings, present blessings and promised future blessings. Rather **we joy in God!** Not only peace with God, and reconciliation with God, but joy! This joy comes through

our Lord Jesus. It was by Him we received this reconciliation. [While Jesus truly did atone for our sins that is not Paul's point here. The KJV's "atonement" is not supported by better manuscript sources.] The lost sinner's need has been fully met and furthermore his personal relationship with God established and God's continued present and future blessings assured by the death and resurrection of His dear Son.

Our sins are paid for, we are at peace with God and secure in His love forever. What more could we want? Well maybe we wouldn't want any more or even realize we need any more, but we do. So Paul, as led by the Spirit, next speaks to that need, a very basic problem we all have. In fact it is something each of us was born with. Sin. Our inborn sinful nature. It is what leads us to sinful acts. The whole human race, including our natural parents, inherited this from the first man and woman on earth, Adam and Eve. It is still in us even though the penalty has been paid for the sins we have committed and those we will yet commit. And that is the problem. The old nature in us continually pressures us to commit sins. How do we get free from it's power? The rest of chapter 5 and the next chapters deal with that. They will open the way to even more truth and spiritual blessings that are ours.

By Ron Canner, September 12, 2007

Further Notes regarding Justification.

Justification is being counted righteous before God the judge. "Righteousness" and "justification" are translated from the same Greek term. But in English we can't say "righteousified" so we say "justified."

Scripture speaks of being justified in several different ways.

By Grace — Romans 3:24 Being justified freely by **his grace** through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

By Faith — Romans 3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified **by faith** without the deeds of the law.

— Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified **by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

By Blood — Romans 5:9 Much more then, being now **justified by his blood**, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

By Resurrection — Romans 4:24 . . . if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; 25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

By Faith vs. by Works of the Law — Galatians 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

By Works — A persons works and actions display their faith and trust in God. We see these works and so does God who is glorified by them. Works demonstrate the existence of faith in God and justify to others a person's claim to faith in God. Genuine Christian fellowship, and assembly fellowship follow.

Romans 4:2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God

James 2:17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. 18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. 19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. 20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? 23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. 24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. 25 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? 26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

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