

Sent: Wednesday, January 10, 2018 10:22 PM
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study on Romans 5

"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ!" (Romans 5:1)

Notice the "therefore" and the "having been"! It's something that has already happened to those who "believe" in Christ! And it's justification! A word, or some form of it, used some 30 times in the book of Romans! A term that comes from the Greek word for "righteousness," or "righteous," and means "to declare righteous"!

In the first four chapters of Romans, Paul had already established the doctrine of "justification by faith," which is the key theme of Romans, something picked up by Martin Luther--and all those who have come to faith in Christ! According to John MacArthur, this "verdict includes pardon from the guilt and penalty of sin, and the impartation of God's righteousness to the believer's account, which provides for the positive righteousness man needs to be accepted by God! God declares a sinner righteous solely on the basis of the merits of Christ's righteousness! God imputed a believer's sin to Christ's account in His sacrificial death!"

Galatians 2:16 says: "...Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified!"

And so, justification (or salvation) is based on God's grace alone, by faith alone, in Christ alone! With that established, Paul writes in Romans 5 about the results, benefits, and wonderful blessings for the believer of being "justified by faith"--all of which can only be described as "out of this world"! Then Paul ends his treatise with an amazing analogy (MacArthur calls it "one of the most enigmatic passages in the book") of Adam and Christ, to give additional assurance that those who belong to Christ (and not just to Adam) will certainly enjoy eternal life!

So, what are some of those "wonderful blessings" cited by Paul?

1--Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (vs. 1)! The first great result and benefit for the "justified believer" is that the "war" with God is ended! Colossians 1:21-22 says that "although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach"!

2--Access to the very throne of God where, justified, "we stand"! (vs. 2) Such access, and standing, was unthinkable to Paul's Jewish readers, who were well aware of the incident on Mount Sinai, in Exodus 10:20-21, where "the Lord came to the top of the mountain...and called Moses...then spoke to Moses..."telling him to "go down and warn the people so that they would not break through to the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish!" And they (his readers) were also well aware of the fatal consequences of trying to enter into the Holy Place of the temple!

But, when Christ died on the cross, Matthew 27:51 records how the "veil of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom..." and access to God was restored! In Hebrews 4:16 we as believers are, in fact, encouraged to "draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need!"

3--An ultimate hope in sharing in the very "glory of God"! Lending credence to the title Douglas Moo assigned to this text: "Rejoicing in Life and Hope"! Paul writes in Philippians 3:20-21 that "...our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself!" I John 3:1-3 adds: "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. But we know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is! Everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure!"

4--A new hope in this life--despite trials and tribulations! Paul says that we can actually "exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance proven character; and proven character, hope!" And a whole new perspective on suffering!

5--Being indwelt by the Holy Spirit--and thus having the "love of God poured out within our hearts!" Jesus, in John 7:37-39--quoting the prophet Isaiah--spoke about the coming of the Holy Spirit (after His ascension), and how those who believed would have "rivers of living water flowing from their innermost beings"!

6--Saved from the wrath of God through Christ--and yet "so much more"! Paul notes that not only are sinners saved from the wrath of God (through having been justified) --but actually "reconciled" with God! Denoting not merely the legal aspect of justification but the "personal" aspect of "reconciliation"--allowing an intimate relationship with the God of heaven! All of which is reason for "great rejoicing"!

But Paul is not finished! In verses 12-21, he draws a contrast between what we have through Adam and what we have in and through Christ! Moo suggests, in doing this, that Paul "wants to make it absolutely clear that the verdict of justification that we experience in this life will be confirmed in the life to come"! And it's again reason of great joy!

Paul's point is that both Adam's and Christ's life and actions had, and have, great consequences and effects on the entire human race! In a nutshell, Adam brought sin, and condemnation, and death! While Christ brought the gift of grace, and life, and righteous standing!

Romans 5:18 says: "So then as through one transgression (Adam's) there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through the act of righteousness (Christ's) there resulted justification of life to all men!"

In other words, Christ's one act of redemption was immeasurably greater! Much greater than Adam's one act of condemnation!

Moo writes that the "increased seriousness of sin has been matched by an even greater increase in the extent and power of God's grace! And Paul noted (in 5:20) that "where sin increased (after the Law was given!), God's grace abounded all the more!"

All this is simply to make us realize that the repentant sinner (and that would include all who claim to be believers) receives "so much more" in Christ than he lost in Adam! Christ has "overcome" all the disastrous effects of sin!

And so (as our lesson title suggests) we, as believers, can truly "rejoice in life and hope--because of all the wonderful blessings of "having been justified by faith"!

Hope you're really enjoying--and being blessed--as you're emerging yourself into this study of Romans! Can hardly wait for Romans 6!

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