

# ***FPFWC Christian Development***



## **Faith and Salvation**

July 2021

Summer Quarter

**July 24, 2021**

**Lesson #4 – Peace with God**

SCRIPTURE TEXT –Romans 5:1-11

**Key Verse - Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.—Romans 5:1**

**ICE BREAKERS –**

1. What does it mean to be justified?
2. How should Christian hope affect a person's attitude toward his or her current circumstances or goals?
3. In what ways does suffering produce endurance?

**LESSON BACKGROUND**

Romans is both the most challenging of Paul's letters to understand and the richest depository of what he calls "my gospel" (Romans 2:16; 16:25). The basis and reality of being justified by faith is the subject of Romans 1–4 in general (see lessons 6 and 7) and 3:24, 28 in particular.

Paul quoted Habakkuk 2:4 in Romans 1:17 to set the tone for the entire book: "the just shall live by faith." Included in the letter are the apostle's understanding of the Old Testament background for the Christian message, the nature of salvation as it is based on the atoning death of Christ, the centrality of faith as the only path for salvation, the changed relationship between Jews and Gentiles in the plan of God, and several other matters.

Only through faith in Christ may eternal life be found. Eternal life cannot be earned by works, although works are important. Eternal life is not inherited by ancestry, although such ancestry is not unimportant (see Romans 3:1–2; 9:4–5). Eternal life, the life of salvation, is found only in a faith that trusts God to save us.

Abraham, the great patriarch of the Jews, was justified by faith (Romans 4:3, quoting Genesis 15:6; see lesson 7). Thus the idea of faith as the core element of one's life is not a Christian innovation. Faith is to be the foundation of our relationship with God. But this was nothing new: faith was to have been central in the pre-Israel period, in the nation of Israel itself, and in the church. Having established these facts in Romans 1–4, Paul moved to implications, today's text.

**LESSON COMMENTARY –**

**A. Christians Can Boast in God (5:1–11)**

Paul's theme from 5:1–8:39 relates to the benefits that accrue to the believer who has been justified. This section fits with his overall purpose of seeking to motivate the believers in Rome to support his mission to Spain. Unbelievers

possess none of these privileges, and the Roman believers should assist Paul in proclaiming them.

**5:1–2. Therefore** (v. 1) introduces an inference from 3:21–4:25 that the believer has **peace with God**. There is a textual problem related to the verb **have** (whether it is an indicative “we have” or a hortatory [commanding] subjunctive “let us have”), but it is probably indicative. Paul begins giving commands in Romans only in chap. 6 (for hortatory subjunctives applicable to believers, see Rm 13:13; 14:13, 19; there are 22 imperative verbs from chap. 6 onward), but none before (except the hortatory subjunctive in 3:8, which is put on the lips of one in error, and the imperative in 3:4, which is purely rhetorical). Rather than encouraging the believer to strive for **peace with God**, Paul continues his statement of doctrinal facts so prominent in the first half of Romans. God Himself has established peace with those He **justified**. For **the glory of God** (v. 2), cf. the comments on 3:23.

**5:3–5.** It is possible that Paul presupposes the need to have faith for this chain (perseverance, character, hope) to be complete, but he does not mention it here, and it should not be read into the text. His point seems to be that through **tribulations** God will produce in the Christian **perseverance, proven character** (v. 4) and **hope**, similar to Rm 8:29–30.

**5:6–10. For** (v. 6) introduces an explanation regarding how God poured out His love, through Christ’s death. The difference between the **righteous man** and **the good man** (v. 7) is that the **good man** has done something tangibly beneficial for another. I might die for someone who has been good to me, but I probably would not die for one who I considered to be righteous, but who had done nothing for me. If God has done the “major” thing (sinners being **justified by His blood**, v. 9, parallel to **enemies** being **reconciled to God**, v. 10), the believer can count on Him to do the “minor” thing (save sinners **from His wrath**, v. 9, parallel to being **saved by His life**, v. 10).

**5:11.** Believers boast not only in the “hope of the glory of God” (v. 2) and in tribulations (v. 3), but **in God** Himself.

## **B. Christians Can Live a Life of Security (5:12–21)**

The connection with what precedes is not clear, but Paul may be presenting the basis of the hope detailed in 5:1–11. The believer can have hope because Jesus has overturned the negative effects of Adam’s fall.

**5:12. Just as** may find its conclusion in “even so” (*houtos kai*) in v. 18, but more likely it is found in **and so** (*kai houtos*) at the end of v. 12. “Original sin” is a term used to describe the idea that every person sinned in and with Adam, so that Adam’s sin and guilt was our sin and guilt. But Paul is probably not teaching original sin in these verses, for several reasons. First, the phrase **because** [*eph’ ho*] **all sinned** literally means “on the basis of which” and signals that everyone sins because the state of spiritual death, and physical death, entered the race through Adam’s act. Second, the verb **sinned** *always* refers to an individual’s conscious acts, never to sins committed without conscious choice or committed by proxy. Third, **sinned** is probably a “gnomic” aorist, describing a general truth about acts that typically take place, not acts that did take place in the past (see 2:12; 3:23, where **sinned** is also used, but has a gnomic sense).

**LESSON NUGGET** – Before we came to Christ we were at war with God. We were rebels against the laws of God, feeling that they were too restrictive. We believed the lies of Satan as he made sin seem attractive. He blinded us to the fact that sin was destroying us. So we fought against God, not realizing that He was trying to save us. We knew we were at war, but we didn't know that we were fighting against God. Then Jesus told us, "Come to Me, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). When we accepted Christ and experienced His rest we realized that the war is over. There is such peace! There is such rest! To know that God is now on my side.

**Sources:** *Moody Bible Commentary, Standard Lesson Commentary, The Essential Everyday Bible Commentary and Wiersbe Expository Outlines on the New Testament*