

Peace Grace and Hope

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- [0 : 00] Well, good morning everyone. Welcome here this morning in the name of our risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. It's good to see all of you come out this morning.
- We have a special service this morning. I'd like to think that every service is special. We come together to get spiritual food for the week ahead.
- And yet today is a little extra special. So, you know, not only are we going to top up on spiritual food, but we have the blessing of hearing the testimonies of how God has worked in the lives of these four young ladies and He has called them into the family of God.
- And so it's a special morning indeed. We've been blessed this morning already. The song selection that we've had this morning and the words there.
- I can't catalog those words into my memory that quick, but there was definitely truth in those words. So thank you for that.
- [1 : 17] Also, thank you, Joe, for reading the Scripture for us this morning. So why is it so special to become a child of God?
- What are the benefits or the blessings of being a son or a daughter of the King of Kings? It's the question that came to mind.
- And I believe our text this morning in Romans 5, the first five verses here especially, they answer that and share what some of the most valuable blessings are.
- And so I'm just looking. There's three specific blessings that I'll look at this morning. And they are that we have peace with God.
- We have access by faith into the grace in which we stand. And we have a lively hope. And so I've titled the message this morning, Peace, Grace, and Hope.
- [2 : 33] To begin with, I want to back up into chapter 4 of Romans just to get the context as verse 1 in chapter 5 starts with the therefore. So I'll read verses 23 through 25 of chapter 4 just for context.
- Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses and was raised because of our justification.
- So it's speaking of Abraham being saved by faith. And, you know, because of his faith, God's promises towards him, they were imputed or they were ascribed to him.
- And so that promise of blessing that Abraham got, sorry, it is extended to us as believers as well.
- It says, So all who put their faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior partake of the blessings that God promised to Abraham.
- [3 : 53] And so how does the death and resurrection of Jesus factor into this? It says that he was delivered up because of our offenses.
- So on account of our sin, of the sin of the whole world, Jesus was arrested and he was falsely accused and sentenced to die.

Then it says, And he was raised up, he was raised because of our justification. And so the only way that we could be justified or declared righteous before God, the only way that we could have the guilt of sin removed was for Jesus to be nailed to that cross.

You know, he hung there, his arms outspread, inviting the whole world to come to him, to have sin's dark stain washed clean in his blood.

And so that's where chapter 5 starts. Therefore, therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

[5 : 09] You know, therefore, because of God's promise to a faithful Abraham, we too have been justified by faith. God sent the Savior, his only begotten Son, as he promised to atone for our sins, to free us from the bondage of sin.

And so if we are here this morning, and we have placed our faith in Jesus as our personal Lord and Savior, we are justified before God in heaven, and we have peace with him.

It's through Jesus that we stand before God and we are declared righteous. That is amazing. We cannot stand before God without Jesus.

Without Jesus, we can't get anywhere near God because we are vile, filthy, and sinful.

A just and holy God cannot even look upon sin. He is so disgusted with it. And yet, if we have Jesus, if our faith is in him, we can boldly come before the throne of God.

[6 : 30] And God can look upon us, and he does, for he sees us through Jesus, whose crimson blood has washed us white as snow.

Now in a moment, we'll be hearing the testimonies of these four young people, of how they came to the realization that there was separation between them and God.

Peace was missing from their lives. And their search for peace led them to Christ, where they found that peace, rich and abundant and free of charge.

Christ spans the gulf between us and God. We were born enemies of God, having inherited a sinful nature from our forefather Adam.

It was when we put our faith in Christ Jesus and his finished work on the cross, the enmity was gone. That gulf, the space between us and God, has been bridged in Christ, and we have full access to God.

[7 : 48] And we have that access day and night. He is our heavenly Father, and he always has time for us.

And we find true peace in him. Because it is a full morning, for lack of time, I won't be flipping to other scriptures very much this morning, but in your spare time, check out Ephesians chapter 2, and especially verses 13 through 16, for more on Christ being our peace.

It speaks of that as well. So, continuing on to verse 2, having access by faith into the grace in which we stand.

So, verse 2, through whom also, that is through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

And so, I realized as I was putting my notes together, the last bit of verse 1, the notes on verse 1, I had already put in, you know, Christ spanning the gulf.

[9 : 16] You know, I touched on how we have access to God through Christ Jesus. And so, but instead of going and reworking all my notes, I figured I would just continue on and just keep expounding a little more on verse 2.

And so, in our original state, or our old nature, as we've talked about in our baptism classes, access to God was unavailable to us.

Or we didn't have that access. It was by faith in Jesus Christ that we gained that access. And verse 2 here says that it is access into God's grace.

And so, first of all, let's define grace. Grace is unmerited or undeserved favor. It's getting a favor, giving favor that we do not deserve.

And so, we have access by faith into this grace, this free, unmerited love and favor of God. Do we deserve it?

[10 : 27] No, we don't. We deserve to face the consequences and punishment for our wicked ways. But, because of God's love for mankind, who were created in His image, He extended that grace to us.

We had no hand in it. We didn't do anything to deserve the least bit of grace. It was all God. Because He is love, He extended His grace to us.

It was His choice to do so. We find favor, then, with God through His Son, Jesus.

And it says that we not only have access to this grace, but it says we stand in it. So, what does that look like? So, to stand, we must be bold in our faith.

We must know that we have peace with God. And we must know that we are justified. Because if we don't know these things, how can we stand in this grace?

[11 : 48] If we don't know, if we aren't sure, we remain fearful. We cringe.

We hide. Is that a picture of a justified saint? Can we truly come before the throne of our God boldly if we don't know what our faith in Christ does for us?

In Christ, we are free. The penalty for our sins was paid in full.

Our debt is gone. And we walk in newness of life. We are a new creation. We have peace with God, and His grace abounds toward us.

And when we can walk in peace, and grace is extended to us, then there is hope, right? Verse 1 tells us there is peace with God through Christ Jesus.

[13 : 03] Verse 2, that through Christ, there is access to God's grace, and we stand in it. And then in the last line of verse 2, as a result of this peace and grace, it leads us to rejoice.

It says, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. And so, what kind of hope is this?

What kind of hope does this sound like? And was this the kind of hope where we might say, I hope it doesn't rain as we watch storm clouds approaching?

Is it that kind of hope where we're doubting if it won't rain as we see the clouds approaching? Or is this the kind of hope where we know it's a sure thing and we can look forward to it in anticipation?

Can we be unsure and still rejoice? In my Bible here, it says, if we are children of God, we are justified by faith.

[14 : 25] We have peace with God. We have access into the grace in which we stand. And we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

I don't read the word might anywhere in these verses. And so, to me, that means that these are sure things.

There's no doubt. Our hope is a lively hope. It's alive within us. And we look forward to seeing the glory of God.

I have a verse out of Psalm 84 that I'd like to quote. We won't turn there this morning, but Psalm 84 verse 11 reads, For the Lord God is a sun and shield.

The Lord will give grace and glory. No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly. Does a verse like that leave room for doubt?

[15 : 32] It speaks of the things that the Lord God will give to those who walk uprightly, to those who uphold His statutes.

It says, He will give grace and glory. No good thing will He withhold. What is required of us? It is to walk uprightly.

And how do we do that? Well, we can't. But with Christ, we can. If we follow in the footsteps of Jesus, we will walk uprightly.

And these things will be given to us. We can be sure, for God's Word says so. That's a lively hope. And so then, how is this type or this kind of hope cultivated within us?

Well, verses 3 and 4 in our text lay out the path to cultivating this hope. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance, and perseverance character, and character hope.

[16 : 51] So again, how is this type of hope cultivated in us? It says it's through tribulations. And so what are tribulations?

Definition that I pulled up on tribulations says that it is troubles and distresses which proceed from persecution. So this lively hope, you know, it's cultivated within us from persecution.

You know, Scripture also tells us that all who believe in God will face persecution from the world. And so now, we can see why, right?

It's to grow this lively hope within us. And so let's look at the process. First, it tells us that we glory in these tribulations.

And so to glory, we take pleasure in them. Is that accurate? Do we take pleasure in persecution? persecution? It's hard in the moment, right?

[18 : 07] But as we consider it later on and we take it to the Lord, we can begin to understand how it is for our benefit that we go through these things.

it increases our faith and the Lord strengthens us through them. So what does that do?

It continues on. This produces perseverance. perseverance. We know there is a God and we are in the right and we are strengthened.

Because we know that, we will persevere. We will continue on. We are resolved. Perseverance then, it produces character.

character shapes us, molds us. It's who we are. And more and more, we are conformed into the image of Christ as we go through persecutions.

[19 : 22] And so, like Job, we hold on to our integrity. We will serve God and Him alone. It produces character.

What does character then bring out? Character then produces hope. This hope is a confident expectation.

We know God's promises are true, that they will come to pass. There is no doubt because we cling to the author and finisher of our faith.

faith. So, take courage in tribulations. Through them, God is working on us, producing in us a lively hope, a confident expectation.

It's a refining process. We come out a better person in the end. seeing God leading us through these tribulations, it gives us hope.

[20 : 33] He's done it before and He will do it again. 2 Corinthians 4, 17 gives us perspective on that.

I'll turn there this morning in 2 Corinthians 4, verse 17. 2 Corinthians 4, 17.

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. So, compared to what we will receive in glory, this light affliction, these tribulations that the world casts our way, they're only a little bit if we have the right perspective.

All right, back to our text. Verse 5. Verse 5. So, to clarify what kind of hope the passage is talking about here, verse 5 says that it is a hope that doesn't disappoint, it won't let us down.

Now, hope does not disappoint because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. so it's a hope that doesn't disappoint, that won't let us down.

[22 : 16] Why not? Because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

It's not a little sprinkle of love, a little bit for everyone. it is poured out in our hearts.

It's everywhere. Our hearts are filled to overflowing with God's love. God's love is a sure thing.

His Son Jesus as the Messiah is a sure thing. His Holy Spirit given to us indwelling us is a sure thing. And just to conclude this morning and to sum the passage up, I have a quote from Matthew Henry that I'll share.

He wrote, we have justice, peace, grace, perseverance, character, and hope which is all built on the faith we have in Christ.

[23 : 34] Christ is that cornerstone on which we build and we have all these building blocks built on Christ. A firm foundation.

All right, so we will conclude, I will conclude the message part for this morning. We'll close here in a word of prayer and then we'll move on to the best part of the service this morning.

we'll hear the candidates' testimonies. So, please bow with me. Heavenly Father, we come before you again this morning.

Lord, we thank you for the heartbeat in our chests, the breath in our lungs. Lord, this life is given to us by you and you are true and faithful to your word.

You are faithful to us. We thank you for that. Lord, we thank you for your word, that it is sure and that it is true and that the hope we get from it is a lively hope, not something that we grasp at in doubt, not sure if it will hold true.

[24 : 54] We know and we have that confident expectation that your word will go forth as you have promised. And so, we thank you that we are justified in our faith in the Lord Jesus, that we are declared righteous before you and that we can come before you boldly and stand before you.

We can stand in that grace that you give to us, that you give toward us. And Lord, also, the peace that floods over us when we accept Jesus in faith and a peace that continues with us through all the tribulations that the world brings.

We can glory in those tribulations. We can rejoice because we are sure of the foundation that we are building on. we can persevere like Job did when his friends denounced him, when his wife told him to curse you and die.

He stood true in his faith. And we too can do that. Lord, just again thank you for your word and for the promises and the hope that we have in you.

Lord, this morning I just again want to bring these four baptism candidates before you. Lord, it is a special morning for them. And the nervousness and the fear that they are feeling, Lord, I'm feeling that this morning as well.

[26 : 35] There is that nervousness of coming before a crowd of people and yet you give the strength to do that and to come boldly and to share your word with all who would hear.

And so this morning I ask for strength for these candidates as well as they come up and share. Just give them a peace and calmness to come forward and to publicly proclaim their faith in your son Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior.

Savior. And Lord, just as we go from here and this afternoon after lunch as we meet up together at the river to proceed with the baptisms, Lord, there too just give peace and strength and a joy to see the commitment that these young believers have made to follow you all the days of their life.

Lord, just again thank you for this morning. Thank you for being with us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Alright, so at this time we will have the candidates bring their testimonies and we'd sort it out the order that we would do it in here on Wednesday at our last baptism class and so if you would like to each one by one come forward in that order and share your testimonies and once the testimonies are done we'll again have the candidates come up onto the stage.

We have some questions that we ask of them and when that is done as well we will have them return to their seats and we and we will open it up as time allows for a little bit of sharing and encouragement before we close.

[28 : 43] So, Brianna, we'll start with you. Would you come up? And don't be afraid of the mic. We can all hear.

Thank you. My name is Brianna Dick.

My parents are Pastor Henry and Tammy Dick. I grew up in a Christian home and I always heard about all the Bible stories and how Jesus and that God loved me so much that he sent Jesus to die on the cross in my place to save me from my sins.

I accepted Jesus into my heart as my Lord and Savior around the age of seven. But a bit over a year ago I was going through some really hard times and on the night of June 22nd I went to my parents crying and I talked with them for a while and after I went to my room and rededicated my life to God.

This didn't instantly make all my struggles disappear but after I had prayed I felt a burden lifted off of me and I was so full of peace. My life wasn't perfect after this and I was still going through a difficult time but I was trying to lean more on God.

[29 : 55] It took a while but I made it through that difficult time and although I couldn't see it then I know now that because of it I have grown and become stronger in my faith. One of my favorite pieces of scripture that helped me through this time is Proverbs 3 verses 5 and 6 which says trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not unto thine own understanding in all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths.

applause hello everyone my name is Mackenzie Elias I am 16 years old from the time I was born I was taught about God and his love toward others as I was growing up I could see the Holy Spirit in my parents and I always thought to myself I can't wait to grow up and be godly like them not knowing I could be like that now in my early teenage years I felt like I was missing something in life like a purpose so I turned to earthly pleasures to try to fill that void inside it didn't work and then last year I'm one of my close friends Grace and I started to notice her overwhelming amount of joy and enthusiasm to learn more about God's word so I talked to my mom a bit about this and then soon realized that she had the Holy Spirit in her and that God the Holy Spirit that is what I was missing after this I decided to read my Bible more and found more about God's free gift of salvation and now he was just waiting for me

I've heard this before but now it just hit different I also talked to ask my parents questions about believing in God and being a Christian and then last year in August I cried out to God and asked him to fill my heart and believed finally with my whole heart that he loved me so much to die on the cross to free me from the bondage of sin and to be in heaven with them after that I felt so free alive and overfilled with joy I had the willingness to praise and serve the Lord God has helped me through a lot of my problems and he draws me closer to him every day and I can't wait to see what he has in store for the future thank you hi my name is Heather Elias I was born June 15 2010

I was raised in a Christian home and was taught about God the first time I heard I needed to be saved was when I was about nine years old my Bible lessons always talked about how we were all sinners needing salvation I asked Jesus to save me but I struggled with that I wasn't sure if I was saved at the end of last year I went to the evangelism classes that were here at church and in one of the video lessons it said that if you weren't reading your Bible on a regular basis then something might be wrong with your Christian log it really made me think about my life

I really wanted to repent I really wanted to repent and have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and be obedient to him at the beginning of this year I made a new commitment to Christ since then he has made me a new person he has strengthened me and given me a new purpose

[35 : 25] I also have a desire to read the Bible and the Holy Spirit has given me the ability to understand one of my favorite verses is Isaiah 55 8 and 9 for my thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways I sayeth Lord for the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts whenever something happens I don't understand I can remember this verse I am grateful to God for all he has done to me now I would like to be baptized thank you applause good morning good morning for those for those who don't know me my name is Amanda Thiessen my parents are Memo and Lisa Thiessen

I am so grateful to have been raised in a Christian home we went to church regularly and I learned about God ever since I can remember when I was in grade one I asked God to forgive me of my sins and to come into my heart but I found that I was not perfect so I had the feeling that I had to be saved over and over again I doubted if I was saved and kept questioning if I'd go to heaven which really scared me looking back now I know it was the enemy making me doubt my salvation when I was about twelve or thirteen I went to Sturgeon Lake Bible Camp and our speaker Joe was talking about how you could know if you were saved and I wish I could remember exactly what he said that made it click for me but what matters is I finally got clarity that I was a born-again believer and I had so much peace as my relationship with the Lord has grown stronger some things God has been teaching me lately are how great his love is and how my actions and words have an effect on people and I'm learning to portray Christ better every day a verse that I often look back on is Philippians 4, 6-7 be careful for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus thank you thank you all right thank you for sharing all right thank you for sharing all right thank you for sharing at this time we like to invite all of you to come up onto the stage stage and we'll have some questions that we ask of you. We'll have you answer.

If you would come up. All right, so the first question, do you acknowledge your sinful nature and have you repented of your sins and have you accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and do you promise not to part from this truth as long as you live?

Yes. Yes. Yes. Second question, do you believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God who was crucified, died and rose again and according to Acts 4.12 is the only one through whom you might be saved and have all your sins forgiven?

Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Jesus, speaking to Martha, said in John 11, 25 and 26, I am the resurrection and the life.

[40 : 10] He who believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this? Yes. Yes.

All right, those are the questions. You can go back to your seats. Actually, before you do that, please come back up.

Getting ahead of myself. Let's just all together, let's bow in a word of prayer again and just dedicate these young people to the Lord.

Heavenly Father, we just again bow before you this morning, Lord. Thank you for this day. Thank you for these four candidates. Lord, thank you for calling them.

Lord, for putting the calling in their life. Lord, for drawing them. Drawing them to yourself. Lord, just thank you for the way that they have responded.

[41 : 25] That they have responded positively. That they have accepted the free gift that you were offering in your son, Jesus. Free salvation through the blood of Christ.

Lord, we just thank you for the commitment that they have made. And how they have publicly declared it here this morning in front of these witnesses. Lord, we just ask that you would continue to walk with them.

And that you would continue strengthening them. And you would continue growing their faith. And just continue giving grace and peace and a lively hope to them.

As they seek to follow you. And so, Lord, just be near to them. Encourage them.

And for the church around them, Lord, to come around them. To come alongside. And to be an encouragement. And to disciple them.

[42 : 30] And to share our experiences with them. That they can grow from that as well. And just, Lord, as we proceed with the baptism this afternoon.

Baptizing them in the river. Lord, we just ask for strength and guidance there as well. As we do that. And may it be honoring to you. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. Alright. Now you may go to your seats.