

Our Glorious Peace

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[0 : 00] Good morning. Please have a seat. And please turn in your Bibles to Romans chapter 5.

! Before I get into this morning's message, but one of the greatest ways to build into your Christian life or to your walk with Christ is to get to know God better, right?

Like, we kind of know that. But there's actually some really great books that are on the market that talk about the characteristics and attributes of God.

One of them is very well known. It's by A.W. Tozer. I'd recommend it. The problem is when people write these books about the character of God, there are usually two books that are about this thick each.

They're immersive, but they're challenging. In fact, I use one of those books just for time and devotions, just to read what some of the earlier saints and what the Bible talks about.

[1 : 20] Sorry. Hopefully my voice comes back for the sermon. So I ordered five of these. They're \$20 each.

They're at the welcome desk. And this is a great gateway into understanding some of the characteristics and attributes of God.

I would encourage you to take that opportunity to grab one of the books. If you want to know the name, you're not, you don't have \$20 today.

Hopefully they'll be gone, but it's called None Greater. It's featured by Tim Challies and a few other ministries that we support that we're excited about.

And one other message, just as Dave alluded to, I'm heading to the Philippines. It's actually less than two weeks, getting a little overwhelmed just thinking about it. But, you know, we talk about this month being Pastor Appreciation Month.

[2 : 20] And, you know, in a big way, it's really pastors who appreciate their church. And I'm so very thankful for everything that you people give, care for, serve.

A church is not about a pastor. It's about the people. Amen? Amen. And in case you did not know that, the Bible actually holds you responsible for the health of the church.

How's that one for a, quote unquote, kicking the pants, right? So you guys are responsible to want to hear good preaching. You guys are responsible to encourage one another in loving one another, to serve one another, to use your gifts.

But one of the ways that you have graciously blessed me is just in the support for the mission trip. As Pastor David said, we've kind of gone over. So I'm going to show you a picture here.

This is Hanuk. And so the extra money that we've had, we're going to be passing on to a couple of other missions. But let me just read you the story about Pastor Hanuk.

[3 : 26] It says, I'd like to introduce you to Pastor Hanuk and his family. Last October, Hanuk graduated from the Expository Preaching and Pastoral Ministry Program in Pakistan.

So just in case you don't know, I'm going with this group called TMAI, the Masters Academy International. And it is their conviction that the best way to reach indigenous people in the mission field is to train up their pastors.

pastors, often in very hard to reach places. Oftentimes, the old method, bring them here, they kind of get in here, then they don't want to go back. The other method of sending someone who, let's be honest, and it's got nothing about color or race, it usually has to do about culture.

You could send me to reach the people of Sweden. I might be white, but I know nothing about their culture. I do not know anything about how they communicate. So the desire is to send men and women, these families, into these countries to link with other Bible-preaching churches that support the ministry, and they begin these academies.

So this academy that started was the Expository Preaching and Pastoral Ministry and Program. These aren't big academies. They're usually quite small, but it said, he stood out as one of our most diligent and eager students, and as a result, we kept a close eye on his progress.

[4 : 52] Over time, he proved to be a man of godly character with a clear heart for the Lord and his church. Because of this, we've invited Hinuk to pursue further studies through the Master's Seminary online under our mentorship.

Now, this is the church in the Philippines that I will be speaking at in part of their ministry in two weeks. Under our mentorship, he joyfully accepted and started his Master of Divinity.

However, as the semester progressed, it became clear that his region in Pakistan presented significant challenges to his learning, namely, inconsistent internet access, lack of theological resources, and most crucially, the absence of a healthy local church to model what we're striving to teach.

So TMAI always goes to where there's a church. So oftentimes, they just send men and these families into these churches just to help get them going. And once they've reached, and they usually try to connect with all different churches in that region that share that same philosophy and they build in together.

So in light of this, we've invited his family to relocate to the Philippines where he can continue his Master's of Divinity studies under our guidance while actively participating in a healthy local church that can shape his understanding of biblical ministry in real time.

[6 : 19] So it's kind of exciting and one of the goals that Hanuk has is they're hoping and praying that Hanuk will play a key role in helping them establish a TMAI training center in Pakistan.

They write, this is a strategic priority as Pakistan is the largest Muslim nation in the world and less than 1.5% of the population are Christians.

Among those believers, access to sound resources and theological training is extremely limited. Expository preaching is virtually unheard of and biblical shepherding, theology, and church practices are greatly lacking.

So I just wanted you to know this is where the extra funds will be going to. I'm hoping for an opportunity. I will meet Hanuk and his family and I just ask you to continue praying for some of these families that are making great sacrifices to go to other countries where there's even different languages.

And let's be honest, we might not say this in five years, but praise the Lord for AI because you can get live translations. I don't know if you know, in your earbuds, your Apple iPhone or earbuds, you can get live translations.

[7 : 33] Someone's talking to you in another language and it gets translated into your language. That's pretty powerful stuff right now. So I'm really glad the church is taking the time to develop these resources.

All right. I am excited about this, but I'm more excited about today's passage. This is indeed one of the most glorious passages in all of Scripture.

I know that's a big thing, right? You're like, wow, that's a big thing you're saying. This is a big book with many passages. But I want to start reading you this passage and then I will get into why it's so amazing.

So let's open up our Bibles at Romans 5, starting at 1, verse 1. It says, therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Through Him, we have also obtained access by faith into His grace, in which we stand and rejoice and hope for the glory of God.

[8 : 39] Oh, sorry. I don't have my glasses, so I'm skipping things here. Through Him, we have also obtained access by faith and into this grace in which we stand and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings knowing that sufferings produces endurance. Endurance produces character and character produces hope. And hope does not put us to shame because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit and has been given to us.

For while we were still weak, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person, though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die.

But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by His blood, much more shall we save by Him and from the wrath of God.

For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by His life.

[9 : 58] More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Let me pray. Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, we just thank You for this time we come to worship. We come to kneel before You in worship, to come under Your Word, O God.

I pray, just as we move through this text, I pray that we can see and grasp the magnificent beauty of it. I pray that our souls would be challenged.

I pray that we would truly come to realize our true status before You as those who are justified by You.

This is an amazing text, O Lord, and I pray for amazing results, not just from this sermon, but from the teachings therein to the lives of those who know You.

[11 : 04] I pray that this truth would draw those who are on the outside of faith, who are perhaps just checking out Christianity. I pray that You give them an understanding.

Wow, this is what it's really all about. I pray that they would desire this, to know that they can have a righteous home before a righteous God and feel no shame.

So we ask these things as we get into this text. I pray that You'd bless and give me a strong voice for these next 40 minutes. In Your name we pray.

Amen. Alright, who here knows about The Price is Right? You guys know that. Everyone loves The Price is Right, right? Everybody kind of plays it.

They're trying to guess the right price. Wait, does anybody not know what The Price is Right? So, because if you don't, I will take 15 to 30 minutes to explain the game.

[12 : 02] You know, it's just... So basically, you know the audience and it's kind of funny. One of my friends actually got up there. He went to the audience, clean cut guy, and he basically dressed up as a clown. Just hoping that they were going to notice him.

He had his hair all spiky. And they brought him up. He won and he got to bid on a kitchen dining set, which every college kid needs. And he won and he got to go up.

Now, one of the things about The Price is Right, right? There's a couple of great prizes. The first one, you bid to qualify. Then there's three of these contestants get acted in.

It could be a scooter, a grand piano, or whatever. You play some game. Then you get to spin the wheel. And you know at the very end of the show, that's when things get going. The two people who score the highest on spin the wheel get to go to...

You remember what it's called? Showcase? Showdown. Showdown, right, right. So you go down to Showcase Showdown and they usually show you something that's really great. It's like, you know, you'll get up there and they'll go, hey, here's a new home in the swamplands of Missouri.

[13 : 08] You know, the person's like, all right, okay. But here's the thing. Anybody who's ever seen Showcase Showdown knows, you always pass on the first showcase.

You always pass on the first showcase. Showcase. Because even though Showcase Showdown, listen, Missouri's a nice state, I'm sure, and there's not all these nice... But it's a great home.

It's a great prize. It's the kind of prize that could change your life. But Showcase Showdown, number two. It's like you get a new home, a new car, new furniture.

Guess what? We're going to give you a round-the-world trip and then plus, we're going to give you a vacation house on the shores of the beautiful beach. Right? It's big.

It's big and it's grandiose. This passage is Showcase Showdown number two. This passage is Showcase Showdown number two.

[14 : 03] Showcase Showdown number one is the great thing of justification. You've been justified by God. You have a new home. You are made right with God.

But Showcase Showdown number two, it tells you just how amazing it is to be right with God.

See, Romans 1-4 told us you're justified. You've been declared righteous. Your sins are forgiven. You have peace with God.

Hallelujah! Amen! Wahoo! That alone is mind-shattering. That alone is you just want a great house. But in Romans 5, Paul turns and says, you thought that was everything?

You thought that that was all I was giving you? Get ready. God's not done. Let me now show you what else comes with justification.

[15 : 11] This chapter is Paul saying, you're not just saved, you are blessed beyond measure. This is one of those passages where you don't bother debating.

You sit back and you say it's beautiful. It's wonderful. and you meditate on these truths.

For four chapters, Paul has been in this courtroom mode. It's almost humanity has been standing before the judge. The evidence has been presented.

None is righteous. No, not one. The verdict is in. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. And just when everything looks hopeless, the gospel explodes into this darkness.

But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law through faith in Jesus Christ. This is what is called justification.

[16 : 19] It means the guilty are declared righteous by faith alone. Romans 4 ends this way. Christ was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

The gavel falls, the case is closed, the verdict is delivered and the sinner walks out of the court forgiven. But then we get to Romans 5.

The judge who stand in authority over you walks down from the bench and he puts his arm around you and he simply says, come home with me.

You're mine now. You see, Romans 5 begins with one of the most glorious therefores in all of scripture. Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul is not offering up another argument. This is actually theology erupting into worship. This is Paul shouting, look what comes with justification.

[17 : 44] Look at all that peace with God really means. Here's the big truth of Romans 5, 1-11. God didn't just remove your sin.

God opened his house to you. God didn't just cancel your debt. God gave you access to his riches.

God didn't just silence the accuser. God filled your heart with his love. And as one theologian aptly puts it, justification is not the end of salvation, but it is the foundation of a relationship so rich that only eternity can exhaust it.

So here's how we're going to handle this text. Honestly, it's too big for just today. For the next two weeks, we're just going to look up to verse five. But in these first five verses, Paul gives us five riches that come along with being justified by faith.

And these are going to be the points in today's sermon. We're going to deal with the first three. One, we have peace with God. What that means is the war is over. Number two, we are going to have access with God, which means the door is open.

[19 : 12] Three, we're going to learn about assurance from God. That hope is alive. Four, we're going to learn about the indwelling by God where his love is within us.

And the fifth amazing truth is that we are persevered by God that your salvation is secure. Amen? This is this amazing teaching.

So this morning, we're going to take our time with the first three. Next Sunday, next Sunday, Lord willing, we'll finish with the final two. Because church, this is our showcase.

This is our glorious prize that is found in Jesus Christ. This is what it means to be peace with God.

So my first point from verse one, notice, therefore, since we have been justified by God, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

[20 : 16] That's the first point. We have peace with God. What Paul is saying is, we're the wars over. If you remember, the first question that Paul answers us in the first part of Romans is, why is this world so messed up?

And the biggest reason why is because we have suppressed the knowledge of God. So when Paul says therefore, it's like he's drawing a line under everything that's underneath this text.

It's his way of saying, let's add this all up. All humanity, guilty. Law keeping, insufficient to get right with God.

How about if we keep the festivals? No way, no how. What about what happens if I'm a son of Abraham? Doesn't matter. faith is the only way and faith in Jesus Christ, the perfect substitute, is the only way in.

So therefore, because all of that, we have peace with God. You see, this phrase changes everything.

[21 : 27] Now please do not confuse peace with God with the peace of God. The peace of God is that inner calm that guards our heart.

We're talking about actual peace with God. That means end of hostility. It means the reconciliation of enemies. Before justification, the Bible is quite clear that we are at war with God.

Do you know that? Romans 4, 8, 7 calls it we are enmity with God. That we actually hate God. We hate his righteous decrees. You see, our sin wasn't a misunderstanding with God.

Our sin is mutiny. Our sin is mutiny against the great God, the great creator, that we willingly suppress the knowledge of God, as Romans chapter 1 tells us.

We just don't break the law. We declare ourselves independent from the law. let's never ever soften who we were before Jesus Christ.

[22 : 43] See, before you met Jesus Christ, you were not God's neutral neighbor. Scripture tells us that you were God's enemy. Abraham's 2 and 3 says we were children of wrath.

But then a miracle happens. Through the cross of Jesus Christ, the war is over. Paul says in Ephesians 2 14, it says he himself is our peace.

You see, at Calvary, God didn't compromise his justice or ignore our rebellion. God satisfied his justice and in it his mercy.

the blood of Jesus Christ didn't just purchase pardon. It is the ink which signed the peace treaty. When Jesus Christ cried from the cross, it is finished.

The courtroom fell silent. When Jesus rose from the tomb, the payment for our souls was accepted.

[23 : 53] And now the judge becomes our advocate. The executioner becomes our savior. The one we offended took the penalty himself and handed us his righteousness.

That is justification. And the first fruit of justification is peace with God. Let me give you three qualities of this peace.

And I pray that this encourages your heart. First, let me be clear. This peace that Paul is telling us about is objective peace. It is not emotional peace.

It is objective peace, not emotional peace. You may not feel peaceful every day, but your feelings don't change the fact that this is not some psychological serenity.

it is what is called a legal reality. As one writer put it, the peace of justification is not a mood, it is a status.

[25 : 04] It's the difference between a ceasefire that might break any moment and a treaty that signed, sealed, and is eternal. Your peace with God doesn't depend on how spiritual you feel this morning.

It doesn't depend how spiritual you feel tomorrow morning when you didn't get a chance to go to church. It isn't affected by that at all. Your peace with God depends on whether Christ's blood satisfies the Father.

And the fact that Jesus Christ rose from the dead says it does. So I want to be clear. This peace is objective, not emotional.

Another second attribute of this peace is that this peace is exclusive. This peace can only be attained one way. Notice verse one, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice that Paul doesn't say through your sincerity. It doesn't say through your good heart.

[26 : 15] It doesn't say through your wonderful intentions. Peace with God comes through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Every other road leads back to the battlefield with God. Religion says make peace with God by doing these works that we prescribe for you.

Christianity says no, no, no. God is the one who makes peace with you. You don't make peace with God. God makes peace with you.

The gospel says that this comes through Jesus, through his cross, through his finished work. So when God looks at you now, he doesn't see an enemy.

he sees a son or daughter clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Amen? This is why we sing, because the sinless Savior died, my sinful soul is counted free, for God the just is satisfied to look on him and pardon me.

[27 : 34] I want to know something else that's so incredible about this peace? This peace is permanent. This peace is permanent. It is everlasting. Notice Paul uses the present tense.

We have peace. He doesn't say we hope for peace. We're trying to keep peace. He says we have now peace. And this peace cannot be revoked because its basis cannot change.

Christ's finished work doesn't fluctuate with your performance. Great news. Amen? Because if your peace could be lost every time you stumbled, every time you struggled with faith, then that would mean Jesus' death only brought you a temporary truce.

That's it. That is not the gospel. That is not the gospel. gospel. Colossians 1.20 says God made peace by the blood of his cross.

What that means is the same blood that secured your justification guarantees your reconciliation. This is amazing.

[28 : 56] Through Jesus Christ we have peace with God. Amen? Here's my question for you. God's peace with Why do so many believers still live like they're on probation?

If we believe that we have peace with God, why do so often we as believers act like we're on probation with God? And what I mean by that is you're trying to earn back God's favor after failure.

You try to earn back God's favor after failure. Lord, forgive me for my sin. It was wretched, holy. You know what? I'm going to go serve at the coffee desk at SBC for the next six months and I'm going to make the best coffee.

Or I'm going to replace Chris Mitchell at the welcoming people in and I'm going to be the best greeter in the world. Two, it's when we walk on eggshells spiritually afraid that God is almost over us just waiting to slap us.

another way we live this truth out about why we still think feel we're on probation is we serve out of guilt instead of gratitude.

[30 : 17] There is not a single work that I would like you to do at this church out of guilt. You know that? Not a single one. God, I want you to see that your service here is a part of your worship to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And if you're struggling with that, be honest with your, we have many different leaders that oversee these ministries, be honest, it's not a good time, I'm struggling with my faith. Great, let's pray.

But never feel that you are guilted into it. I refuse to pastor a church that works from guilt. I grew up in that kind of church.

See, if you've been justified, you will stop living like a fugitive. You're not waiting for the hammer to fall. The fact of the matter is you stand in grace.

Every morning you remind yourself, I'm not fighting for peace. I am living with peace. You see, Christ didn't die to make you a tolerated sinner.

[31 : 29] Christ died to make you a beloved child. You see, when Satan whispers, God stands against you, point them back to this verse.

Point them back to this verse. Put it on your fridge. Remember, you have peace with God. You're lying, Satan. Get away from me. And let me tell you about that peace.

It's beautiful. It is blood bought. It is the doorway to every other blessing we will look at into this passage. church. See, here's the thing.

Once you've been justified, peace isn't the only gift you receive. It's the first key to the first door that opens up the rest. Because the moment the war ends, the door to God's presence swings open.

And that brings me to point number two. When we are justified, we now have access to God. The door is open. Romans 5, 2.

[32 : 36] Through him, we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

So, verse 1, peace ends the war. Verse 2 gives us access. It's like the war is over and the palace gates over.

open into Jesus Christ. Imagine being summoned into the king's courtroom as a condemned criminal. You go in expecting just judgment.

You're trembling before the throne. And the king steps down, takes off his crown, and says, I've paid your debt.

You're free. Your family now come live with me. See, that's the movement from peace to access. You see, peace ends the hostility.

[33 : 40] Access begins the fellowship. Peace ends the hostility. Access begins the fellowship. Peace removes the barrier.

Access opens the way. And this is not a probationary pardon. It's a permanent invitation. Now let me take you through this text and how this happens.

Notice it says, through him. Through him. That there is no other access point to God. Through him means not through religion, not through self-important, heritage or following the law.

It only comes through him. Now John 10, 9 makes it pretty clear. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved.

You see, every other path leads to a locked gate. That's why Hebrews 10, 19, and 22 says, we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus.

[34 : 53] Let us draw near with a true heart and a full assurance of faith. That's a beautiful verse in case you guys do not know that.

That through our justification we can enter with a true heart and full assurance of faith. Through him and only through him the sinner walks into the throne room as a child like this.

Notice it says we have obtained access. This access in the Greek was used to introduce someone to royalty. It means a right of approach.

When Paul says we have obtained access, he's not talking about a quick handshake and move along. And God and then we go back to the waiting room.

You ever had one of those situations in life? You're kind of meeting someone and you're going to get pushed along. I remember when I was serving in thesis and I was kind of this expert in this one area and usually the way it worked is you had many bosses.

[36 : 06] So I'm like a level eight guy. Managers are ten to fifteens. So I'm this eight guy. So I'm kind of not the bottom of the rung but in my little territory I am the bottom of the rung.

So I get invited up to the manager's floor. There's a big case. I'm being asked to sit down and usually anything I say comes from my boss and his boss or her boss.

It's always third stage but I'm kind of the knowledge guy. So I remember going in giving all the information and I just pick up my brochure and I'm walking out and they go no no no we want you to stay in here with us.

On that day I did not feel like a level eight anymore. I was sitting with the fifteens. I was at that table right? That's kind of what it feels like. Anybody ever feel that way? You're kind of going in doing your duty and just someone invites you in.

This is what Jesus Christ did. You're in but you're in permanently. And what it means is we have continuous standing.

[37 : 07] That room where he lives is guess what we are living there too. That's why Jesus Christ said I'm going to prepare a mansion a home of many mansions. Notice the phrase into this grace in which we stand.

We don't just visit grace we live there. We just don't step into God's presence we stay in God's presence. The point is justification isn't a visitor's pass.

Justification is a permanent residency card in the house of grace. Notice we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Let's talk about the joy of anticipation. You see peace settles the past. Access transforms the present but hope secures the future.

Now Paul lifts our eyes upward. He says we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. That word rejoice means to boast, to exalt, to glory in.

[38 : 19] Paul is saying we're not just content, we're celebrating. celebrating. glory. We're giving glory to God in his presence.

The believer lives in joyful anticipation of standing glorified in God's presence. The same glory we felt short of in Romans 3 23, right?

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. We're not falling short anymore. more. The same glory we once felt short of is now the glory we're destined to share and the peace of justification leads to this joy of gratification.

Think of it this way. Justification didn't just get you into the courtroom. It gets you into the throne room. Imagine standing in a room where every surface, the floors, the walls, the ceiling radiates grace.

Everywhere you turn, it's grace. Every step you take, it's grace. Every breath you draw, it's grace. That's what Paul means when he says in which we stand.

[39 : 32] One writer says grace is not a step we take towards God. It's the ground in which we stand on once we're his. You don't fall out of grace because grace is never something that you step into.

You with me? You never fall out of grace because you never stepped into it. God scoops you up with his grace. So here's the question.

If you believe this is true, if you believe you're here today and you're saying along with me, amen, amen, I have peace with God and now I have access to God.

So my question is if the door is open, why do so many people, why do so many Christians still live on the porch? they seem excited to look in the windows, they like hearing about the people who went in and maybe come out and shared with them, but they're just afraid to step forward into the throne room.

The fact is you've been granted access. The question is do you use it? The fact of the matter is all too often we live like spiritual peasants when God has given us the privilege of princes.

[41 : 16] We pray, Lord, help me survive this day when he actually invites us to pray, Lord, glorify yourself in my life today.

pray. It's as if we crawl under the table just so grateful for the scrap of foods that might fall down from this table and we can nibble on these little blessings.

It's like as if God tolerates the stray dogs around the table. there's a seat and it has your name on it and it stands at the table where he is seated.

That is where we are to be seated. Romans 4 16 says let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

You don't need an appointment. You already have access. Because of the blood of Jesus Christ, you have the right to go boldly before the throne.

[42 : 44] Not because you're good but Jesus Christ is good. Amen? So we know that peace with God ends the hostility.

We know that access to God begins with intimacy. But here's the thing. Paul's not done. Showcase showdown and it ain't over yet. He knows what you're thinking.

That sounds amazing. But what happens when life gets hard? What happens or what happens if my peace is shaking? What if I suffer?

And this is where Paul takes us next. Because justification just doesn't give peace and access. It also gives us assurance. Which is the confidence that even in suffering, God is working things out for our good.

Let's take a look at verse five or three and four. It says, not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings knowing that suffering produces endurance.

[43 : 49] And endurance produces character and character produces hope. Now, let's be honest. You're hearing Paul tell you that.

You might turn to your spouse or your friend next to you and just say, did I just hear that right? Did Paul just say, I'm supposed to rejoice in my suffering?

Yes. Yes, he did. It's as if Paul says, you think justification just gives you peace and access. That's good, but it actually gets better.

You see, justification gives you a whole way for you to interpret your life, therefore interpret your pain. And this is what assurance really is.

Assurance is the settled conviction that nothing can shake what God has done for you, not even suffering. Let's be honest.

[44 : 59] Do we say that? Man, I'm rejoicing in my suffering now. Now, dealing with a spouse who has cancer, a child that has walked away from the Lord.

I've got a health issue, a stress issue. I rejoice in this. I rejoice in this. the fact is, this is one of the most counterintuitive sentences in all of Scripture.

We rejoice in our sufferings. Let's be honest. We rejoice, or even the world rejoices when things go right.

when David Crente is up here announcing the nuptials of Ryan and Carrie, we rejoice. But here's the thing.

The believer rejoices even when things go wrong, even when life doesn't look like the way I want it to.

[46 : 16] And I'll tell you why. Because one who has peace with God, one who has access to God, one who's been justified by God, will know that God never stops working for his good.

Notice the phrase, not only that. Paul is saying, we don't just rejoice in peace, access, and hope. We rejoice in hardship too.

And here's the truth. Justification changes the meaning of suffering. How you suffer before you are a believer in Jesus Christ changes when you become a Christian.

Let's be honest. Before we were in Christ, before we were justified suffering only screamed, where is God? Now, suffering whispers, God is at work.

God is at work. You see, this is a truth we need to commit ourselves to. When we endure the multiple hospital visits, when we're about to enter counseling, it's 1am and I've just had a brutal fight with my spouse.

[47 : 47] The fact is, suffering no longer threatens your standing. It actually proves it. It demonstrates that God is at work.

why? And what we see here in this text is we have a so-called holy chain reaction. And I want you to see these links forged in the fires of trial.

One, suffering leads to endurance, leads to character. Let me say it again. Suffering leads to endurance, endurance leads to character, and character leads to hope.

Now, this is not a formula for punishment. It is a theology of maturity. What Paul is saying here, justification doesn't insulate you from pain, but it will transform what pain produces in your life.

Now, let's just walk through this. A, notice it says suffering produces endurance. Let's be honest, suffering teaches us to stay when everything in us wants to run.

[49 : 06] Right? Pain makes us want to run away. My marriage is hard, run away. Irreconcilable differences we'll claim before the courts.

See, the Greek word here used for steadfast it means hold your ground under pressure. It's like a soldier getting ready for the oncoming fight.

James uses the same word in James 1, 3, 4. It says the testing of your faith produces endurance. In other words, storms don't destroy saving faith, they strengthen it.

justified people don't fall apart. They grow stronger. Number two, endurance produces character.

The word character means tested worth. It's what happens when metal passes through the fire and comes out purified. Endurance refines us, it scrapes off the dross of self-reliance, the impurities of pride, and it reveals something genuine, which is proven faith.

[50 : 30] See, when you endure, you become the real thing. And then we get to the surprising end of the chain, hope.

You see, suffering doesn't lead to despair for the justified believer. It deepens our hope. Why? Because you've seen God be faithful in the furnace.

You've tasted his sustaining grace. You no longer think you're saved, you know you're saved. That is holy assurance.

Whatever else could possess David to write, even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.

Unless he actually believes, God, you are with me, God, you are working, God, you are not against me.

[51 : 37] You see, in our world, we see suffering as punishment rather than proof of salvation. salvation. Here's the truth. Trials don't cause your salvation.

They confirm it. The enemy wants you to interpret suffering as divine punishment, but for the justified, suffering is divine preparation.

Every hardship you face as a believer is not evidence that God has abandoned you. It's proof that he's training you. He's preparing you. He's disciplining you.

Hebrews 12, 6, the Lord disciplines those he loves. You see, assurance is not a feeling you work up.

It's a confidence that God works in you, and it's often through suffering. I'll tell you right now, there's no such thing as a loving parent who does not discipline or train their children for righteousness.

[52 : 42] That is not loving. Why would we tolerate a God who does not do the same? Think of a jeweler, a goldsmith.

Roland would certainly tell you the stories, right? He puts the metal in fire, heats it up until it liquefies, and then he skims off the impurities. And how does he know it's pure?

fire? It's when he can finally see his reflection in it. That's what God does with his justified children. He allows the fire not to destroy you, but to reveal himself in you.

So when you're walking through suffering, don't think, God must be mad at me. he's perfecting you. No, he's perfecting you. He's proving the genuineness of your faith.

He's letting you know that he wants to see his image in you. John Piper is very well known for don't waste your suffering.

[54 : 00] The fact is every time you hurt, you have a choice. You can interpret suffering as rejection and run from God or interpret it as refinement and run to God.

See, if you've been justified, the hardest moments of your life become the strongest evidence of his faithfulness. suffering doesn't threaten your justification.

It strengthens your assurance of it. That's why Paul uses these words. We rejoice.

Not because the pain is pleasant, but because the process is purposeful. If you ever want to hear a testimony on this, write this down.

Death is not dying dot com. Death is not dying dot com. It is the story of my friend's wife, who when diagnosed with bone cancer and only months to live, was asked to give her testimony before a woman's group which only had 14 women.

[55 : 24] which grew to 20. And when everybody found out about this testimony, they had to rent out a casino because over close to a thousand people showed up for this testimony.

Since that time, and she died shortly after, this testimony literally has gone around the world and has been seen and encouraged many a million times over because she understood the simple truth, death is not dying.

And she did not care to waste her suffering. Her story is about submission to the love of God.

So, church, do you see what God is saying to you in Romans 5? If you belong to Christ, you are not waiting to see how God feels about you.

You are not hanging in some spiritual maybe. You are not on probation. You have peace with God.

[56 : 35] The war is over. God is not against you. God is for you. You have access to God.

You are not locked outside the throne room. You do not need to knock and hope he answers. Through Christ you stand in grace and you are welcome.

And you have assurance from God. Your suffering is not proof that God walked away. Your suffering is proof that God is working.

Suffering produces endurance. Endurance produces tested character. And tested character produces hope. And that hope will not put you to shame. That hope is yours now.

It's not in heaven someday. That hope is today. That's justification applied to your actual Monday.

[57 : 36] time. But listen, we're not done. Because I know some of you are thinking or have thought, okay, BK, what happens if I break?

What happens if I fall? What if I sin? What if I fall apart? What if I blow it again? Can I lose this?

And here's the thing, Paul knows exactly you're asking that same question. And this is why he doesn't stop at verse four. Next week, Lord willing, we're going to hear two final truths.

One, that you are indwelt by God, that God's love poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. And the fifth truth is that you are preserved by God.

Much more shall we be saved by his life. In other words, not only has God made peace with you, he's moved in. He's living with you.

[58 : 41] And not only has God moved in, he refuses to let you go. Even when you try to run out of that house, he's grabbed you. That's where we're going.

So for today, here's the call. If you are in Christ, stop living like a fugitive. Stop praying like a stranger.

Stop suffering like an orphan. You're justified. You have peace. The door is wide open.

Come, sit at the banquet table and receive the life that God offers you. Even in the fire, hope is alive.

This, my friends, is your glorious peace with God. Let me pray. What an eternal, holy truth, oh, Father, to have peace with you.

[59 : 43] For some of us, we're just excited that we've been justified. we're no longer seen as enemies, but we just want to live on the outskirts of God.

We don't want to bother you, God. We're just happy with our salvation. Other people can move in and do those other things. I'm quite content out here.

What we see as Christian leaders here over and over again, those who live on the outskirts are the ones who live in the hopelessness. Those are the ones who worry about their assurance.

They're the ones that worry, do I really have access with God? Their prayers are minimal. Their intentions, their lives are minimal because they're just kind of working in a way not to offend you, God, rather than living in a way that brings glory to you.

Father, I pray not for the small things for this church. I pray for the big things. I pray for a church that brings glory to God. I pray for a church full of people who pray that their lives would matter to the glory of God.

[60 : 53] That they just don't pray, Lord, just help me make it through this day. Now I'm a child of the king. The king's got work to do.

I get to please the one who saved me, who pulled me out of my addiction, my broken relationships. I get to serve the one, who graciously took me from my blindness, my false religion.

And I get to have open, clear eyes, oh Lord. My suffering just isn't pain. It's knowing that you're walking with me through the valley of death.

Because the reality is, this is a broken world full of sinners. sinners, our bodies break down because of sin. Because of Adam's sin.

And we're going to get into that later on in chapter five, how that was so important, how Jesus Christ as the second Adam makes things right. God. Father, I pray that if there's anybody here who's on the outside, who's sitting on the porch looking at the family dinner, where people are loved and cared for, would just open up that door and walk in and be welcomed.

[62 : 18] Father, just even as a church, may we physically represent that. For someone here who may have been a Christian, been on the outside, living a life that was outside of you, but now they want to come to you.

Father, let us be a model of welcoming them in. Let us be a model of loving them. We don't care about the past. We care about our hope. Let us walk together in the newness of life, encouraging, praying, and loving one another.

Father, I pray more than anything else that you would just pound these truths into our hearts. I ask you these things in your most holy, precious, and everlasting name.

Amen.