

# Enjoying Justification

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Preacher: Steve Jeffrey

[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning, everyone. There was an article in one of Sydney newspapers around about five years ago now, I think, with the title, Cheer Up Sydney.

Apparently, the article went on that Sydneysiders have a particular legendary preference for complaining and whinging and whining.

And as the article went on, the solution for our unhappiness according to the psychologist Susie Green, who was at the time the CEO of the Sydney-based Positivity Institute, was quite simple. She said, we live in one of the most beautiful cities in the world and generally people are kind and caring. We aren't living in a war-torn country. The point is, the reason that we aren't a cheerier lot is because of negative circumstances.

That's her view. And in actual fact, we should be cheery because we haven't got as many negative circumstances as other people do in life. I mean, the source for your happiness should be, right now, looking at Ukraine.

[ 1 : 19 ] You should be happy if you look at Ukraine, for instance. And in a similar vein, happiness.com reveals a list of five top components for a life of happiness.

Number one, be in possession of the basic stuff of life, of food, shelter, good health and safety.

Number two, get enough sleep. That's why most parents are miserable.

Number three, have relationships that matter to you. Number four, take compassionate care of yourself and others.

And number five, have work that's really interesting and engages you. Now, on one level, you could see why someone in a Western society in a large city would look at that list and go, that's logical.

On another level, it's a ridiculous list. It makes no sense at all to most people. Most people, in most places, in most centuries, in the history of the world, have never experienced anything like that list.

[ 2 : 25 ] Ever. What do you do with people who have never had food, shelter, health and safety? And they'll never have it. They're confined to misery all of their life.

I don't think history would say that's the case. Or what about those on the list? Number five, engaging and interesting work. I mean, come on. How many people actually experience that every day of their life in the workforce?

our culture places the maximizing of joy and happiness in life as, in fact, one of the greatest pursuits of life. How many times have you ever heard, do whatever makes you happy?

The most important thing is that they're happy. Or he died doing what made him happy. I mean, what nonsense. Seriously. Christianity, Christianity, amazingly, is after the same thing.

Do what brings you the most amount of joy in life. Only that it would suggest that God is central to that life of joy.

[ 3 : 38 ] In fact, joy is one of the major consequences of the Christian faith. It is the benefit of being justified by faith, justified, as we have sung this morning, not based on any of my work, based on any of my circumstances.

Being made right with God makes a huge difference to your life. It makes a difference not only to where we might be heading in the future, but to how we act and experience the presence, present right now, here, in both the good times and the bad times, and that's where we turn to Romans 5. If you've got your Bibles, turn it up there. Really got two points, but a bunch of sub points. So, don't get too excited too quick. Really two points, enjoying justification and confidently enjoying justification.

So, chapter 5 begins with the connection between the first four chapters with the word therefore, since we have been justified.

So, this is flowing out of justification by faith. The benefits he is about to write about flow directly from being justified by faith.

[ 5 : 05 ] I see six of these in the first 11 verses and we're going to go through those quickly. First of all, the first benefit in verse 1 is peace with God. There is a difference from the peace of God which might be described as a calm and satisfied heart during troubles and pressures.

This one here is peace with God. It is peace in relation to God, peace about God. You see, peace with God means that the state of hostilities between God and humanity is now over.

Peace with God is peace in relation to God. It is objective, not subjective, it's objective and it happens regardless of my circumstances in life.

This means that before salvation in Jesus Christ, all of humanity is at a state of war with God.

When we live life our way without God, two things happen. The first thing is we claim authority over our lives and over the world in which we live.

[ 6 : 27 ] The problem is that God as the creator of all things claims authority over the exact same thing, himself. self. And when two parties claim authority over the same thing, you have conflict, you have war is what happens.

And so that means that not only is God at war with us, so we're at war with God because we claim authority over our lives, but he's also at war with us.

He has a problem with us. It's not just that we're hostile to him, he is also hostile to us. And we already know from Romans chapter one that God's anger is upon us.

God's anger is not the same as our anger. It's not vengeful, it's not vindictive. God's anger from Romans one is legal.

There is a sentence on humanity that cannot just be ignored. Humanity has a debt against God that just cannot be wished away.

[ 7 : 39 ] this is why we cannot simply turn back to God in our own efforts as though we can do all that's necessary to be at peace with God once more.

And we've seen that in the first four chapters of Romans. Peace with God is something that God must gift us with. The second benefit is in verse two access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.

The sense of this language here is that is being brought near being introduced to to develop a relationship with a powerful dignitary you need an introduction.

Access by faith into God's grace means that we are given a favorable position so that we can develop a personal relationship.

That is Jesus has introduced us to the God of the universe. We are ushered into the royal throne room of the universe and there quite significantly the Christian stands.

[ 9 : 03 ] We don't come in groveling, we stand and we remain there. We remain in the throne room wherever we go, whatever is happening, we remain there in that place with Jesus.

So this takes us beyond just the step of peace with God which is the end of hostility. Justification is not merely the removal of the negative, it is imparting of the positive.

This is friendship with God. Justification by faith gives me access to God all the time. Third benefit to the hope of the glory of God.

This is the present benefit of anticipating in God's future glory. The word hope here means conviction.

It means a hope filled certainty. It's about a certainty about the future. Now there's a progression that's happening here. The more we experience our peace and our access to God, the more we will desire to see Him, want to see Him face to face.

[ 10 : 23 ] And the more certain and thrilled we become with that prospect, into the future. That's hope. It's a thrilling prospect.

The fourth benefit is in verses 3 to 8. I'm going to slow down a little bit on this one. We glory in our sufferings. In verse 2, Paul writes that we rejoice that that's what the word boast means, in the hope of the glory of God.

We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. In verse 2, sorry, verse 3, he continues also with glory.

We glory in our sufferings. Another way of looking at that is we rejoice in our sufferings.

He's saying not only do we have these joys, but these joys that we have are there. They remain even in the face of suffering, even in sorrows.

In fact, these joys, these benefits help us to find joy in our sorrows. Paul does not say we rejoice for our sufferings.

[ 11 : 36 ] Fantastic, I'm being crucified. He's not saying that, but the Christian rejoices in suffering or through suffering.

There is no joy in the actual troubles themselves. But the Christian does know that the suffering will have a beneficial result.

Now, what's the suffering here? Just view it as loss. Probably the easiest thing, just loss. A Christian is not a Stoic who grits their teeth and simply bears through the suffering.

They look through the suffering to the certainties of the future and in the present because suffering starts a chain reaction of benefits.

Verse 3, suffering leads to perseverance. It's a word that has the sense of being focused on life. I've got to tell you, every time I take a funeral, I believe nothing like a funeral sharpens focus for life.

[ 12 : 52 ] Clarity about priorities come to bear at a funeral service. Suffering causes us to focus on what really matters in life.

Helps us to realign our priorities and remove distractions. Verse 4, perseverance leads to character. It's the quality of confidence and growth that comes from coming out the other side of the trial.

This in turn leads to growth in hope which is a stronger assurance of and confidence in peace with and access to God and a future glory.

suffering removes from us rival sources of confidence and hope. Suffering drives us to the one place where we can find real hope, confidence and certainty and that is in God himself.

Now the placement of verse 5 right after the outcome of suffering seems to mean that Christians who focus single-mindedly on drawing closer to God in the hardship, in the tough times, through the suffering, will in fact experience more of his love during the suffering.

[ 14 : 22 ] As it says in verse 5, God's love has been poured out into their hearts. This is an amazing assertion that Paul's making here.

If we face suffering with a clear grasp of justification by faith, God's grace to us in Jesus Christ alone, our joy in that grace will deepen even in the midst of the hard times.

God's love. That's what he's saying. We will experience more of God's love and possibly even a vivid, heightened, intense, even at times an overwhelming assurance of God's presence and his love.

Confidence in God's love for us during suffering by God's grace, however, is not just left to the subjective experience of it because verses 6-8 is God's provision of an objective assurance of his love.

In chapter 3, Paul says that God demonstrates his justice to us on the cross. Now, he says for the first time that the cross, the crucifixion of Christ also demonstrates God's love for us.

[ 15 : 56 ] In fact, potentially a better word here than the word demonstrate, a much stronger word, and I think it's there in the original language, is that God proves his love for you on the cross.

The more the gift costs the giver and the less the recipient deserves the gift, the greater the love of the giver is on display, and that is justification by faith.

Measured by those standards, God's love for us in Jesus Christ on the cross is incalculable. If we face suffering with a clear grasp of justification by God's grace to us in Jesus Christ, our joy in that grace will only deepen.

On the other hand, if we face suffering with a mindset of justification by what I do, then suffering will break you. It will break you rather than make you.

The self-justifier is always insecure at a deep level because they aren't living up to their own standards and they know it. When suffering hits, they immediately feel that they are being punished for something that they have done wrong.

[ 17 : 24 ] Now, I won't ask for a show of hands here today because I don't want to be unhelpful but when something has gone wrong in your life, how quickly does your mind go to what have I done wrong?

How quickly does it go to God's punishing me for something here? You have a sense of loss in your life and you immediately go to there's a sin, there's a problem, I've done something wrong, God's punishing me.

That is not living by faith. That is justification by works. And when we operate from justification by works, we do not find refuge in God.

We do not find confidence in him. Because in that moment you think God is actually against you. He's actually against you. And since their belief that God loves them was inadequately based, suffering shatters them.

Suffering in fact drives them away from God. I can't tell you the number of times that I've heard Christians who are struggling actually are not having a devotional life, actually walking away, pulling away from God and from his people.

[ 19 : 02 ] Hard times are causing to pull away. It's because their life is based on justification by works, not by faith. suffering drives them away from God.

Suffering trials, hardship reveals whether justification by faith or justification by works is in fact in the driving seat of your life. Sometimes God does use suffering in life of a Christian as a kind of, let's call it an intervention.

intervention is always done out of love. God can and he will rough his kids up sometimes, treat them with an element of toughness as parents do with children in order to correct them.

But it's not done out of vindictiveness, it's done out of a desire for them to grow and to develop and not be delinquents. It might feel like we're being roughed up, but it comes from a hand of a merciful father with a deep concern for us to grow and persevere and enjoy him more.

And he did it for his son, to his son, so that we might be his sons and daughters. And so look to the cross.

[ 20 : 33 ] Look to the cross. There is your benefit. But let me just say, if that is you right now, brother or sister, if you are going through those hard times in the moment, you're not sure whether God is for you, it is important that you keep coming back to justification by faith.

Keep coming back. as a Christian, God sent all, hear me this, if you're dozing off right now, someone's dozing off beside you, nudge them right now.

Wake them up. Because this is crucial that you hear this. if you are in the midst of suffering and trial right now, you're a Christian brother or sister, you must be confident of this.

God has sent all, all, all of your punishments onto Jesus. All of them.

All of his just settled anger against your sin, past, present, future, all of it, fell into the heart of Jesus on the cross and was swallowed up and absorbed by him.

[ 22 : 01 ] All of it. It has disappeared forever. He has no wrath left for you. None.

That is justification by faith and you are now free to view your suffering not as God crushing you but as God bringing you into a greater appreciation of all the benefits that you enjoy as his justified child.

you are free to see suffering in a way that only the Christian faith causes you to see it as something that does not touch your joy or what you have lost in your suffering was not where your joy for what was lost in your suffering was not where your joy is ultimately found.

The fifth benefit is in verses 9 to 10 we will be saved. These verses assure us that Christ's work for our salvation not only gives us hope for our ultimate future but also for our immediate future too.

We are assured here that we will be preserved as saved throughout our life and through to the very day of judgment.

[ 23 : 33 ] That is the point of these verses is if Jesus stayed on the cross and saved us when we were his enemies then how much more will he keep us saved now that we're his friends?

It's a how much more argument. If he saved us when we're his enemies will he now fail us now that we're his friends? makes no logical sense and if he achieves salvation for us when he was dead how much more will he keep us saved now that he's alive?

The God who brought us into faith will keep us going in our faith. The God who opened heaven for us will ensure that we get there. It's a guarantee of future salvation.

That's the benefit. the sixth one is in verse 11 and the whole point of justification by faith. You see justification by faith is not an end.

It's a means to an end. And verse 11 is the end. We rejoice in God. That's the point. The benefit of justification by faith is it gives us back the very thing that we lost in sin and that is pleasure in God.

[ 24 : 55 ] To rejoice in God is not to rejoice in the benefits that he gives us but in him. In him. And it's not the joy here is not in our possession of him but ultimately his possession of us.

God is the second half of Romans 5 and confidently enjoying this justification. It is widely agreed that the second half of Romans 5 is one of the greatest theological sections of the entire Bible.

It is also widely agreed that these verses are the most difficult in the book of Romans if not the entire New Testament. It is connected to the previous verses with the word therefore at the beginning of verse 12 and then as you read it it's not entirely sure how it's connected to it. All is expanding here on the confidence that the Christian should have of God's salvation through Jesus Christ. Now there is a significant amount that can be drawn out of these verses and I've got to be honest with you in the early part of this week these are two different sermons that's what I was thinking and you're hoping that that's not what's happening in this one sermon and so what I'm going to do here is I'm going to exercise the spiritual gift of superficiality for the sake of clarity this morning and application and just driving that's my goal here this section introduces us to the idea that all of two realms there is the realm of sin and death inaugurated by Adam and there's the realm of grace and life which has been inaugurated by Jesus

Christ now that idea if you can just grab hold of that idea and hang on to it because it's going to be very helpful for you as we go through the rest of five six seven and eight nevertheless it is a strange idea all of humanity has solidarity with Adam in sin or with Jesus in salvation it is not a common concept in western relationships but it's much more familiar in eastern and ancient contexts this concept ultimately of a representative a head a representative it's a common concept in theology and in philosophy and it's called federal headship a federal head is a person who through a covenant relationship represents or stands in for someone else and they represent an entire group so here we've got

[ 28 : 01 ] Adam and we've got Christ they do this in such a way that what they achieve you achieve and what they lose you lose so a trade union gives a representative the right to negotiate and sign a contract on behalf of all of its members what you lose what they gain you gain or a president declares war and all of a sudden all the citizens are impacted by that war the whole country it's not just the president's at war now but the whole country's at war every citizen of that country is now at war that's federal headship the consequences of their actions overflow into those that they represent on the surface this concept of federal headship doesn't sound fair at all why should I be judged for Adam's failure I didn't elect him as my representative that's the thing

I didn't elect him as my representative and if he fails get rid of him I'll put someone else in there another way to look at this is it's actually good news it's actually liberating news if Adam's disobedience is our disobedience then if there was an obedient person to replace an Adam a second perfect Adam then surely I would choose him surely I would choose that federal head instead that one could represent us before the judgment throne in negotiations with God that is it's wonderful news that God deals with us through our federal head and not left our own devices what Paul wants us to see in these verses is the cosmic significance the cosmic significance of what Jesus has done for us in justification by faith the whole history of humanity has been changed by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ God has established a totally new realm of existence in which it is possible for all people to be declared righteous and be given eternal life and so these verses here in the second half of Romans 5 challenge our personal and our parochial views of what God is doing in this world Jesus death on the cross justification by faith all that he's achieved is not simply a private event that benefits me and a small group of people God has changed the world everything's been affected by this past present and future everyone who has ever lived is either in or out of the new realm of

Jesus Christ what that means is that as you walk through suffering and everything else in this life clinging to faith in Christ it should be done so with a huge amount of confidence in him this is not a private matter this is a global cosmic matter than what justification by faith is these verses as does the whole Bible reveal the secret to inconceivable and unconquerable joy it is this according to verses 20 and 21 if you are in Jesus Christ your sin cannot outpace God's grace grace the law the law was the sin increased grace increased all the more so that just as sin reigned in death so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord God the promise of those verses is thrilling absolutely thrilling those who are saved by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ are freely and fully justified having been forgiven counted as right with God and reconciled to God no sin can overcome God's abundant grace he is more ready to forgive through Jesus Christ than we are ready to sin and oh my goodness how ready we are to sin there is more grace in Christ than there is sin in you and me that's the thrill of the end of Romans 5 just love this quote from Jim

[ 33 : 38 ] Packer there is tremendous relief in knowing that his love to me is based at every point on prior knowledge of the worst about me I'll say it again there is tremendous relief in knowing that his love to me is based at every point on prior knowledge of the worst about me we may be inclined to think that faith in Jesus Christ our conversion to Christian faith as a small thing a private thing we may be even viewed to think of it in terms of a change in my life that brings about a modest reform to some areas of my life according to the apostle Paul the difference between the two realms is infinitely great the transfer from the realm of

Adam and death to the realm of Christ and life it would impact every aspect of your life every aspect this chapter should instill confidence in the Christian hope in the Christian joy in the Christian to be part of God's realm of grace in Jesus Christ is a gift as we've sung this morning so clearly it is all a gift we can take no credit for it we can receive no praise for it and so we praise him for his love and his mercy I've got to agree with John Stott his conclusion to this chapter in his commentary on Romans he says the major hallmark of faith in Jesus Christ the major hallmark is joy joy joy in God himself through every circumstance of life joy is the major hallmark of the Christian faith he says the Christian should be the most positive people in the world so let's just close with a few signs of what that might look like to rejoice in God number one your mind is deeply satisfied with the doctrine of justification by faith deeply satisfied you rejoice in it by studying it applying it to yourself and speaking about it to others secondly you only ever think of your past in terms of justification by faith you say what me me a Christian me despite that all that I have done all of my flaws all of my failures yes yes it's true thanks be to

God number three when you discover in yourself a new character flaw like a certain fearfulness or a lack of self control in a certain area the discovery does not cause you to doubt God's love for you in fact it drives you closer to him and his grace becomes more precious to you as your sin is more and more revealed number four when your conscience accuse you as it often will my goodness how could you possibly call yourself a Christian you don't look to your own positive performance as your response you don't counter your conscience with well hang on a bit what about this this and this and this that I've done or this and this and this that I've achieved you don't excuse it either I had a bad day I was under pressure that's justification by works number five this is always a difficult one we often allow our unconscious to accuse us it's really awful when other people join in on it when you face criticism you don't go oh my goodness totally unfair have you taken a look at yourself lately you quietly rejoice on the inside as the person is speaking to you and tearing you down oh my goodness that's not even half of it my goodness I'm glad they don't see me with clarity it's much worse than that even though they don't see it God does and he has cast all of those things away as far as the east is from the west criticism does not crush you it drives you into

[ 39 : 05 ] God's grace more and more number six when you face death you do it with surrender because you're going to a friend thank you for→ need to have jam to cover ■■■■ air