

Romans 4:23–5:1

²³ Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him,

²⁴ but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead,

²⁵ who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

¹ Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Peace with God Romans 5:1-2

INTRO:

We who know the Lord Jesus Christ speak often of peace. We like to sing, *“What a treasure I have in this wonderful peace, Buried deep in the heart of my soul; So secure that power can mine it away/ While the years of eternity roll. Peace, Peace, wonderful peace/ coming down from the Father above/Sweep over my spirit forever I pray/ In fathomless billows of love.”* Where does our wonderful peace come from?

In **Romans**, the Apostle Paul systematically presented his gospel. In the last part of **chapters 3 and 4**, he demonstrated our justification, our declaration of being righteous before the one Holy and Just God is based not on any works that we can do, but only on our faith and what He has done for us in Christ Jesus. He argued this point in **Romans 3:21-31**. Then he illustrated it in the life of Abraham, the father of faith in **chapter 4**. Now in **chapter 5**, he drew an important conclusion from all of this.

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

I. Why We Have Peace

II. How We Have Peace

I. Why We Have Peace

A. Paul's statement begins with the important little word, ***“therefore.”*** This word means Paul is drawing a conclusion from what he just said, and indeed what he has been teaching us for the last chapter and a half.

1. Several years ago I was assigned to be a part of a jury for a criminal case. In our criminal justice system, the judge judges the law, and a jury of peers judges the evidence and the guilt or innocence of the accused. In the case to which I was assigned, the defendant was accused of driving under the influence of alcohol. We, the jurors listened to all the evidence presented in the trial and then passed judgment on the guilt of the defendant. Now had we found the defendant not guilty, he could never have been charged with that crime again.

2. Paul is taking us to a court room not completely unlike the court room in my jury experience. The difference is there is no jury in this court room and there needs to be no presentation of the evidence. The Judge, who is God, knows already all of the evidence. As the writer of **Hebrews** reminds us, ***“there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.”*** Now the Judge of all the Universe looks at the evidence and looks at us and the only correct verdict is "Guilty!" Since sin is a capital crime, the only correct sentence is death. Then someone else enters the picture. He is the Lord Jesus Christ, God the Son. He has already come and done what we could not do. He obeyed the Law. He never sinned. And He became the propitiation for all of us who have put our faith in Him. Charitie Bancroft put it best when she wrote: *“Because the Sinless Savior died/ My sinful soul is counted free!/ For God the Just is satisfied/ to look on Him and pardon Me.”* So, God, the Judge of the highest court of the Universe, looks on the Lord Jesus Christ and what He did for me and He then bangs His gavel and gives His verdict once and for all – Not Guilty! Justified!

3. The Apostle Paul wrote how God the Father did this for all of those who put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 4:24-25 ***“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.”***

4. Paul said, ***“Therefore,”*** because we have been declared righteous through faith, there is a two-fold result. The first result we will consider today. We Have Peace With God!

B. Why do we have peace with God? To answer this question we need to consider what kind of peace we are talking about.

1. First, peace can mean the cessation of warfare. Did you realize all human kind, collectively and individually are at war with God? A little further on in this text we will read,

Romans 5:10 ***“For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.”***

Notice Paul insists we were enemies. We were enemies because our natural sinful minds cannot please God nor submit to Him. **Romans 8:7-8** says:

“Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”

Until God sent His Son to die in our place and took upon Himself our sin, we were enemies of God and at enmity with God. When Jesus became our propitiation, ***“the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness of humanity”*** was satisfied in the sacrifice of the Son of God and hostilities ceased between God and us! This is the objective side of our peace, in this sense we had peace with God!

2. The word "peace" in the Biblical concept means more than the lack of conflict. It also contains the idea of "well being because of the positive blessing of God." In the LXX the Greek word for peace translates the Hebrew "shalom." This is also true when we come to the peace with God that we have because of our having been justified by faith. This is the subjective sense of peace which should flow from the objective truth of our justification by faith.

3. Let me illustrate how this works by returning to the picture of the court room. Do you remember the O. J. Simpson trial? Before the verdict was rendered, Simpson had reason to fear the authorities. They sought him out. They arrested him and held him in custody until that fateful day when the jury came back. They were the sole judges of the guilt or innocence of O. J. Simpson. When they stated their verdict – "Not Guilty," O. J. Simpson had nothing more to fear from the authorities. For all time he has been declared innocent of the murder of Nicole Brown Simpson. No one could ever charge him with that crime again. You and I know that because we heard the verdict given!

4. In a real sense, we who have come to the Lord Jesus Christ by faith, no longer have anything to fear from the court of God. He, who is the sole judge of our guilt, has declared us once and for all not guilty on the basis of the propitiation of the Lord Jesus Christ. We can live our lives in a subjective realization of that peace because God has declared us not guilty!

5. We may say, "But I was not there to hear the verdict, how do I know that I have been justified?" Listen to **Romans 4:22-25** again,

"And therefore 'it was accounted to him for righteousness.' 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."

Do we believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead? If we do, then the promise is sure, "***It shall be imputed to us.***" Paul did not say, it might be imputed to us. He said "***it shall***".

C. Faith here is more than simple intellectual assent. It involves a committing ourselves and our lives to Him who raised Jesus from the dead.

II. How We Have Peace

A. It is easy to understand how we have peace in the objective sense. God has either declared us righteous judicially or He has not. When the verdict is rendered, we have rationally no reason to fear. However, subjectively, if we are not sure the verdict has been rendered, we may fear even though there is no reason to fear.

B. How do we have peace? The only way we will experience peace with God is if our minds understand and grasp the reality of this truth.

1. Someone may say, "Hey, preacher, why are we spending so much time on this deep and dry doctrine of justification by faith alone?" It is for this very purpose.

2. Until the mind grasps the wonder of this doctrinal reality, we will never be at rest and at peace, we will never have a sense of well-being instead of dread. Comfort when we stand in the presence of the living God never comes from platitudes and warm gushy feelings. It comes only from knowledge rooted in the fact, that the infinitely holy and just God of the Universe has declared me righteous even though I am right now still a sinner. For the whole of what God has done is:

Romans 3:26 *"to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus."*

C. If we are going to have peace with God, we also need to be able to answer the accusations of our own consciences and those of our adversary the devil.

John Newton, the author of "Amazing Grace," was saved out of a life of decadence as a slave trader. He became a preacher of the gospel that he once despised. Can you imagine the wrestling he did at times with his conscience and the Devil over his past life? He wrote a hymn in which he tells us of his major weapon in this struggle. The title of the hymn is "Approach, my soul, the Mercy Seat, where Jesus answers Prayer." Listen to this verse:

**Thy promise is my only plea,
With this I venture nigh;
Thou callest burdened souls to thee,
And such, O Lord, am I.**

**Bowed down beneath a load of sin,
By Satan sorely pressed,
By wars without, and fears within,
I come to thee for rest.**

**Be Thou my shield and hiding place,
That, sheltered near Thy side,
I may my fierce accuser face,
And tell him Thou hast died.**

It is only a person who believes in the doctrine of Justification by faith who can echo Newton's words.

Hymn #203 *And Can It Be*