
Monday, January 16, 2023 • Read Romans 5:3–5

Questions from the Scripture text: In what else do we glory/rejoice (v3)? What does tribulation produce? What does endurance/perseverance produce (v4)? What does character produce? What doesn't hope do (v5)? Whose love has been outpoured? Where? By Whom? How did we obtain Him?

In what do they glory, who have been counted righteous in Christ's righteousness and being conformed to righteousness by Christ's strength? Romans 5:3–5 looks forward to the sermon in this week's midweek meeting. In these three verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **those who are justified through faith in Christ glory not only in the hope of God's glory but even in their current tribulations.**

One who has been genuinely brought to faith in Jesus Christ is not only counted righteous (justified) only by Christ's own righteousness (v1), but also is now being conformed to Christ by Christ's own strength (v2a). We know that means that in the future, we shall surely be perfectly holy so that the everlasting experience of God's glory will be perfectly happy for us (v2b). But what is the *experience in this life* of those who have been brought into the status of justification and the condition of standing by grace? Tribulations! (plural)! This is the circumstance of those believers in this life who are genuinely adopted children of God (cf. Heb 12:1–9).

Glory in Christ's giving us endurance. Perseverance (endurance) is not something that we can grow in without intense pain, or prolonged pain, or both. In His humanity, even our Lord Jesus grew in His capacities. His endurance grew in the wilderness, resulting in His counting the joy of His Father's Word as better than the joy of bread (cf. Mat 4:1–4), and His greatest endurance was at the cross, where He counted the joy of the praise of God's glory and the securing of our glorification as weightier than His own shame or suffering (cf. Heb 12:2).

Now, He grows us in endurance by giving us things to endure. We need endurance to run against sin (cf. Heb 12:1). We need endurance to be conformed to Christ, who endured (cf. Heb 12:2). And since it is tribulation through which endurance comes (v3b), He gives us whatever tribulations we need (cf. Heb 12:5–8). The experience is painful (cf. Heb 12:11a), but since the end bears the fruit over which we rejoice in v2 (cf. Heb 12:11b, 14), we rejoice even over the experience and its pain. "We also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance."

Glory in our glorification-in-progress. As we grow in perseverance, something marvelous happens to a believer. He is not what he used to be. Yes, it grieves him that he is not yet what he ought to be. And, sometimes, even the knowledge of what he will one day be brings him not only glad reflection upon his future self but sober and painful reflection upon his present self. But though he is not what he ought to be, and not what he will be, still he is not what he was. He has been changed by Christ. And He is being changed by Christ. Perseverance produces the proven character, the demonstration that he is not what he previously was. A believer might not yet be fit for glory, but he has been brought to count it as weightier to himself than present comfort or present discomfort. As we endure what is necessary for being rid of our sin, we rejoice over the fact that what Jesus does for those whom He justifies, Jesus has begun to do in our own soul. "perseverance [produces proven] character"!

Glory in the source of this progress: the eternal, electing, everlasting love of God. What is this new character that the Christian sees in his life? He was dead in his transgressions. He did not seek God. He did not do good. No one did. No not one. So what is it, and where did it come from?

What is it? It is a partial fulfillment of the thing hoped for. It is an aspect of his character that will continue to remain when all of his former fleshliness has been eradicated. It is a piece of heaven. The pure ore of the new creation. It is him being in Christ. Even better, it is evidence of Christ being in him! When v4 says "character [produces] hope," it does not mean that it gives us hope. We already have that hope, and that hope is already sure. Rather, the word 'hope' refers to the thing hoped for—the obtaining of that hope. And this (very!) little of what we shall be will not disappoint. It will not fizzle and fade and fail. When we see what (very!) little of our proven character there is, we are yet seeing something infinitely great, and something that will everlastingly endure. "Now hope does not disappoint"!

Where did it come from? The Holy Spirit makes sure that we know. It came from God's love for us. The Holy Spirit Himself is a gift to us. "by the Holy Spirit Who was given to us"! And He was given to us for (in part) this reason: to pour out the love of God in our hearts. The older translation, "shed abroad," may be better here. This is the abundance and completion of pouring over the insufficiency of some other application. The heart is pictured as a surface or a region that is entirely covered and smothered by a substance. And what a substance it is: God's love for the justified sinner!

There no place anywhere in the believer's thinking for the idea that something has not come to him from the love of God. Even when he sins and grieves and displeases his Father. Even when the Father hates what he has done. Even when the Father chastens him painfully and severely. Why has Father done this? By the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer's heart, one sure part of that answer is always, "because He loves me!"

I know that He loves me, because He gave Christ for me (v1a). I know that He loves me, because Christ secured peace for me (v1b). I know that He loves me, because He gave me (end of v5) His Spirit to teach my heart that He loves me. I know that He loves me, because His eternal, electing love is determined to make me like Christ (8:29). I know that He loves me, because He has begun the process of glorifying one whom He has justified (8:30). And how has He advanced this process? Was it through character-proving, endurance-producing, tribulation? Then I know that He troubled me because He loves me!

And if my tribulation is a palpable expression of my Father's love, by which He is bringing me to enjoy perfectly that love, then how shall I feel about it? I will glory in it!

What tribulations are you enduring? For what sort of life should you hope, if you hope to see that you are a legitimately adopted child? What is God building in you, and what should you be aiming to build, if He brings you tribulation as His child? When you see small progress in grace, how should you feel about that progress, regardless of its smallness? What is it, and where did it come from?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for counting us righteous entirely on account of Christ's righteousness. And we thank You for having begun to conform us to Christ and His righteousness. And we thank You that You will finish conforming us to Him. Give us to rejoice over whatever tribulations You deem necessary, and grant that Your Spirit would continually shed abroad in our hearts the knowledge of Your eternal, electing, everlasting love for us, we ask in the Name of the Only-Begotten Son, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP32AB "What Blessedness" or TPH433 "Amazing Grace"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Romans 5 verses three through five. These are god's words.

And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, Knowing that tribulation produces perseverance. And perseverance character. And character hope. Now, hope does not disappoint. Because the love of god has been poured out in our hearts. By the holy spirit. Who has given to us. So far the reading of gods inspired and inherent word.

So we heard the end of verse two, that being justified. Uh, through faith in jesus christ. Brings us not just and not merely into a condition of peace with god and servitudes to the lord christ. And grace, which strengthens us a condition of strength by god's own strength. In which to stand.

Uh, but also a condition of joy. Over the glory that we are absolutely certain, which is the word way. The word hope is used and what the word hope means joy over. The glory of god, that we are absolutely certain. To enter into. Because if you're not standing by your string, If you stand in grace, which means standing by god's strength, then what question can their possibly be?

If it has been guaranteed by the death of christ and is being Brought to fruition accomplished by the strength of christ. Uh, then by two unassailable infinite things, That is absolutely certain. And then the question is, what am i experiencing now? That christ is infallibly all powerfully using to bring me into the enjoyment of the glory of god.

And the christian answer is, Sunshine and lollipops and health, and pleasure, and trouble free. Everything. When everybody likes me, That is the answer that many think they should have, and when it's not like that, they think something has gone threadfully wrong with christianity in general and their own christianity and specific.

But that is not the experience of those. Who's enjoyment of god's glory? Has been secured. By christ's death. And is now being Accomplished. By christ's strength. No, their experience is Tribulation. Not only that. But we also glory in tribulations, We are full to bursting with joy. Um, It's been a while since we had a sermon in which we opened up what that word that means rejoice.

And it's the same word, the end of verse two rejoice in the hope of glory, the glory of god, not only that but we also glory. So that word glory and the rejoice in Verse 2 are the same word. And it means to be full to bursting with joy over.

Uh, so that glory in yourself is the exact opposite thing of being a christian. And glorying in god is exactly what a christian does that we would be full to join with bursting over him. Now, this seems like a very strange thing to say about your tribulations. Unless, You have these two unassailable things that explain to you.

The, why? And the how? And the where to of your tribulations? Why? Because god is giving me that perfect happiness and that, perfect, holiness that he has intended for me from before the world began. Those whom he justified, he also glorified. That's the good that all things work together for.

Is not all things work together for the, you know, Explainability of some small thing in our circumstances. Or he made me late so that i wouldn't get into a car wreck. Well, he might have made you early so that you would get into a car wreck so that you might be converted or if having been converted, so that you might be sanctified.

There are car wrecks in the christian life that are the good. That god is working. Because they are bringing us to be full to bursting with joy over him, instead of full to bursting with joy over having non-shattered legs, and functioning kidneys, or whatever else it is. And so since i know that what jesus has earned by his death and as accomplishing by his strength, is that i would be full to bursting with joy first and foremost, over the glory of god and then in anything else, or in everything else, for the sake of the glory of god as the chief joy in all other joints, not just above all other joys.

But in all other joys, then when he brings me through tribulations, I rejoice over the tribulation's. You say well, how are they good? Well, The full answer to that is known only by god. Because he is not just working for one individual. But for his own glory in a multitude of individuals, whom he is bringing to glory.

Bringing many sons to glory. The scripture says, But there are specific ways that he is often and always working in the troubles of believers. One. He is. Giving us endurance perseverance. You know, there are some days that i don't get much endurance building in the pool. You know why?

Because i don't go very hard. Maybe i'm tired or maybe i'm lazy. Probably both. But i don't get much endurance that day. But some days. I go hard and i plan to do a hundred yards more than the previous day. And then when i get to the end and i am utterly exhausted.

Instead of being satisfied that i did, 100 yards more than the previous day. I do a hundred more yards. On those days. I am miserable. And in pain. But you know what? I get. Endurance. It is literally impossible. To obtain endurance. Without prolonged pain. And prolonged difficulty. That is how endurance comes by having something that you actually don't just, you know, coast through but have to endure.

And does god, giving his saints? To come to glory, not being a persevering enduring committed people. Who know that his the worth of his glory is over against all other things and will gladly have that, whatever it might cost them as he not conforming them to christ. Who for the glory of god, and for the glorification of his people, endured the cross.

Despise the shame. He had a joy set before him. That he would lead and eventually glorified church In the praise the infinitely. Satisfying and happy. Praise Of the infinitely, the ever blessed god. And for the joy set before him, he despised the shame, he endured The cross. And so if if jesus is a man of endurance, Than are not those who are being conformed to his image.

Being made of people of endurance. And how will they do? So without suffering, Did not our lord jesus himself. As a man grow and wisdom and stature and favor with god. And with men, And did he not grow and endurance with every trouble? Every grief every difficulty Every need his whole life long.

Growing and endurance in the wilderness. As for 40 days and 40 nights, he doesn't teach her drink. And the devil comes and says, you know, being called the son of god must not be very valuable. Because it didn't get your bread. And Jesus quotes from Deuteronomy about the comparative worthlessness of bread.

Because he's grown and endurance, which has increased even in his perfection. But has increased as a man his capacity for enjoying the glory of his father. And how humiliated Satan was. And that's the righteousness that is counted for us before God. As we believe in Jesus his own righteousness.

Counted, as if we ourselves had done that. Oh, the reward. That should come. To a man or a woman who has enjoyed God like that and endured like that. Well, if you have believed in Jesus Christ, it's counted for you as if you have done it. And God will give you the appropriate reward, you will not deny.

The righteousness of his son. But even more than that, is he not now? Conforming us to the very righteousness that has been counted for us. So we come to tribulations. And tribulations are producing in us endurance. And we become full to bursting with joy. Over the difficulty. That God has brought into my life to make me more like Jesus.

Not only that. But we also glory and tribulations knowing the tribulation produces perseverance or endurance, and perseverance, character, proven character. Uh, the idea of a demonstrated goodness. Of character is here. And as he makes us to be more and more like Jesus, we can actually see coming out of the trial.

That we are not what we were before that. We are better than we were before. We are more like Christ than we were before. And we know, that this actually has an end point of being conformed to his image. So that if, the last as chapter 8, says Jesus is the firstborn among many brethren and that is what we hope for.

So now we're not just hoping based on what we know from the Bible, but tribulation actually becomes a mechanism by which we begin to see some of that which, for which we have hoped. So, when we say, perseverance, character and character. Hope we are not talking about more anticipation of something in the future.

We're talking about the hoped-for thing. That as God works in our character through our trials. We are actually starting to see some of what we had hoped for as future. When we came to faith in Jesus Christ, now, it's small. It's not like it will be in glory.

We don't look in the mirror and you know, see. Yeah, the aura of a soul of the just made perfect. So we see a sinner. Who has not what he ought to be and not what he will be. But he has not what he was. And what he is now, is more like what he will be and more like what he ought to be than what he was.

And how did God do that in him? Well, he is the means of grace, of course. He honors. The means that he is appointed. But he also uses his wise and good and kind providence, including our trials. And as we see it, we see. God, is doing what he said.

We say why did he do this? Why did? He give me. This hard trial that was so painful. That it actually became an occasion on which I could enjoy or not enjoy maybe enjoy. I could have. Growth in endurance. The answer is because he loves me. Because all legitimate children.

He disciplines. He gave me pain because he loves me and I resist pain. I resist sin. Even when painful and Hebrews 12 says, Come on, you haven't died of your resistance to sin yet. Which is okay to do. It's good to die, resisting sin. How glad you have been to be honored by God, to have had such a death if you die a resisting sin, don't we read of the martyrs Oh, I forget.

Which one? It was who had recanted and, um, you know, signed the the document compromising his faith and then, uh, when he when the Lord steeled his resolve and he was committed to burn at the stake, they brought him to the fire extended his hand into the fire.

So the thing and that signed the document that had denied his Lord would burn first. Of that mortal flesh that was about to be eliminated.

But the reason that God has brought pain into our lives. The reason that we are willing to have pain, the great reason to be willing to have pain. Is to be conformed to the image of the Son. To be brought to glory. And he's done it because he loves me.

And so that's the end of this chain of reasoning. Here we also glory and tribulation no, contribution produces perseverance, perseverance, character and character. Hope in this case, the thing hope for now, the hope the, the little bit of the thing hoped for that. We have does not disappoint because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has given to us.

And so the Holy Spirit who we're going to hear about in chapter 8, is the spirit of adoption, the spirit who makes us hate sin, the spirit who makes us put sin to death, the spirit who makes us call God. Our Abba. He teaches us in our tribulations. This is because God has loved you.

And the description here of the love of God being poured out in our hearts. Actually like the old translation better. Shed abroad. So completely covered as to be doused that there would be no corner, no particle of your entire heart. Where the love God's love for you. Not our love for God, some mistrans like this is utterly ridiculous.

Within the context of the book of Romans and the whole context to the Bible. And especially this particular context with the the righteousness of Christ and the strength of Christ to think that a hope that does not disappoint comes from our love for God. No. It's God's love for us.

And the description here is. Uh, the heart as if it were a surface. And the Holy Spirit. Communicating, how much God loves us. To every part of that surface. So that there is not a single thought, or affection, or choice or desire. That is uncovered by. The love that God has for me.

So that even when I consider my greatest tribulations in life, and I say why did this happen? The Holy Spirit teaches me to say because I had been adopted by a father who loves me and he knows how to do what's best for me. And so he's given me tribulation.

So that I might be conformed to Jesus in my endurance. So that I might be. All the more certain. That even that, what I hoped for? To see at the end that I would be like Christ. Is already starting to materialize. In my life. As God grows me. Oh, how he loves me?

That he did this for me. What a blessing? Transformation comes. To those who learn. To be full to bursting with joy, over God's glory. That even their tribulations

become something. That they can also be full to bursting with joy over. Because that's what god is using in their lives.

To bring them to that glory.

Let's pray.

Our grace has gotten our heavenly Father. We bless your name. For your design, for how you work in the lives of your children. And we pray for each one of us. That we would have the personal. Individual ministry. Of your spirits to us. Convincing us that we are your children.

Giving us faith in christ alone for our righteousness. Making us sure that it is in his strength alone that we stand. So that we will be full to bursting with joy over the certainty. That we shall be like christ and enjoy your glory. And even to be full to bursting with joy.

Over the tribulations through which you bring us there. We do pray that you would conform us to his image, even in this life more and more. That we would be able to see. That hoped for character. Being brought out. As a fruit of the trial through, which you bring us, So, make us to live by faith in jesus christ.

Who loved us and gave himself for us. And his name, we ask it. Amen.