

What Benefits do We Gain from Justification by Faith?

Romans 5:1-11

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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 this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. - Romans 5:1-2, ESV

"What difference does it make, really?"

Sometimes, when I'm wrestling with deep questions, I like to step back and ask that question. So far, in Romans, we have been wrestling with the question of how we can be righteous and thus accepted by God. We have seen that no one is righteous, Jew or Gentile. We have also seen that we cannot become righteous through the law, because we do not obey the law. Thus, the law only condemns us. We have also seen that God gives us a righteousness apart from the law through Jesus Christ. We have seen that this righteousness is received by faith alone and not by works.

So, what difference does it make?

Well, the largest theological difference this makes is that salvation is entirely God's work, thus God alone is glorified in our salvation. All ground of boasting is removed, and the work of Christ is magnified.

But what benefits do we gain from the fact that we are justified by faith? What happens once we are justified?

The first thing Paul says is that "*since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" If we were required to be justified by works, we would never enjoy peace with God in this life. We would be working toward peace, striving for it, but we would never have it. Because we are justified by faith in Christ, we have peace with God.

Not only do we have peace with God, but we also have "*access by faith into this grace in which we stand.*" We have been granted access into the good favor of God. God's throne is now a throne of grace for us. He is now the God of all grace toward us.

Third, in addition to peace and grace, we are also given the gift of being able to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. We know we will one day see and share in the full glory of God, and we rejoice in the certain hope.

But wait, there's more . . .

We can not only rejoice in the hope of glory, but we can even rejoice in our suffering. Why? Because, having been justified by faith and having peace with God, we have God's assurance that all of our suffering is working good things for us: endurance, character and hope.

We also have deep knowledge of the love of God, in two ways . . .

1. "*God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.*" (v. 5)
2. God's love has been clearly demonstrated for us by Christ's willingness to die for us when we were sinners and we were His enemies. (vv. 6-8)

Finally, we have the sure expectation that we will be saved (fully and finally at the Last Day) by the life of our "Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation."

So, I guess the answer to the question, "What difference does it make?", is very clear: Being justified by faith alone in Christ alone makes all the difference in the world, in this life and in eternity!