

Romans 5:1-11 Answers God's Seminary of Suffering

Introduction: Today we explore the wonderful results of being justified by faith. Key blessings include peace with God, the ability to rejoice in suffering, supernatural hope and reconciliation.

Overview: Romans has 16 chapters and 5 sections: Sin, Salvation, Sanctification, Sovereignty and Service. Today we continue on in second section: **Salvation**.

Review:

Based on 1:16, how can a person get God's power for salvation? (Read).

Righteousness is for everyone who believes (Jew or Greek). It comes by faith. The Reformers called this *sola fide*. The truth of salvation by faith is consistent with the teaching of the Hebrew Scriptures, as evidenced in Paul's quotation in Romans 1:17 of Habakkuk 2:4.

******1. What are some of the benefits of being justified by faith (5:1-5)?** The foremost benefit is that we have peace with God.

ESV **John 14:27** Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.

Fringe benefits include rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God, rejoicing in suffering and having God's love poured out in our hearts.

2. What is the "therefore" (5:1) there for? The word "therefore" flags an application or a result or a conclusion to the previous section (3:21-4:25), the point of which was that we are justified by faith. Romans 5:1-5 Paul lists the results of justification by faith.

Review: What does "justified" (5:1) mean? It means you are declared to be just or right with God. Pneumonic: It is "just as if I'd" never sin.

The primary benefit of justification by faith is peace with God (5:1). How would you define the word peace (5:1)? The Greek is *eirené* (1515, basis for the name, "Irene"); the root (*eiro*) means to join together and thus, to exist together in harmony. Applied to nations, it is a state of national tranquility; it is exemption from the rage and havoc of war; harmony; security, safety, prosperity (because peace makes and keeps things safe). Spiritually, it is the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ (Thayer). Its meaning is derived from Hebrew concept of *shalom* (NBD, p. 902). This peace is significant in that formerly we were liable to God's wrath (Romans 1 & 2) and according to 5:10 were God's enemies.

Why did Paul clarify that this peace with God comes through our Lord Jesus Christ

(5:1)? See 3:24-25, 4:23-25. We do not have peace with God by faith in faith, or faith in man or faith in science, but only and specifically through faith in Jesus because of the salvation he bought for us by his work on the cross.

According to 5:2a, what else do we obtain through Jesus? Through Jesus we have also obtained access into God's grace in which we "stand". Our standing with God is on the basis of God's own grace, not anything in us.

Note: Some manuscripts omit "by faith" (5:2).

ESV **Ephesians 2:8** . . . by grace you have been saved through faith.

In 5:2b, what is another result of having been justified by faith? We exult in hope of the glory of God.

3. What does it mean to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God? Compare 3:23. Whereas formerly our sins caused us to fall short of God's glory (3:23), through Jesus we are now glory bound!

ESV **Romans 3:23** . . . all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God . . .

What does it mean to rejoice (5:2)? It is from *kauchaomai* (2744), "to glory in a thing" (Thayer). It is to exult or take pride in. In a bad sense, the ESV translates it as boasting in 3:27 and boast in 4:2. If salvation depends on keeping the law, there is no reason to rejoice, but since salvation comes by faith we do have reason to rejoice. In a good sense, we "boast" in God's grace!

Word Study: "Glory" is from *doxa*. It refers to God's character and presence (NBD, p.424). The root means "good opinion". In this content it refers to a "most glorious condition, most exalted state; the glorious condition of blessedness into which . . . true Christians shall enter after their Saviour's return from heaven" (Thayer). A suggested synonym here: "presence."

Review: What is "hope" (5:2)? Biblical hope is a confident expectation. It is not wishful thinking or positive thinking or blind optimism.

The Point: Though faith in Jesus we can rejoice (exult) in the confident expectation of obtaining the glory of God (the opposite is to receive the wrath of God).

According to 5:3-5 in what else do we rejoice? More than rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God (5:2), we also rejoice (*kauchaomai*) in even our sufferings!

Truth in Advertising: The New Testament never promises exemption from suffering if you believe in Jesus. What it does promise is a supernatural perspective on suffering.

Word Study: Suffering (5:3) is from *thlipsus*; the root meaning is “a pressing, pressing together, pressure;” thus metaphorically “oppression, affliction, distress.” It is used in reference to the afflictions of those hard pressed by siege and war, a woman in childbirth, a person in prison (Thayer, #2347). It is the sound of the meat of a grape being put under pressure and popping out of its skin (<http://www.biblestudytools.com>).

4. What kind of sufferings (5:3) did Paul have in mind? Paul did not specify the cause of the suffering. It could be due to struggling with sin in our lives or tension between husband and wife or from child rearing or laboring to earn a living or from persecution or sickness (cancer, degenerative problems, chronic diseases), etc. In short, it could be suffering from any cause.

5. Suffering causes some people to curse God. Job’s wife, for example, told him to curse God and die. What is it that allows us to rejoice in sufferings (5:3-5)? The key word is “knowing” (5:3). Paul is thinking here of what suffering achieves. We can rejoice in suffering because we are aware that it matures and transforms us. It is a step by step transformation (ESV Study Bible, p. 2165). Suffering brings about endurance, character and hope. The eventual outcome gives perspective and purpose to the suffering we now endure.

Example: A woman endures the suffering of child birth, rejoicing in the expected outcome: a new life being born.

ESV **Acts 14:22** . . . through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.

Application: Are you at the place in your walk with God that you rejoice in suffering? Sometimes we really need an attitude adjustment! God has enrolled us in a seminary of suffering so we can earn a degree in maturity. Suffering is in escapable part of the curriculum.

ESV **Job 2:10** . . . Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?

How does suffering produce endurance (5:3)? There is nothing to endure if there is no suffering!

Teacher’s Note: “Produces” (5:3-4) is from *katergazomai* and means to perform, accomplish, achieve. The KJV has “worketh” and the NAS “brings about”.

6. How is it that enduring suffering produces character (5:4)? The KJV has “experience” rather than character. One’s character or experience is only built over time. The Greek word means trial, proving or approval, like precious metal that is left after the base metals have been refined away (Cranfield, p. 261). The NAS renders this “proven character”. You have been tested and found true, reliable, dependable and sound.

7. How does character produce hope (5:4)? The idea seems to be that to have one's faith proved by God in the fires of suffering and sustained by Him so as to stand the test is to have one's hope in God strengthened and confirmed (Cranfield, p. 261). If you did not have hope to start with you would have crumpled up long ago. When through proven character you learn over and over of God's trustworthiness, it continues to build your confidence in God.

According to 5:5, what does hope not do? Hope does not put us to shame.

8. In what context do we not have to fear being put to shame (5:5a)? We do not have to fear being put to shame on judgment day because the glory of God will be ours (5:2).

Martin Luther quoted Psalm 3:3 with reference to not being ashamed:

ESV **Psalm 3:3** . . . you, O LORD, are a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter of my head.

9. According to 5:5, God's love has been poured out in our hearts. The statement of this truth begins with the word because (5:5b). This means God's love in our hearts is the cause of something. What does God's love in our hearts cause? Christian hope is founded on the love of God (Barclay, p. 73). God's lavish love, poured out in our hearts, is the cause or the reason we can be confident our hope will not put us to shame (Cranfield, p. 263).

Trinity: According to 5:5, what is the source of God's love within us? The Holy Spirit is the source. In this paragraph (5:1-5) are mentioned God (the Father), the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

******How did God show great His love for us (5:6-11)?** God's love for us is shown in Christ's death on our behalf despite the fact that we were sinners. Jesus' death is the final proof of God's love. It brought about the peace we have with God.

10. What various words are used throughout this paragraph to describe those for whom Christ died (5:6-11)? We are described as weak and ungodly (5:6), sinners (5:8) and God's enemies (5:10). There was nothing lovable about us, but God loved us anyway.

Perspective: Apart from Christ, do you really see yourself as weak, ungodly and an enemy of God? You should, for that is your true natural condition. It is the true state of anyone who is not in Christ.

11. With respect to what are people weak (5:6)? See 1:16. We are weak with respect to saving ourselves from sin. This is why the gospel is God's power for salvation. Weak people need God's power!

What is implied by the statement that Christ died while we were “still” weak (as opposed to no time indicator, 3:6)? This implies that in Christ we are no longer weak; the power of God is ours through by grace through faith in Christ.

12. What time was the right time (5:6)? *Compare also 3:25-26.* The right time was that time when we were still helpless and unable to save ourselves. It was also the right time in the sense that previously God had formerly passed over sins and then put forward Jesus as a propitiation by His blood.

What makes us “ungodly” (5:6)? *See back to 3:9-18.* Paul spent most of Romans 1, 2 and 3 developing the truth that mankind has broken God’s law and unlike God is sinful. This truth will be developed more in the second half of chapter 5, but the fact is we are all born with a predisposition to sin. We are not simply sinners because we sin, we sin because we are sinners.

Important Truth: Christ died for the ungodly (5:6). If we were not ungodly, Christ would not have needed to die. Humanly speaking, unless a person truly believes that he is ungodly apart from Christ, that person is not a candidate for salvation.

ESV Romans 4:5 . . . to the one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness.

13. What contrast is set up in 5:7-8 to illustrate God’s remarkable love? Every now and then a person will give his own life to save another’s life, especially if that other person is considered to be a good person. In contrast, Jesus gave His life for us even though we were unrighteous sinners.

According to 5:7, how likely is it that one man would die for another? Paul said it scarcely happens even when the person to be rescued is considered to be righteous (or good). The Greek behind “scarcely” (5:7) is *molis*, the root of which means “toil”; thus, “with difficulty, not easily, scarcely, very rarely” (Thayer, #3433).

Teacher’s note: Verse 7 refers to those who are good or righteous by society's standards, not God's. Biblical goodness and righteousness are not in view here.

Example: One soldier may be willing to throw himself on a live hand grenade to save the life of his friend, whom he considers to be good.

How are we described in 5:8? We are described as sinners, the opposite of being righteous. Despite being weak, ungodly sinners, God loved us and died for us.

Example: A soldier might throw himself on a live hand grenade to save the lives of his fellow soldiers, but never would he do so to save the lives of enemy soldiers. Conversely, God give His life to save His enemies (sinners).

Word Study: “Love” (5:8) is from *agapé*, “affection, good will, benevolence” (Thayer, #26). It is self sacrifice for the good of the loved one; it is unswerving loyalty (NBD, p.711). A suggested synonym phrase here might be: “unselfish benevolent concern for our good” or “devotion.”

14. Christ died for us (5:8). What does “for” (5:8b) mean? For is from *hyper* (5228) and means “for one's safety, for one's advantage or benefit” (Thayer). That is, “in place of, on behalf of, representing” (Webster's). Compare to “for” in 5:7. His death was redemptive, propitiatory and substitutionary.

15. Based on 5:9-11, what did Christ's death accomplish for us? We have been **1)** justified by His blood, **2)** saved from the wrath of God and **3)** reconciled to God.

16. What is the connection between Christ's death (5:8) and Christ's blood (5:9)? See *Leviticus 17:10-14*. They are synonymous. His blood represents both His life and His death as the blood was shed. The life is in the blood (Le 17:11) and when the blood is split so is the life.

ESV **Leviticus 17:11** . . . the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life.

Christians talk a lot about being saved. Based on 5:9, what is one thing we are saved from? Compare 1:18. Christ's blood saves us from the wrath of God upon our sins.

17. Theological liberals insist that God is not a God of wrath and that the Bible says God so loved the world, not God so hated the world. How can God's love (5:8) and God's wrath (5:9) be harmonized? Wrath and love are opposite sides of the same coin; His love rejected brings God's wrath. In an act of love God poured out His wrath against our sin on Jesus instead of us.

18. What is reconciliation (5:10-11)? Businessmen want to reconcile their books. The Greek word is *katallagé*; the root means “exchange” (as coins for others of equal value); thus, “the adjustment of a difference, restoration to favor” (Thayer #2643). Reconciliation applies not to good relations in general but to the doing away of enmity, the bridging over of a quarrel; it implies that the parties being reconciled were formerly hostile to one another (NBD, p.1012). It is the exchange of enmity for friendship (Rienecker, p. 360). A suggested synonym might be “restoration to friendship” or “reunion.” This all ties back in with the “peace” we now have (5:1) contrasted with the fact that we once were God's “enemies” (5:10).

19. What is the difference in emphasis between justification (5:9) and reconciliation (5:10)? Justification is a legal term meaning we are right with the law. In that sense it is rather impersonal. Reconciliation is much more personal. It is the language of friendship. Formerly there was hostility between man and God.

The death of Jesus reconciled us so we are no longer God's enemies (5:10). According to 5:10, having now been reconciled, what guarantees our salvation much more?

Compare 4:25. Jesus' resurrection life also saves us.

ESV **Romans 4:24-25** . . . Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

20. How does Jesus' life save us (5:10)? *See 1:4, Hebrews 7:25.* Paul gave no further explanation. Other Scriptures indicate Jesus' resurrection proves Jesus was who He claimed to be (God, Ro 1:4) and that His payment for our sins was accepted by the Father. He is also praying for us:

ESV **Hebrews 7:25** . . . he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

According to 5:11, what does being reconciled with God allow us to do? It allows us to rejoice (*kauchaomai*) in God.

What does the "also" (5:11) refer back to? *See 5:2b,3a.* It may go back to the previous rejoicing. We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God (5:2b). We rejoice in our sufferings (5:3a) and we rejoice in God through Jesus (5:11).

21. According to 5:11, what did Jesus do that allows us to rejoice in God? *Contrast 3:27 and 4:2.* Through Jesus we have now received reconciliation with God. This is in contrast to the unfounded boasting of 3:27 and 4:2 (from the same Greek word as "rejoice").

So What?

22. What are the various "therefore(s)" of being justified by faith (5:1-11)?

**** = ask this question before reading the text aloud. Doing so will cause focus.

- These lessons are designed for a 45 minute session and are based on the text of the ESV.

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