

# The Blessings of Justification by Faith, Part 1

## *(Vs. the Hopelessness of Justification by Works)*

### **Romans 5:1-5**

**Sermon-in-a-Sentence:** Through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we who were formerly God's enemies are now reconciled to Him and are given the privilege of direct access into His presence.

In Romans 3:21-22 the Apostle Paul proclaimed, "But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known...This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe." And in verse 28, "For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law."

So, in chapter 4, using the example of Abraham, Paul asked in verse 3, "What does the Scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.'" (Quoting Genesis 15:6.)

He then goes on to show that Abraham was not justified, or saved: 1) By Works; 2) By Circumcision; or 3) By the Law but, rather, 4) By faith alone in the promise of God.

Just like Abraham, we do not have to work to earn a right standing before God; we must simply accept His gracious gift of righteousness by faith alone. Salvation is by faith alone in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross and His resurrection from the dead.

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For the Chamula Indians of southern Mexico, faith is "taking seriously what God has obligated Himself to do."

Romans 5:1 (paraphrased) – "Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight because we have taken seriously what God has obligated Himself to do, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Faith is simply taking God at His Word, believing what He has promised, and so, when we put our faith in Jesus Christ, God declares us to be righteous in His sight.

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In Romans 5:1-5, Paul identifies ten blessings that God has for those who place their faith in His Son, Jesus Christ, for salvation.

#### **#1 – Peace [with God]**

**1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...**

- "Peace means that there is no more hostility between [ourselves] and God, no sin blocking our relationship with him." (*Life Application Bible Commentary*)
- The source of hostility between God and man is sin; sin in our lives makes us the enemies of God. (Romans 5:10)
- The only solution for hostility is reconciliation.
- When we are reconciled to God through faith in the death of His Son, we have peace with God.

- Our love for this world and the things of this world creates a barrier of hatred and hostility between ourselves and God. (James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17; Romans 8:7)
- When we surrender to the evil desires of our sinful nature, we are entering into hostility toward God.
- Christ died on the cross, shed His blood, in order to reconcile us to God by removing the hostility created by our sins and replacing it with peace. (Ephesians 2:14-17; Colossians 1:19-22; Isaiah 53:5)
- "Peace with God is only possible through Christ because on the cross he met the conditions required for peace." (*Life Application Bible Commentary*)
- "Into the depth of our predicament the word is spoken from on high: By grace you have been saved! To be saved does not just mean to be a little encouraged, a little comforted, a little relieved. It means to be pulled out like a log from a burning fire. You have been saved... totally and for all time!" (*Karl Barth*)

## **#2 – Access**

### **2 through whom we have gained access by faith...**

- Because we are now at peace with God, we also have personal access to God.
- Access – the means of approaching, the right or permission to approach or to enter into the presence of. (*The American Heritage Dictionary*)
- "To have access means 'to approach,' as if by introduction into a king's throne room." (*The New King James Study Bible, p. 1886*)
- Through the Lord Jesus Christ, we have the means, the right, the permission to approach God and enter into His presence. (Matthew 27:50-51)

In the tabernacle and temple, the curtain symbolized the separation between God and Man due to the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man. Behind the curtain was the Holy of Holies which contained the Ark of the Covenant with the Mercy Seat on top. It represented God's Throne room. Only the High Priest was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies and that, only once a year with the blood of the sacrifice which he sprinkled on the Mercy Seat.

- If we do not figure out how to gain access to God, the consequences are eternally devastating!
- Jesus Christ is the only means of access to God! (John 10:7-9; 14:6; Hebrews 4:14-16; 10:19-22)

#3 – Grace

#4 – Hope of Glory

#5 – Sufferings

#5a – Perseverance

#5b – Character

#5c – Hope

#6 – Love

#7 – The Holy Spirit