

**The Blessings of Justification by Faith, Part 3**  
**(Vs. the Hopelessness of Justification by Works)**  
**Romans 5:1-5**

**Sermon-in-a-Sentence:** Through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we can rejoice in the midst of our trials and troubles knowing that God is using them to produce Christlike character in our lives.

In Romans 5:1-11, the Apostle Paul invites us to join him in celebrating our spiritual blessings in Christ. In Ephesians 1:3 he wrote, "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ." Contemplating our spiritual blessings in Christ gives us the *motivation* to worship God and the *courage* to face the trials of life! From his discussion of chapters 3 and 4, Paul concluded...

**1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have...**

**#1 – Peace** [with God] – ...**peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...**

**#2 – Access** [to God] – **2 through whom we have gained access by faith...**

**#3 – Grace** [from God] – ...**into this grace in which we now stand.**

**#4 – Hope** [of God] – **And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.**

**#5 – Sufferings** [for God] – **3 Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings...**

**#5a – Perseverance** – ...**because we know that suffering produces perseverance;**

**#5b – Character** – **4 perseverance [produces] character;**

**#5c – Hope** – ...**and character [produces] hope.**

- "Our English word *tribulation* ["sufferings"] comes from a Latin word *tribulum*. In Paul's day, a tribulum was a heavy piece of timber with spikes in it, used for threshing grain. The tribulum was drawn over the grain and it separated the wheat from the chaff. As we go through tribulations, and depend on God's grace, the trials [serve to] purify us and help to get rid of the chaff." (*Wiersbe, Be Right, p. 61*)
- God's purpose in our trials and tribulations is that we might be purified and become more like Christ.
- "Sufferings" (*NIV*) – translation of a Greek word that describes pressure, stress, affliction, anguish, a heavy burden, a hardship, distress, persecution, tribulation and trouble.
- How can we possibly consider suffering to be a blessing from God?
  - Suffering can be Profitable if we view it from God's Perspective and respond to it according to His Principles.
  - James 1:2-4 – perseverance = "cheerful and hopeful endurance."
    - 1) We are to persevere and endure our trials believing that they are going to produce something good in our lives.
    - 2) God's purpose and intention in our trials is that they will bring us to spiritual maturity and completion.

- 3) Many times we ask God to take our trials away when what we should be asking is that He would help us to learn the lesson He has for us to learn and to grow and change in the area of our life that He is targeting.
- Matthew 5:10-12 – Both James & Jesus exhort us to take the “long view” on suffering.
    - 1) James exhorts us to joyfully persevere, to cheerfully endure our trials, believing that they will bring us to the place of spiritual maturity and completion.
    - 2) Jesus exhorts us to rejoice and be glad in the midst of persecution, to consider ourselves to be blessed by God, because we will be richly rewarded for doing so in the kingdom of heaven.
  - Romans 8:17-19; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Hebrews 10:32-36; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:6-7; 4:12-19; Romans 8:28-29.
  - God is more Concerned about our Conformity than our Comfort.
- “There is a price for being identified with Jesus. Along with the great [blessings], Paul mentions the suffering that Christians must face. What kinds of suffering are we to endure? For first century believers, there was economic, social, and physical persecution; some even faced death. We too must pay a price for following Jesus. In many parts of the world today, Christians face pressures just as severe as those faced by Christ's first followers. Even in countries where Christianity is tolerated or encouraged, Christians must not become complacent. To live as Jesus did — serving others, giving up one's own rights, resisting pressures to conform to the world — always exacts a price. Nothing we suffer, however, can compare to the great price that Jesus paid to save us [nor the glory that we will share with Him in heaven].” (*The Life Application Commentary Series*)
- “As gold is heated, impurities float to the top and can be skimmed off. Steel is tempered or strengthened by heating it in fire. Likewise, our trials, struggles, and persecutions refine and strengthen our faith, making us useful to God.” (*Life Application Study Bible, p. 2257*)
- “The people of God rejoice not only in future glory but in present trials and sufferings, not because trials are pleasant but because they produce a step-by-step transformation that makes believers more like Christ.” (*ESV Study Bible, p. 2165*)
- “For first-century Christians, suffering was the rule rather than the exception. Paul tells us that in the future we will *become*, but until then we must *overcome*. This means we will experience difficulties that help us grow. We rejoice in suffering not because we like pain or deny its- tragedy, but because we know God is using life's difficulties and Satan's attacks to build our character. The problems that we run into will develop our perseverance – which in turn will strengthen our character, deepen our trust in God, and give us greater confidence about the future. You probably find your patience tested in some way every day. Thank God for those opportunities to grow, and deal with them in his strength.” (*Life Application Study Bible, p. 2036*)

**#6 – Love – 5 And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts...**

**#7 – Holy Spirit – ...by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.**