

SERMON STUDY SUMMARY

Romans Part 10: The Joy of Justification

In Romans chapter 5 Paul speaks about the Joy of Justification, reminding us that Jesus' sacrificial death and resurrection paid for our sins, and God's wrath and justice are satisfied when we accept Jesus as our Lord and Saviour. This weekend, Pastor Henry focused primarily on Romans 5:1-2: *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.* Peace, access and hope are three divine blessings we receive from justification.

First, we have incredible PEACE with God. We are now His children, no longer under His wrath because we are victorious through Jesus Christ. We don't need to worry about doing enough to earn God's favour, or wonder if we will be condemned because it's impossible to be perfect – that was in the past. God's joy and peace fills us with a sense of calmness and tranquility which spills over into every aspect of our lives.

We realize that, having put our trust in Him through Christ's redemption, God is no longer our judge but is our loving, heavenly Father. We are now free to serve God out of love, and because we believe His church and His kingdom mission really matter. We experience a strong desire to know God intimately and obey His will for our lives.

Second, we have direct ACCESS to God. 'Access', in the Biblical context, is when one person brings another person into the presence of a third person, as Christ did for us. When Adam and Eve rebelled and sinned against God, we lost direct access to God. Prior to Christ's death, people could draw near to God, but only the High Priests were able to enter the Holy of Holies.

When Jesus died on the Cross, the barrier between God and man was shattered and we now have the privilege of speaking directly with the Lord at anytime and anywhere, taking our prayers and requests to Him, and building a close personal relationship with Him.

Third, we have the HOPE of the glory of God. This life, inundated by disappointments, restlessness and troubles is temporary, and rarely lives up to our expectations. However, as Paul elucidates, we have the hope of glory in Heaven where, in the future, there will be no more death, suffering or pain, and we are made righteous, pure and perfect in God's sight through Jesus.

To paraphrase John Stott: in light of God's amazing grace we should be the most positive people in the world, exulting in the Lord. This will result in our lives being changed and suffused with glory. Christian worship becomes an uplifting celebration of praise and thanksgiving to God, and Christian living a joyful service of God.

What God is saying in these verses, through Paul, is that no matter how challenging this world becomes, how difficult or unfair our lives are, how hopeless things may seem, by God's grace each individual is His masterpiece and He promises that our future in Christ will be amazing and magnificent, not on the basis of our goodness and performance, but on the basis of the fact we are justified through faith in Jesus Christ. We have Peace with God, Access to Him, and the Hope of heaven. To God be all praise and glory! Amen.

SERMON STUDY GUIDE

IN - PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. Describe an exhilarating experience you have had. What made it so?
2. List some common cultural conceptions of heaven that you have heard. What does heaven look like to you? What do you most look forward to about heaven?

UP - PURSUE GOD

Read Romans 5:1-2 (draw from these verses for questions below)

3. *Read 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Philippians 4:7.* What does it mean to be justified? How would you define 'peace with God'? Why is this 'good news'?
4. *Read Luke 23:45 and Hebrews 4:16.* When you pray, where are you standing in relation to God's throne? What do these verses tell us about our 'access to God'?
5. *Read 1 Corinthians 2:9 and 1 John 3:2.* What is this hope in Rom 5:2 that we are to boast of?

OUT - PURSUE MISSION

6. How can you daily celebrate "the hope of the glory of God" in your attitudes and outlook? How might this look to those who do not have the hope that we have?
7. Paul says in Romans 5:1-2 that we have peace with God, access to Him and a future hope in Him. What lie do you need to let go of in order to mature in these blessings?

For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

Personalize Romans 5:1-2 by substituting 'I' for we, and 'my' for our. Read or say this aloud several times. Where is God speaking to you in this? Ask the Lord to help you experience His peace, enjoy full access to Him, and rejoice in the hope we have in eternity with Him.

THE WORD (NIV)

Romans 5:1-2

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.

2 Corinthians 5:21

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Philippians 4:7

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Luke 23:45

For the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two.

Hebrews 4:16

Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

1 Corinthians 2:9

However, as it is written:

"What no eye has seen,
what no ear has heard,
and what no human mind has conceived"—
the things God has prepared for those who love him—

1 John 3:2

Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.