Romans 5:1-5 Peace and hope

Slide 1

Slide 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. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Slide 3 What is the therefore there for?

Slide 4 Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, ‘So shall your offspring be.’Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead – since he was about a hundred years old – and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. This is why ‘it was credited to him as righteousness.’ The words ‘it was credited to him’ were written not for him alone,

Slide 5 but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness – for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

Slide 6 Justification

Court room scene – individual made right, accepted, adopted, brought into God’s family – just as if I had never sinned or just as much right to stand in God’s throne room as Jesus.

God’s covenant faithfulness and renewal of all of creation – a declaration of membership of being one of God’s people – based on God’s promises to Abraham and fulfillment of those promises in Jesus.

How do you see justification?

Slide 7

1The result is this: since we have been declared ‘in the right’ on the basis of faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus the Messiah.

Slide 8 How do you understand Faith?

Slide 9

2Through him we have been allowed to approach, by faith, into this grace in which we stand; and we celebrate the hope of the glory of God.

Slide 10 Result is Peace with God.

In Romans here, Paul talking about a reconciliation to end all reconciliations. ‘Since we have been declared to be in the right, we have’—what? a warm glow in the heart? a sigh of relief that our sins have been forgiven? a new understanding of what it means to belong to God’s people? Yes, all of those and more, but at the centre of it all we have *peace with God*.

It seems to me that almost without failure when I read about celebrities they end up estranged from their parents. The ego and greed and control and abuse.

So many people live estranged from family members. It is always sad when that happens. Sometimes people are abusive and dangerous. Sometimes people just remain stubbornly resistant to reconciliation. Refusing to forgive offence.

Perhaps what is even sadder is the number of people who refuse to reconcile with a loving God.

Slide 11, 12 13 Possible causes of our images of God

How do you picture God?

Slide 14

Grace here is shorthand for the very power and presence of God. His favour, love, forgiveness and acceptance.

We begin to discover that this relationship and the calling that comes with it are the very thing that we were created for.

That doesn’t mean it doesn’t come with problems.

Sometimes it is difficult to imagine God being interested in little old me but The God of the Bible is more mysterious by a long way. He is the creator of the world, transcendent over and above his creation, and yet, because his very nature is love, it is (as we might say) completely natural for him to establish personal, one-to-one relations with every single one of us.

Of course; it may not seem natural for us. The reasons for this are obvious once we have grappled with Romans 1:18–32. Not only our behaviour, but our thinking and feeling, have been so warped by rebellion and idolatry that we assume it’s hard to establish a relationship with God, and that even if we succeed it will be difficult and awkward to maintain it, or maybe even intrusive and frightening.

I couldn’t come to church till I sort myself out. Not realizing that sorting us out, healing us and reforming us is God’s business. The old song – all I had to offer him was brokenness and strife.

But actually I don’t always find Prayer easy; Paul will talk, towards the end of the present section of the letter (8:26–27), of a sense of ‘groaning’ in the **spirit**, not knowing what’s going on. But just because we feel awkward shouldn’t mean we mistake this for a problem in the relationship itself.

When we are reconciled to the God who is our father, we discover that he wants not simply to enjoy this one-to-one relationship, but to enlist us in his service in working for his **kingdom**. And that will bring all kinds of pressures and problems which will require us to hang on in **faith** and hope even when we don’t sense his presence, even when it doesn’t ‘feel’ as though there’s anything happening. We mustn’t imagine that our *feeling* of being close to God is a true index of the reality. Emotions often deceive. Paul is summoning us to understand the reality, the solid rock beneath the shifting sands of feeling.

The first two verses of chapter 5, then, celebrate our access into the very presence of God himself. We have ‘the right to approach’: this is the language of the **Temple**, where certain people get to come near to where God is.

As a result of being justified by faith, we are, in the old phrase, ‘in a state of grace’, a status, a position where we are surrounded by God’s love and generosity, invited to breathe it in like the air.

Like I said - As we do so, we realise that this is what we were made for; that this is what truly human existence ought to be like; and that it is the beginning of something so big, so massive, so unimaginably beautiful and powerful, that we almost burst as we think of it. When we stand there in God’s own presence, not trembling but deeply grateful, and begin to inhale his goodness, his wisdom, his power and his joy, we sense that we are being invited to go all the way, to become the true reflections-of-God, the true image-bearers, that we were made to be. Paul puts it like this: ‘we celebrate the hope of the glory of God’. This is the glory that was lost through idolatry and sin (3:23). When we finally inherit this glory, the whole creation will be set free from corruption and share our new-found freedom, the freedom to be our true selves at last (8:21).

Slide 15 Talk to it

Slide 16

3That’s not all. We also celebrate in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces patience, 4patience produces a well-formed character, and a character like that produces hope. 5Hope, in its turn, does not make us ashamed, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the holy spirit who has been given to us.

Slide 17

Paul can then go on to speak of celebration even in the midst of sufferings, the necessary path through which we travel as we share the father’s work in this still-corrupt world. Note, he doesn’t say that we celebrate our sufferings (in the same way that we celebrate our hope, in verse 2). We celebrate, he says, *in* our sufferings. He sees a steady progression in which God uses our sufferings for the same purpose as he gives us his own presence and love: to transform us into the truly human people we were made to be. That progression leads from patience to character, and from character to hope. We either **go** through difficulties or we **grow** through them.

Slide 18 Growing into Jesus – Suffering is not lost. We can learn to celebrate even in the midst because of our great hope.

We live in a world that wants everything immediately; that has no stability of character except a hollow media image; that wanders this way and that because it has no idea where it might be going. The **gospel** of Jesus the **Messiah** calls us to swim against the tide on all counts.

Why does Paul say that hope ‘does not make us ashamed’? Possibly the answer is that the Christian, like Abraham, is called again and again to ‘hope against hope’ (4:18). We look foolish in the world’s eyes, waiting for something we can’t see (8:25). But we don’t appear foolish to ourselves, because we are sustained by something far deeper, something which grows directly out of the gift of ‘peace with God’, out of the reconciliation which Paul will go on to describe in later verses in this chapter. Israel was commanded to ‘love **yhwh** your God with all your heart’. Paul, conscious that the new family he has described is the true family of Abraham, now declares that, through the gift of the **holy spirit**, this becomes a reality for us.

IN verse 5 Paul may be saying that through the Holy Spirit God’s love is poured out in a new way or maybe that God is establishing through the Holy Spirit those who belong to Jesus the true covenant family in whom both the promises and commands given to Israel are fulfilled.

That those grasped by the gospel are marked out as the people who offer this God ‘the obedience of faith’ (1:5), loving him from the heart.

These verses introduce the long section of chapters 5–8, where Paul explores the power of God’s truth and the depth of God’s love.

Slide 19

Pause for a moment and celebrate, in grateful prayer, the glorious fact of being welcomed into God’s presence, at peace and in hope.[[1]](#footnote-1)

1. Tom Wright, [*Paul for Everyone: Romans Part 1: Chapters 1-8*](https://ref.ly/logosres/evry66ro01?ref=Bible.Ro5.1-5&off=13&ctx=ROMANS+5%3a1%E2%80%935%0a~Peace+and+Hope%0a1%C2%A0The+result) (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2004), 80–85. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)