

Day 116, Romans 5

by David Servant

We have peace with God through Jesus Christ, and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, knowing that we are saved from the wrath of God and made righteous through justification.

Scripture: Romans 5:1-20

Topics: "Justification", "Repentance"

Description

David Servant preaches on the profound truth that we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, emphasizing the importance of surrendering in faith and repentance to be reconciled to God. He highlights the joy and hope we have in the glory of God, even in the midst of suffering, knowing that our perseverance validates our character. Through Jesus' sacrifice, we are saved from the wrath of God and justified, being made righteous in His sight.

Transcript

We do not have peace with God through Jesus Christ. Rather, "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (5:1). Let us not overlook that important distinction. Formerly, we were enemies of God (5:10), destined for His wrath. But by virtue of Jesus' paying the penalty for our sins, along with our hoisting the surrender flag of faith and repentance, we've been reconciled to God. How silly it would be to think that we have peace with God had we done nothing more than "accept Jesus as our personal Savior" while continuing in sin!

Now reconciled, we "exult in hope of the glory of God" (5:2). That is, we rejoice knowing that we will one day be in the presence of God's glory. We also rejoice when we suffer persecution, because we know that our perseverance validates the sincerity of our character, which also fills us with hope for a glorious future. That hope is one that will not be disappointed. We already have a taste of its fulfillment through the indwelling Holy Spirit (5:3-5). The Spirit is, as Paul referred to Him in another place, a "down payment of our future inheritance" (Eph. 1:14).

For whom did Jesus die? Paul wrote that "Christ died for us" (5:8). Some say that proves that Jesus only died for the church, which they then define as those who were sovereignly pre-selected by God to be saved. But just two verses earlier Paul wrote, "Christ died for the ungodly." That includes everyone. So did Christ die for the church or the ungodly? Obviously, for both. The greater always includes the lesser. Jesus' atonement was not limited in its intention, but only in its effect by those who resist God (1 Jn. 2:2).

From what are we saved? Paul wrote, "...from the wrath of God" (5:9). Not only that, but we are also justified (5:9), which could be translated, "made righteous." To be justified is more than being forgiven. It means to be found not guilty.

The latter half of Romans 5 is not as easy to understand as the first half. Some commentators suggest that Paul is answering critics who questioned how one man's act could possibly result in salvation for so many people. So Paul goes back to Adam to show how one man's act negatively affected the entire human race, and then he draws an analogy with Jesus. It is an imperfect analogy, as are all analogies.

To those who believe that the Mosaic Law was a means to salvation we might ask, "If the Mosaic Law was given to save people, then how could people be saved before it was given?" Is it perhaps possible that God wasn't holding anyone accountable for their sin before the Mosaic Law, since no one knew God's laws? Paul shows how God was holding everyone accountable for their sin long before the Law of Moses. He writes, "For until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses" (5:13-14.). That is, people were sinning before the Mosaic Law was given. God, however, does not hold people accountable for their sin if they don't know His will. It is obvious, then, that He was holding them accountable for their sin before the Mosaic Law, because everyone between Adam and Moses died.

From this it is also obvious that God must have given laws to everyone before the Law of Moses. Clearly, they would be the laws that He wrote on everyone's consciences. God expected everyone to obey those laws, but they didn't. Paul wrote, "The Law [of Moses] came in so that the transgression would increase" (5:20). That is, the Mosaic Law was given to help Israelites to better realize their sinfulness, to lead them to repentance and faith. They were already fully condemned by the law written in their consciences, but I suspect they may have been tempted to ignore that inner condemnation by virtue of God's delivering them from Egypt, thinking that they automatically had His favor. So by means of the Mosaic Law, they stood doubly condemned, primed for repentance and saving faith.

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