

The Righteousness of Faith - Part 5

by Roy Hession

Roy Hession emphasizes the transformative power of faith and grace in the believer's life, highlighting the joy found in suffering and the assurance of eternal glory.

Duration: 38:11

Scripture: Romans 5:1-3, Romans 5:5-6, Romans 5:8, Romans 5:11

Topics: "Righteousness Of Faith"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the love of God and how it is demonstrated through Jesus Christ. He explains that this love is not dependent on our goodness or strength, but rather it is shown when we are helpless and without strength. The preacher highlights the fact that while we have the power to sin, we have no power to free ourselves from its condemnation. However, God's love brings us out of this helpless state and offers abundant promises of hope and joy. The sermon also touches on the importance of recognizing our need for God's love and the futility of gaining worldly success without gaining our soul. The preacher references Romans chapter 5 and expresses his awe at the depth of God's message in this epistle.

Transcript

Now, will you turn this morning to Romans, Chapter 5. I would like to say that I'm overwhelmed, really, at the wealth of what God has to say in this epistle, and really oppressed by the inadequacy of what we are trying to do. We shan't get much beyond the end of Chapter 5. There remain some of the most important chapters, 6, 7, and 8, and on, which we'll hardly be able to touch upon. And this morning I'm particularly conscious of inadequacy, and even of the difficulty of preparing what we have.

Indeed, there comes a point after which my notes run out. But the subject matters, and I'll have to look to the Lord very much to help us cover whatever ground he thinks is right. Of course, one of the reasons why those of us who have to speak have these anxieties or concerns is because we do want to be successful.

But I recognize we don't have to be successful. In fact, our apparent success can sometimes obscure the glory of God. So we haven't got to give things very impressively.

I think the Lord sometimes has had to say to me, Are you willing to be weak? I've always thought I wanted to be strong and impressive. So, I want to be willing to be weak, as weak as God wants us to be tonight, this morning, only that the Lord Jesus himself shall be seen in the morning. Now shall we turn to Romans

chapter 5? Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

And not only so, but we rejoice in suffering also, knowing that suffering worketh patience, or patient endurance, and patient endurance experience, and experience hope, and hope putteth not to shame, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

But God commended his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

And not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation. The slight alterations of those as they stand in the revised version, which in these cases are very important and should be noted. Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

For until the law was in the world, for until the law, sin was in the world. But sin is not imputed where there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression.

Do you understand that? Adam had a law which he broke, but there wasn't another law given until Sinai. Therefore those who sinned did not sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression. Nonetheless, death reigned, says Paul.

And this Adam is the figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. He contrasts the offence of Adam with the free gift that comes to us by Jesus Christ.

For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. Is sin going to affect many and grace not do likewise? Of course grace is going to do that and more. Grace is not going to be seen less than sin.

And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift. For the judgment was by one to condemnation. One sin brought condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.

He's enjoying himself poorly, just rejoicing. Look at it. And contrasting it with Adam's sin and its sad results.

For if by one man's offence death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one many shall be made or constituted righteous.

Moreover the law entered and didn't make things better but worse. It had the effect of causing the offence to abound. But that didn't take grace by surprise.

Not the least bit defeated. For where sin abounded, grace was more than a match. Grace did much more abound.

That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. Is sin going to have a reign and not grace? And is the reign of sin going to be more than the reign of grace? No, says Paul. Grace today is reigned through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now we ended up chapter four by seeing that just as righteousness was imputed, was reckoned to Abraham, not because of his work but because he simply believed God, so it shall be imputed unto us. If we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences and raised for our justification, when God raised his son from the dead, he was thinking of us. When God saw it was right and just to clear the shorting of all the sins for which he'd taken responsibility, he was thinking of us.

When I was loved when I didn't love him, having entered in and accepted that gift, I have peace with God. Once again he had through Jesus Christ our Lord. Oh, that's his great formula.

He won't let you get anything from God except through Christ. By the way, that's the great word of the gospel. Not be like Christ but come through Christ.

Well, that's the first great result, peace with God. We talk about sometimes losing our peace. Well, you can and you can't.

In a sense you can't because Christ, in glory for you, is your peace. He secures your place there with God. But if sin comes into the life of a believer, he loses the sense of that peace.

And if he doesn't repent, that conscience will begin to beget in him the all-time attitude of dread, of an inner deed with God, that God's against him and the Christians are against him. They're all criticizing him. And then he'll be against God and against the Christians.

But you repent again, and then you see that peace that had always been there, but you'd lost the sense of it. When it comes back again, you see Christ as your peace and his blood there. You hear the words of love again.

You gaze upon the blood, you see the mighty sacrifice, and you have peace with God. Now the next, second result is, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Two results, peace with God and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.

Now this word hope in the New Testament is used in a sense in which we don't use it in current English, I think. Normally hope is regarded as a lower degree of faith. You might try and help a person and ask them questions.

Are you saved? Are you going to glory? I'm not sure, but I hope so. And in that sense hope is a lower degree of faith. There's a great deal of uncertainty, but that is never the sense in which the word is used in the New Testament.

Hope is the assured expectation of that which is promised to faith. Hope in the New Testament presupposes faith. What faith assures us will be, hope confidently expects and treats as a present position

although it hasn't taken place.

Faith is the substance of things hopeful. It's expectation, certainty. We rejoice in the certainty of the glory of God.

The gratuitous justification that we have received not only assures my present peace with God, but assures for me my future glory. The assured hope of which begets a triumphant exultation of spirit as if it were a present possession. So reads an old commentator.

Being justified by faith I have a present peace. But if I declare righteous before God then I'm assured of future glory. And you know that is the simple but basic, one of the simple basic results of knowing yourself right with God through the blood of Christ.

You're sure of glory. You're sure of heaven. And you know it is deeply spiritual, deeply scriptural.

Some of these rather jiggy choruses are found in utterly unscriptural. I remember in my early Christian life we used to sing all over the place, I remember, a chorus we hadn't sung for some time. I'm on my way to the glory land.

I'm on my way to the glory land. I'm on my way, praise the Lord to the glory land. Then we used to add a verse.

If you get there before I do, just wait for me, I'm coming too. We were certain of it. We still are.

We're sure. And you know the hope of the glory of God is meant to figure in the life of the believer. Let those who will talk sneering about pie in the sky when you die.

We've got something better than pie. We've got glory. And we're utterly certain.

And that's the reason why sudden death needs to bother the Christian. What's all this talk about atomic warfare? How terrible. But we've got to die.

I don't know which is worse, an atomic bomb or cancer or just heart failure. And it doesn't matter for the Christian. He's bound for glory.

He's certain of it. He's sure of it. Would God have loved me in my sin and declared me a sinner, cleared of every charge, and given me peace with God? Surely all that carries with it the assurance of glory.

And we rejoice in the certain expectation of glory. And so don't you be ashamed. Don't let them make you self-conscious when you sing the chorus.

And if they've got a bit of a lift, I should think so, there's going to be a lot of lift, a lot of rhythm in heaven. I'm on my way to the glory land where I'm going to meet Jesus. Yes, one verse was, I'll see him there in the glory land.

I'll see him there in the glory land. I'll see him there, praise the Lord, in the glory land. You know, as one gets older, I think of death.

I sometimes ask myself to square up to it. And you know, I say, well, it's all right. It's wonderful, really, to be anticipating glory and even regarding death in its right and proper light even now when you're in good health.

The Salvation Army, when one of their workers dies, they say he's been promoted to glory. Lovely, why not? We rejoice in hope of the glory of God. But this isn't just froth and emotion, just look how it goes on.

It's really down to earth. But not only so, we glory, same word actually in the Greek, we glory, we rejoice in suffering. Because between the day when I trust Christ as my Savior and the day when I get to glory, there's some difficult passages.

You're not going to avoid it. There may be some tears, some sorrow, some sickness, some bereavement, some loss, some persecution. But this justified man who's had this great initial assurance of the love of God, not even that dismays him.

He says, hallelujah, for suffering. It's going to work something more in me than I had before. And so the justified man doesn't say, oh, if God's a God of love, why is he allowed that? You see, he's had such a demonstration of the love of God in loving him when he was a sinner and saving him from guilt and disgrace then.

That whatever else may happen, nothing can shake that. These things are nothing. Though he might be, as many have, left to languish in jail for Christ's sake.

They've got an evidence of the love of God towards sinners. But that doesn't touch. Indeed, they glory in it, they're supposed to.

And I tell you, grace helps us to. You probably won't do so without a bit of repenting first, being human. You'll feel sad and sorry and you may have your doubts.

The devil may come along, but it won't be long before grace helps to come back. And you'll pray and say, Lord, praise the Lord. Hallelujah.

There's going to be some good in this. And he tells you the good that comes out of it. We glory, we rejoice in suffering, knowing that suffering worketh patience or patient endurance.

Oh, you see, this is really down to life. This is what we need. This is why we have to be suffering.

Now, an old commentator I looked up before I came gives this. Patience, the grace of patience, is either the meek endurance of ill because it seems it to be of God. That's one degree of patience.

The meek, submissive endurance of ill because it sees that nothing can touch him but which is of God. Job knew something of that. The Lord gave.

The Lord's taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. This is you, Lord.

You don't blame second causes. You accept it as God. The cup that the Father has given me, shall I not drink it? The meek endurance of ill because it is of God.

Or, the calm waiting for promised good till his time comes to dispense it. And sometimes it seems a long, long time. Before the thing you're assured God intends for you does come.

But endurance, patience, is that grace by which you wait for it. And you repent of your calamitous wishes, wishes, wishes. Wishing, wishing for what God hasn't given you now.

That, by the way, is the definition of the vital word, lust. Lust in the Bible isn't only to do with sex. It covers that, of course.

It's wishing, wishing, wishing for now, what God hasn't given me now. Maybe he intends that for you now. He might intend matrimony for you in future years.

But you want it now. You want a boy now. You want a girl now.

Wishing, wishing, wishing. He hasn't given it to you. And if you stop granting, you'll make some terrible mistakes.

Sometimes God has to give suffering. Which always goes to postpone. That's what you wanted so much.

Which you felt God might have for you. But calm, waiting for promised good till his time comes to dispense it. And suffering, and deprivation, working obviously, patience, if you're exercised by it.

And we have had that meek endurance and calm waiting, said this old commentator, in the full persuasion that such trials are, one, divinely appointed. Divinely appointed. Even sick.

But wonderful good. Two, that they are the needed disciplines of God's children. You don't know what surrender to God's will is until his will crosses you.

Then you have the privilege to forsake your will, embrace this, knowing it comes from a loving Father. Now this is what the justified man sees this. He knows the God he's dealing with.

He's been a hostage of that infinite grave. And no matter what else will happen, nothing can compare with that. Therefore he knows it's come from a loving Father and it's a needed discipline that he needs.

I remember Joe Church saying to me, he said, you know, the ones who can help others are those who've suffered. And at that time I didn't think I had suffered. I said, well, I haven't got very far.

Little knew that very soon it was coming. I praise God for that experience when I learned it off my wife. The needed discipline of God's children.

So you calmly go through it with God. He said, thirdly, you meekly endure in the full persuasion, one, that it is thinely appointed, two, that it is a needed discipline, three, that it is, but for a definite period. The devil tells you it's going to go on and on and on and it's never going to stop.

That's not God's way. I know in my experience. When God's time has come, how quickly he brings you out.

I was amazed. A whole number of things went all wrong at the same time. When God had taught me what he wanted me to do, it all came right.

In a definite period of time. And he says we endure it not without abundant promises of songs in the night. These dear old writers, don't they write beautifully? I don't think we can write or speak English.

Please turn the cassette over now. Do not fast wind it in either direction. Not without abundant promises of songs in the night.

These dear old writers, don't they write beautifully? I don't think we can write or speak English in that lovely way. Not without abundant promises of songs in the night. So, the justified man is not put off by something.

He's mistaken by it. He's got that great initial, all-inclusive evidence that God loves him. And so he says hallelujah.

And suffering comes. Miles goes by. Then he comes out a little richer.

Pray for me. And so he learned in suffering to bend his knees. To surrender his will.

To repent of self-pity. Repenting of wishing for what God hasn't given him. He goes through it.

Patience. Tribulation, work is patience. Patience, endurance.

And patience, endurance, work is experience. Now, I understand the word experience in the Greek. There means proof or provenness.

I don't think it means that by going through this, I prove that I can speak it. Or I prove that my faith is enough. But rather I prove that grace is enough.

In those times I go back again and again, I prove that Jesus is a peer, unexcelled in the realm of science. He's in his element. As every Christian doctor will know when he's seen the saints in their suffering.

Seen them losing love. The saints are never such in good form as them. Never are they so near God.

Jesus is really close to me. Dear, dear one, what's going on? And maybe we'll have to have some trouble in order to prove what a saviour he is. And in that last going through the river, if you like to call it that.

You know I was in a church service some time ago and I was nearly in tears when we were singing that hymn, Hold Thou My Hand. And it says about when I come to that last river. And I thought that last river which I've got to cross.

I thought I'd have to brace myself for that one day. But the hymn said, When we come to that last river which thou didst cross alone for me. He's part of the water.

You'll go over on dry ground. Now you see what suffering's worth is. Patient endurance.

And in that patient endurance you've got an experience. You're a man of experience. That's the word.

The revisers are worried about that word. But I think, I've looked at all the various readings. They're all helpful.

But I think I've come back to the authorised experience. A person with experience. Experience of grace.

And what does that lead on to? Experience worth his hope. Well, you began there and you end there. In other words, the justified man has not had his hope of glory dimmed by his sufferings, but brightened.

He emerges more sure of glory, more looking forward to it, than ever before. You see, experience has even brightened his hope. As John Newton said, His love in times past forbids me to think.

He'll leave me at last in trouble to seek. In sweet Ebenezer, I have in review confirmed his good pleasure to see me right through. And this grace I've tainted in my trials.

There's not a shadow of doubt now. But I'll stand with Jesus one day in the glory. And then he goes on to, then he goes on to say, because, he says, this hope, rather, does not put us to shame.

In other words, does not disappoint us. It does not disappoint us because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. In other words, he says, and this hope that I emerge with even brighter is not going to disappoint me because my soul is given wonderful vision and sensation of the love of God toward me.

Which visions do not come from mere suffering is all based on Calvary, on being justified by faith. This man hasn't left that sweet wonder of how God saved him. It's grown.

And he says, my, he says, this love, this hope is not going to disappoint me. How can it? When now I'm given such assurances of the love of God as I see Jesus, my righteousness. And then he expounds on the nature of this love, and once again you will see his, see me here, his glory.

I put it up, the glory. He wants to get you absolutely rejoicing and hopeful of the glory of God, utterly certain of it. And therefore I imagine, careless about so many of the things that worry us on earth.

Now he says, look, he says, this love, when did we get it? When was it demonstrated? When we were good, when we were strong? No, he says, we were in a fourfold condition when we were yet helpless, without strength, passively helpless to extricate ourselves. As I said the other day, you and I have a limitless power to commit sin, a limitless power to commit sin, but no power at all to extricate yourself from it and its condemnation once it's committed. You're not only a sinner, but you're a helper.

Once you've committed sin, not all the good in a lifetime can do one thing to erase it. Do you notice that? Watching it, profit a man if he gained the whole world and lose his soul. Right, he's gained the world, he's lost his soul.

He's found that the world vanishes away. He wants it back, he can't. Watch and he gives now in exchange for his soul.

He's got no money. It debase currency. And having lost his soul to get the things of the world, he can't get it back.

Help, help. You and I are helpless sinners. And while you are still in that condition, it's a lovely.

While we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. And then he has a wonderful comparison between the love of men for men and the love of God for men. The love of men for men will only go so far.

He says, scarcely for a righteous man will one die. You don't find people laying down their life for a righteous man. Though perhaps, if he's a good man, a very gentle, generous man, you might possibly.

That's the limit to which the love of men for men can go. But the love of God for men is the very love that God can lend his love toward us, that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. I was loved while I was a sinner.

Christ died for me while I was a sinner. More than that, we're told we were forcefully enemies. Without faith is my condition.

Ungodly as a sinner is my character. But an enemy is my attitude. Unbroken.

Unbroken, an enemy. Stiffness. And even when I was like that, showing such an unsavory attitude, I was loved.

I was died for. I was justified. I was reconciled to God.

And his argument is as if I was loved when I was innocent, and died for what was of my sin, and reconciled when I was in that attitude. Now that I've repented and come to become a friend of God, how much more shall I be saved from wrath from him? If he was willing to do the one that cost him his death, how much more is he willing and able to do the other which is going to be performed in the power of his life? If he was willing to do all that while we were repugnant and enemies, how much more is he willing to secure our future glory and all the way of continuance to it? For us, that's the answer. And so, this love that meets me at the cross carries me right the way through life, and my hope comes out brighter.

And it isn't that I go to any other source. It's that same old love, that same old vision that shines all the brighter. And if I've been justified by his blood, I have no doubt at all I shall be saved from wrath through him.

Oh, get the words, because this is the old time gospel which the church has rocked. Saved from wrath. You know, people don't like being asked, being saved.

Are you saved? What do you mean, saved from? Saved from wrath. Are you saved, friend? Saved from what? Saved from wrath. Because the Bible says, he that believeth on the sun hath life.

But he that believeth not the sun shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. I want to say, if a man who doesn't know peace with God, if a man depending on his righteousness and his religiousness, you are this morning under the wrath of God, but not by God's desire. You put yourself there.

God has got one program that we might be saved from wrath through him. And tonight, today, you can be justified by his life and be utterly assured of being saved from wrath through him. Well, and then, we're still on this rejoicing in hope.

First, the two results in our peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Secondly, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God with the tribulations of life do nothing but dim but brighten because we've got, we were persuaded of a love that loved us while we were yet sinners. Therefore, now that we've turned to him, he's going to go on with us and assure us of future glory.

And he says, and not only so, we not only rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, we not only rejoice in tribulation, but we rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. It's something even more than peace with God. It's joy in God.

You see this melting vision of God. And, you know, Jesus and the revelation of God in him is meant to draw us to God. You know, we can preach the gospel in a faulty way in which it would appear that a loving Jesus is persuading an unwilling God to demerit him.

It's the other way around. It's a loving God. Our sins, not for one moment, ever succeeded in turning him against us.

We didn't believe him. When we see this amazing grace, he becomes infinitely desirable. We delight, we rejoice in him through whom? Through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have now received the atonement.

Well, I didn't get as far, and I think it's better to stop there. But, I think there's a natural distinction. And, you know, this next portion, 12 to 21, that looks very doctrinal, it came to me that Paul wasn't really worried to teach us doctrine, he was just having a little rejoice.

He said, now it's just sin. Which is greater? Man's sin or God's grace? Sin has had a reign and produced death. Doesn't grace have a reign? Yes.

He says, the reign of sin that brought death is over. And now grace is reigning. Only live for Christ hath died.

Oh, how inadequate it is. He had much more to say, but we can't go on with it. But we'll have to stop there.

As sin hath reigned unto death, even so grace might reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ. Do you know something of the reign of sin? Producing death, the death of the best things in your life, the death of peace, the death of much else. As God's word is this, just as sin has reigned unto death, even so there's going to be a reign of grace in your life.

Genius. Reign. One last thought I must say is this.

These last verses are simply to extol the fact that the extension of the grace of God, the extension of the redemption of God, is coextensive with and beyond the extent of sin. In America they love to sing as a Christmas carol Joy to the World. We sang it so often.

And one line of which was, He cometh to make his blessings so far as the curse is found. Grace extends to every bit as far as the curse is found. And if you will, there's not one bit what sin is for, but grace is to recover.

You don't have to repent. You don't have to say, Lord, please, I'm the one. For the moment just stop justifying yourself and repent.

Over that new thing, grace delights to recover. He delights to make that ma vessel again, another vessel, as seems good to the potter to make it. Well now, I think we must have a hymn to close with.

And let's sing, When all my labors and trials are all. I believe this man just read Romans 5 when he wrote this. Number, well it's not in this book.

Well, five, we've got another book and we have to take it nonetheless. When all my labors and trials are all, and I am safe on that heavenly shore, just to be near the dear Lord I adore, willfully aided. The glory for me.

The tune is in this book, you know. At first, I'll give you another verse. When all my labors and trials are all, and I am safe on that beautiful shore, just to be near the dear Lord I adore.

Friends will be there. Friends will be there I have loved long ago. Joy like a river around me will flow.

Yet just a smile from my Savior I know will through the ages be glory for me. Yes, so we are, we haven't finished without another brethren. We're all going to be together.

And there's some brothers who used to minister in these conferences and they're in glory before us. We'll meet them. Friends will be there.

But the best of all, one little smile of recognition, that'll be glory for you. Friends will be there I have loved long ago. Joy like a river around me will flow.

Yet just a smile from my Savior I know will through the ages be glory for me. When by the gift of His infinite grace I am accorded in heaven a place just to be there and to look on His face all through the ages be glory for me. The gift of His infinite grace.

When you think of what you've done through the long years of eternity in something unspeakably glorious I tell you, it's fact. The best things of the earth are just tawdry by comparison I need to tell myself that When by the gift of His infinite grace When by the gift of His infinite grace I am accorded in heaven a place just to be there and to the Father He stands, we are through the ages in glory for Him. Thompson, if you will lead in prayer, you can stand at the back and pray for us.

O God, our Father, our hearts are full of praise this morning. Praise for the Lord Jesus who has made all of this glory that we do not deserve possible for our sinners. We praise Thee for His precious blood that has purchased it all, paid the price in full, and made it over freely available to us, poor, wretched, vile, weak sinners.

And we ask, Lord, that the glory may be in our souls this day, that Thou fill us with the joy of the Lord, that it may be our strength. And we pray that all this day we may rejoice in Thee, Lord Jesus. For we are going to rejoice in Thee throughout all eternity in those days that lie just ahead.

And we praise Thee, Lord, this morning for this glorious hope set before us in Thine own worthy and precious blood. Amen.

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