

ROMANS From Wretchedness to Righteousness

Study 7

Romans 5:1-11

How it changes us from the inside

Justification brings peace (Romans 5:1, 9-11)

Verse 1

Rom 5:1

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

1) a) Objective question, choose the most appropriate answer. Based on the video lecture, which type of 'Righteousness' does Romans Chapter 5-8 focuses on?

A. Legal Righteousness

B. Ethical Righteousness

b) Fill in the blanks. Based on the video lecture, what does ethical righteousness mean?

How we:	behave	And how we:	act
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c) Fill in the blanks. Based on the video lecture, what is the context behind humans having no peace with God?

We are God's	Enemy	
We are experiencing	Alienation	from God
We are under the condemnation of		God's wrath
We are under	Judgement	for eternal death and separation from God

Verse 9-11

Rom 5:9-11

Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

2) a) Objective question, choose the answer(s), can be more than one. Based on verses 9-11 and video lecture, which of the following is true?

- A. We are reconciled to God through Jesus' death
- B. Reconciliation is bringing two parties on the same page
- C. When people say 'peaceful', they may not include reconciliation
- D. There is subjective peace and objective peace

b) Objective question, choose the answer(s), can be more than one. The word 'peace' is 'Shalom' in Hebrew. Based on the video lecture, which of the following is true?

- A. Shalom means wholeness
- B. Absence of war and conflict is enough to be considered Shalom
- C. Shalom is the return to God's original design
- D. Only Jesus can bring us true Shalom

Background Information

Cornelius plantinga

"Shalom is...the webbing together of God, humans, and all creation in justice, fulfillment and delight... Shalom means universal flourishing, wholeness and delight- a rich state of affairs in which natural needs are satisfied and natural gifts fruitfully employed. Shalom, in other words, is the way things are meant to be...the full flourishing of human life in all aspects, as God intended it to be."

c) Fill in the blanks. Based on the video lecture, in what ways Jesus brings us true Shalom?

Salvation	Soundness	Righteousness
Wholeness	Community	Justice
Integrity	Connectedness	Well-being

d) Fill in the blanks. Based on the video lecture, how is Jesus going to bring this peace to us?

Verses	How
Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called	By being an authoritative royalty: Prince of peace

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.	
Colossians 1:19-20 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.	Through the payment of blood

Justification brings access (Romans 5:1-2)

Verse 1-2

Rom 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.

3) Objective question, choose the answer(s), can be more than one. Christians now have access to God. Based on the video lecture, which of the following is true?

- A. Christians are now God's temple (1 Cor 3:16)
- B. Normally, it is difficult to access someone with higher power (eg. royalty, leaders, gods, God)
- C. God is reluctant to accept us as His sons
- D. As adopted sons of God, we are not allowed to call God "Father"
- E. Christians have access to God by being the temple where God dwells and being sons who can approach their Father anytime

Quick Verse Reference

Matthew 27:50

And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.

Lamentations 3:22-24

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail.

They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.

I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion;
therefore I will wait for him."

1 Corinthians 3:16

Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst?

Romans 8:14

For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."

Justification brings Hope of Glory and in Suffering [Rejoice] (Romans 5:2-4)

Verse 2-4

Rom 5:2-4

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.

4) a) Reflection question. What are the types of glory verses 2-4 ask Christians to look forward to?

God himself, suffering and its result.

b) Reflection question. What are the other types of glory humans tend to want instead?

Physical beauty, achievements, assets, intelligence, gender identity, self-love etc.

c) Reflection question. What does suffering produce according to verse 4?

perseverance->character->hope

Background Information

John Piper

"The glory of God is the infinite beauty and greatness of God's manifold perfections"

Tim Keller

"God's glory is God's weightiness in wonderful qualities such as might, beauty, goodness, justice and honor."

Romans 8:16-17

The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Philippians 3:10-11

I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

d) Reflection question. Rank from 1st to 8th the following at this point of your life:

Pillars of security	Rank: which will you depend on the most when suffering comes?	Rank: Which of the following is more painful if you lose it?
Health		
Relatives		
Job		
Bank Accounts (finance)		
Husband/Wife (spouse)		
Parents		
Church		
Jesus/God		

Evidence of God's love (Romans 5:3-8)

Verse 6-8

Rom 5:6-8

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

5) Objective question, choose the most appropriate answer. Based on the video lecture, verses 6-8, the argument Paul proposed is which type of evidence of love?

A. Subjective evidence

B. Objective evidence

Background Information

Argumentum a fortiori (literally "argument from the stronger [reason]") is a form of argumentation that draws upon existing confidence in a proposition to argue in favor of a second proposition that is held to be implicit in, and even more certain than, the first.

Verse 3-5

Rom 5:3-5

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.

6) Objective question, choose the most appropriate answer. Based on the video lecture, verses 3-5, the argument Paul proposed is which type of evidence of love?

- A. Subjective evidence
- B. Objective evidence

Case Studies

Case 1

Lai Mooi Hun was a member of the 2nd Baptist Church and attended one of the Life groups where a prominent leader was involved in adultery and was in the process of divorcing his wife. Mooi Hun tried to speak to him but he was angrily turned away and told to mind his own business. The leader has left the church and is now deeply in debt to loan sharks and runs a pub in the middle of KL.

Mooi Hun was very upset and shared the story to his friends in the church wondering that if such a strong leader in church can fall to sin what chance is there for a young Christian like him? What if persecution or temptation comes, will he be able to endure? and how do one have any confidence in this?

7) a) Discussion question. How would you explain to him how God will keep him secure in Him eternally using the Romans 5:1-11?

Look in verses 9-10, Paul assures us that Christ's work for our salvation not only gives us hope for our ultimate future, but for our immediate future. We are assured that we will be preserved as "saved" throughout our life and through the very day of judgment.

The argument of Paul is very strong. He intertwines two arguments in these two verses. First, if Jesus stayed on the cross and saved us "when we were God's enemies" (v.10), then "how much more" will he keep us saved now that we are his friends ("justified by blood" – v.9)? If he

succeeded to save us when we were hostile to him, could he fail to prevail now that we are friends? If he didn't give up on you when you were at war with him, what could you do to make him give up on you now that you are at peace with him? (The God's wrath of v.9 must be his future judgment day wrath, because Christians have already had God's wrath turned aside. See Romans 3:25-26). Further, if Jesus effected our salvation when he was dead, "how much more" will he keep us saved since he is alive (v.10b)?

It is not until the end of Romans 8 that Paul confronts the issue of "losing salvation" more fully. But here he virtually answers the question indirectly. He says that it is inconceivable that Christ should fail to save us to the end.

a) Reflection question. Share with the group what this verse Romans 5: 9-10 means to you personally, how it affects your life and your feelings?

Quick Verse Reference

Romans 5:9-10

Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!

Case 2

Nora was an active Christian who recently suffered a stroke and was now confined to a wheelchair and was dependent on her family to feed and provide for her every need. She is undergoing physiotherapy and hopes to walk one day. There was a lot of pain over her spine and caused her more misery.

She gets increasingly bitter about her life. She was an orphan and lived a life of poverty and now this. She was a faithful Christian.

Her pastor shared with her Romans 5 and told her that she should not wallow in her pain and self pity but instead she should learn to rejoice. She was told to ignore her pain and disability. "Smile and just imagine that she can walk. Have faith in God, He will heal her and meanwhile as she waits for healing, she must exhibit faith by believing that she is already healed. When she gets her pain, she is to smile and say: 'It's all good. I rejoice!' Then only God will heal her and bless her."

8) a) Discussion question. Do you think that her pastor has correctly applied Romans 5:1-5? What's wrong with what he has said?

Paul says ``but we rejoice in suffering.” He says in effect, “Not only do we have these joys, but these joys stay joys in our sorrow, and even help us to find joy in our sorrow.”

Christians, rather, rejoice in suffering. That means there is no joy in the actual troubles themselves. God hates the pain and troubles of this life and so should we. Hence we should not pretend as if the suffering is enjoyable to keep a façade in the face of others as if everything is fine as this places more pain and suffering. We express our pain in suffering but the expression of pain is not the pain of total anguish as those who have no hope. Rather, a Christian knows that suffering will have beneficial results. A Christian is not a stoic that faces suffering just by gritting teeth. Christians “look through” the suffering to their certainties and rest in the knowledge that our troubles will only serve to increase our enjoyment and appreciation of them.

Case 2.1

Nora’s brother Boon Ping has also suffered. He used to be a loan shark before he became a Christian and even as a Christian he struggles to live a godly life because he has a temper and has difficulty controlling it. He suffers from chronic pain over his left leg due to complex nerve disease for which there is no cure. When his friends who are wealthy try to help him with finance and introduce specialists, he rejects them, looking down on them.

The pastor counseled him and told him he was suffering because of his sins committed as a loan shark in the past and his current sins. He should rejoice in his suffering because he is atoning for his past sins and in suffering he makes himself more acceptable to God.

b) Discussion question. Is what the pastor said to Boon Ping correct? Is it what Paul meant by saying we are to rejoice in our suffering?

The pastor is telling Boon Ping to rejoice for his suffering as it atones for his sins in the past and the ones he is currently struggling with.

Paul does not say we rejoice for our sufferings, what the pastor is suggesting is masochism. It actually is possible to rejoice for suffering. Some people need to feel punished in order to deal with their sense of unworthiness and guilt. Others actually get a superior attitude towards people who have had an easier life. They see them as superficial or ungrateful. It is possible to use suffering as a “work,” another form of justification by works! Some feel that God owes them his favor and acceptance because we have had such a hard life. People who do not “process” their suffering through the gospel of grace can become proud and superior or deeply cynical.

c) Discussion question. What is the possible reason Boon Ping rejected his friend's help?

He has a superior attitude toward people who have had an easier life which are his friends who are rich and healthy. God looks favorably on him compared to them because he is able to endure suffering.

Case

2.2

Nora feels very far from God because of her suffering and feels God does not even love her and is very far away.

d) Discussion question. How can we use Romans 5: 5-8 to reassure her?

The Christian's ground of assurance is two-fold: one is internal and subjective, while one is external and objective. Both are necessary.

(i) You can feel and experience it yourself at some point of your life!

First, v.5 tells us that we can know that God loves us because of the experience of his love. "This hope does not disappoint us, for God poured out his love into our hearts." It comes through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, every Christian has some inner experience of the love of God. Paul's language shows that this can be quite a strong experience, though it can be mild and gentle too, which is more common. The greater your inner experience of love, the greater the assurance and hope and power you have. Generally the people who have the most of this are those who are very experienced and disciplined in prayer, meditation, life-balance, obedience. Some Christians have experienced this assurance very powerfully.

For example:

Sometimes our spirits cannot stand in trials. Therefore sometimes the immediate testimony of the Spirit is necessary. It comes saying, "I am thy salvation!" and our hearts are stirred up and comforted with joy inexpressible. This joy hath degrees. Sometimes it is so clear and strong that we question nothing--other times doubts come in soon.

—Richard Sibbes

It is no audible voice, but it is a ray of glory filling the soul with God as life, love and liberty. It is like the word to Daniel that said, "O man greatly beloved!" Or like the word to Mary. The Lord

only said her name MARY, and filled her soul so she no longer doubted she was his! Oh, how glorious is this manifestation of the spirit!

–William Guthrie

(ii) Don't depend on just your subjective feelings, also depend on the objective historic fact of Jesus!

Second, vv.6-8 tell us that we can know God loved us because of the death of Jesus. Paul makes an argument which we should all have in our minds clearly. It goes like this:

v.7a – “It would take a very loving person to die to save another.”

v.7b – “But even a very loving person would not die for an evil one--a very good one, yes, but an evil or wicked one? No.”

v.8 – “But that is what Jesus Christ did, by the will of the Father. While we were rebelling, and while we were resisting him, he died for us. Therefore, God loves you.

Case 3

Think about the times specific difficulties or trials you have experienced as a Christian.

9) a) Discussion question. Did you see it doing in you what Paul describes in Romans 5:1-4? Why or why not?

Here are some things to consider as you are analyzing your own “case study.”

Guided question	Your answer (Yes/No)
A. Did it lead you to focus, to single-mindedness?	
Did it help you sift out the unimportant from the important?	
Did it help you focus attention more on prayer and on what God has done for you?	
B. Has your suffering produced testedness?	
Did you follow through despite fears?	

In other words, did it bring a kind of maturity and confidence that comes from having been through it all?	
Are you a less jittery person, a less fearful person?	
C. Did it lead you to an actual deeper experience of His presence and His love?	
Did you find a greater closeness, a sense of nearness?	

If your suffering did not lead to this, analyze why:

Guided question	Your answer (Yes/No)
Was it a failure of the will?	
Did you simply fail to spend time with God in worship and reflection?	
Or did you disobey him in some way to escape the hardness of the situation?	
Was it a failure of understanding the gospel?	
Did the suffering make you doubt God's love?	
That is a natural response, but did you eventually shake that off?	

The speed with which you do that is an indication of the degree of your understanding of justification. Remember that God can use suffering to “awaken” a person to some sin — as a kind of “intervention.” But interventions are only done by people out of love. God can and will treat you roughly if you need it, like a loving parent will do with a wayward child — but all out of deep concern. If you are a Christian, God has sent all your punishment on to Christ. All his wrath for you fell into the heart of Jesus and was swallowed up and absorbed there — it disappeared forever. He has no wrath left for you.