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# The Epistle of Romans

The Justification of the Ungodly

Chapter 5 Verses 1-11

So far in Romans, we have heard the bad news how no one is righteous, not even one. We have also heard the good news that we are justified by faith, not works. But now that we know we are justified by grace through faith in Christ, what does that mean for us in the here and now? As we live in the present – the daily grind of life – what are the implications of being justified? This is the theme that Paul is about to take up in Chapters 5 to 8.

Before we examine verses 1-11, do you remember Paul's central thesis back in chapter 1? The Gospel is what? The answer, it is the power of God for salvation. So, what does that mean in the present time for you as a Christian?

We must be careful not to jump to our behavior at this point immediately. In other words, we often spend a lot of time talking about sin; then we talk about salvation for about 2 seconds before moving on to our behavior. Thus, what can happen is that we talk about vices, then we talk about Jesus and salvation for a brief moment before moving on to our behavior. For example, GOSSIP

IS BAD FOR IT BREAKS THE 8<sup>TH</sup> COMMANDMENT AND HURTS PEOPLE'S REPUTATIONS, *in Christ you are forgiven in the power of the gospel*, DON'T GOSSIP ANYMORE BUT SPEAK ONLY POSITIVE THINGS ABOUT YOUR NEIGHBOR. Do you see how easy it is to move quickly over salvation – going from vice to virtue and bypassing salvation or making salvation a minor point?

Now, trying to go from Vice to Virtue isn't necessarily wrong. Vices are bad. Virtue is good. However, we must keep in mind that the shift is not from vice to virtue, but instead, it is from vice to faith in Christ. The end goal is not virtue, but Christ! And Christ is not anti-virtue! When Christ is the goal, virtue will be the fruit. Indeed, virtue comes forth as a fruit of faith. Virtue comes forth as a work of the Holy Spirit.

So, examining Romans 5, verses 1 to 11, what do we learn about this present reality of salvation – the power of the Gospel for the Christian? We learn four things.

First, the Christian has peace – peace with God. Keep in mind that this peace comes as a result of receiving righteousness. In other words, one cannot have peace before receiving the righteousness of Christ. Indeed, it is perverse to claim peace with God without Christ! But what about peace? It is peace knowing that we are free from the wrath and judgment of God. It is a spiritual peace that produces peace of the conscience.

Second, the Christian stands in the state of grace. This is confidence – not in oneself – but confidence that one is in God’s good pleasure. And where is God’s good pleasure? It is in Christ.

Thirdly, the Christian can have joyful pride. Joyful pride is the opposite of shame. This joyful pride can even exist while suffering! It is a joyful pride (a boasting) knowing that one is not only in a state of grace, but that one will have the hope of future glory when the Lord makes all things right.

Fourth, the Christian is not left to fend for himself/herself in this life under the sun. The Christian is given God’s love through the Holy Spirit. This love is supernatural. Keep in mind that love is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and it is pumped into the Christian’s heart as gift! Indeed, this love is ‘Godly impulses’ worked by the Spirit in the Christian towards a neighbor.

Peace, confidence, joyful pride, and love – this is the power of the Gospel for the Christian, in spite of the circumstances of life. This is the Christian’s present reality.



