

The Joy of Proven Character - Romans 5

December 28, 2017

Romans 5:1-2 ESV

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

peace (eirēnē) *peace, rest, quietness, harmony, concord, security, safety*

"The tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, of whatsoever sort that is." -- Outline of Biblical Usage, Larry Pierce

1 John 4:18 ESV

18 There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

"This peace with God is a calm, intelligent sense of friendship with the Almighty Lord of heaven and earth. He that has it, feels as if there was no barrier and separation between himself and his holy Maker. He can think of himself as under the eye of an all-seeing Being, and yet not feel afraid. He can believe that this all-seeing Being beholds him, and yet is not displeased." -- J.C. Ryle, Sermon "Justified!"

Psalm 32:1-5 ESV

1 A Maskil of David. Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

2 Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

3 For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.

4 For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.

Selah

5 I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah

"True repentance proceeds to produce confession of sin. The tongue of a repentant person is loosed. They feel they must speak to that God against whom they have sinned. Something within them tells them they must cry to God, and pray to God, and talk with God, about the state of their own soul. They must pour out their heart, and acknowledge their iniquities, at the throne of grace. They are a heavy burden within them, and they can no longer keep silent. They can keep nothing back. They will not hide anything. They go before God, pleading nothing for themselves, and are willing to say, "I have sinned against heaven and before You—my iniquity is great. God be merciful to me, a sinner!" When a person goes thus to God in confession, you have the third step in true repentance." -- J.C. Ryle

1 John 1:9 ESV

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Romans 5:2 ESV

2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

2 Peter 1:2-4 ESV

2 May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,

4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

Romans 5:3-5 ESV

3 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance (*hypomone - steadfastness, constancy, endurance, patient waiting, perseverance*),

4 and endurance produces character, and character (*dokime - a proving, approved, tried character, of tried worth, experience, experiment, test*) produces hope (*elpis - joyful and confident expectation of salvation, to anticipate with pleasure*),

5 and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Only by suffering:

1. **Sin is purged from our hearts** (*pleasure, ease and comfort has never purged even one sin*).

1 Peter 4:1-2 ESV

1 Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

2 so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.

2. **We are exercised in the ways of godliness and holiness** (*pleasure, ease and comfort exercises us in selfishness and self-indulgence*).

Hebrews 12:11 ESV

11 For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Hebrews 5:14 ESV

But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

3. **The work of God in our heart is exposed** (*pleasure, ease and comfort never exposes our true nature and character*).

1 Peter 1:6-7 ESV

*6 In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials,
7 so that the tested genuineness of your faith--more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire--may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

When suffering reveals what suffering has produced, a most joyful expectation of God's continuing work and salvation in us is released.

James 1:2-4 ESV

2 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,

3 for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.

4 And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

The true child of God will greet the pain of every trial with all joy, knowing that God is masterfully using this very suffering to perfect in me what is lacking, to further mold me to be like Him.

Hebrews 12:9-10 ESV

9 Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live?

10 For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness.

No external or circumstantial miracle can bring the joy and hope like the miracle of a changed heart.

Philippians 1:6 ESV

6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Jude 1:24-25 ESV

24 Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy,

25 to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

How do you know that your heart has been changed supernaturally by the Spirit of God, rather than your behavior being modified by self-discipline?

Isaiah 30:21-22 ESV

21 And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.

22 Then you will defile your carved idols overlaid with silver and your gold-plated metal images. You will scatter them as unclean things. You will say to them, "Be gone!"

Hebrews 8:10 ESV

10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.