

February 15-16, 2025

Title: Romans: The Free Gift, Pt 3: “The Peace, Access, and Hope of Justification” – Romans 5:1-5

Big Idea: Rejoice in the peace, access, and hope of justification by faith alone.

Read Romans 5:1-5.

What in the message stood out to you?

What questions do you have?

1. The PEACE of justification – Romans 5:1

Read Romans 5:1. What comes to your mind when you hear the word “peace?”

What do you think it means to have peace with God? How is this different from the way people talk about peace today?

If we must be justified by faith to have peace with God, what is our relationship to God before we are justified? See Romans 1:18, Romans 2:5, and Romans 2:8 for help in answering.

To have peace with God is to have “shalom” with Him. This means, among other things, that He is now FOR us and not AGAINST us. Read Romans 8:31-35. What are some things you observe about our new relationship with God from these verses? How should this encourage us?

2. The ACCESS of justification – Romans 5:2a

Read Romans 5:2a. The word translated “access” has the sense of “to bring near” or “to introduce.” How does it make you feel to know that Jesus has introduced you to God and given you VIP access to Him?

What are some ways that we can enjoy this access to God? How have you enjoyed this access to God over the past week?

What does it mean to stand in grace? How should this reality inspire our prayer lives?

Read Hebrews 4:16. How should we come to God? What should we come to Him for?

What are some current needs in your life? Have you brought these needs to God? Why or why not?

3. The HOPE of justification – Romans 5:2b

Read Romans 5:2b. What does it mean to rejoice in hope of the glory of God?

Do you long for heaven? What are you most looking forward to? How do these things relate to the glory of God?

How does your current access to God create hope for even more in the future?

Read Romans 5:3-4. What do these verses say about the relationship between suffering and hope?

In what ways have your own sufferings increased your hope in future glory?

How does suffering produce endurance? How does endurance produce tested character? Why does tested character produce more hope?

Read Romans 5:5. Have you ever experienced more of God's love while you suffered? Describe this experience. How did this help you endure? How did this increase your hope?

Read 1 Peter 1:6-9. What do these verses say are the results of having our faith tested and proved genuine? Can this happen any other way than through suffering? Why or why not?

"Next Steps" Takeaways – Discuss and pray through the following:

- With God:
 - Spend some time with God this week and journal about your experience with suffering in light of Romans 5:3-4:
 - Does suffering drive you away from God, or toward Him?
 - Does it help you sift out the unimportant from the important?
 - Does it help you focus your attention more on prayer and on what God has done for you?
 - Does it produce tested confidence that your faith is real?
 - Does it lead you to a deeper experience of His presence and love?
 - If the answer to any of these is "no," ask the Lord to reveal to you where you are putting your hope other than Him (health, comforts, relationships, possessions, etc.) and help you change this.
- With Others:
 - Pray for the people you love that God will use suffering in their lives to increase their experience of His hope and love.
 - If you are new to the faith or new to the church, register for and attend the "First Step Welcome Lunch" on Sunday 3/2 at 12:15pm
- On Mission:
 - Register for and attend the 6 week "Heritage of Hope" class that is starting next Sunday 2/23 at 9am.
 - Don't just live well. Die well. Leave behind a "heritage of hope."
 - Give those around you the gift of finishing your life well as you hope in Jesus.
 - Plan to hope in God by sharing your faith.
 - Plan to hope in God by sharing medical and memorial decisions.
 - Plan to hope in God by sharing your possessions through a will or trust.