



International Bible Study Commentary

Verse-by-Verse Bible Lessons Thru the Bible

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Lesson 7

Romans 5:1-11 Commentary New International Version

(Romans 5:1) Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

When we place our faith in Jesus Christ for salvation “by the law of faith,” as Paul wrote in Romans 3:27, we have peace with God, because God has forgiven us and cleansed us from sin. By God’s grace, through faith in Jesus Christ, God has declared us to be acceptable to Him and right with Him (God has justified us). Furthermore, Jesus Christ has placed us in a right relationship with God (God has reconciled us); therefore, we have peace within our hearts and minds before God. Justified by faith in Jesus, we are no longer at war against God. We are no longer His enemies. God no longer considers us enemies or in rebellion against Him or His Kingdom. Jesus Christ has changed us, and He has given us the Holy Spirit to indwell us (God has sanctified us). Jesus Christ is our Lord, and we now live in the Kingdom of God, as Paul described in Romans 14:17, “For the kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” We are no longer at war against the followers of Jesus Christ or against any of Jesus’ commandments in the Bible. We love Jesus and we love to obey Jesus and we love all who love and follow Jesus. We are no longer at war within ourselves because we know that God does not condemn us and we do not need to condemn ourselves for our sins of the past, as Paul wrote in Romans 8:1, “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” We love to follow, trust, and obey Jesus Christ because He is our Lord and Savior. Jesus our Lord has saved us by His free grace and power as a gift, a gift we do not deserve.

(Romans 5:2) 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.

Made possible by the sacrificial death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, we now stand before God by God's grace, forgiveness, and pardon for our sins. Now, we love and obey the law of faith and trust Jesus Christ for our salvation. Now, we stand in the presence of God as one of God's friends instead of one of God's enemies. As Jesus said to His disciples in John 15:14-15, Jesus says to us, "You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father." We live in the presence of God as one of His loving and devoted children by our adoption into God's family, as Paul wrote of Christians in Romans 8:15-16, "For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him." By faith in Jesus Christ, we stand in joy and peace in the presence of God, which is made possible by God's fatherhood and friendship toward us, expressed to us through our Lord Jesus Christ and His work in our lives. We now have hope, the assurance and conviction that what God has promised to do in us and for us God will do. Through Jesus Christ, we will be enabled to show forth the glory of God and the image of God in us. After our resurrection from the dead, we will be glorified with new human bodies. The Apostle John described what our resurrected lives would be like in 1 John 3:2, "Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is." We can boast in God the Father, in Jesus Christ, and in Jesus' gracious words and works, but we will not boast in our faith or works—given to us as free gifts from God, Who gives us purpose in this life—even purpose in our suffering.

(Romans 5:3) Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance;

We glory in God and the future that God has prepared for every believer in Jesus Christ. We also glory in our sufferings because our sufferings are not

meaningless—God has a plan to use our sufferings for our good and the good of others always. Through trusting in Jesus, whose Spirit lives and works within us, our sufferings will make us better believers and better able to bring God honor and glorify God in every situation, whether our sufferings are removed in this life or not. The Holy Spirit will work in us while we suffer and empower us to endure and persevere in faithful trust and obedience to Jesus. We glory in this fact and in the opportunities that Jesus gives to us to show forth the faithfulness of God to His children.

(Romans 5:4) perseverance, character; and character, hope.

As we suffer as believers, we are conscious of making choices (often repeatedly and sometimes after great struggles) to persist in faithful obedience to God in Christ rather than give up and turn away from God or distrust Jesus. As we choose to trust in Jesus with the Holy Spirit's guidance and power, our character (our moral power and consistency of purpose to keep loving God, others, and ourselves according to the Scriptures) further develops and glorifies God. Perseverance and character development are not automatic or mechanical, but through our faith in Jesus Christ; therefore, our hope of obtaining God's future for us becomes more assured and we become spiritually stronger to face life's challenges.

(Romans 5:5) 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.

Job suffered as his "friends" and Satan unjustly tried to make him feel ashamed and guilty and deserving of God's punishment. Similar afflictions and "comforts" can happen to those who keep trusting in Christ while they suffer. Through the Holy Spirit, God pours out His love into the hearts of everyone who believes in Jesus Christ for salvation. The loving work of the indwelling Holy Spirit will grant us assurance of God's everlasting love and grace in our suffering. Believers do not rely on their feelings of being loved by God while they suffer. Rather, they trust in God's Word that the Holy Spirit has brought home to their hearts as they have prayed, studied, and applied the Bible's teachings over many years of following Jesus. God the Father and Jesus have indeed given the Holy Spirit to indwell all who

believe in Jesus Christ; therefore, they know God's love and peace and no matter what their accusers say their suffering will not make them ashamed.

(Romans 5:6) You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.

According to God's perfect timing, Jesus Christ died for the ungodly, and Paul has already proved that all Jews and Gentiles have behaved in ungodly ways—that includes us. Because we have behaved in ungodly ways, apart from the work of Jesus Christ and faith in Him, we are unable to save ourselves or stand in the presence of God in the right (as righteous or justified people). We are powerless to make ourselves right with God. God himself began to make us right with Him when Jesus Christ died for the ungodly, and God will reveal our complete justification when He shows that we are right in His sight and declares His just judgement for us on the Great Day of Judgment—all made possible by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ who died and rose from the dead for us. In the Scriptures, God has revealed many good reasons and promises for us to repent of our sins and believe in Jesus Christ and His sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins.

(Romans 5:7) Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die.

In this context, a "righteous person" is one who appears to be right before the watching world. In their own eyes, the Pharisees were "righteous" because they tried to live according to their laws and traditions. They rarely showed love for God or those who did not believe and behave as they did. Rarely will someone die in the place of someone who acts like the Pharisees acted. A "good person" is probably one who strives to do good to others or help people in need. Paul wrote that a "good person" might so win the admiration or love of someone that they might be willing to die in their place for them. We know of those who have died to save a loved one, a family member, or a fellow soldier, but they might not have consciously chosen to die instead of them. We do not hear of anyone choosing to die in the place of someone who hates them and has hurt them to save them.

(Romans 5:8) But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

When God looked (and looks) at sinners (and all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God—Romans 3:23), God does not see righteous and good people because God sees into our hearts. But rather than see us all judged and condemned to eternal death as we deserve because we have violated God's Law of Love, God has proven His love for us by sending Jesus Christ to die for us—so God could be just when He justifies us instead of punishing us as we deserve. Because we know these facts even while we suffer in this life, we have hope for the future and for the glory and friendship of God that we will experience in ever greater measure throughout eternity.

(Romans 5:9) Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!

No matter what we feel or what is happening to or around us, we have hope based on our assurance of God's fulfilled promises and loving works as revealed in the Bible. As followers of Jesus Christ, we will be saved from God's just punishment on the Great Day of God's Just Judgment because of the saving work of Jesus Christ. As we look around us and see evil deeds openly practiced, approved of, and encouraged by others, we can begin to understand why our holy and loving God justly and righteously experiences wrath (great anger and fury) toward those who seek to destroy all that our holy and loving God has done for generations to bless all people everywhere and show forth His lovingkindness to everyone. We only see a tiny fraction of all the evil and harm caused by those who hate God, who have turned from the true God, and who make us so angry we call out for justice. Some of the greatest evils being perpetrated are by those who claim to be "religious." By varying degrees, everyone has done evil and need God's saving grace and forgiveness. Thankfully, by grace, Jesus shed His blood as a sacrifice on our behalf. As followers of Jesus, we have been justified by God and will have peace with God now and forevermore through faith in Jesus. We know we will be saved on the Great Day of Judgment because God's love has been poured into our hearts and the Holy Spirit has been given to us to transform us into the image of our loving Savior and Lord.

(Romans 5:10) 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!

Paul emphasized the benefits of faith in Jesus Christ, and we begin to consciously receive these benefits when we believe in and begin to follow Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. We do not trust in our imperfect life and works or what we hope to do in the future, but we trust in the life and works of Jesus Christ who died and rose again for us before we ever repented and began to love and trust in Jesus or our heavenly Father. Since Jesus has done all that Paul has described (and even more) for us while we were still God's enemies, by Jesus' life and work in our lives we have the assurance that He can and will give us eternal life as He promised (see John 3:16). We will be saved by His life because He lives and works within us. Remember what Jesus promised in John 14:23, "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them." God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit make their home with those who love Jesus and keep (obey) His word.

(Romans 5:11) Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

When we sinned against God and refused to love God and others as we ought, we sinned personally against a personal God (not some distant dictator or potentate who is concerned only for his self-image, selfish interests, and obedience to his rules). After we rebelled against God and brought disgrace upon ourselves, we could not have an acceptable personal relationship with God because of our true moral guilt. A judge in a courtroom can justify or condemn us impersonally without ever desiring to have a personal, loving relationship with us. But God created us in His image and God loves us and wants to have an eternal loving personal relationship with us. Therefore, Jesus Christ came into the world to justify, forgive, cleanse, and pardon guilty sinners. Through Jesus Christ, God has established a personal, loving relationship between God the Father, God the Son, the Holy Spirit and us. Jesus prays for us as our High Priest in heaven. God the Father hears and answers Jesus' prayers for us. The Holy Spirit

indwells and prays within us to comfort, guide, and help us. These are some of the fruits of reconciliation that we have received by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Our reconciliation is with and through the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Our justification through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ made our reconciliation with God possible. The Holy Spirit also enables forgiveness and reconciliation among the repentant followers of Jesus Christ. Our God and King, the Judge of the universe, wants to have a personal, loving, and everlasting relationship with us, and through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ we have become true and lasting friends with God and members of His forever family. As children of God in the family of God, we also have personal, loving, and everlasting relationships with one another.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. What kind of peace do believers in Jesus Christ have through faith in Him?
2. When is boasting wrong and when is it right?
3. Give one reason the followers of Christ can glory in their sufferings?
4. What reason did Paul give for our hope as believers not putting us to shame?
5. What were we like when Christ died for us?

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