

PEACE WITH GOD

Removing Hostility through Reconciliation

Romans Series
PBC 2025

Text: Romans 5:1-11

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 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. ³ Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 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. ⁶ For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. ¹¹ More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Introduction:

This morning, I am excited that we are returning to Romans to continue our journey through the greatest letter ever written – the Mt. Everest of the NT!

As we start a new section of the book in chapter five, I think it will be helpful to pull out our map and look at the big outline of the book so we know where we are on the trail and see how this part of the book supports Paul's main message that ***the Gospel is the good news about how and why God saves the world through His Son and for His glory.***

Setting the Context: Five Big Sections (Romans in 5 Words_

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|-----------------|-------------|
| 1. Euangelion | 1:1-17 |
| 2. Condemnation | 1:18 – 3:20 |

3. Salvation 3:21 – 8:39

- *Propitiation (3:21-31)*
- *Justification (4)*
- ***Reconciliation (5)***
- *Sanctification (6-7)*
- *Glorification (8)*

4. Confirmation 9:1 – 11:36

5. Application 12:1 – 16:27

By the time we reach this section, Paul has explained ***why a person needs the good news of the gospel*** – that God has provided a righteousness through His Son that will rescue a sinner from His righteous wrath and remove that sinner from His just condemnation. (1:1 -3:20)

Paul explained ***how this righteousness from God is received*** – by grace alone, through faith alone, in the finished work of Christ alone.

Now, as he begins chapter five, Paul shifts his focus to a specific group of people – those who have been justified. He writes the rest of the book to individuals who have repented of their sins, fully trusted in Christ, and been justified through their faith (*see the verb tense in 5:1 – “therefore, since we have been justified by faith”*).

In the passage before us (5:1-11), Paul highlights two main benefits that enter the lives of those who have been justified by faith alone (5:1).

A person who has truly been justified by faith receives:

1. A new position with God

- We have peace with God (5:1)
- We obtain access/standing into a new realm/the kingdom of God (5:2)

2. A new perspective on life

- We rejoice (glory/boast) in the confident hope of being restored to the glory of God (5:2).
- We rejoice (glory/boast) in our suffering (5:3).
- We rejoice (glory/boast) in God to whom we have been reconciled (5:11).

This morning, I want us to focus on the first of two main benefits that come from our justification – “Peace with God.” **This phrase is monumental in Scripture.** All of humanity has longed to hear this from God ever since the day Adam and Eve sinned because they were deceived and because of their unbelief in God’s Word, which led them to willfully disobey God’s will. Their unbelief and disobedience broke the “shalom” (peace) they once enjoyed with God in Genesis 1-2.

And from that moment, all of humanity has longed for the fulfillment of God’s promise to send a champion who would be the “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace,” and who would establish a kingdom characterized by righteousness and unending, everlasting peace! (Isaiah 9:6-7)

And one day, Paul picked up his pen and wrote these monumental words, **“We have peace with God!”**

I. The Nature of this Peace (5:1)

We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

A. Position vs. Possession – “with God” vs. “from God”

- There is an internal peace that comes from God that strengthens and stabilizes believers in trouble and affliction.

Isaiah 26:3 You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

Philippians 4:7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

- This internal peace that comes from God ***is not what Paul has in mind here. He is referring to a change in our relationship or standing with God.*** We have entered into a completely new position in relation to God – we are at peace with Him!
- Before we were justified, we were under His righteous wrath and just condemnation. Now, all of that has been reversed, and we stand in a very different place with Him relationally – all is well.
- We now enjoy the “shalom” (harmony) and full-orbed blessing that Adam and Eve experienced when they walked with God in the kingdom of Eden before the Fall!

B. Present Reality vs. Potential Hope – “We have Peace with God!”

- Note the present tense verb – we have peace with God.
- Paul uses grammar to emphasize important theological points. This is evident in the 11 verses before us.
- He uses the past tense to describe justification as something that has been completed at a specific point in time in our lives. In other words, justification is not a repeated event; it is something that occurs once, and when it happens, it is complete and permanent.
- However, it reflects a present reality that continually exists in our lives – we are relationally restored to God now and forever.

C. Permanent vs. Temporary

- God requires conditions for justification—repentance and obedient faith. However, God places no conditions on this peace.
- Justification places believers into a new, permanent relationship with God because He fully forgives their sins, imputes Christ's full righteousness to them, and changes their relationship to Him – and these three things are not based on how well we behave going forward; they depend on our relationship to God through Christ!
- Later in the chapter, we will see how this works – but essentially, we can sum it up this way: justification permanently unites us to Christ in such a way that whatever happens to Christ, happens to us!

- This is why Paul can end this section on salvation so confidently – “There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus” (8:1) and “[nothing] will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord!” (8:39)

II. The Need for this Peace (5:6-8)

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

A. *Our relationship with God before justification – ungodly sinners who are the objects of His righteous wrath.*

- The term “ungodly” shows up in 1:18 to describe people who are under God’s wrath because of their impiety and willful wickedness in suppressing the truth of God.
- These are people who refused to give God glory; who rejected His good design and wise plan for life; and who rebelled against His moral authority!
- We were not just people who made an innocent mistake. We are people who were at one time at war with God! There was active enmity and deep hostility between us and God (Romans 8:7).
- This enmity and deep hostility manifested itself in a refusal to submit to God’s righteous standard expressed in His moral law – this what Paul meant in 1:32 when he described us by saying, *“Though they know God’s righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give (hearty) approval to those who practice them!”*
- And we have certainly seen examples of this very recently in how people have responded to the senseless brutal murder of an individual who spoke boldly and clearly for the gospel!
- And God’s response to this open rebellion, deep hostility, and entrenched enmity is Righteous Wrath and Just Condemnation on all ungodliness and unrighteous men (1:18).

B. Our denial of that reality – we are not spiritually healthy but “weak” and “unrighteous” sinners.

- Paul consistently uses the term “weak” to describe people who lack faith in God. They might believe in God, but they do not trust or obey Him, and they are not faithful followers.
- This is important because in Romans 3, Paul argues that justification comes solely through faith. In other words, those who are “weak” in the sense that they lack faith and rely on their works are still at odds with God.
- Romans 1 describes people who openly reject God and rebel against His moral authority over their lives. And most of us know people like this who are at “war” with God and who are hostile toward the idea that God exists or are deeply offended by the idea that God has moral authority over them.
- However, most religious people do not believe they are at war with God. They might admit that things are not entirely right with Him or that they have disappointed Him by their sins, and many are working hard to become righteous enough to please God. But they do not see themselves as God’s enemies who are at war with Him.
- However, in Romans 1-3, Paul makes it clear that all people are alienated from God because of their sins, and they instinctively sense the relational gap between themselves and God.
- Millions of people are desperately trying to earn favor with God so that He will set aside His wrath, remove His condemnation, forgive their sins, and welcome them into His presence now in this life and in the life to come. In other words, they are seeking a way to reconcile with God and enjoy peace with Him.

Beth and I saw this while in Rome, where more than 32 million people came to earn a plenary indulgence for their sins from the Pope during the Year of Jubilee. Some of them sought an additional plenary indulgence by climbing the Santa Scala (28 holy stairs that Helena brought to Rome) on their knees! ***All in an effort to seek and maintain peace with God!***

III. Obtaining this Peace (5:1, 9)

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

Romans 5:9 Since, therefore, we have now been **justified by his blood**, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.

A. ***This peace was procured by Jesus Christ our Lord.***

- God is the offended party – but He initiated and accomplished all that is needed to establish peace with us and grant it to us.
- He is the ultimate peacemaker – He himself is our peace.
- Listen to Paul describe this to the Ephesian believers:

Ephesians 2:13–17 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ **For he himself is our peace**, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵ by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, **so making peace**, ¹⁶ **and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility**. ¹⁷ And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.

B. ***This peace is based on His Sacrificial Death in Our Place***

Romans 5:9–10 Since, therefore, we have now been **justified by his blood**, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies **we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son**, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

Colossians 1:19–23 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and **through him to reconcile to himself all things**, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. ²¹ And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²² **he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him**, ²³ if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

C. ***Faith Alone is the requirement to obtain this peace***

Romans 5:11 More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom **we have now received** reconciliation.

- This is present, ongoing reconciliation – “we have **now** received” is the same language Paul uses in 5:9, “we have **now** been justified by his blood.”
- His blood was the ground for appeasing (propitiating) God’s wrath and atoning for our sins, **making justification possible**.

- Our faith is the means by which this justification is accessed (5:1 – *since we have been justified by faith*), **making justification actual**.

IV. The Effect of this Peace (5:2)

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.

- Because justified people now enjoy eternal peace with God, they also have permanent access to a new Realm and have been granted citizenship in a new Kingdom—the kingdom of God that functions as a realm where grace prevails!
- Paul employs kingdom and dominion language to depict sin and grace governing two separate realms.

Romans 5:20–21 Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,²¹ so that, as **sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life** through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- In the old realm, the **Kingdom of Sin and Death** – sin reigned over us, and death had dominion over us (Romans 6:8-12).
- In the new realm, the **Kingdom of Grace and Life** – grace reigns over us, and righteousness has dominion over us, leading to life!
- Which brings us to the last point – how do we respond to all of this?

Conclusion: Responding to this Peace

As we consider these incredible benefits, God wants our hearts to respond in two very specific ways.

First, a text like this should give us a new perspective on life – rejoicing!

- The term “rejoice” means to “glory” or to “exult” in – to be filled with exuberant, explosive joy at our extreme good fortune!
- We rejoice in the confident hope of being restored to the glory of God that was lost at the Fall. (5:2)
- We rejoice in our suffering because of what it produces in us. (5:3)
- We rejoice in the reconciliation with God that we have received through Jesus Christ our Lord! (5:11)

Question: Are you a person who is known for your joyfulness?

Second, a text like this should motivate us to a new purpose in life – being unashamed, unstoppable ambassadors for reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:17–21 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. ¹⁸ All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and ***gave us the ministry of reconciliation***; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ ***Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.*** ²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Question: Are you a good ambassador of the gospel? Are you using your life and vocation as a platform to implore others to be reconciled to God?

Illustration:

Reconciled Through Death: Years ago in a western city a husband and wife became estranged and chose to separate after the death of their only son. They moved away and lived in different parts of the country. The husband happened to return to the city on a matter of business and went out to the cemetery to the grave of their son. He was standing by the grave in fond reminiscence when he heard a step behind him. Turning, he saw his estranged wife. The initial impulse of both was to turn away. ***But they had a common-hearted interest in that grave, and instead of turning away, they clasped hands over the grave of their son and were reconciled.*** They were reconciled at a place of death! Our personal reconciliation took nothing less than the death of God's Son; but his death and its effects went far beyond any human death. This is why we can be confident when we implore men to be reconciled to God – because the death of His Only Son is the means of that reconciliation! (Clarence E. Macartney, Macartney's Illustrations)