

Hope Does Not Disappoint

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Date: 07 July 2019

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[0 : 00] Turn with me, please, to Romans chapter 5, Romans chapter 5, and I will read verses 1 to 5.

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand, and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance, perseverance character, and character hope.

And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

Verse 5, we read, and hope does not disappoint us. Now, we all know that disappointments in life will come as surely as snow comes in the winter.

[1 : 12] When it's July, it's hard to imagine the snow out there, but it will come. And so, in the same way that the squirrels start storing away the acorns for the coming storms, we need to be storing away God's truth in our life, in our thinking, because we know that the times of disappointments will come.

And months ago, as Linda and I looked ahead in time to the weeks that we were quite sure were arriving, when we would be moving, and most of you are aware that there have been some bumps on that road.

We're still not exactly certain when we'll be moving. But it's moving in that direction. I started thinking, what do I want to say to Grace Fellowship Church?

Is there something I want to say in my final weeks there, in opening God's word to them? Do I have anything particular that I want to add, that I want to say from God's word?

And as I meditated on that and read, this theme began to develop in my head of the, as I saw in God's word, of there is no disappointment in this hope that we have in God.

[2 : 45] So, this morning, I'd like to look at the passage here in Romans chapter 5. We are driving towards that theme in verse 5. The hope of the glory of God does not disappoint us.

But let's begin by putting it in a larger context. In the book of Romans chapter 1 and 2, Paul demonstrates the fallen sinful condition of all mankind.

Paul's description of mankind's depravity and God's righteous wrath culminates in chapter 3, verses 10 and 12, where he says, There is no one righteous, not even one.

There is no one who understands. There is no one who seeks God. All have turned away. They have together become worthless. There is no one who does good, not even one.

Well, in the face of this hopeless situation, Paul introduces the good news in Romans chapter 3, verses 21 and 22. But now, a righteousness from God, apart from the law, has been made known to which the law and the prophets testify.

[3 : 54] This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. In the following verses, Paul proclaims the justice of God in punishing sins in Christ.

Sins that had not been punished are satisfied in the redemption that Christ provided on the cross. Paul proclaims the grace of God in the redemption of sinners.

And then in chapter 4, Paul moves in to demonstrate how Abraham received his redemption by faith. He was justified by faith and not by works.

And so we too are justified by faith, not by works. And in chapter 5, Paul begins to open up the implications, the blessings, the fruit of our justification.

From chapter 5 to chapter 8, he will open up those implications as he expounds on our union with Christ, our freedom from bondage of sin, our life in the spirit, our election by the Father, and much

more.

[5 : 03] And as he does that, we see even more fully the implications of our justification. He starts here in chapter 5. Proclaiming our peace with God and our assurance of the hope of the glory of God.

So, let's look at the first two verses as we move towards hope. Verses 1 and 2 of chapter 5.

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into his grace in which we now stand, and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

Starts out with therefore. Because this is true, because we are totally condemned and sinful, because we are under God's wrath, because righteousness has been provided in Christ, because we are justified by faith and not by works.

Therefore, since all of that is true. And then in these two verses, there are three points I want to focus on. We are justified by faith.

That theme is mentioned twice. We have peace with God, and we rejoice in hope. Justified by faith.

[6 : 30] Notice in verse 1, at the beginning of verse 2, that the central proclamation of peace with God is flanked by two different phrases, which communicate the same central truth.

Our justification is based on the work of Christ, which we receive by our faith. Verse 1.

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom, that is through Christ, we have gained access by faith.

By faith, through faith, through our faith, we have received our justification. Now, our salvation, our redemption, our justification, is based on the merits of Christ, on his work.

We receive them by means of our faith. The means of our receiving Christ's finished work, notice it's not a work.

[7 : 44] We are not being rewarded because we're having faith. If we start to think that we are to be rewarded for our faith, scripture makes it clear that even that is given to us.

In Ephesians 2, verses 8 and 9, we read, For it is by grace you have been saved through faith, and this, that is your faith, not from yourselves.

It is a gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast. Lest we begin to think that our faith, which is an essential part of our receiving our justification, is a work that merits our salvation.

Scripture makes clear, no, your faith is not a work. Our faith is the means, it is the method by which we receive the merit of the salvation Christ has secured for us.

See, biblical faith looks outward. Having seen the depth of our sin, our total depravity, that we are helpless to secure our own salvation, we come to the end of ourselves, and we say, I need help from outside.

[9 : 02] I am a sinner. I repent of my sins. I am looking to Christ. I am looking to the cross. And that outward vision of faith is not a work.

It's coming to the end of yourself and trusting in Christ. So scripture makes it clear, it's by the means of that, by our faith, we are saved, not by our works.

Well, as I pointed out, that phrase flanks the central proclamation in verse one that we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, Paul is not speaking here of the peace of God. The peace of God is that quieting, calming assurance that we can know in the midst of troubles and anxiety and fear.

Probably the best known scripture that addresses that is in Philippians chapter one. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God and the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus.

[10 : 21] Here in Romans chapter five, Paul is speaking about our peace with God. Once we were God's enemies, now we are his friends.

Once we were objects of his wrath, now we are recipients of his grace. Once we were dead in our sins and without hope, now we are alive in Christ and given the hope of the glory of God.

We have been reconciled with God. God is no longer angry at us for our sins. They have been paid in full by Christ on the cross. We have been washed in the blood of the Lamb.

We are no longer in rebellion against God. Our rebellion has been replaced with submission. We are no longer fearful of an angry God. Our fear has been replaced with love.

We are at peace with God and he is at peace with us. What a glorious proclamation.

[11 : 22] We have peace with God in our justification which we receive through faith. Now, our peace with God is not just a subjective feeling but it's an objective reality.

Our subjective feelings, our emotions, they wax and wane, they grow and diminish, they change with our health, with our circumstances, even with the weather.

But, the peace with God is firm and secure because it is not based on our emotions.

It is based on the unchanging work of Christ. If we possess faith in the work of Christ, we have peace with God.

That is a present, certain, objective reality. reality. Now, while our peace is an objective reality, it should also be a subjective reality.

[12 : 24] We should delight in that. We should embrace it. It should give us joy. Our emotions are not the source of that peace with God but our peace emotionally we are distant from the Lord.

If we have truly trusted in Him, we have a peace with God. Rejoice in hope and that brings us to the second half of verse 2.

And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Our hope causes rejoicing to begin now because we stand in grace.

You see that phrase there in verse 2 as well. We are standing in the grace in which we now stand and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. But hope primarily looks forward.

It begins now. We experience the blessings of it now. But the nature of hope is to look forward. Just a few pages ahead in Romans chapter 8. We read that in Romans 8 verses 23 to 25.

[13 : 35] Not only so but we ourselves who have the first fruits of the Spirit grown inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoptions as sons the redemption of our bodies.

For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? But if we hope for what we do not yet have we wait for it patiently.

It is the nature of hope to look forward. We're going to consider that a little bit more fully in verse 5. But then notice here in verse 3 it goes on we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God and in verse 3 not only so some other translations not only that not only this Paul now introduces a new comparison which is even more astounding.

It's almost as if he says it's hard to believe but not only so but we also rejoice in our sufferings because we know that suffering produces perseverance character and character hope.

We rejoice in sufferings because it is a path to glory because we know that our suffering will have meaning. It will produce a good result.

[14 : 58] You see that process laid out there in verses 3 and 4. Suffering perseverance character hope. Each quality helps to produce the next.

Each one moves on beyond to the next step. The development of perseverance and character and hope does not necessarily mean that our suffering will come to an end.

It might even increase because as that process of suffering brings us to spiritual maturity, we are better equipped to handle further suffering in an even more godly way.

Go through that cycle and grow even more. We will not reach full maturity in our lifespan, but the experience of that process is causing us to grow in the Lord.

The product of that process is a firm hope in the glory of God. You see back at the end of 4 and back in the beginning of verse 5, we have arrived back at hope.

[16 : 19] You see there at the end of verse 2, Paul lays out how our faith, our justification has brought us peace with God. He emphasizes that we have access to God, that we're standing in grace, and we rejoice in hope.

Paul says, but here's something even more astounding. There's another path to that same hope. Yes, when we meditate upon God's work, when we see it in our life, when we think about how we have peace with God, that leads us to hope.

But Paul says, even if you're suffering, even if you're having to struggle with stuff, even if you're needing to persevere, it will lead to character, and it will lead to hope.

No matter where you are in your life, no matter what's going on, in times of blessing, in times of rich meditation upon what God has done for you, in times of suffering and hurt and pain, both paths lead back to hope.

And the hope that we have here in verse 5 is that same hope in the glory of God that was mentioned in verse 2. We're arrived back at hope.

[17 : 42] If that's right, if I've laid out the passage correctly, and shown you those two paths that Paul lays out, which both bring us back to this hope of the glory of God, we need to be saying, okay, so what is the hope of the glory of God.

The hope of the glory of God includes two aspects. One, the manifestation of the glory, which is God's own.

The manifestation or the demonstration or the seeing of God's glory, his transcendence, his power, his greatness, his goodness, his holiness.

The hope of the glory of God is that hope that we shall see that. In one aspect of it, in John chapter 17, Paul is praying for his disciples in the garden of Gethsemane before, in his anguish there, before going to the cross, he's praying for his disciples, disciples, and in verse 24, he prays, Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am and see my glory.

The glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. Our Lord prays for his people, that includes us, that they will be with him in glory so that they can see, so that we can see Christ's glory which was given to him by the Father.

[19 : 34] The hope of the glory of God is that anticipation, that looking forward to that full and final answer to our Lord's prayer that he prayed there in the garden.

the day will come when all his people will be gathered together and we will see his glory, the glory as of the only begotten son full of grace and truth.

We will see the manifestation of God's glory and what a blessing that will be. That's a hope. Take hold of that hope.

Let that hope drive you. There's another aspect to this hope. That's the hope of the completion of the believer's transformation into the image of the glory of God.

The completion of the believers of our transformation into the image of the glory of God. In Philippians chapter 1, Paul says, I am confident of this thing, that he who began a good work in you will perfect it to the day until the day of Christ Jesus.

[20 : 47] God's going to finish his work. He's going to finish his work in you and you and me. He's going to conform us into the image of his son. The day will come when that will be a reality.

Now, I've said that there are two aspects to this hope of glory, but there's a way in which they connect together. See, the day will come when we will see the hope of the glory of God.

We will see him with undimmed eye, with a sinless heart, and we will at that time have more delight and more comprehension in seeing the glory of God and seeing God more fully will help us to be further transformed into his image, into his glory.

1 John, 1 John chapter 3 verse 2 says, We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. We shall be like him because we will see him as he is.

When we see God in all his glory, all his greatness, all his transcendence, all his power, all his holiness, we will further become more like him. And as we come more like him, we will see him even more clearly.

[22 : 22] As we see him more clearly, we will be further transformed. That same cycle of growing in our comprehension and our seeing of the glory of God will continue for an eternity.

we shall never plumb its depths. We shall never exhaust his glory. That's a hope to look forward to. Now in this life, the Lord refines us through suffering, the suffering that causes perseverance, perseverance character, and character hope.

in the new kingdoms, when we are with the Lord, we will continue to be growing.

We will never be infinite. We will always be finite. We will never know everything. We will always be learning. But suffering will be no more.

[23 : 28] But there will still be that process of seeing God more fully, which will make us more like him, which will enable us to see his glory to an even greater extent.

And so that hope does not disappoint. And hope does not disappoint us.

not know, we will know, many disappointments in our life, in our work, in our plans, in our health, in our relationships.

But those disappointments in life do not necessarily detract. Indeed, they may only intensify our hope in the glory of God, which does not disappoint.

The text tells us there in the beginning of verse five. Why does it not disappoint? Well, the text gives us even more answers to that.

[24 : 42] Because, and hope does not disappoint us because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom he has given us.

We're given there two reasons for why hope does not disappoint us. One is objective. God has poured out his love into our hearts. Two is subjective.

Poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom he has given us. First, that solid objective ground. God's love is poured out onto us.

His love is real and unchanging. It is solid and secure. It is powerful and effective. God's love is poured out on us. It is not rationed out drop by drop.

It is poured out into our hearts. It saturates our hearts. It flows our hearts which in scripture is the center of our being, our intellect, our emotions, our will.

[25 : 42] It is poured out and it affects every area of our life. God's love controls and captivates and affects and it transforms. transforms. But perhaps you think, but maybe I'll miss it.

I mean, God's love is objective, okay, so it is his sovereignty and his power, his rule, his creation. Scripture tells us that the creation around us testifies to God's goodness and power, but billions of people are blind to it.

they don't see it, even though God's creation testifies to his goodness and his power. Maybe I'll be blind.

Maybe my heart will be so hard that God's love being poured out on me will just roll off it like water on a rock. Maybe I won't get it. Maybe I'll miss it.

Well, God's word answers that fear too. God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

[26 : 58] The Holy Spirit has been given to us. He dwells with his people, teaching, instructing, convicting, encouraging, shedding abroad God's love and assuring us that we are his.

We can turn again ahead, just a few pages to Romans chapter 8, verses 15 and 16. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear.

You know that fear that I was just talking about? Maybe I'll miss it. Maybe I won't apprehend God's love. Maybe he'll pour it on my heart and my heart will be too hard. No, not to make you a slave again to fear, but you received the spirit of sonship.

And by him we cry, Abba, Father. The spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

If you're here this morning trusting in Christ, you have that spirit testifying within you. Saying, Lord, my heart is easily distracted, it easily grows cold, but Lord, you know all things, you know that I love you.

[28 : 22] That spirit testifies, it brings God's word to mind. It opens your eyes to see that love poured out into our heart.

So we've walked through these five verses, we've seen whether we have the path of suffering and trials, or whether we have the path of blessing and rich meditation upon what God has done for us. They both lead us to hope, that hope of the glory of God that looks forward to that day when we shall see him, we shall be like him because we shall see him as he is.

Here's the point at which my notes become much more spotty. As I stand before you here this morning, as one of your elders, I thought, what do I want to say to Grace Fellowship Church?

I thought, I don't think a warning is necessary. Warnings are necessary because they're in scripture, but that's not what I want to bring. I don't want to focus upon the ways that the Lord has used our years here to stretch us and grow us in him, although a testimony is appropriate.

[30 : 14] I think maybe I could have done it, maybe I could have done it in a way that was rooted in scripture and glorifying to God, but no, I don't want to be talking about me.

I want to be encouraging you. to take hold of that hope, that hope of the glory of God, because no matter what lies ahead, whether it is suffering or whether it is increased growing in an understanding of who God is and what he does, either path will bring you back to that hope, that looking forward to that day when we shall see the glory of God.

None of us knows what lies ahead in the years, months, weeks, days, even hours, but we can be certain of this, that he who has begun a good work in you will perfect to the day of Christ Jesus.

I want to bring a few applications here, which grow out of this text, and I want to speak them primarily to you, Grace Fellowship Church, as a corporate body.

all of them apply to us as individuals. And you know, most of the time when God's word is being opened up, it is applied to us as individuals, and that's correct.

[31 : 58] Each one of us stands or falls. Each one of us must take hold of God's word and trust in Christ and repent of our sins. That has to happen in each individual heart.

But you know, we're a body. We're a family. We're members of one another. And I want to try to speak this hope to Grace Fellowship Church as a corporate body.

In the days ahead, whether in disappointment or flourishing, be sure you continue to look to the Lord in faith.

We spoke, I spoke of how our faith, the very means by which we receive all of the blessing of our justification, comes by our looking out of ourself, coming to the end of ourselves, seeing that there's no hope here from this source, from here within my heart for me, I must look outward to the cross. I must look to Christ. I must look to God. That will always remain true. Having begun our walk with the Lord with a faith that looks outward, we must continue in that same way.

[33 : 35] Grace Fellowship church, whether in times of prosperity or in times of difficulty and disappointment, must look to the Lord. We will never reach the point where we can keep the work of the church going on our own efforts, where if we just try harder.

Now, there is a place for self-inspection, there is a place for resolve, make no doubt about it, it's all through scripture. But that in and of itself is useless.

Keep your vision outward. Keep looking in faith to the Lord. I suppose I am bringing some warnings, aren't I?

But hopefully they're warnings that are full of encouragement because I'm encouraging you to keep your eyes on Jesus. I encourage you to consider the implications of the fact that Grace Fellowship Church has peace with God.

Each one of us, trusting in Christ, must know that same peace with God. But we have a corporate identity. We have a relationship and a fellowship as brothers and sisters, as a body here at a particular place, in a particular time.

[35 : 07] And Grace Fellowship Church has peace with God. That doesn't mean there aren't sins that need to be addressed. That doesn't mean that there are things we don't need to examine in light and perhaps change or correct in light of scripture.

scripture. That doesn't mean that our particular ways of doing things and convictions are better than any other brethren or church.

But it does mean that this body is at peace with God. And if you are a member of this church and we are at peace with God, how much more should we be at peace with each other?

And know that peace and express it in tangible ways. We have peace with God.

That should bring a smile to our face. We have peace with God. We don't deserve it. We did nothing to earn it. We have peace with God. And yet, we have it.

[36 : 29] If trials and disappointments come, it doesn't mean that God has abandoned his people. He may bring trials that discipline us, that purify us, but that's for our good.

God has to God. He may bring great blessings and prosperity, which cause us to grow.

Beware that we think that we have somehow earned it. Our God always does all things for the good of his people. consider the paths which lead to the hope of glory.

I pointed out how no matter what our pathway is as individuals or as a body, they lead us back to that hope in the glory of God.

look around you and see where there is evidence of God transforming lives, God redeeming people, God bringing a brother or sister who were strangers to grace into excitement and joy over his word, who cannot get enough of being in God's word, who delight in gathering with his people and hearing his word opened and seeing his praises.

[38 : 15] Look around you, where do you see that happening? Where you see it, you will see the evidence of God at work here at Grace Fellowship Church.

Look around you, where do you see suffering? Where do you see suffering and pain and people going through hard times? People struggling with the disappointments that this life brings.

Even there you'll see God at work, suffering producing perseverance, perseverance producing character, character producing hope. If you can speak those truths to yourself when you're in the midst of the suffering, can't you be speaking it to your brother and sister when they're in the midst of suffering?

We need to be doing that. I don't have any more notes.

I don't have any more notes. hope. But I do want to close with this.

[39 : 34] Some of you sitting there may know nothing of that hope of the glory of God. You don't know what I'm talking about.

Or you know it in an intellectual sense. you've sat in enough Sunday school to know what I'm talking about. But you have not embraced it by faith.

Maybe you even have a certain level of intellectual assent. But you've not trusted it. You've not embraced it. You've not put your faith in Christ.

To those of you, if there are any, I encourage you to take hold of Christ through faith.

You need peace with God. You need hope. Not just for this life, but for the life to come.

[40 : 47] Brothers and sisters who are already trusting in Christ, be praying for that power to be at work in our church, even now. Don't turn off your ears.

This doesn't apply to me now. We long to see men and women come to know Christ, come to glory in the cross, and have that hope, that hope of the glory of God.

By God's grace, that hope has grown in my years here at Grace Fellowship.

it has been my privilege, my joy, to be your elder, even when I will acknowledge there have been many times that I have felt the burden of that.

and I feel certain the Lord is leading us on as things become clearer.

[42 : 07] We'll be sharing with the church and prayer concerns that grow from that. But now, brothers and sisters, Grace Fellowship Church, let me read it one more time.

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings because we know that suffering produces perseverance, perseverance, character, and character, hope, and hope does not disappoint us because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom he has given us.

Oh, Father, we thank you for the gifts you've given us. We thank you, Lord, for making us your own. For sending us your spirit. Lord, I thank you for this body of grace fellowship church that you have raised up here in this time and this place.

Lord, we pray that your spirit would be at work among us, causing us to grow evermore in our hope of seeing the glory of God. And may that hope change us day by day, more and more, into the image of Christ.

[43 : 48] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.