

KEY TEXT

Romans 5:1-11 (ESV)

5 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

- *Man's effort to justify himself*
- *Meaning of "to justify"*

The words **"to justify" = "to be just or to be right."**

TO JUSTIFY = TO VALIDATE.

- *Context Summary*

Title

“WHAT IS YOUR JUSTIFICATION?”

Outline:

- **What is Biblical Justification?**
- **What are the benefits of Biblical Justification?**
- **What if we don't grasp this Biblical Justification?**
- **What if we grasp this Biblical Justification?**

MAIN POINT

(1) WHAT IS BIBLICAL JUSTIFICATION?

Verse 1- Therefore, since we have been justified by faith.....

Our key text = Paul's INTIMATE JOY OF HIS CONFIDENCE IN GOD.

TRUSTING FAITH has done what the labor to produce the works of the law could never do.

It has given man PEACE WITH GOD.

It is only when we realize that GOD IS THE FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST that there comes into life THAT INTIMACY WITH HIM, that NEW RELATIONSHIP, which Paul calls JUSTIFICATION.

The teaching of JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH is what separates biblical Christianity from all other belief systems.

In every religion and in some branches of what is called "Christianity", man is working his way to God.

Only in true, biblical Christianity is MAN SAVED AS A RESULT OF GRACE THROUGH FAITH.

Only when we get back to the Bible, do we see that justification is by **FAITH, apart from works.**

The word “justified” means:

- **“PRONOUNCED OR TREATED AS RIGHTEOUS.”**
- **The ACT OF GOD NOT ONLY FORGIVING THE BELIEVER’S SINS BUT IMPUTING TO HIM THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST.**
- **Justification only comes through faith (Romans 5:1; Galatians 3:24).**
- **Justification is not earned through our own works; rather, we are covered by the righteousness of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8; Titus 3:5).**

- The Christian, **BEING DECLARED RIGHTEOUS**, is thus freed from the guilt of sin.
- Justification is a **COMPLETED WORK OF GOD**
- It is **INSTANTANEOUS**, as opposed to **SANCTIFICATION**, which is an ongoing process of growth by which we become more Christlike (*the act of "being saved"*). Sanctification occurs after justification.

(2)WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF JUSTIFICATION?

8 benefits

- **PEACE**

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

How does justification by faith affects our relationship with God?

**PEACE WITH GOD THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.
We HAVE BEEN RECONCILED WITH GOD (5:10).**

Peace (*eirene*) means **THERE IS NO MORE HOSTILITY BETWEEN US AND GOD**, no sin blocking our relationship with him.

A NEW RELATIONSHIP HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED, so we no longer dread the outcome of judgment but live under the **PROTECTION** established by God.

While living under this uneasy peace in Roman's time, Jesus had told his disciples, **"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid"** (John 14:27).

Peace with God is only possible through Christ, because on the cross He met the conditions required for peace.

Not only was the “punishment that brought us peace” (Isaiah 53:5) borne by Him, but He also fully lived up to His given title, Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6).

The basic teaching is that THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, PEACE IS ESTABLISHED BETWEEN US AND GOD, whether or not we feel it from the moment to moment.

In Christ, we claim PEACE WITH GOD, even when we are experiencing turmoil.

Application: God is reconciled. You don't have to do anything to reconcile Him.

The message of the Gospel is, **"Be ye reconciled to God."**

The next move is yours. When you accept His salvation, then you experience peace that your sins have been forgiven.

- **ACCESS**

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.

Not only has Christ justified and reconciled us to God but He also has given us **PERSONAL ACCESS TO GOD.**

The grace of God initiating our salvation is the **SAME GRACE IN WHICH WE STAND.**

We require that **GRACIOUS ACCEPTANCE every day of our lives as believers, just as truly as we needed it the moment we believe.**

We have been brought into a **PLACE OF FAVOR WITH GOD. Instead of being His enemies, we are **HIS FRIENDS** – in fact **HIS OWN CHILDREN.****

Through Jesus, says Paul, we have **ACCESS** to this **GRACE**
IN WHICH WE STAND.

The word **"ACCESS"** in Greek is *prosagoge*.

It is a word with two great pictures in it:

- It is the regular word for **INTRODUCING OR USHERING
SOMEONE INTO THE PRESENCE OF ROYALTY.**

And it is a regular word for the **APPROACH OF THE
WORSHIPPER TO GOD.**

Here Paul was saying, “Jesus **USHERS US INTO THE VERY PRESENCE OF GOD. He opens the door for us to the presence of the King of Kings and when that door is opened what we find is **GRACE,** not condemnation, not judgment, not vengeance but the **SHEER, UNDESERVED, INCREDIBLE KINDNESS OF GOD.”****

- But *prosagoge* has another picture in it.

In late Greek, it is the word for the **PLACE WHERE THE SHIPS COME IN, A HARBOR OR A HAVEN.**

= so long as we tried to depend on our own efforts, we would be tempest-tossed, like sailors striving with a sea which threatened to overwhelm them completely, but now that we have heard the word of Christ, we have the **CALM OF DEPENDING**, not on what we can do for ourselves but **ON WHAT GOD HAS DONE FOR US.**

Because of Jesus, we have ENTRY TO THE PRESENCE OF THE KING OF KINGS and ENTRY TO THE HAVEN OF GOD'S GRACE.

The word ACCESS (*prosagogein*) has also been translated "introduction"; "Brought us into"; "been allowed to enter".

The use can include PERMISSION TO ENTER OR THE ACT OF ENTERING ITSELF.

Paul does not have in mind the believer standing outside of God's grace with permission to enter but rather that THROUGH CHRIST WE ARE USHERED INTO GOD'S VERY PRESENCE.

The thought is **NOT** about **POSSIBLE ACCESS** to God but **ACCOMPLISHED ACCESS TO GOD.**

Application: "Access" means that you and I have access to God in prayer. It's wonderful to have someone to go and talk to about yourself and about your problems and about your friends and your loved ones.

Today, we as children of God have access to a Heavenly Father who will listen to us here and who does answer our prayer.

• HOPE

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.

The hope that is mentioned here is the hope that the Scriptures hold out.

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13).

To look for the Lord to come and take His church out of this world, that's a **GLORIOUS HOPE, and it will take place at His appearing.**

Now, the child of God has this hope.

That means he has a FUTURE.

Today, many men have all the comforts in life in an affluent society, but the interesting thing is, HE HAS NO FUTURE.

Application: The world today is looking for a hope, looking for a future.

This explains the restlessness that is throughout the world.

Hopelessness has driven many people to alcohol, drug addiction and down other avenues that are dead-end streets.

Why?

Because they have lost hope for the future.

Well, the child of God, has a hope, a **BLESSED HOPE and he knows that all things are going to work together for good (**Romans 8:28**).**

He knows that nothing is going to separate him from the love of God (Romans 8:39**).**

• TRIUMPH IN TROUBLE

³ Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,

KJV – And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worked patience; and patience experience; and experience hope:

In other words, WE JOY IN TROUBLES, knowing that trouble works PATIENCE – patience does not come automatically – and patience, experience; and experience, hope.

**Note that these three words that are associated with
TROUBLE.
JOY, HOPE and PATIENCE.**

God has to work that into us although it is a fruit of the Holy Spirit.

**It takes TROUBLE/SUFFERINGS/TRIBULATIONS to
BRING OUT THE BEST IN THE BELIEVER'S LIFE.**

The only way God can get the fruit out of the life of the believer is by pruning the branches.

And troubles produce these fruits in our lives.

Verse 3b- “knowing that suffering produces endurance”:
Suffering - The word for “suffering” is *thlipis* in Greek,
which means **PRESSURE**.

**All kinds of kinds of things may press in upon the Christian
– want, and straitened circumstances, sorrow,
persecution, unpopularity and loneliness.**

All that pressure produces **ENDURANCE.**

Endurance/Experience (KJV) – The Greek word is
hupomone **which means more than endurance.**

It means THE SPIRIT WHICH CAN OVERCOME THE WORLD

It means the SPIRIT WHICH DOES NOT PASSIVELY ENDURE BUT WHICH ACTIVELY OVERCOMES THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF LIFE.

***Hupomone* is not the spirit which lies down and lets the floods go over it; it is the spirit which meets things BREASTFORWARD AND OVERCOMES THEM.**

4 and endurance produces character,....

Character – The Greek word is ***doklime***.

It is used of metal which has been passed through the fire so that everything impure has been purged out of it.

When affliction is met with character, out of the battle a man emerges stronger, purer and better and nearer to God.

4"....and character produces hope,

"Character produces hope"

Two men can meet the same situation.

It can drive one of them to despair and it can spur the other to triumphant action.

To the one, it can be the end of hope; to the other, it can be a challenge to greatness.

The difference corresponds to the difference between the men.

The character which has endured the test always emerges in hope.

- **LOVE OF GOD**

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.

The Christian hope never proves an illusion for it is founded on the love of God.

POEM: Human Hopes

***"The Worldly Hope men set their hearts upon
Turns Ashes – or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face
Lighting a little Hour or two -is gone.***

When a man's hope is in God, it cannot turn to dust and ashes.

When a man's hope is in God, it cannot be disappointed.

When a man's hope is in the love of God, it can never be an illusion, for God loves us with an everlasting love backed by an everlasting power.

• THE HOLY SPIRIT

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.

Here Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit is given to every believer – not to only some believers but to all believers.

E.g. The carnal Corinthians

When we come to Christ, we have everything God offers in salvation, including the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

And it is the Holy Spirit who **ACTUALIZES OR MAKES REAL THE LOVE OF GOD** in the hearts of believers – that is, God's love for us.

Salvation and justification are the **proofs of GOD'S LOVE.**

6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

Here, Paul wants to make sure that there is no misunderstanding about **WHO** Christ actually died for – **THE UNGODLY.**

We are the ungodly.

We can have hope in God because the nature of God's love.

God's plan from the beginning was to send His Son to die for us **AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME, WHEN WE WERE STILL WEAK/POWERLESS.**

"The right time" refers to the both the timing in history and the timing in God's plan.

In the face of our powerlessness, God was **FULLY IN CONTROL.**

The events in human history did not determine the plan of salvation; the plan of salvation was designed by God to happen **AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME.**

We are saved only because God took the initiative and demonstrated His incredible grace and love by sending His own Son to take the punishment we deserved.

And He did this while we were **WEAK/POWERLESS (unable to do God's will because of the power of sin in our lives) and **UNGODLY** (constantly living independently of God).**

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.

The highest expression of human love is when someone gives his or her life so that another person can continue to live.

People do not readily die for their **enemies.**

But God's love stands in stark contrast to even the deepest expression of human love because **GOD SHOWS HIS LOVE FOR US IN THAT WHILE WE WERE STILL SINNERS, CHRIST DIED FOR US.**

Jesus did not come to change God's attitude to men; He came to show what it is and always was. He came to prove unanswerably that **GOD IS LOVE.**

Application: Christ's death is the highest manifestation of God's love for us. While we were rebellious and despicable, Christ died for us so that we could come to God, find peace with Him and become heirs of His promises. Christ did not die so that we could be made lovable; Christ died because God already loved us and wanted to bring us close to Himself. No matter how lonely or alienated we feel, we have the unalterable objective fact that Christ died for us.

• DELIVERANCE FROM WRATH

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

The “wrath” mentioned here is what the prophet spoke of: “That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness” (Zeph 1:15).

What is the great day of wrath?

The Great Tribulation.

We have been saved from the penalty of sin; He is constantly saving us today from the power of sin; and He is going to save us in the future from the presence of sin.

That means that every believer will leave this earth at the Rapture.

We will escape the day of wrath, not because we are worthy, but because we have been saved by the grace of God.

We have been saved by grace; we live by the grace of God and ten billion years from today, we will still be in heaven by the grace of God. We are saved from wrath through Him – through Christ.

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.

He died down here to save us; He lives up yonder to keep us saved.

- **JOY**

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

To rejoice in God means that right now, wherever you are, whatever your problems, you can joy, rejoice, in God.

You can rejoice that He lives and that He is who He is.

You can rejoice in God because Christ took our sins upon Himself and paid the price for them with His own death, instead of punishing us with the death we deserve.

We can rejoice in God because He has justified you by His death and consequently you are able to be in the presence of God now and forever.

Through faith in HIS work, we have become his FRIENDS (received reconciliation) and are no longer enemies and outcasts.

(3) WHAT IF WE DON'T GRASP THIS BIBLICAL JUSTIFICATION?

Understanding the doctrine of justification is important for Christians.

First, it is the very knowledge of justification and of grace that **motivates good works and spiritual growth; thus, justification leads to **sanctification**.**

We work not to get saved but we work **BECAUSE we are saved.**

Once a person is justified, there is nothing else he needs in order to gain entrance into heaven.

Since justification comes by faith in Christ based on His work on our behalf, our **OWN WORKS are disqualified as a means of salvation.**

There exist vast religious systems with complex theology that teach the false doctrine of justification by works.

But they are teaching “a different gospel- which is really no gospel at all” (Galatians 1:6-7).

Without an understanding of justification by faith alone, we cannot truly perceive the glorious gift of grace – God’s “unmerited favor” becomes “merited” in our minds and we begin to think we deserve salvation.

**The doctrine of justification by faith helps us maintain
“pure devotion to Christ” (2 Cor 11:3).**

**Holding to justification by faith keeps us from falling for
the **LIE** that we can earn heaven or God’s favor.**

**There is no ritual, no sacrament, no deed that can make us
worthy of the righteousness of Christ.**

**It is only by His grace, in response to our faith, that God
has **CREDITED** to us the holiness of His Son.**

Both Old and New Testament say, "The just shall live by faith".

Therefore, if you do not grasp this doctrine of JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH, then you will use YOUR OWN EFFORT to JUSTIFY AND VALIDATE yourself and everything you are doing for yourself and God.

That means you have RELIGION and not RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST.

NO BIBLICAL JUSTIFICATION = RELIGION

HOW WILL RELIGION AFFECT YOU IN THE DIFFERENT AREAS OF YOUR LIFE?

ACCEPTANCE

"I obey, therefore I'm accepted."

MOTIVATION

Motivation is based on fear and insecurity.

OBEDIENCE

"I obey God IN ORDER to get things from God."

CIRCUMSTANCES

When circumstances in my life go wrong, I am angry at God or myself, since I believe that anyone who is good deserves a comfortable life.

CRITICISM

When I am criticized, I am furious or devastated because it is critical that I think of myself as a “good person.” Threats to self-image must be destroyed at all costs.

PRAYER

My prayer life consists largely of petition, and it only heats up when I am in a time of need. My main purpose in prayer is **CONTROL OF THE ENVIRONMENT.**

CONFIDENCE

My self-view swings things between two poles. If and when I am living up to my standards, I feel confident, but then I am prone to be proud and unsympathetic to people who fail. If and when I am not living up to standards, I feel humble but not confident – I feel like a failure.

IDENTITY

My identity and self-worth are based mainly on how hard I work or how moral I am- and so I must look down on those I perceive as lazy or immoral.

(4) WHAT IF WE GRASP THIS BIBLICAL JUSTIFICATION?

To be justified by Christ is to accept God's merciful judgement in Christ and place complete trust in the Lord.

In short, HAVE FAITH.

The person who has been justified is tempted as before and therefore remains dependent on the grace of God.

Faith must not be INACTIVE but a "faith working through love"(Galatians 5:6), that is, one must AUTHENTICATE RELIGIOUS FAITH BY DEEDS OF LOVE.

Barclay comments, "Through Jesus, our *STATUS* with God was changed. Sinners though we were, we were put into a right relationship with God. *BUT THAT IS NOT ENOUGH.* Not only our *STATUS* must be changed but our *STATE*. The saved sinner cannot go on being a sinner; he must become good. Christ's death changed our *STATUS*; His risen life changes our *STATE*. He is not dead but alive; He is with us always to help us and guide us to fill us with His strength so as to overcome temptation, to clothe our lives with something of His radiance.

*Jesus begins by putting sinners into a right relationship with God even when they are still sinners; He goes on, by His grace, to enable them to quit their sin and become good people. There are technical names for these things. **THE CHANGE OF OUR STATUS IS JUSTIFICATION**; that is where the whole saving process begins. **THE CHANGE OF OUR STATE IS SANCTIFICATION**; that is where the saving process goes on and never ends, until we see him face to face and are like Him."*

If we grasp this biblical justification, then we HAVE THE GOSPEL AND WE WILL BE LIVING A LIFE ALWAYS RENEWED BY THE GOSPEL.

**WITH BIBLICAL JUSTIFICATION
= RENEWAL BY THE GOSPEL**

This is how a life justified by the gospel looks like:

ACCEPTANCE

"I'm accepted; therefore, I obey."

MOTIVATION

Motivation is based on GRATEFUL JOY.

OBEDIENCE

"I obey God to get God – to delight in and resemble Him."

CIRCUMSTANCES

When circumstances in my life go wrong, I struggle, but I know my punishment fell on Jesus and that while God may allow this for my training, He will exercise His Fatherly love within my soul.

CRITICISM

When I am criticized, I struggle, but it is not essential for me to think of myself as a “good person.” My identity is not built on my record or my performance but on God’s love for me in Christ.

PRAAYER

My prayer life consists of generous stretches of praise and adoration. My main purpose is FELLOWSHIP with God.

CONFIDENCE

My self-view is not based on my moral achievement. In Christ I am *simul iustus et peccator* – simultaneously sinful yet accepted in Christ. I am so bad that He had to die for me, and I am so loved that He was glad to die for me. This leads me to deep humility and confidence at the same time.

IDENTITY

My identity and self-worth are centered on the One who died for me. I am saved by sheer grace, and I can't look down on those who believe or practice something different from me. Only by grace am I what I am.

CONCLUSION

If you are justified by faith in Christ, you will not let anyone or anything in this life validate you or to denounce you.

You are validated by the acceptance and love found in Christ's substitutionary death for me.

"If Christ is for me, who can be against me?"

And when you serve Him, you serve Him because you have been justified by Him and not to get more favor or love from Him.

WHAT IS YOUR JUSTIFICATION?

Your justification is not found in your ministry skill, reputation, acceptance and love of men; power; success; security and comfort.

Your justification is found in Jesus – God the Father has accepted and loved you.

You do not work for God's approval, but you work from God's approval.

