

When in Romans Do as the Righteous Do

"God Shed His Love on Thee"

5:1-11

"To gush," "to run greedily out," "to spill." It's the word the KJV translates "shed abroad" and the NKJV translates "poured out" in Romans 5:5.

J.B. Phillips translates it, "Already we have the love of God flooding through our hearts by the Holy Spirit given to us."

Think of the overflowing of a levee or the breaking of a dam. There's no stopping the flow of water.

When you get saved, it's like the breaking of a dam as God the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within you and to flood and go on flooding your heart with God's inexhaustible love.

If you were saved later in life you might remember that initial flooding as waves of forgiveness and acceptance and hope washed over you. You were simply carried about on its currents wherever you went.

Fast forward your life. You've been a Christian for some time. Instead of describing your life as being carried along by torrents of living water it seems you are experiencing a spiritual drought.

The promise of Romans five is that God is still pouring out His love in your heart. It comes with being justified. It's from God and He won't revoke it.

If you and I are not experiencing it, then we have forgotten the joy of His salvation.

Romans 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith,...

"Having been" is in the past tense. You have *already been* justified by faith. The moment you received Jesus Christ as your Savior you were fully and completely justified before God. You did not begin to become justified after a life of effort and energy.

That's important for many reasons but one is that you can be sure that certain spiritual blessings are yours to experience and enjoy **right now** and **anytime** you choose to avail yourself of them.

Paul identifies several of these blessings. These cannot be reduced or lost because they originate with God and are part of His freely justifying you. These are yours and ready for withdrawal

The first is that you have "peace with God."

Romans 5:1 ...we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

We sometimes speak of people as having made their peace with God. This is wrong. It is God Who has made peace with us. We were at war with God, sinners by nature and by choice.

God imposed His terms for peace in the Gospel. His terms are the Cross of Jesus Christ. Jesus died there in your place to deliver you from God's holy wrath against sin. You must accept His terms through surrender to Jesus Christ or continue in your war against God.

When you surrender to God through Jesus Christ, you are immediately at peace with God. "Having been justified, [you] have peace with God..."

Since it is God Who has made peace with you, and not the other way, you need never doubt His attitude toward you. It's why you can claim promises like Jeremiah 29:11 which says,

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Because you are justified and at peace with God, you also have access to God.

Romans 5:2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand...

The word “access” means *entrance to the king through the favor of another*. The Jew had been kept from God’s presence by the veil in the Temple and the Gentile was kept out by a wall and warnings. When Jesus died the veil was torn and He broke down the wall.

You have entrance to the King because of Jesus.

It is therefore the cruelest of all heresies that teaches men they need other mediators to approach God besides Jesus Christ. You have immediate access to God through Jesus Christ. There is **no** intermediate access - not through priests and not through the deceased.

Look, I understand how things work on a natural level. Growing up I never asked my dad anything. My mom was the mediator.

So when people suggest that you’ll get to God quicker if you go to Mary or to another saint, on a natural level it makes sense. But it’s nonsense at best and damning at worst.

Jesus once declared that all believers are His mother and brothers and sisters. In other words, there are no intermediaries since we all are equal.

Warren Wiersbe said something I especially liked: “The child of a king can enter his father’s presence no matter how the child looks.”

Because you are justified, at peace with God, and have immediate access to Him, you also have hope.

Romans 5:2 ...and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

In the Bible, “hope” means you are encouraged to look to the future with certainty. You can be certain “of the glory of God.” A couple of things come to mind when I hear that phrase, “the glory of God.”

1. One thing that comes to mind is that God will reveal His glory at the end of all things. He will finish His plan of redemption for mankind.

2. The other thing that comes to mind is that I am the biggest part of His plan! Saving me and bringing me home to Heaven is God's purpose for creating the universe. I will reveal His glory when He is finished with me and I am in my glorious new resurrection body for all eternity.

I saw an old interview with astronomer Carl Sagan in which he suggested it was the height of arrogance to suggest mankind was alone in the universe. You know what the real height of arrogance is? Suggesting there is no God Who created the universe in which He has said He is mindful of us!

Since it is true that you, through Jesus Christ, stand in the very presence of God, you are able always to "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Your earthly situation cannot affect your heavenly standing.

This is why Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego could rejoice in the fiery furnace. God would deliver them... Or they would die! Either way they were certain of the future. Either future was glorious.

God's got your life covered past, present, and future.

- "Peace" covers your past. Whatever you've done, God has made peace with you.
- "Access" covers your present. Whatever you need, spiritually speaking, you can go to God and seek from Him.
- "Hope" is the sure promise of your glorious future.

These are not merely philosophical idea to meditate upon. They are practical tools to get you through everyday living.

Let me put it this way. Does knowing these things really make a difference day-to-day? Well, let's take a look at how peace, access and hope affect us when we are really under the gun.

Romans 5:3 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations...

Trouble is the common lot of the human race, but only the Christian glories in "tribulations." It is not that you enjoy trouble, or even that you merely

endure it; even unbelievers can do as much. You “glory in tribulations” when the glory of God in which you stand shines through your trouble, surrounding your surrendered life for all to see.

Tribulation is your servant.

Romans 5:3 ...know[ing] that tribulation produces perseverance;
Romans 5:4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

God is at work in your tribulation. Tribulation is in the Greek *thlipsis*, and originally conveyed the idea of "pressing together; pressure." It describes the pressing of olives into oil, and the crushing of grapes into wine.

The application of this word to human sufferings was first used in the New Testament. The Christians were the first ones to think of themselves as being in the vat like olives or grapes, and being pressed or crushed to the point where they were like oil or wine.

It is not possible to have oil and wine unless olives are pressed and grapes crushed. As Donald Grey Barnhouse wrote,

Even the finest fruit will not yield its essence without this process. Indeed, the finer the fruit the firmer the skin, and the heavier the pressure that must be put upon it to burst its surface that the juices may spurt. If you are to be splashed with joy, you must be crushed.

The process for producing really excellent oil and wine from the pressing and crushing of your life is always the same: perseverance, character, and hope - one leading to the next. Even in, and especially in, tribulations the believer can persevere, knowing he has peace with God, access to God, and a certain hope. Persevering, you experience God's proving and sense His approval - which is the real measure of character. As you experience a greater sense of God's approval, it confirms your hope. As your hope is confirmed, you cannot help but rejoice.

Romans 5:5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

"Hope does not disappoint." You need never be disappointed, you need never despair, about one thing. God loves you.

"The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit Who was given to us." The Holy Spirit can witness directly to your heart that God has an unconditional, unchangeable love for you. In the very moment you might despair or grow disappointed it is the Spirit's responsibility to remind you of God's love. The answer to disappointment and despair is to be overflowed with the knowledge of the love of God for you. And the way to do that is to see what God has done for you in justifying you while you were yet ungodly.

In verses six through eleven, Paul describes this witness of the Holy Spirit to your heart. This is what the Holy Spirit wants to say to you each time you are disappointed or you despair.

Romans 5:6 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

Romans 5:7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

Romans 5:10 For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

His reasoning is simple: Since God justified you while you were yet ungodly, how much more will He do for you now that you are His dear child?

- You were once "without strength" to save yourself, but God acted in love to save you.
- You were still a "sinner," ungodly and unworthy, but God acted in love to save you.
- You were even God's enemy, but He acted in love to save you. He "demonstrated" His love for you once and for all by sending Jesus to die for you while you were in this hopeless condition.

If God did all that for you while you were hopeless, how much more will He do for you now that you have the certain hope of Heaven? The answer is, He not only "saved you from wrath" when you were hopelessly lost, but you "shall be saved by His life."

"Saved by His life" means you can be certain that the power of His resurrection life is available to you moment-by-moment, day-by-day.

Romans 5:11 And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

We saw in Chapter four that Jesus' death propitiated, or satisfied, the just demands of God's wrath against sinners and so man can be reconciled with God. Because of Christ's death the whole world is said to be reconciled.

2 Corinthians 5:19 ...God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

The whole world is reconciled, but not everyone is saved. Paul speaks of preaching "the word of reconciliation," and of your "receiving the reconciliation." You receive it when you are justified by faith, when you are saved. The whole world is savable, but only those who receive Jesus are saved.

Since you received the reconciliation when in a hopeless state, how much more can you expect to receive now that you have the certain hope of your standing before God, justified by grace through faith?

If you could be saved by works, if you could earn it or merit it or deserve it, then you could never know whether or not God really loved you. He would be obligated to save you based upon what you had done.

Since salvation is God's gift receive through faith, you can be absolutely certain God loves you. The only possible motive for saving you is love!

Ask God to restore to you the joy of His salvation. Know again His love shed abroad in your heart.