

51. The Book of Romans 5:4-8

Paul's Epistle to the Romans
A message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier
(5-8-24)

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In our study in Romans, we are currently in the second major section of the book—a section that runs from 3:21-5:21. This section is dealing with the most important doctrine in the Christian faith—the doctrine of 'Justification' (salvation).

We are currently in Chapter 5 where Paul presents two categories that pertain to our justification—

'The Blessings of our Justification'; and 'The Basis for our Justification.'

The Blessings of Our Justification—verses 5:1-11

Now, Paul wants you to know that once you've received Jesus as your Savior and have entered into Him by faith—there are many blessings that become yours by virtue of your relationship with Him.

He then goes on to list 8 things in the first 11 verses of Chapter 5 that are ours when we have Jesus and have been justified by faith:

Romans 5:1–2 (NKJV)

¹ Therefore, having been **JUSTIFIED BY FAITH**, we have **peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom also we have **access by faith into this grace in which we stand**, and **rejoice in hope of the glory of God**.

1. **Peace with God**-verse 1
2. **Access by Faith into this Grace**-verse 2a
3. **Standing with God**-verse 2a
4. **Rejoice in Hope of the Glory of God**—verse 2b
5. **We Glory in Tribulations**— verses 3-4

Romans 5:3–4 (NKJV)

³ And not only *that*, but we also **glory [rejoice] in tribulations [suffering]**, knowing that tribulation produces **perseverance**; ⁴ and perseverance, **character**; and character, **hope**.

a. **Perseverance**

The word translated “**perseverance**” is *hypomone*—a word that means to live under difficult circumstances without trying to escape out from under them. In other words, tribulations toughen us up and teach us to *'hang in there.'*

b. **Character**

The word in the Greek means something “*tested*” or “*proved*.” The term was used for testing precious metals such as gold to increase its purity and value (Explained).

Just as the goldsmith uses fire to melt the gold ore in order to cleanse it of physical impurities—so does God use the tribulations to cleanse His children of spiritual and moral impurities.

Peter illustrated this truth by referring—not to the testing of gold but to our faith—

1 Peter 1:6–7 (NKJV)

⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various **trials**, ⁷ that the genuineness of your **faith**, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is **tested by fire**, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

James says the same thing—

James 1:2-3 (NKJV)

² My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

When James talks about the “*testing of our faith*” he is using the same analogy as Peter—that of a gold or silver smith refining the gold or silver ore.

When we get saved our faith is *precious* but still in a very ‘*raw*’ state and needs to be refined before it can really be used by God for His glory. Once again it is the fires of trials that accomplish this—

- Trials will test faith to determine if it’s genuine—if not it will be ‘burned up’ (destroyed like paper, wood and hay are destroyed by fire). (Matthew 13:20-21; 1 Corinthians 3:12-15)
- Trials will also strengthen true faith—just like steel is strengthened (tempered) when subjected to fire.
- Trials will purify the faith of true believers as God uses them to ‘*burn away*’ the impurities like the dross in the gold ore.

The goal in all of this, is so that God can ultimately use each of us in greater ways for His glory—“*But He knows the way that I take; When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.*” (Job 23:10)

The final trait or quality that **tribulation** produces in the life of a Christian is—

c. **Hope**

Romans 5:3–4 (NKJV)

³ **And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; ⁴ and perseverance, character; and character, hope.**

So, after we have been tested and approved by the fires of trials and tribulations—the result is it leaves us with hope. The reason trials and tribulations leave us with hope (if we’re living in obedience to the word of God)—is because we sense that the Lord is working in our lives, developing our character.

This gives us confidence (hope) that—having begun a good work in us, He will see it through to completion (Phil. 1:6) and that He has greater plans for our lives that trials are preparing us for.

But not only that, when we are persecuted by the world (“tribulations”), we rejoice in the knowledge that we are truly children of God—which reinforces the hope that our faith is genuine and we are heaven-bound:

Matthew 5:10–12 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Blessed *are* those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹ “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. ¹² Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

So with all of that in mind you understand how Paul could say—“**we glory in tribulations...**” (Romans 5:3)

Number 6 on the list of blessings that become ours when we are justified by faith is that—

6. The Love of God has Been Poured Out in Our Hearts—verse 5

Romans 5:5 (NKJV)

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.

As we have said before—whenever *hope* is applied to a promise of God in His word, it is never an: “*I hope so hope*”—it’s always an: “*I know so hope!*” Remember the context is ‘**justification by faith**’ (verse 1) or—‘*the hope of heaven*’—

1 Peter 1:3–5 (NKJV)

³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

One author said—

*“If we were to hope for something but then later find that we were never going to get it, our hope would be put to shame or disappointed. But the hope of our salvation will never be put to shame. We will never be disappointed or find that we have rested on a false confidence. How can we be so sure? ‘**Because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.**”*

Why can we be sure that we will be taken to heaven when Jesus comes for His Church at the Rapture? It’s because He has given us the guarantee—

Ephesians 1:13–14 (NKJV)

¹³ In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

The word translated ‘guarantee’ (Gk. is ‘arabon’) could be translated “*down payment*” (sometimes called ‘*earnest money*’) or “*engagement ring.*” (Comment)

Now the Holy Spirit lets us know He’s living in our hearts as believers by pouring into our hearts God’s love—

Romans 5:5 (NKJV)

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.

As we have said in past studies—God’s love (agape) is a supernatural love that is only found in the nature of God—it is not human love. **Agape love is a divine love** that we are not born with (it is not something that is inherent to our sinful, fallen human nature)—it has to be given to us by God. (2 Peter 1:4)

One of the most important statements on the subject of love is found in 1 John 4 verse 8—“*He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.*”

Let me just say this—the expression that ‘God is love’ has been used by many who like to quote the Bible (when it suits their purposes)—as a way to justify their sin or the sins of others.

This is nothing new—back in the days of the hippy movement in the 1960’s and 70’s, there were a lot of young people, who weren’t Christians, but who liked to write “*God is Love*” on banners and signs and then use that expression to justify what they called ‘free love’.

But actually, what they called ‘love’ was in reality nothing more than lust being acted out through sexual sin—and by the way, it was anything but ‘free’!

This kind of sensual ‘love’ (**eros** not agape) cost these young people more than they could have ever realized at the time:

1. *It cost them their innocence. It made parents out of children.*
2. *It cost them their freedom, as the devil used all this ‘free love’ to put them into bondage to sexual sin.*
3. *And it cost many of them their very lives as it paved the way for the AIDS epidemic and other STD’s that still plague our society to this day.*

Christian love (God’s love) is not the love of the world (often selfish and sensual)—it is genuine love because it comes from the God who is Himself—LOVE!

1 John 4:7–11 (NKJV)

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

In the beginning of 1 John 4:10 which reads, “In this is love...” can be translated: “*In this way is seen the true love...*” Of course, if God’s love is called the ‘*true*’ love than all other forms of love are *false*.

Now, let me clarify what I'm saying. First of all, let me say that in the Greek language (the language of the N.T.) there are four words for *love*—although only two of them actually appear in the New Testament.

1. There is the word **eros** from which we get our English words—*erotic* and *erogenous*.

This is a word that better represents the idea of *lust* and is really more about the biological act of sex than love—this word does not occur in the New Testament at all.

2. The second Greek word for love is the word **storge** which speaks of *family* love—this word also doesn't appear in the N.T.
3. Then there is the word **phileo** which means "*affection*", "*friendship*" or "*brotherly love*"—in other words, a reciprocal love. (Explain)
4. Finally, there is the word **agape**. This is a Greek word that represents a powerful, all-consuming kind of love.

Now, we must be careful here because, I've heard pastors say that this Greek word was invented and used exclusively in the N.T. to represent God's love. Yet Jesus, in Luke 11:43 said, —"*Woe to you Pharisees! For you love (agapao) the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces.*"

The Pharisees were *consumed* by a 'love' of prestige and the praise and recognition of men—and so in that regard they *agaped* the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. However, it is true that every time in the N.T. where the word *agape* is used of God's love for man—it always speaks of an all-consuming love characterized by *selflessness* and *sacrifice*.

The classic example of this being John 3:16—

John 3:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

God's love is an all-encompassing and unconditional love that loves freely regardless of how that love is returned—if returned at all! This is different from human love which is *reciprocal* ("I love you *because* you love me.") and often *conditional* ("but I only love you *when* you treat me right.").

Again, God's love is not like human love—it's unconditional, universal and non-discriminating—as the Scriptures say, "*God so loves the world*" and "*is no respecter of persons.*" This is what I meant when I said that God's love (*agape*) is true and all other forms of love are false—it's because *agape* love is the only love that is true to God's nature.

Look, I'm not saying that *family* and *friendship* love are *illegitimate* forms of love—they are genuine forms of love and therefore absolutely legitimate. It's just that—in and of themselves, they are *not* the love that the Bible speaks of that truly characterizes God's nature—which is *agape* love.

Human love is *limited* and can *diminish* over time—which many couples have experienced in their marriage where their love for each other has diminished or even died altogether.

But God's love (*agape*) never diminishes because God is the source of this love and God never diminishes or changes—"He is the same yesterday, today and forever." (Hebrews 13:8)

Human love, loves its own (those closest to it)—God’s love, loves even His enemies:

Matthew 5:44-46 (NLT2)

⁴⁴ But I say, love your enemies...⁴⁵ In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. ⁴⁶ If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much.

Romans 5:5–8 (NKJV)

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. ⁶ For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

This statement becomes all the more incredible when you compare it to what Paul has already said about how God views mankind—

Romans 1:26–32 (NKJV)

...²⁹ being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; *they are* whisperers, ³⁰ backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, ³¹ undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; ³² who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

One author put it well—

“The most overwhelming truth of the gospel is that God didn’t love the lovely, He didn’t even love the likable— God loved sinful, fallen, rebellious mankind, so much “that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

Romans 5:8 (NKJV)

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

Author Donald Grey Barnhouse relates a true story of a young teenage boy whose little sister had been crippled and needed an operation:

“The operation was provided for her. But after the operation the girl needed a blood transfusion, and the boy, her brother, was asked to volunteer. He was taken to her bedside and watched tight-lipped as a needle was inserted into his vein and blood was fed into his sister’s body. When the transfusion was over, the doctor put his arm on the boy’s shoulder and told him that he had been very brave. The youngster knew nothing about the nature of a blood transfusion—but the doctor knew even less about the actual bravery of the boy—until the boy looked up at him and asked steadily, “Doctor, how long before I die?” He had gotten the idea that he would have to die to save his sister, and he had thought that he was dying drop by drop as his blood flowed into her veins. But he did it anyway!”

That is an example of family love in operation.

As touching and as selfless as a story like that is (being willing to die for people we love is powerful)—but it can’t compare to what Paul says here in Romans 5:6-8 was involved in what God did by dying for us—while we were His enemies!

➔ Listen for story of gangbanger named Vince.

God's immense love is supremely demonstrated by Christ's dying for **ungodly sinners** who were His **enemies**.

Every time the devil tries to condemn you for your faults and failures in your Christian life—remember Romans 5:8!

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower—please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

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