

Gospel Power



"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation..." (Romans 1:16)

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What Have We – (Romans 5:1-5)

Warren E. Berkley

The book of Romans opens with the charge that both Jews and Greeks "are all under sin," (Romans 3:9). After the introductory greeting, Paul takes up the charge against Gentiles (1:18-32). Beginning in chapter two, he addresses the Jews and makes the same case against them. The conclusion is "both Jews and Greek...are all under sin," and in fact "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," (Romans 3:9,23).

Near the end of chapter three, Paul begins a statement of the good news, that is - God's gracious provision for sin to be forgiven. Though we have sinned, we can be "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," (3:24). Chapter four relies upon the Biblical accounts of both David and Abraham to show that when we depend upon God, believe in Him and act on that belief - we become personal recipients of His forgiveness. Though we have sinned, God is willing to impute righteousness to us "who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead," (4:24). Everything else Paul tells us (inside and outside of Romans) confirms that to "believe in Him" means trust that prompts obedience (see Romans 1:5). Justification by faith simply means hearing, believing and doing what God says.

When we do this, in response to the gospel

of Christ, what do "we have?" When I decide to become a Christian, I do that and continue that way of life, what do I enjoy as a result? This very practical question is answered by Paul in Romans 5:1-5.

"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. 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.

"Therefore" means in conclusion. Paul has argued (1) that all are under sin, and (2) that by a response of faith, we can personally participate in God's provision of forgiveness in Christ. When I obey the gospel and as I follow Christ after my baptism, I am "justified by faith." Paul concludes - there are good results! There are blessings "we have."

Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Sin puts the sinner in opposition to God (see Colossians 1:21; Ephesians 2:12 &

Isaiah 48:22). Because of who Jesus is and what He did, the sin and the opposition it causes can end! Those “justified by faith” enjoy peace with God; completeness, wholeness, harmony. As faith becomes active in my response to the gospel and my walk in newness of life — I am justified, and one good result is this peace.

Access by faith into grace. There is a vibrant word here: access. In this context it means, entrance into a place of blessing. When you read the word here in Romans five, imagine a beautiful room; a place of great blessing. Call this place “the room of God’s favor.” Outside of this room - you are alienated, lost and destined for wrath. Inside this room, you are surrounded by God’s favor. How can one who has sinned gain access into this room? By faith! Though you have sinned, by an active faith in the gospel of Christ, you can move into this great location, the room of God’s favor. But though peace and access are great needs and abundant gifts from God, there is more! “Not only that!” (see v. 3).

We also glory in tribulations. To the world, this sounds - not just strange but absurd and abnormal. Can anyone go through tribulation (pain, anguish, hardship, persecution) and glory at the same time? The idea - when stated in

these terms - seems to raise immediate objection. Paul affirms, those “justified by faith” can do this! By this faith we have the capacity to endure trouble, because we know something. For those who live by faith, tribulation produces perseverance! In a hostile environment — faith affords the faithful the strength to develop character (see also James 1:2-4). Jesus said, “In the world you will have tribulation; be but of good cheer, I have overcome the world,” (John 16:33).

How do we know all this? The Holy Spirit. We know we have these blessings by faith, and we know that hope will have a good end – because a loving God has communicated to us. “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.”

Romans 5:1-5 is about what you have, if you are “justified by faith.” If trust in God and belief in Christ has caused you to repent and be baptized...if you are walking in newness of life, you have peace with God, access into grace and the capacity to glory and grow even in tribulation!

~via *Expository Files*, Vol. 8 No. 8



What Can The Elderly Do?

Ira Lynn

“O God, You have taught me from my youth; and to this day I declare Your wondrous works. Now also when I am old and gray headed, O God, do not forsake me, until I declare Your strength to this generation, Your power to everyone who is to come” (Psalm 71:17-18).

Having just reached the time of life when I can buy twenty-five cent coffee at McDonalds and “enjoy” (too many) senior moments, I have

been reflecting on the fears and concerns that come with aging. On a more serious note, it is a time when my wife and I are dealing with elderly parents.

Time, like Ol’ Man River, just keeps rolling along — and it takes us with it. We get older whether we like it or not. Some deny it and try to convince themselves and others that old age is not approaching. But it is - and God intended

for it to! All of us are aging. Some of us handle it well, we keep on going, we look forward to being at home with the Lord.

Yet, I do not know any people who absolutely relish the idea of getting old. It is a time of diminished capabilities. One older gentleman said, "I feel as good as I ever have until I try to get up from my chair." Things that used to be done are no longer possible. Feeble efforts abound. Older people, at least in our culture, find themselves to be fundamentally irrelevant. Their wisdom is not always welcome. They think about the lessons learned from the past among people who are caught up in the now. They want to contribute but fear they are in the way. The wise man tells us that aging is not for the fainthearted (Ecclesiastes 12:1-8).

So, what can the elderly person do? The aged Christian can think back over his life and thank God for His blessings during adversity; for all the good things that have come his way. I believe such thoughts will assure the troubled heart that God will not abandon His loved one now. Uncaring people might put an old person out to pasture, but the Lord will keep him in the picture.

An older person can be encouraged by the fact that he is a living testimonial to the faithfulness of God. Listen to the psalmist in 71:7, "I have become a marvel (an example) to many; for thou art my strong refuge (protection, strength)." The life of the psalmist had not been easy; had not always been smooth (71:20). But, he has arrived safely! From a heart full of gratitude he can make a powerful statement to "this generation" (71:18). I believe that if more older people made such statements (cf. Psalm 71) they would be surprised to find that many would listen.

Elderly person — what can you do? Would you write some things down? Could you pass on to future generations a lifetime of lessons learned? Can you exude confidence even in the midst of aging with all of its attendant ills? Are you still seeking to discover more of God's purposes? Do

you truly anticipate heaven? Such activities and thoughts will help you to not be afraid. Live the rest of your life for God's glory, and look forward to the best of life to come in His presence.

~via *Biblical E-Sights*, Vol. 1 No. 40

News & Notes

THE SICK: *Marcia Cooper* is in the Hillside Hospital in Pulaski, room 111, following her surgery on Friday... *Scottie Goode's father, Hubert Goode*, his in the Huntsville Hospital room 841 following surgery yesterday to remove the shunt due to infection...*Phil Pressnell* is scheduled to have his kidney stones remove this morning in Athens hospital...*Shelia Moore's mother-in-law, Lorraine Whitehead*, is in the Huntsville hospital room 534.. *Mary Best* has continued to be sick with a virus this week... *Tisha Thomas' grandmother, Nellie Hunter*, has been moved back to the Meadow Brook Nursing home following her surgery for her broken hip last week ..*Arvel Newton's nephew, Chester Newton*, is at home sick battling cancer ..*Angie McCrary's aunt, Irma Newton*, is not doing well at all in the nursing home...Remember *Millinea Word* as she will be taking another round of oral chemo medication this week... *Wanda Tucker's father, Billy Letson*, who is continuing to take medication for his Leukemia..*Helen Trousdale's niece, Martha Henson*, who is battling cancer ... *Sandra Glass' cousin, Tina Strickland*, is not doing at all well and is not able to continue her treatments... *Mattie Blanche Word* continues at home and not able to be out...*Aldeen Noles* is in the SunBridge Nursing Home in Lawrenceburg ..*Mary Best's nephew, Shannon Johnson*, who is at home ... *Millinea*

Word's mother, Nola McCafferty, who is in the Meadow Brook Nursing Home in Pulaski.

OUT OF TOWN: The McConnells: James and Freda have been out of town this past week on vacation ... **Mark McIntyre** is out of town this week with his work.

GOSPEL MEETINGS: The **Cartwright church** near Athens is beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Thursday. They will have a singing at 3:00 followed by a service at 4:00 and services Monday through Thursday will begin at 7:00 p.m. The speakers in this meeting will be as follows: Sunday – Tim Sutton; Monday– Doug Matlock; Tuesday – Jeff May; Wednesday – Everett Conn; Thursday– David Cox ...The **First Street church** in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee is beginning a meeting today and it will continue through Friday with Ken Weliever preaching. They will have a service this evening at 7:30 and Monday through Friday services will begin at 7:00 p.m...The **Capshaw church** in Limestone county will be a meeting on Thursday and it will continue through next Sunday. Service Thursday through Saturday will be at 7:00 p.m. Lowell Sallee will be the speaker in this meeting.

SYMPATHY: We want to extend our deepest sympathy to **Mary Best** in the passing of her cousin, **Billy Rippy**, recently. He was buried on Saturday.

PREACHING TONIGHT: Wiley Deason will be preaching tonight at our evening service. I hope that all will plan to be here to hear him this evening.

SINGING: There will be a singing Friday, August 10th, at the **College Place church** in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. The singing will begin at 7:30 p.m.

THE RECORD: *Averages for July 2001*
Sunday: Bible Classes 86
 Morning Worship 96
 Evening Worship 75

Wednesday:
 Bible Classes 64

Gospel POWER

is published in interest of New Testament Christianity and to enhance the work of the Anderson church.

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Bible Classes 9:45 a.m.
 Morning Worship 10:45 a.m.
 Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Classes 7:00 p.m.

Anderson church Home Page

Anderson-church.org

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