

### Six Down, One To Go

Romans 5:1 Therefore, since ***we have been justified*** through faith, ***we have peace with God*** through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 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***.

3 Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance;

4 perseverance, character; and character, hope.

5 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***. (NIV)

This marvelous paragraph in Paul's *Gospel Magnum Opus* called The Letter of Paul to the Romans delineates ***six things we already have*** as believers in Christ and ***one thing that still awaits us***. The backward glance of what we already possess in Christ is breath-taking, and to look ahead is more than we could ever comprehend. But let's attempt the impossible and try to describe the glory of our redemption in Christ! We shall surely fall short in the description, but we shall delight in the attempt none-the-less. This is a mountain top unattainable, an ocean unfathomable, a truth inexhaustible, a joy inexpressible and filled with glory. Come, and let's begin a journey we will never conclude! Look at the glory of Christ and His full redemption of sinners.

Paul makes a series of comparisons in Romans chapters 1-5 between law and grace, condemnation and justification, alienation and reconciliation, Adam and Christ, death and life, letter and Spirit. He is clearly delineating the difference between the purpose of the law to reveal holiness and sin and hold all men accountable, and the powerlessness of the law to remove sin and provide righteousness. He completes the thought in chapter 8:1-3.... "what the law was powerless to do.... God did...by sending His Son!"

### ***We have been justified***

The law was powerful in revealing and providing the standard of Divine righteousness. But we are law breakers. And though the law is powerful to condemn us, the law is powerless to provide us with righteousness. The problem is not with the law. The law is holy, righteous and good. We are the ones who are unholy, unrighteous, and evil. The problem is with us sinners. The law was never given to save us, but rather to show us the need for a Savior outside of ourselves. Paul begins his list of our present possessions in Christ with this gift of righteousness.... "we have been justified by faith in Christ." We have been given righteousness, the very perfect, complete, and unblemished righteousness of the Sinless Son of God. Therefore, we are declared to be righteous in the sight of God our Judge. We are no longer condemned. We no longer shrink back in shame and terror. We stand in Christ justified fully and forever. What a treasure. This is not a righteousness to be given some day, but righteousness already bestowed and possessed in fullness now! We have been justified.

### ***We have peace with God***

Because we have been justified, we have peace with God. Again, this is a present possession. Having been justified, we are no longer considered enemies of God. We have been reconciled by the Righteous One and so have peace with God. No longer do we live in fear and terror. This is both outward - having been justified by God in Christ, and inward - having been transformed by regeneration and a new nature so that we are no longer hostile to God, but delighting in His will and Lordship over us. We have the peace of reconciliation through justification and the peace of transformation by regeneration. And all this is from God Himself. The law could not provide peace, "because law brings wrath" (Romans 4:15). But Christ brings peace, for "He Himself is our peace." (Ephesians 2:14-16) We have peace with God.

### ***We have access by faith into this grace in which we stand***

The law could not provide access into God's presence. Even the Law-giver, Moses, discovered that the law restricted access into God's presence, in that sinners coming too near would die. Everything about the law indicated separation between the holy (God) and the unholy (sinners.) Although God desired to live among His people, their sinfulness would have resulted in their destruction if they approached too near. At Mt. Sinai the warnings came again and again. As the tabernacle was completed,

and the veil of separation was hung before the most holy place, with two woven replicas of Cherubim on the veil, the imagery was clear. As God drove Adam and Eve from His presence in Eden for their sin, He placed two Cherubim before Eden's gate to bar the way. (Gen 3:24) So now, the two angels stand before the Most Holy Place, barring the entry of all but one man, once a year, to come with a sacrifice of blood. The high priest alone could come, on the day of atonement, and that for but moments, and then to flee lest he stay too long and die. The law could not provide access. When Moses finished the erection of the tabernacle in Exodus 40, the scene ends with God's glory descending in the cloud and Moses "could no longer enter in." The law could not provide access. But Christ does! Our Great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God, gave His blood as the sacrifice, and he shouted out, "It is finished", the curtain was torn in two, the angels drawn away from barring the Most Holy Place, and all are invited in with full access provided by Christ alone. We have access!

### ***We rejoice in hope***

The law could not give us joy. It brought us the essential rebuke, conviction, grief and mourning for our sin. But it could not remedy our sin and therefore could not give us joy. But Jesus did! The law brings grief over sin, but Jesus gives us the joy of justification. The law brings fear of wrath, but Jesus gives us the joy of peace. The law brings guilt and separation, but Jesus gives us the joy of access. The law brings us regret and shame over our past, but Jesus gives us the joy of anticipation for the future. We have joy!

### ***We have the love of God poured out in our hearts***

The law could not give us the love of God. The law reveals the holiness and wrath of God held rightly against us. But Jesus gives us the love of God poured out in our hearts through His Spirit. This love is the fountain of our joy and hope, as it provides to us the unshakeable certainty of the unchangeable character of God's saving work in us. This inner witness of the Spirit confirms to our souls the reality of this everlasting love of God. We have love!

### ***We have the Holy Spirit***

The law could not give us the Holy Spirit. Under the covenant of the law the Holy Spirit would come upon certain chosen servants such as prophets, priests and kings. But under the law the Spirit's coming was not pervasive (all believers) nor was it permanent (He left King Saul, Samson, and others.) But Jesus gives us the Holy Spirit in a fullness not known under the law. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit and He now indwells, baptizes, seals, leads, and teaches every child of God all their lives long from regeneration to glorification. We have the Holy Spirit.

### ***SIX DOWN, ONE TO GO... THE GLORY OF GOD!***

With all the wonder of the six present possessions of the believer described, what is still awaiting us? Glory! Back in 5:2 we read that "we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." We are yet to experience the glory of God. Look at this closely. It is not just that we shall see the glory of God, but we shall share in it. We shall be glorified. (8:29-20) When we see Him, we shall be like Him. (1 John 3:2) We have never seen a glorified saint. But we shall... countless millions of them. We shall see the glory of God, we shall share the glory of God. The law could not give us God's glory. As God said to Moses the law-giver, "No man can see my face and live." Moses was allowed to see God's subdued glory, and even that caused his face to shine with reflected glory for a time. But we shall see His face and live! (Rev 22:1-4.) We shall see and share in that glory forevermore.

As you consider the wonder of all we have in Christ, forget not what we already have, and forget not what we shall soon receive from Jesus Christ, Lord of Glory, Lamb of God, Light of the World.

### **Self Check**

- 1) As you think of your most treasured possessions in life, do these six come often to mind? Why or why not?
- 2) Describe the work of the law of God in your own life. How did that prepare you for trusting Christ as Savior.
- 3) How have you misused the law in your own life, either before or since you've been saved.

### **For Further Study**

Read Exodus chapter 40 and see how Moses finished his work and was left outside the place of the presence. Then compare that to John 17:1-3, and John 19 and Jesus finishing His work and opening the place of the presence for all and entering into His restored glory with the Father.

*“Lord, I praise You for Your law. It reveals Your holiness, my sinfulness, Your justice, my need. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Lord, Your law was my schoolmaster to lead me to Your Son. Let me never misuse Your law. Let me never excuse my sin. Let me ever rest in Jesus Christ alone for righteousness, peace, access, joy, love, the Holy Spirit, and glory. He alone is my Savior, Redeemer, Justifier, Reconciler, Restorer, and Glorifier. All glory to Jesus, now and forevermore. AMEN.”*

**Remember, you are very special to us and we pray for you.**

**Living with leaving in view.... John 9:4**

**Ron & Val**

Seeing The Invisible, embracing The Unapproachable, declaring The Unexplainable,  
changed by The Immutable, running after The Irresistible  
with inexhaustible joy in our inexpressible sorrows,  
spending our time on eternity,  
owning nothing yet possessing everything  
that matters and lasts.  
We are Pilgrims in Paradox.  
Welcome to THE JOURNEY