

**The Gospel as it Really Is:
Romans simply Explained
The Great Blessings of Salvation
Romans 5:1-11
May 25th 2025 MHC & MPC
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Introduction

Do you and I really understand the Gospel? I have a multiple choice question to test us out! Ready?

Jacob was brought up in a true Christian home, baptised in his early teens and has sincerely served Christ in his local church for many years.

His childhood friend, Jason, spent his days without a care about God. But one evening, when Jacob explained the Good News to him, Jason's heart was strangely warmed and he believed the message! Who is more righteous in the eyes of God, one minute after Jason's conversion?

- A - Jacob is more righteous than Jason
- B—they are both equally righteous in God's eyes
- C—Jason is more righteous than Jacob

"C" is obviously wrong, religion teaches "A" - good people go to heaven, bad people go to hell. The Gospel teaches "B": God gives us the gift of his perfect righteousness the moment we believe!

- Jacob's "good life" does not *contribute* anything to his standing in the eyes of God, because he is a sinner
- And the "godless life" of Jason does not *detract* from Jason's righteousness because it is a gift from God!

This is the Gospel teaching of Romans chapters 1-4, righteousness comes to us by faith, not by works.

So where is Paul going to take us next, I wonder!?! Paul is going to teach us that the Gospel is the start of the Christian journey; not the terminus, the firing gun, not the finishing tape, the doorway into a brand new life filled with the blessings of God. *"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith (that's the Gospel of chapters 1-4), we have peace with God (God is our friend, not our enemy, what a blessing....)"* ...and many other great blessings as well as peace with God, such as hope and joy and love!

The Gospel (which Paul calls "the grace in which we now stand" in verse 2) is *only the first, the initial, blessing* of salvation! Many other blessings follow! "I have come that you might *have life* and have it *more abundantly*." (John 10:10) Jesus said. In just the 11 short verses before us, Paul shares *five*

great blessings every believer, both the Jasons and the Jacobs, enjoy; and the first is this:

Blessing 1: We have Peace with God!

“Therefore... we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ... (verse 1)

Paul is not thinking here of peace in our hearts, that more subjective state of peace that we enjoy in the midst of a crisis, the peace that passes understanding. He’s not writing about the peace of God, here, he’s talking about peace with God, a new relationship with God; God is our friend, rather than our enemy: *“We have now received reconciliation.”* (is how he puts it in verse 11)

Once we were God's enemies, verse 10., both ways: from, our standpoint, we were “God-haters” Paul has said in chapter 1 verse 30. And from heaven’s perspective, because of our sin, “we were objects of God’s anger” as Paul puts it in Ephesians 2:3, but now the relationship has been restored through Jesus Christ (all of God’s blessings come through the Lord Jesus) and we have peace with God!

Isn’t this a wonderful? The God who made the universe, controls the destiny of every nation, is now our friend! He is with us and for us, not apart from us or against us? (and if he is for us, who can be against us?)

Blessing 2: We have future hope!

Another blessing of the Gospel, writes Paul, is future Hope, *“we boast in the hope of the glory of God” (verse 2)*

“The glory of God: “Paul is talking about heaven to come. We were made to enjoy the glorious presence of God and to shine with reflected glory. That was Adam and Eve’s highest joy in the garden of Eden, not one another, not the pleasures of creation all around them, but fellowship with their Creator in the cool of the day. And that is what lies ahead of every believer, beyond the grave! “The glory of God;” A new world free of evil, A new body free of suffering, But supremely, a new and face to face relationship with Jesus Christ!

Through her hymn-choices I knew that my mother longed for heaven. At her funeral, long ago, her 6 kids sang her favourite hymn about the Lord Jesus Christ. The chorus scans like this: “Face to face *in all his glory*, I shall see him by and by.”

As we go about our daily earthly lives let us always remember that heaven is our real and final home! Let’s learn to hold lightly to houses and careers and possessions—and even lightly to marriage and family, for these are all passing gifts! And if you are running your last lap today, rejoice for “To be with Christ is better by far.”

Now, someone is bound to come back and ask Paul, “You mention the glories of heaven to come, but what about the sufferings of this present life? What about disease and bereavement and misfortune?” The third blessing of salvation is this: God promises to transform our understanding of suffering so that we can actually rejoice in them, listen:

Blessing 3: We can rejoice in suffering

“We boast/glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character hope.” (verse 3-4)

Translators don’t know how to translate the word boast because it sounds all wrong to go around boasting about our sufferings, so some of them translate it rejoice, “we rejoice in our sufferings.”

Whether boast or rejoice, believers have a new attitude to suffering which enables them to rejoice in the midst of them! Why? How come? Because sufferings produce good things in us!

PERSEVERANCE, suffering produces perseverance, stickability, as the suffering continues perhaps week after week, year after year, instead of giving up you keep going, suffering generates perseverance

CHARACTER the perseverance induced by suffering generates character. Persevering through a long trial produces solid character! A light, a weak character gives up at the first hurdle, the first difficulty but a solid character just keeps on going!

HOPE, and what does character produce, Paul? It produces hope! A solid character is a trusts the promises God makes about the future!

Sufferings produce perseverance and character and even hope! We don’t rejoice in the suffering themselves, we rejoice in what they are producing, and especially the end product which is hope! Sufferings turn our eyes away from this entrancing & deceitful world and encourage us to consider eternal joys to come.

I remember a sister in Christ, who grasped these verses, explaining how it had completely her attitude to suffering. She was teaching herself to turn every earthly sorrow around, and to say to herself, “this won’t be in heaven, but the opposite will!” A good relationship suddenly broken - no broken relationships in heaven, but eternal fellowship and friendship, praise God! A new bodily illness—no illness in heaven, instead an imperishable powerful, glorious spiritual body! Hallelujah! Disappointment with ourselves - no indwelling or besetting sin in that new body!

Blessing 4: We are loved by God!

“God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. ...

Paul will talk more about the Holy Spirit in later chapters, here he points out one the blessings the Holy Spirit brings into our lives, he pours out the love of God into our hearts.

In verse 5, Paul has in mind, primarily, the subjective, experiential and assurance that we are loved by God:

*Loved with everlasting love,
Led by grace that love to know;
Spirit, breathing from above,
Thou hast taught me it is so.
Oh, this full and perfect peace!
Oh, this transport all divine!
In a love which cannot cease,
I am His, and He is mine.*

But Paul is aware that our emotions are unreliable guides; and that we may not always feel God's love for us, so he adds verse 6-8: *"You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

The greatest proof of God's love for us is not found in our feelings, but in the cross. Rarely does one person love another enough to die for them! Someone might possibly give up their life for a very good person, but no-one would give up their life for a wicked person. But that is exactly what Jesus did, "while we were still sinners" before we were justified or sanctified, Jesus died for us!

*I love to hear the story
which angel voices tell,
how once the King of Glory
came down on earth to dwell.
I am both weak and sinful,
but this I surely know,
the Lord came down to save me,
because He loved me so.*

Blessing 5: We have present and future security!

God's people are totally safe in this life and the next! Paul uses a line of reasoning in verses 9 and 10, that run like this, "Since God has already given us the greater blessing, how much more will he give us the lesser blessing." If someone has already given you a billion dollars, it's no big deal for them to gave you another 100 dollars. The greater blessing is the giving of his Son to death, the lesser blessings are security in this life and the next

Verse 10:

“For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved (kept safe) through his life!”

If Jesus did the difficult thing of reconciling us to God through his death, how much more will he do the easy thing of keeping us safe today through his present life! Did you know? Jesus, risen and ascended is watching over us, ever-praying, always protecting us while we live *in this world*..

And verse 9:

“Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him!”

If Jesus did the greater the more difficult thing of making us righteous by his costly death, how much more will he do the easy thing of keeping us from the coming wrath of God! (v9)

Do you sometimes worry about the present and the future? We all do! Do not worry, says Paul, because God who has done the greater thing for you, in and through the suffering of his Son, will accomplish the lesser task of keeping you safe! The hymn writer, Augustus Toplady, who wrote “Rock of Ages” also penned “A debtor to Mercy alone”, which ends with these profound and comforting words:

*more happy, but not more secure,
the glorified spirits in heaven.*

The saints who have gone before us are more happy, but they are not more secure, protected, safe, than we are, here below.

Brothers, sisters and friends! Through Jesus Christ, we have all received one gracious blessing after another, and here are five of the best:

- We have peace with God
- A glorious future
- We can rejoice in our sufferings
- We are loved by God
- And kept safe by his power

My the Lord encourage our hearts this morning, through his holy word,

Amen.