**Press On – With Hope (March 15, 2017)**

*“Hope that WILL not disappoint”: Romans 5:1-11 (NIV & NLT)*

***Romans 5:1-11 (NIV)***
Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we [b] boast in the hope of the glory of God. 3Not only so, but wealso glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5And hope does not disappoint, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

6You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. 7Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. 8But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him! 10For 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 through his life! 11Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

***Romans 5:1-11 (NLT)***
Therefore, since we have been made right in God’s sight by faith, we have peace[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+5%3A1-11&version=NLT#fen-NLT-28010a)] with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. 2Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God’s glory.

3We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. 4And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. 5And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.

6When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. 7Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. 8But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. 9And since we have been made right in God’s sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God’s condemnation. 10For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son. 11So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God.

**Helpful Background for the Passage**

1. Paul reminds his readers that through faith, life can be experienced differently. It will not be easy but will be filled with joy, trust, confidence in the Lord, and peace with God. A life that is characterized by faith in God will also reflect love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, and self-control.

2. Paul frequently links faith, hope and love as he does in the first section of Romans 5. He reminds us that through faith, we can firmly hold on to the promises of God (hope), empowered by the understanding of God’s amazing love. We can have great confidence or certainty (hope), through believing (faith), because we have already seen the best demonstration of God’s love in Jesus. (1 Cor. 13:13, Gal. 5:5-6, Col. 1:3-8, 1 Thes. 1:2-3)

3. In studying this section of the letter to the Romans, we must remember the two realities of the Christian life. At the same time, we are completely perfected and accepted by God through Christ and still growing in Christ - becoming more and more like Him. We experience both the presence of Christ and the presence of sin. We enjoy the peace that comes from knowing that we have been made right with God while we face daily struggles and problems that cause us pain. For a Christian, the eternal penalty for sin has been taken by Jesus. The power of sin has been broken by Christ, but the presence of sin remains in our lives.

4. “Therefore,” indicates another change in thought for the author. Why is it there? Paul showed in earlier sections of Romans how both Jews and Gentiles, religious and non-religious, can be saved through faith alone. He used the example of Abraham to demonstrate how a human can be justified by faith through God’s efforts alone. Now, Paul will apply the lessons learned to every believer and show that God’s love and grace are available through Jesus to all.

5. “Peace,” (5:1) [EIRENE] is the “absence of conflict, hostility or war.” Through Jesus, our sin no longer comes between us and God. God’s wrath against sin has been satisfied, and His justice has been preserved. Jesus Christ has opened a way to the Father and has ended all hostilities between us and God. A new relationship has been established, characterized by love and peace. (John 14:27, Is. 53:5, 9:6))

6. The word access, (5:2) [PROSAGOGEIN] can be translated as “been allowed to enter,” or “introduced,” or “brought us into.” The meaning can include “permission to enter,” or the act of entering itself. Paul is reminding us that in Christ we are escorted into the very presence of God Almighty as beloved children. We have “direct access” to God through His grace. This concept is not “possible access to God,” (conditional) but rather “accomplished access.” It’s already available to us if we are in Christ.

7. Humans were created to be in “glory.” The original human design was perfect and in God’s image. But, as a consequence of sin, we fall short of glory now. God’s purpose is to recreate His image and His glory in us. He will shape us to be more like Christ. We will be restored to glory when we are with Him for eternity.

8. Paul calls believers to rejoice:
 a. in the hope of the glory of God. (5:2)

Anticipating our future with God ought to bring us moments of pure joy. We stand in God’s grace and love, and our eternal futures are secure. As beloved children, God will take care of us, both now and then.

b. in our suffering. (v. 5:3) “consider it pure joy, whenever you face trials of many kinds.”
 (James 1:2) We are not to be happy or glad when we suffer, but rather aware that suffering
 can be used by God to perfect our faith, and shape us to be more like Jesus.

 c. in God. (v. 5:11) Our trust in Jesus frees us to enjoy our relationship with God the Father.
 We no longer need to worry about “lightning bolts from heaven” striking us if we step out of
 line. We no longer need to live spiritual lives burdened by shame, guilt, and unhealthy fear of
 God. We can “revel in His love.”

9. Suffering is a “normal” condition of being alive. In a fallen, sinful world, suffering will happen. Sometimes suffering is a result of our own choices; consequences, but often suffering is unrelated to our choices; trials. Bad things happen. Our response to suffering is the key. If we understand that EVERY ONE suffers, and decide to trust God through it, our response can lead us to persevere, grow, and have hope. Confident expectation (hope) can carry us forward through anything until we reach eternity.

10. “Character,” (v. 5:4) [DOKINE] includes the idea of “one who has been approved as a result of testing.” A Christian who has character, has been tested by trials, and has not collapsed under the pressure. Inward strength is the evidence of character.

11. The word “reconciled,” (v. 5:10) [KATALLASSO] describes the act of transforming enemies into friends. It means not just “making peace,” but “renewing and reviving relationship.” Reconciliation brings peace, and establishes unity again between parties who were formerly hostile, and in conflict.

**Review Questions**

12. (v. 5:1-2) What do we enjoy as a result of being justified by faith? How was this accomplished? To what do we have access? So what?

13. (v. 5:3-4) How should we respond to suffering? Why? What does a right attitude towards suffering produce? How does perseverance produce character, and how then, character to hope?

 14. (v. 5:5) What is hope? Why does Biblical hope not disappoint? What guarantees that hope (confident expectation) in the promises of God WILL not fail or disappoint us?

15. (v. 5:6-7) What was the timing of the sacrifice of Jesus? For whom did Christ die? What illustration helps us understand this sacrifice?

16. (v. 5:8-9) How does God show His love? When did God demonstrate His love to us? Why is this significant? How are we saved?

17. (v. 5:10-11) What occurred while we were still God’s enemies? How did reconciliation happen? To what promised reality does this lead? Why/In Whom do we rejoice?

**Application:** (So What?)

18. How have you responded to suffering in your life? Do you think that your response to suffering led to perseverance, then character, and finally hope? How do you experience Biblical hope?

19. Read and respond to v. 5:8. How has God’s love been demonstrated to you? How have you responded? How will you respond? How does this also lead to hope?

20. If you are a Christian, you are at peace with God,) and you are able to rejoice in God. How do you respond? What choices will you make in response? How does this also lead to hope?