

**Reading:** Romans 5:1-11

**Theme:** Access by Faith into This Grace.

We have started looking at this chapter and already noted some glorious truths, precious treasures from it concerning people like us. We have seen we need to be justified by faith and also what it means to be justified. Last time we noted that Paul drew our attention to 3 immediate fruits of justification: 1. Peace with God. 2. Placed in the standing of grace and 3. Prospect of future glory. Last time we considered Peace WITH God and noted it is not the same as the peace OF God. Peace with God is outside of us, outside of our subjective realm and stands eternal and forever in heaven. It is our legal state with God and yet it does percolate, cascade down into our lives and should be evidenced more and more as the peace of God - as we consider, apply this wonderful truth that we are at peace with God and He with us.

We move on quickly into v2 and I plan to cover the first half of this verse in one go! It is a lovely verse that deserves our attention, our consideration for it will again underline our security, the certainty and therefore the assurance of our salvation. I hope we have been seeing that as we have looked at these truths. That is my aim in this series in Romans 5 - I want to draw attention to the certainty, the security, the assurance of our salvation. As this is a chapter filled, stuffed full of it, even I should be able to do that! I used an example a few weeks ago of a treasure chest stuffed full of treasures and as we deal with one treasure, out pops another as there is truth upon truth concerning the certainty and security of our salvation. I want to see 4 things concerning our 2<sup>nd</sup> point of being **Placed in The Standing of Grace** in v2a.

**1. Participation.** *“through whom”*

Here Paul begins to present another fruit, another consequence of our being justified by faith. All the greatness of that work,

bringing us peace with God, yet it is not only that, but we stand in this grace. This is amazing, thrilling, wonderful, but note Paul almost repeats the fact, the truth that this occurs through the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul centres his first readers' thoughts on the Lord Jesus. We are justified by faith, with the Lord Jesus' person, life, work, death and resurrection being the object of that faith. We have peace with God through Him and Him alone. There is no way to participate in justification by faith or to have peace with God, or to have access into this grace in which we now stand, unless by means of, through the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are not to feel and imagine that our morality, niceness or our ideas or even our suffering are enough. Here the word of God stresses the truth that we participate in these blessings only through the Lord Jesus Christ, when we trust Him as our Saviour. I do not care who you are, what you do or have done; what you claim, unless you have the Lord Jesus as your Saviour, you are not included in the things we have looked at or will look at. If you have trusted the Lord Jesus as your Saviour, then these things are as true a for you as for the greatest Christian there has ever been. We all need to recognise, realise and apply personally these things are true of little you and me as we go on in our struggles of life.

*Participation* needs to be noted and underlined, so we grasp that we are partakers of these truths and we appreciate, enjoy and delight in the great things our God has done for us. Moving on we see:

## **2. Presentation.** “*we have gained access*”

Imagine you were a penniless rebel living in Elizabethan England and someone came to you, favoured you, obtained your pardon, re-clothed you, had you bathed and then said they would take you to the Palace and present to the Queen! Not only that, but they

secured for you the lifelong right to go into the Queen at any time - you would always have access to her majesty.

God's word describes and declares this amazing truth, that in and through the Lord Jesus, we are moved from outside to inside, from being cut-off to being introduced and presented into this grace in which we now stand. At one time we were not objects of God's favour or grace. By nature, we were rebels, enemies, against God and He us. Yet through the Lord Jesus, we have been and continue to be in the state of grace and favour. Do you recognise again why we dare not leave the Lord Jesus out of any consideration of any blessing? All our blessings centre on and spring from Him. We are to trace back all our blessings and we will find their source, their origin in Him and all He has done for us. Here it is access into this grace. Without Him we would be lost in our sin and stand condemned, but we are no longer there if we are a Christian and we see:

### **3. Position.** *"into this grace"*

We have not only peace, but are in this grace. Here Paul, in writing *"into this grace"*, refers to our justification, our peace with God and all that flows along with and from it. We are in a state of grace and God will ever, always deal with us as being in that state. We have been brought to such a position and it ever remain so. GRACE = God's Riches at Christ's Expense. God deals with us in Christ and all Jesus has accomplished for us. It's not that we have earned or deserved it, but He gives us such freely even though we do not deserve it, yet He does so for Jesus' sake. Because we are in Christ, we are brought into a wonderful relationship with God in which we can now receive blessings and benefits from God which we couldn't receive before as we were previously under His wrath and condemnation.

In 6:15 Paul says “*we are not under law, but under grace*”. Paul is careful to stress this, so that we do not get the wrong idea and shows we are to live in such a way as to declare that we are under grace, but we are to recognise our position has been dramatically changed, transformed. We were under law, under God’s condemnation because we couldn’t keep it to gain eternal life. We were objects of His wrath, but God, through the Lord Jesus, by our being born-again by God’s Spirit in our conversion, we are brought into the new position of being “*under grace*”; been brought into the position of being in the state of grace and God is at peace with us. We have the blessing of heaven, because we are subjects of His grace.

What a thing to contemplate - our relationship with God is radically different and has been totally changed, transformed from what it was. Now He is reconciled, we are at peace, He loves us, cares for us and seeks our best. He is willing to shower us with His richest blessings. As we consider this, we are not to forget that it is all of grace. We are in this position because we have been brought into it by the Lord Jesus Christ when we trusted Him as our Saviour.

“*Grace, tis a charming sound*” - in our lives we are to trace its source to God’s undeserved favour to those who really deserved no favour, but severest punishment. This is our position as a Christian. We are so often short-sighted and dim-witted concerning who we are in Christ, about what He has done for us. We live as paupers, as those who are clueless and think little of all He has done for us and yet we have a royal position and blessings untold.

This access into this grace gives us an access to God in prayer and we can do so with boldness and confidence. We can have the

confidence of His love and care. It does not mean we will have health, wealth and prosperity, for He knows what is right for us and even if He chooses dark times for us, He will be there watching over us and will care for us. Whatever occurs He is still dealing with us in grace and we are remain in that state of grace. This is further emphasised by our final consideration:

#### **4. Perpetuation.** *“in which we now stand”*

I have not made up that word to keep my sweet P headings together, but it is a real word and come from the word ‘*perpetuate*’ – permanent, to keep on going, preserved. I thought to use ‘preservation’ but felt it did not cover what I wanted to emphasise and so I’ll use ‘perpetuation’!

Paul writes and says *“this grace in which we now stand”*. He doesn’t say in which we are, but uses a word that does not mean stand still as if we have nothing better to do, but ‘*stand fast*’ or ‘*stand firm*’ – a gardening, agricultural term referring to something established, firmly and immovably established or stood on a firm foundation. It speaks of security, of keeping on being established in this state of God’s grace. Matthew Henry wrote *“It denotes not only our admission to, but our confirmation in, the favour of God.”*

We are secure and perpetually so, we are always in this grace. It is not something we can wander into and then wander out of. We are planted, established in the state of grace. It is certain, it is secure. The Amplified Bible, which is a useful translation to use for personal study, attempts to give the full force of words and so “amplify” their meaning, translates the first part of v2 as *“Through Him also we have <our> access (entrance, introduction) by faith into this grace (state of God’s favour) in which we <firmly and safely> stand.”*

What Paul is stressing here is that we are not merely in this grace, but we are secure in it - it is a perpetual, secure, ongoing position of grace we are firmly and safely in. It is not for a shorter or longer time we are allowed to stand in this lovely situation of God's grace, but then we may be turned out into a cold and barren position of non-grace. We are secure in it, we are perpetually secure in it. This is no falling from grace. If we are truly Christ's, then we are not saved for now and then can be lost later on, but we're saved and continue to be so.

If that were not so, then it would make a mockery of Paul's words in Romans 8:38-39 *"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."* Or Philippians 1:6 *"being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."*

Our security is not based on what we do or do not do; feel or not feel - it is based on what Christ has accomplished for us and He introduces us, presents us, gives and makes access for us into this grace and we do not cringe there, or worry it is not secure enough, or if we deserve it. We do not deserve it, but He has secured it for us and we are placed securely in it. We stand, we have the legal standing of being perpetually in the state of grace.

We may not appreciate it or its wonder, or its privileges, but it is ours. Part of our Christian duty, growth and experience is to recognise who we are in Christ and what we have in Him. We are to stand with great delight in this position of grace – not to grovel as if to appease an angry God, for we are at peace with Him now.

We are to thank Him for what He has done for us in Christ. Yes, we are to mourn and sorrow over sin and failure to live as we should, but we are to never ever doubt our Father or saviour's love and grace to us. Even if we do not realise anything else, note the following 2 out workings for us as Christians:

**A. We are safe:** We stand firmly and safely in this state of grace. The final perseverance of the saints – that we will get to heaven, is secure and guaranteed by His work in us. Nothing of our salvation is left up to us – faith is the gift of God; new life is the gift of God; justification and all that follows is the gift of God. Yes, we are to work it out, we are to apply it to our lives in practical living, but even if we fail to enjoy the fullest blessings of our salvation in this life, our eternal safety and security is not in the slightest doubt. Yes, it does and it will affect our living, but that's another subject altogether. Because we are safe, we should have:

**B. Growing assurance:** The God of our salvation wants us to have the joy of salvation, not merely a mindless feeling or excitement, but to have a real joy from knowing that no matter what happens, we are God's child and have a home and a Father in heaven.

It removes the fear of "*Am I good enough?*" Or "*Have I done enough?*" Trying to get to heaven by doing enough religious things is a harsh and cruel religion, as such ones can never have any assurance they have ever done enough! Yet the gospel declares "*Christ has done enough, has done all that is necessary for our salvation and in Him we are secure and safe.*" Religion says 'Do', the Gospel says 'All done'! We can have the assurance of knowing that all is well with our soul on the basis of all that Christ has perfectly accomplished on our behalf.

Martin Luther sought to have peace with God, sought to be righteous and as a monk as he worked through Romans, he discovered, or rather had revealed to him, the truth of Romans 5:1-2 and it transformed his life, transformed Europe and world history even. He knew, was assured he was God's child and stood in this grace.

What an assurance to have. We can have it as a birth right, a new birth right as ours when we trust wholly and totally on what the Lord Jesus Christ has done. When we do so we are safe and secure in Christ and I pray we all would have this blessed assurance imprinted upon our hearts and minds at all times. Not only that, but we would be perpetually amazed, awed and thankful for our position in this grace through our Lord Jesus Christ and rejoice in all that He has secured for us.