

Justification by Faith gives us (Isaiah 52:13-53:12 & Romans 5:1-11) 17-Mar-2024

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

The Suffering and Glory of the Servant

¹³ See, my servant will act wisely;

he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted.

¹⁴ Just as there were many who were appalled at him—

his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any human being

and his form marred beyond human likeness—

¹⁵ so he will sprinkle many nations,

and kings will shut their mouths because of him.

For what they were not told, they will see,

and what they have not heard, they will understand.

53 Who has believed our message

and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

² He grew up before him like a tender shoot,

and like a root out of dry ground.

He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him,

nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

³ He was despised and rejected by mankind,

a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.

Like one from whom people hide their faces

he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

⁴ Surely he took up our pain

and bore our suffering,

yet we considered him punished by God,

stricken by him, and afflicted.

⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions,

he was crushed for our iniquities;

the punishment that brought us peace was on him,

and by his wounds we are healed.

⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray,

each of us has turned to our own way;

and the LORD has laid on him

the iniquity of us all.

⁷ He was oppressed and afflicted,

yet he did not open his mouth;

he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,

and as a sheep before its shearers is silent,

so he did not open his mouth.

⁸ By oppression and judgment he was taken away.

Yet who of his generation protested?

For he was cut off from the land of the living;

for the transgression of my people he was punished.

⁹ He was assigned a grave with the wicked,

and with the rich in his death,

though he had done no violence,
nor was any deceit in his mouth.

¹⁰ Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer,
and though the LORD makes his life an offering for sin,
he will see his offspring and prolong his days,
and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.

¹¹ After he has suffered,
he will see the light of life and be satisfied;
by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many,
and he will bear their iniquities.

¹² Therefore I will give him a portion among the great,
and he will divide the spoils with the strong,
because he poured out his life unto death,
and was numbered with the transgressors.

For he bore the sin of many,
and made intercession for the transgressors.

Romans 5:1-11

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 boast in the hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴ perseverance, character; and character,

hope. ⁵ And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

⁶ You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

⁹ Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! 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 through his life! ¹¹ Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Sermon: Justification by Faith gives us...

Please have your Bibles opened at **Romans Chapter 5** – we're looking at **verses 1 to 11** [**Big Bible-Pages 1750-1751 and Small Bible-Page 1132**]. We will also refer briefly to our Old Testament reading from Isaiah 52 & 53. There is an outline if you would like to take down some notes!

Let me **pray** first...

Recap/Introduction

[Slide – Recap]

In our **series** so far looking at the Apostle Paul's **letter to the Romans**, we have seen that the **bad news** is that ***we all sin and fall short of God's perfect standards*** (Romans 3:23) and we've seen our sin **deserves God's wrath** (righteous anger) (Romans 1:18-32) because **God cannot** allow sin to go unpunished.

But, praise God, the **good news** is that God had a **perfect plan to fix our sins** – by **sending His perfect Son, Jesus**. That **good news** is called the Gospel!

So last week, we said that we are "***justified by our faith in Jesus***"

[Slide – Intro (Justification)]

So, what is justification?

Well, let me use an **illustration** by telling a story:

A rich English man bought a brand-new Rolls Royce and decided to take a trip to Europe. So, he drove to Dover, and drove his Rolls Royce on to a car-ferry and sailed to Calais in France. He drove around France for a few days and noticed that there seemed to be a problem with his Rolls Royce.

So, he phoned the Rolls Royce head office in England and explained the problem.

The Rolls Royce company, flew a mechanic over to France to fix the problem.

The English man, was wondering how much all this was going to cost him.

When he got back to England, he phoned the Rolls Royce head office and asked how much he owed them. The office staff, checked and came back to him and said "there's no record of the Rolls Royce ever having had a problem"

(pause)

[Slide -Justification]

Just like there was **no record of a problem with the man's Rolls Royce** –

justification means – there is **no record of our problem of sin!**

Jesus has removed **our sins from us** – and **we are right with God** – and legally – **NOT GUILTY of our sins** – “*just as if*” we’d never sinned!

This is **ALL** because of JESUS – and **nothing** at all **to do with our own efforts**. All we have to do is **have faith** – and **believe** that **Jesus took our sins away and took our punishment for our sins away from us** – when He died on that cruel cross!

[Slide – Justification by Faith gives us]

Justification by Faith gives us... (Romans 5:1-11)

Now – here in Romans **chapter 5 – verses 1 to 11** – Paul goes on to explain what justification by faith gives us!

1. We have Peace with God (v1)

[Slide – Peace]

1st –justification by faith means - we have **peace with God** – that’s in **verse 1**

This is not the same as **the peace of God** (Philippians 4:7) – where we have a calm and satisfied heart in the midst of troubles and pressures.

Peace with God – means the **state of hostilities between God and us is now over** – because of Jesus’ death for our sin.

Peace with God – means that until we have faith that Jesus saves us – **there is a war going on between God and us.**

When we disobey God – **two things happen.**

1st – when we sin – we not only **break God's law** but we assume the right or **authority to do so** – so we're saying we're king of our own life – not God. But at the same time **God claims kingship over our life too.**

When two people claim absolute kingship over something – **there is a war.** [look at **Ukraine** – two leaders claiming kingship over the same land – doesn't work – it leads to **war!**]

2nd thing that happens when we sin – is that **our disobedience means that God has a problem with us.** God's **wrath** is on us. God's wrath is not vengeful or vindicative – it's **legal**. There is a **sentence on us** – that cannot be overlooked. That sentence can't be taken away by us – we're not capable of coming to God and saying – we've made peace with Him. **We need Jesus to do that** – and then we have true peace with God.

2. We have access to Grace in which we stand (v2a)

[Slide – Grace]

2nd – **justification by faith means** - we have access to Grace in which we stand – that's in the first part of **verse 2**.

We need to **understand** what grace is

Grace is: *God's loving-kindness, mercy and favour towards us – even though we don't deserve it – even though we didn't earn it!*

Having been given this grace – which is the **free gift of Jesus** saving us from our sins – Paul is saying **we now have access to God's grace.**

For **example** – if I go to London – and visit **Buckingham Palace** – I can't just rock up to **King Charles** – and say “***G'Day King Charles – I'm from Australia***”

I will **need someone to grant me access to His majesty**.

In the same way – **Jesus opens up access** – so we can approach **God's throne of grace**.

If we think back to when **Jesus** died on the **cross**. We read in Matthew, Mark and Luke's Gospels (Matthew 27:51; Mark 15:38 and Luke 23:45) that as Jesus cried out his last breath – the “***curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom***”.

This tearing of the curtain was **symbolic** in **saying** – **animal sacrifices offered for people's sins in the temple were no longer required** – because **Jesus' sacrifice** was a **once and for all, never to be repeated sacrifice**; so, we could have access to **God through Jesus**!

3. We boast (rejoice) in our hope of the glory of God (v2b)

[Slide – hope of glory]

3rd – ***justification by faith means*** - we boast (or rejoice) in ***our hope of the glory of God*** – that's in the second part of verse 2.

As we've seen in our **children's talk** this morning – the word “**hope**” in our **everyday English** language is rather **uncertain** – for example – “***I hope it doesn't rain***” or “***I hope my team wins today***”. But the **Greek** word for hope used here – is a **certain or sure hope**!

And what **does Paul say** is the **object** of our **hope**?

The object of our hope is the “glory of God”

It's pretty difficult to summarize the “glory of God” – but let me try:

- God's glory is **God's radiant splendour and majesty** as the **supreme ruler of Heaven and Earth**
- God's glory is what we see around us **in His creation and in the Heavens** (stars and planets)
- God's glory is **seen in Jesus – God's Word becoming flesh and dwelling on Earth**
- God's glory is seen in **Jesus' death and resurrection** as He **completely fulfils God the Father's rescue plan**
- God's glory will be **seen in the future** when **Jesus returns to judge** the living and the dead
- And ultimately when we get to Heaven – **we will see all of God's heavenly glory** – that's the **end product of our certain hope** of God's glory

In the meantime – the sheer perfection and greatness and majesty of God – His Glory – demands us to give Him worship and praise and honour!

Notice – these **three benefits of justification** – *peace with God* – *access to stand in His grace* – and the *hope of the glory of God* – cover the three tenses

We are freed from the past – our old record of sin and rebellion is wiped away

We are free in the present – to enjoy a relationship with God now

And one day in the future – we will be in the awesome presence of God’s glory forever!

How good is that?

(pause)

4. We glory (rejoice) in our sufferings (Romans 5:3-8)

[Slide – Sufferings]

4th – ***justification by faith means*** - we glory (or rejoice) in ***our sufferings!*** – that’s in verses 3 to 8.

Sufferings seems a strange thing for us to be glorying in or rejoicing in?

How can Paul say that?

Well – notice - **Paul doesn’t say – glory (or rejoice) because of our sufferings** – that would make us **masochists!** Where we **feel the need to be punished and suffer because** we have a **sense of unworthiness or guilt**. And it **might even make us feel superior to those** who seemed to have had an **easier life than us!**

And Paul doesn’t want us to use our suffering as a **work** – so we’re **justified by our works**. Otherwise, we could **say to ourselves – ‘I’ve had such a hard life – I *deserve to get to Heaven!***

No – Paul says Christians are to glory or rejoice **IN** their sufferings!

What Paul means is that **Christians will “look past” or “look through” their suffering and see the positives**.

Remember, **Jesus’ path to glory was to suffer and be crucified**.

In our Old Testament reading from Isaiah 52:13 to 53:12 [**Big Bible Pages 1146-1147 and Small Bible-Page 740**]- **Isaiah describes Jesus as a suffering servant – and describes Jesus’ suffering 700 years before it actually **happens!****

Isaiah says:

- Jesus will be a **man of suffering and familiar with pain** (53:2)
- Jesus will be **pierced for our transgressions** and **crushed for our iniquities** (53:5)
- Jesus’ punishment will **bring us peace [with God]** (53:5)
- God laid **all our iniquities on Jesus** (53:6)
- Jesus was **punished for our transgressions** (53:8)
- It was **God’s will** to **crush Jesus and cause Him to suffer** – so that He would be an **offering for sin** (53:10)
- It was **God’s plan** that **Jesus would bear our sins and iniquities** – so that He **could justify many** (53:11)
- And **Jesus bore the sin of many** and **makes intercession** for the transgressors (53:12)

If Jesus suffered all of this for us – **we can’t expect not to also suffer!**

It’s worth saying at this point – that the **suffering that Paul is talking about** - is not necessarily – the **aches and pains or sicknesses** we have – or the **doubts and fears and disappointments** we experience in life. **Sufferings here are more like the opposition and persecutions we get as Christians living in a hostile world.**

So, we **might experience attacks in our church** – to cause **division or disharmony** – or the **Government** might try to **control what we can teach and preach from the Bible** by passing laws – or they might **try to stop Scripture** in our schools.

You see, **our path to glory** – **also requires suffering**. Jesus said so - to His disciples in John 16:33 - ***In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world***

Paul will also go on to say later in Romans – 8:17: *that if we are [God's] children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed **we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.***

So, as we suffer for being Christians – **we are partaking in Christ suffering**

There is an **example of this in Acts 5** – where the **apostles** were **persecuted, jailed and flogged for teaching about Jesus** – but after they were **released** – the **Apostles rejoiced** (Acts 5:41) – *because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name [of Jesus]*

It's the **same for us** – **we can rejoice when we suffer** – because we know we're on **Team Jesus** – and it's **worth it** – for the **glory to come!**

Paul goes on to mention some positive benefits in our suffering in vv3-4.

Paul says in v3 – that **suffering produces perseverance**

Perseverance here means *a person is not swayed from their loyalty and faith in Jesus by the greatest of persecutions and sufferings. They have endurance to keep going no matter what!*

Paul then says –in v4 – perseverance leads to character.

The Greek word for character here means *the quality of someone who has been tried and tested and passed the test. It shows they have a mature character – like a veteran soldier rather than a raw recruit!*

And still in v4 – Paul says – character leads to hope

Now remember – we’ve already said – hope in this context – means a certain or sure hope!

How do we know this **hope of glory we’re promised** - is true and certain?

Well – because in v5 – this **hope comes wrapped in God’s love and the Holy Spirit in our hearts** – assuring us that **God’s promises are true!**

And Paul goes on to say in vv6-8 – that **we can know God loved us** because of the **death of Jesus**. It’s an **historical fact** that “*while we were still powerless*” – sinners – and in our cases not even born – “*Christ died for the ungodly*”

Paul makes the argument in v7 – a person might die for someone who is good and loving – but they’re not going to die for someone evil or wicked!

So, in v8 – **the single action that completely proves and demonstrates God loves us** – is that “*while were sinners*” – part of the human race that was rebelling and resisting Him – **Christ chose, by the will of God the Father, to die for us!**

And Paul is saying – no matter what we’re feeling – no matter what we’re suffering – and no matter what our lives are like right now - we can take God at **His Word** – His love never fails – His Word never fails – and **He doesn’t tell lies!**

[Slide – saved]

5. We will be saved through Jesus (vv9-10)

Which brings us to the next point

5th – ***justification by faith means*** - we will be saved through Jesus – that's in verses 9 and 10.

Paul is **answering the question** people might have – when they say: *I know that I have peace and friendship with God now – because of Jesus – and I know when I get to Heaven – I will have glory with God. But how do I know I will make it there? How do I know I'll endure in the meantime?*

In verses 9 and 10 – Paul assures us that **Christ's work for salvation** not only gives hope for our ultimate future but also hope for right now.

Paul intertwines two arguments.

First – if Jesus died on the cross and saved us when we were God's enemies (v10) – then how much more will he keep us saved now that we are His friends – and **justified by His blood** (v9). If God didn't give up on us when we were at war with Him – what could make Him give up on us now we are at peace with Him!

And - second – if Jesus saved us through His death – how much more will He keep us saved now - when He is alive!

The bottom line is – as Christians – **we have assurance of Heaven** – a rock solid guarantee!

6. We boast (rejoice) in God (v11)

The **first 10 verses of Romans 5** – give us a **wonderful list** of the **benefits** of being **justified by faith**.

Which brings us to the **final point** in **v11**

[Slide – rejoice in God]

6th – ***justification by faith means*** – **we can boast or rejoice** in God.

Why can we **boast or rejoice** in God?

Because Paul says - we have been reconciled back to God through Jesus.

As **Christians** we are in the **unique position** that our joy does not depend on our circumstances or our performance.

If we think about it – if we give our heart to anything other than God – and seek happiness there – sooner or later **we will be disappointed or let down** – **and we realize our happiness is very brittle and insecure**. So, we could decide to look for someone/something else to make us happy or we could just give up.

But the **Gospel of Jesus** – **gives us access to God** – who doesn't change – and doesn't let us down or disappoint. And so, whatever is going on for us – **we can have joy in knowing Him and knowing peace and having fellowship with Him** – and look forward with cast-iron certainty to Heavenly glory.

But we can also enjoy a foretaste of that glory now – hors d'oeuvres before the main course – because the **Holy Spirit works in our hearts and helps us know God's love for us now!**

I know we're Presbyterian – but we can have that joy now – because of what Jesus has done for us!

Challenge/Response

Let me leave us with a challenge

[Slide-challenge]

Because we have been reconciled with God – through Jesus – the Apostle Paul says in another of his letters – in 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 – **God has given US a ministry of reconciliation** – and He has given to US the **message of reconciliation**. Therefore, we must share the Good News that through Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross, **God offers forgiveness and restoration to all who believe in Jesus**, regardless of our past sins or shortcomings. So, **it's up to us to invite people to enter into a restored relationship with God through Jesus**. As we approach Easter, it's a **great opportunity for us** – **to explain what Easter is about** – and **invite people to come to our Lord Jesus!**

Let's pray...

Father God,

Thank you we are justified and declared right with you because of Jesus.

Thank you that we have peace with you and the certain hope of glory

In the meantime, Father, help us to rejoice in our suffering for Jesus' name's sake and rejoice in knowing you love us and rejoice in knowing we have a Heavenly glory to look forward to.

In Jesus name, we pray, Amen!