

• *Being justified we have...*

Six blessings through our being right with God

1. *We have peace with God*

2. *We have access into a kingdom of grace*

3. *We expect to get to glory*

4. *We understand our troubles*

• *Troubles make us tougher*

• *Troubles produce perseverance which develops character*

• *Sufferings essential for maturity*

5. *We experience God's love*

• *By the Holy Spirit*

Now a new major section starts in the letter to the Romans. He has shown us the need of a righteousness from God^{□1}. He has told us how that righteousness comes to us through the Lord Jesus Christ^{□2}. Now the next step is to tell us what are the results of justification. He says: *Therefore having been justified by faith we have . . .* These words set the tone for the next four chapters. He tells us what 'we have' as the result of our being right with God. There are six immediate blessings.

1. **We have peace with God.** ¹*Therefore having been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

2. **We have access into a kingdom of grace.** ²*Through him also we have gained access into this grace in which we now stand . . .* As soon as we are at peace with God we are transferred into a new kingdom. Justification is a doorway giving immediate access into a realm of grace. And we stay there! From this point on we shall always be in a kingdom of grace.

3. **We expect to get to glory.** Paul says: *. . . and we rejoice in our expectation of the glory of God.* Because we are right with God, our final getting to heaven and receiving God's glory is certain. We are as good as in glory already. It is 100 per cent certain God will fulfil his purpose to bring us to glorification.

4. **We understand our troubles.** It might puzzle us that Paul has leapt from the beginning to the end, from 'peace with God' to final 'glory'. It is because once we are at peace with God, final glory is certain. But now Paul comes back to consider what happens in between. In this life we might have many troubles. Paul says: ³*And not only that, but we also rejoice in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation works perseverance,* ⁴*and perseverance works character, and character works hope.* We can even rejoice in troubles, says Paul. It is not that we enjoy the troubles themselves! But we know what God is doing. We rejoice in our tribulations, knowing . . . ! It is what we know that enables us to rejoice. We know that troubles make us tougher! They force us to decide whether we are going to live for God or not. They produce perseverance. And that goes on to produce 'character'. The Greek word means 'the quality of having passed a test'. Sufferings are necessary to maturity. And then we find that we are looking forward to glory more than we used to. When life is easy we do not focus on glory so much. But when life is tough we begin to concentrate more on our final reward. We live for future glory.

5. **We experience God's love.** ⁵*And hope does not prove disappointing, because the love of God is poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom he has given to us.* What prevents us from feeling let down by God when we are in the midst of trouble is the outpouring or 'baptism' with the Spirit. God pours out in (not 'into!') our hearts an awareness of his love. Verses 6–8 tell us what are the convictions that grip us when we experience

□1 1:18-3:20

□2 3:21-4:25

God's love. ⁶For when we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷For one will scarcely die even for an upright person – although perhaps for a good person someone would dare even to die. ⁸But God commended his love towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. This is what grips us by the Holy Spirit. God loves us despite our sinfulness!

When we experience God's love in this way we are able to make some deductions. ⁹Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. There is a piece of logical arguing here. If we have **now** been accepted by God as righteous with the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, then we can be sure we shall be kept safe from God's anger. We need not fear rejection in the final judgement day. Paul explains further: ¹⁰For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by being joined on to his life. If God has started with us, he will continue with us. If the big problem has been dealt with (our enmity and guilt before God), then the rest will be easy! We shall be rescued from sin and all its consequences by the Holy-Spirit-life in Jesus, given to us!

• If the big problem has been dealt with (our enmity and guilt before God) then the rest will be easy!

6. We know that we are already reconciled to God

• God's smile

• Our smile

6. **We know that we are already reconciled to God.** Paul says: ¹¹And not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation. We are reconciled to God already! It is not a future gift. It is here with us right now! We know that God is our Friend. A Friend who knows the worst thing about us, but tells us he will never reject us. A Friend who has plans for us, but will never moralize us. A Friend who is powerful. A Friend who is affectionate. A Friend who accepts us. A Friend who will not expose us. We are walking down the road and someone smiles at us. We wonder, 'Does that person know me? Why is he smiling?' Then we realize. We were smiling at him! God was the joy of our countenance. We have received our reconciliation!



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