



8/4/25

What a powerful service we had yesterday! The groaning the Holy Spirit does for us as He intercedes for us is amazing. I loved the statements, "Pray to center my trust, not to assert my will." And "Trust is a horrible word if control is my goal." Whoa! I need to be reminded over and over that we have a God who is safe, powerful, able to help, able to comfort, and always available. He meets us in our suffering... and someday, He will take us home to glory forever. Amen!

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Romans 5:1-11 ~

I feel like the beginning of this passage is like one of those game shows where the emcee says of the winner, "Tell her what she's won, Hal!" This is the victory that comes because I put my faith in Jesus Christ... It impacts everything about my life. This is not just about a ticket to heaven. This is absolute life change.

Vs. 1-2 ~ My faith in Jesus brings me justification... I am acquitted from all guilt. This is good, because I'm going to find out in several verses that I WAS weak, ungodly, an enemy of the Lord. But when I put my faith in Jesus, the Righteous Judge brought the gavel down declaring, "acquitted, approved." My only responsibility in that was that I believed in Jesus. It would be crazy if I stood before a judge facing life in prison or the death penalty, and he said, "Not guilty." And then I refused to believe it, so I try to talk the judge into putting me in prison anyway. I pray that I would recognize what I've been acquitted from, breathe a massive sigh of relief, and celebrate that I have peace with my Judge FOREVER.

With my faith came justification and peace with God. I have been made whole with God so that there is no tension between us. No shame. If I could see the Father looking at me right now, His face would not be disapproval, but peace. "He crowns me with steadfast love and mercy" (Psalm 103:4) ... because Jesus took a crown of thorns in my place.

With faith came access into the grace in which I stand. Everywhere I walk or stand, I'm still in His grace. Everywhere I walk or stand from the moment of salvation is a place where His pleasure rests on me.

With faith, I'm able to celebrate, boast in, rejoice in hope of the glory of God. I have hope. I celebrate with absolute certainty that I WILL experience the fullness of God's glory in my life.

So... my faith = justification = peace with God = His grace = hope. This is what I get to experience because of Jesus. I have none of this without Jesus. I have all of it with Jesus.

Vs. 3-5 ~ My faith in Jesus changes my perspective of suffering. Instead of viewing suffering as God's apathy, disappointment, or punishment on me, I can literally rejoice in my sufferings. I rejoice both in my hope AND in my suffering... BOTH in the glory that's coming AND in the trials that are here. WHY? HOW? Where my suffering once seemed to have no purpose, now I know that my suffering is never wasted.

My suffering accomplishes something good in me... endurance. I learn to persevere just as Jesus endured enormous suffering for me. My perseverance leads to pleasing character that looks more and more like Jesus. Jesus proved His perfect, sinless character through His own suffering... for me. My character leads to a deeper hope in me... a confident assurance that Jesus' sacrifice became my hope. His suffering, endurance, and hope led Him to the cross, so that He could pour the love of God into my heart when He poured out His blood on the cross. Because He poured His blood out on the cross and then ascended to heaven, the Holy Spirit has sealed me and poured His love into my heart. Nothing I go through is wasted. God uses every situation to make me stronger, more like Jesus, and filled with hope... as I put my full confidence in the Lord.

Vs. 6-8 ~ Well, did I do something great to get God to turn His eyes toward me so that I would get a special pass into all these benefits? Nope. I was weak. I was ungodly. I was not righteous. I was a sinner. Weak. Ungodly. Unrighteous. A sinner. NOT good. NOT righteous. But Jesus, who is strong, godly, righteous, good, and holy, stepped down from His throne to take away my need to earn my way to Him. My job is not to be good enough, but to believe that God IS good enough for me.

God the Father showed me His love BEFORE I did anything to deserve it... because even now there's no way I could deserve it by my own merits. The Father showed me HIS love by sending His Son to die for me when I was in complete rebellion against Him. Jesus was willing to give His life. The Father was willing to send Him. How great must a Father's love be to sacrifice His Son so that I could be adopted? In the Old Testament, kings who sacrificed their kids to false gods were detestable to God. In this case... the Father did not sacrifice His Son against His will. But He did send His Son to lay down His own life because His Son was willing. The Old Testament sacrifices of those kings were selfish and self-serving. All they did was DESTROY life. Jesus' perfect sacrifice was selfless and self-sacrificing. His sacrifice GAVE life.

Vs. 9-11 ~ Jesus' blood was not just any blood. It was blood that did not have the DNA of sin polluting it. It was the only blood that could satisfy the payment for my guilt. It's the only blood that has the power to justify the weak, ungodly, unrighteous sinner. It is the only blood that saves me from the wrath of God that I deserve. It is the only blood that can bring reconciliation.

Before Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden thousands of years ago, they walked with God in perfect relationship... they talked with Him face to face. When Adam and Eve sinned so many thousands of years ago, their relationship with God was severed. The consequences of their sin reached far beyond anything they possibly could have imagined. Through their sin, the relationships of all people who came after them were severed from God because the DNA of sin now ran through the veins of every human soul other than Jesus.

It's like my body's struggle with insulin resistance. I have close relatives on both sides of the family who have or had Type II Diabetes. As "clean" as I eat and as consistently as I exercise, I constantly battle with keeping my glucose and A1C numbers down. I was born with it... and I was born with a much more horrific inherited disease... sin. Jesus provided the cure.

When Jesus hung on the cross, He paved the way for all people to be cured from sin, reconciled to God... to have relationship with Him restored. Because Jesus died AND ROSE AGAIN, I am saved from the horrible disease that made me a weak, ungodly, unrighteous, sinner who had no peace, who not only had no relationship with God, but didn't even care. He provided the cure before I even wanted it... because He loves me.

I am reconciled to Jesus, and I am reconciled to the Father through Jesus. I celebrate the relationship I have with Him, that I never would have or could have had if He didn't love me first. What does it mean that I'm reconciled to God? I have peace with Him. He no longer sees me or judges me for my failures. The only thing I bring to the table is faith. Father, I can't make myself strong. You don't expect me to. You are my strength. I can't make myself godly... which is to be like You. You make me godly through Jesus. I can't make myself righteous. You never asked me to. You give me Your righteousness. I can't free myself from sin. You are my rescue. The only thing I can do is say, "Yes, Lord. I receive it." I receive the truth. I celebrate that I am no longer Your enemy. I celebrate that I have peace with You. I can't comprehend that kind of love, but I receive it and I celebrate it.