

# Heart of the Gospel

## Part 5 – Peace, Grace, and Hope

### Romans 5.1-5

Through Jesus, God has done for us what we could never do for ourselves

- Every bit of this hinges on the “therefore” – if we have indeed been justified by faith, these things are true of us
- Clearly puts salvation in a broader context, contra many who say that salvation is a mere legal formality

#### **We have Peace**

- Shalom – wholeness and well-being
- Lack of conflict – the enmity between the two parties has been put aside because Jesus paid the debt
- Right relationship – goodness, righteousness restored, having been given to us by God because Jesus purchased favor for us

#### **We have Access to Grace**

- Grace is help that we need that comes from God
- Everything is grace to us
  - No judgment or punishment – because we have shalom with God
  - Discipline is also grace – shows we are His, share in His holiness (Heb 12.7-10)
  - Faith is the only way to live in grace – faith in His promises, follow His commands

**Proper response:** rejoicing in the glory that is to come

- Boasting – you think THIS is great...you should see what’s coming!
  - STAR WARS – Rogue One – we know the end of the story

Popular response: my life doesn’t feel like Shalom or grace or glory – it feels like trouble

#### **Rejoice (boast!) in your suffering**

- Not because of suffering but in them
- Because they remind us that the world is not our home and glory is coming
- Because they are not purposeless or punishments – they have a reason
  - Q: do you want transformation in your life? Enough to go through troubles?
- Both of these give us hope

## We have Hope

- Suffering produces Endurance
  - Like a runner builds endurance by running, so transformation happens as we stick to it through troubles (endurance is part of that transformation)
  - Makes no sense if we're trying to earn the approval of God – only makes sense if we have peace with Him, access to grace, and coming glory
- Endurance produces Character
  - Like sandpaper and whittling wood, character takes shape a little at a time
  - Like a runner's legs or a swimmer's frame, it's the endurance that shaped them
  - Spiritually, the older you get the more you're in your prime – older people endure with joy what younger people fear
- Character produces Hope
  - Character is evidence that one has genuinely been changed by God
  - If God changed us this much now, we can bank our hope that He will change us even more when the promised glory comes
  - Q: Why do some people get bitter, not better?
  - A: Their attitude hasn't synced with God's
    - Entitled to an easy life / "good life"
    - Live with the question, "Haven't I endured enough already?"
    - See trials as God's disapproval for their life
    - Not actually justified before God through Jesus
- Hope doesn't humiliate us
  - Because God has poured out His love for us in our hearts through the Holy Spirit
  - If His love isn't certain, we have no hope – but it is (Rom. 5.8)

## Questions for Discussion:

1. The biblical understanding of peace is *Shalom* – a rightness of relationship that includes a lack of conflict. Where do you see *Shalom* in our world today? Where is it most glaringly absent in your opinion? Spiritually, why is it not enough to only have a lack of conflict with God?
2. Some equate grace with forgiveness but the NT teaching of grace is broader than that. Read Titus 2.11-14. How does this passage articulate what grace does? How does that expand your understanding of grace? How can faith give us access to this kind of grace?
3. Who is the person you think of when you hear Paul say, "Rejoice / Boast in your sufferings?" Why did they come to mind? What is it about them that sticks out?
4. If suffering yields endurance and endurance character, how does this resemble the process of transformation? (v.3-4)
5. Trent listed 4 reasons why some get bitter instead of better in trials. What would you add? How much do you identify with any of those reasons in your life or those around you?