

## SERMON NOTES

SERIES: Romans: God's Power for Salvation  
TITLE: The Benefits of Justification  
SCRIPTURE: Romans 5:1-11  
DATE: December 3, 2017  
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The book of Romans is a masterfully written exposition of the gospel of God. Without a doubt, it is the foundation of authentic Christianity and the most articulate, systematic understanding of our faith found in the Bible. Countless lives have been changed by the truth found in this ancient letter, and it continues to change lives today. Interestingly enough, Romans was written to Christians. So, while the good news found in Romans can certainly bring people to faith in Jesus, the actual focus is on how the gospel helps Christians think rightly about God, life, faith, and Christian community. If you want to grow to know God more personal and intimate way, this letter is for you!

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Hallmark Christmas movies are appealing in a weird sort of way. They're all very similar but different. The greatest similarity in all of them is that they all center on the theme of "hope"—hope for love, hope for reunion, hope for the restoration of a relationship, hope for a better life in starting over. The movies are appealing because hope is what we need in this messed up, broken world. And it was what the people in Paul's day needed as well. In Romans 1-4, Paul has made it clear that apart from Christ, we have no hope—we all stand guilty before God and we all need the Gospel. The main way Paul talks about the Gospel here is by highlighting the doctrine of justification by faith. When you place your faith in Christ for salvation, God not only forgives your sins, he also credits to you the very righteousness of Jesus—this is the doctrine of justification—God declares us to be right with himself by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. And at that moment, God also puts his Holy Spirit in us so that at the core of your being, you become a new person, part of God's new humanity—and that begins a lifelong process of transformation and life-change. We have said that our Big Idea for Romans is this—*The Gospel that saves us, changes us; and the Gospel that changes us, unities us*. So as we come to Romans 5, we're turning a corner in the book—moving from God's power to save us to God's power to change us.

What Paul wants us to see is that the doctrine of justification is the only thing that will give us hope both now and in the future. And there are two statements you need to understand in order to apply what Paul will teach us here in chapter 5.

1. Justification is the key to our transformation—the key to life change. Gospel fluency—preaching the Gospel to yourself in the midst of your daily life is primarily about reminding ourselves of how much God love us because he himself has justified us.
2. Justification is experiential—meaning, there are daily benefits to justification which is what Paul articulates for us here in chapter 5.

Benefit #1 — Unbreakable peace with God (5:1).

Benefit #2 — Unhindered access to God (5:2).

Benefit #3 — Unshakeable hope in our future with God, especially in times of sorrow and suffering (5:3-4).

Suffering leads to perseverance.

Perseverance leads to proven character.

Proven character solidifies an ever-growing hope.

Benefit #4 — Unfailing assurance in God's love for us (5:5-11).

Preach the Gospel to yourself—God showed his love for me in that while I was a sinner, Christ died for me. How much more then will I know his love for me, now that God has justified me and reconciled me to himself, because Jesus lives for me.

Here's how Paul puts in Romans 8:34-39. "Christ Jesus is the one who died -more than that- who was raised - who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? No in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Justifying faith gives us hope that will never disappoint because it is rooted in God's great love for us.

*For Discussion —*

When you listen to Bible teaching, you should be listening with an ear to learn, but also an ear to share with others what you learn. Keep that in mind as you discuss today's message. How do you need to internalize this message so you could share this Good News with people who are confused about what makes a person right with God?

1. Talk about your favorite Hallmark Christmas movie.
2. Why is our justification the key to our transformation—the key to life-change?
3. Talk about a difficult time in your life that now, as you look back on it, you can see that you actually grew stronger in your faith.
4. When *does* hope disappoint? What is it about Gospel hope that does not disappoint?
5. Of the four benefits of justification mentioned in this passage/sermon, which one spoke the loudest to you? What situation in your life right now would you see differently if you focused on Gospel hope?
6. Have some read Romans 8:34-39--talk about how this passage completes Paul's thought about how justifying faith gives us a hope in the love of God that does not disappoint.