

Believer's Benefits

Romans 5:1-21

The first Gospel truth unpacked (Rom 1:18-3:20) is: **Slide** People Aren't Righteous. Trapped under the power of sin. (Wasp Trap) All need rescue from the outside. The second Gospel Truth (3:21-4:25) is: **Slide** Jesus Saves Sinners. (Cross) Someone must die. And Jesus paid freely. In the court of the Highest, God declares believers 'righteous'. God credits their account with the righteousness of His Son and transfers their sin and punishment to Jesus on the cross. The great exchange.

This next passage tells us what happens when God's righteousness is transferred to believers. It answers questions like...

"Paul, are you just saying this like a polite Canadian? All by faith? This sounds too good to be true. How can we know that God will declare us 'righteous', on Judgement Day? Chapter 5 confirms God's gracious rescue plan **and** piles on the benefits! It leaves no doubt that believers have something to boast about...not in themselves (in contrast to Jews who have nothing to boast about in the Law) but in the Lord!

Pray

Who is this God we have...that justifies sinful people? God is Creator and Sovereign LORD. The great "I AM"

exists eternally - self-sustaining and self-determining. He is the supreme Judge and Almighty to carry out His judgement for eternity. He doesn't have a split personality and he's not fickle like some human idea of a god. He is **righteous and gracious**.

Jesus tells us to call Him, Father. David calls Him Shepherd.

What does the Almighty Judge and Father do with His fallen, worthless human enemies (Rom 3:12-18)?

He takes the wrath and condemnation they deserve and unleashes it upon the only one worthy to be their substitute, the sacrificial lamb of God is Jesus. Oh, what radical love! So let us never forget in our titles of God...He is Redeemer. God is slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. He is also just (Gen 33:18-34:9, Jer 9:24) and jealously keeps covenants with His people (Ex 20:4-5). Church, we are rescued enemies of God...to humbly serve and bring Him glory forever. Jesus brings glory to the Father. The Father brings glory to Jesus (John 17), giving Him all authority (Matt 28:18) and the bride (the church). And when all God's enemies are vanquished (last is death), Christ will present all back to the Father again for His glory (1 Cor 15:24-28). God's 'justice' for us, is also His **glory plan**.

Let's dig into this trunk load of benefits for believers. It begins with what people receive by faith (Rom 5:1-11) and then, the benefits of having Jesus as a representative, instead of Adam (5:12-21). There's seven "we have" benefits (1st person plural indicative verbs) and five of them are unpacked in the first 5 verses.

Read Rom 5:1-5

1. We have **peace** with God. The ominous cloud of God's present wrath and ultimate condemnation no longer hangs over the believer.^{v1}
2. We have **gained access** into God's **grace** (unmerited favor). Who gives us access? Jesus. How? By faith. And even saving faith is a gift of God (Eph 2:8-9) ^{v2}
3. We **now** stand in the very presence of God's grace. God blesses with daily provision and accomplishes His ministry through us. We stand in His grace. ^{v2}
4. We **boast** (rejoice) **now in hope**. The hope to share in God's glory forever. Heaven is far beyond amazing...it's home with our Savior to express our gratitude face to face. Hope is the key theme of this whole chapter. ^{v2}
5. We **rejoice now in suffering** (^{v3-5}). Just as resistance to muscle strengthens it, so challenges to our faith can strengthen it. Suffering strengthens faith. It forces us to see beyond our world and helps us

depend on God more. We can rejoice in the midst of suffering (not for the evil or pain itself).

Trials present us a choice – hope or despair. Trials can produce good things if we trust God (Rom 8:17). Who doesn't want **patience**? Who doesn't admire **character**...a trustworthy person, day and night. A person who holds to **Hope** brings life. This hope comes from God's love poured, not dribbled. How? Through His Spirit, who breaths life right into our deepest place of motivation, the heart. The Holy Spirit is a person of God, not the force. The Spirit has a will (1 Cor 12:11), mind (Rom 8:26-27), emotions (Eph 4:30) and speaks (Acts 13:2). Believers are the temple of the Holy Spirit, sent to help us and to 'seal the deal' (Eph 1:13-14) that we are God's regenerated family members. Clean and New forever! Amen? Paul will unpack more on the Holy Spirit in chapter 8. How deep is the well of God's love...to pour into us?

Read Rom 5:6-8

It helped me when I looked at the 'righteous person' as someone like a Pharisee...who thinks they are righteous (arrogant). But most people have a 'good person' in their life. You just love them. Especially a child, spouse or a real friend. I've heard of sacrificing for a loved one, but for an enemy? Christ left heaven to do this.

We know we will be declared righteous on Judgement Day because of God's **love** for us in Christ. Now Paul goes on to explain how God's completed **work** for us in Christ completely restores our relationship with Him.

Read Rom 5:9-11

God declares us innocent and removes the punishment for our sins. This is the justify part. Paul is explaining that He also removes the hostility. God is not holding a grudge. This is what being reconciled is all about...the relationship repaired. Many people with a history of hurt and hostility, long for reconciliation. And to bring it home a bit, there have been attempts to end the generational hostility that exists between the original peoples and the settlers from the New World. Most attempts from our government, fail. It is not just for us, nor does it settle the original issue of land claims. Many attempts from the first people's fail, too. Not from a lack of desire but from a lack of perspective.

Chief Robert Joseph is Canada's ambassador of reconciliation. He hopes all people will look within to find a desire for a loving, caring and just society. The hope is beautiful but it's built on a false plan. Peace does not begin by looking within...it begins by looking up! God is the only one who can pour into us the love it takes

to be truly reconciled. Instead, Chief Joseph reveres mother earth and believes none of us were born to be evil or bad or hate. You can't ignore our common humanity in Adam. And you can't ignore the only hope of rescue we have in Christ. Not if you are trying to find true peace. It is true, that a person must look in the past to find their future. And it was written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek thousands of years ago.

The unique problem we have is that when a people has been forced to live a new way with a new language, there tends to be resistance to receiving the truth about God through that same channel. I hope the first peoples learn their language and I hope someone is ahead of the game translating the Bible into St'át'imc (interior Salishan). This language has become 'endangered' so it's more likely that English will still be the best language. Like Chief Joseph, I would rejoice to see Canada be an example to the world of a reconciling people. Where every child is born with the same potential and where we find ways to end divisions, racism and hatred and celebrate diversity. And share the wealth. Cheering each other on...everyone having a place and honored for their unique gifts. I'm basically summarizing what Chief Joseph's vision for a reconciled Canada would look like (Ap 27/17). And

you know what this sounds like? It sounds like God’s people, the church with Christ as head. God is good and He brings hints of His goodness far and wide. But none will experience the depth and length of reconciliation until they look up to receive God’s rescue in Christ and be committed to His family. Jesus said to His disciples, “I no longer call you servants, instead I have called you friends” (Jn 15:15). So we have in this passage, the 6th and 7th benefits to assure us.

6. **We shall be saved** (future tense to address the issue of final judgement).

Salvation: I have been saved, am being saved, will be saved. v9

7. **We have received reconciliation.**

Sin created the ultimate parting with God. By God’s grace in Jesus – believers have a new relationship: all hostility is gone. v10-11

The second way to see what God’s rescue has accomplished for believers is that Jesus now represents us.

People’s destiny through Adam is death (v12). But by faith in Jesus’ finished work on the cross, believer’s have eternal life (v21).

Read Rom 5:12

Because all sinned...has been debated for centuries. Pelagius said sin transfers through disobedience. We are not corporately included in Adam’s disobedience. We just make the same mistake as Adam and individually need reconciliation. Augustine argued that sin is transferred to our account through Adam (sin nature). By looking at v12, we see the flaw in Pelagius’ argument. Death is proof of sin. Babies die before they consciously break a command. All sin because sin’s power reigns in all through Adam (Rom 3:9).

Read Rom 5:13-14

Adam’s outright breaking God’s Command brought sin into the world. The evidence is physical death for everyone. But the people after Adam didn’t have a direct command from God or the written law, like the time of Moses. So they are not in the same ball park as people today...or all the way back to Moses. They are under a different system of judgement. The one who represents us - humanity after Moses - is Adam. What comes next is a comparison between Adam’s trespass and God’s gift in Jesus. **Slide**

Choose Your Representative: Adam or Jesus?

Rom 5	Adam and his trespass	God’s gift of grace through Jesus
v15	Many die by trespass of one man	God’s Grace flows to many by one man
v16	Result of Adam’s sin is condemnation	Result of God’s gift is justification
v17	= Death reigns through Adam’s sin	= Believers reign in life through Jesus

v18	One trespass is condemnation, death for all	One righteous act (atonement) is justification, life for all (believers)
v19	Disobedience of Adam made many sinners	Obedience of Jesus made many righteous
v20-21	The Law made all the above, worse. So that sin reigns in death.	God's grace increases to meet the law . So that grace might reign through God's righteousness for eternal life

Adam violated a command directly from God (Gen 2:17). And so all join Him in death: a) relationship disrupted with God, (b) physical death (c) eternal punishment

All humanity's sin since Adam's trespass (breaking God's command) builds up to be huge...yet God still provided His Son, the gift of grace. We can stand before God – not confident in ourselves, confident in the righteousness of Christ, who paid our ransom in full and brought us into God's family.

Have you ever doubted? Felt like the black sheep of the family...who receives left over goodness from a begrudging head of the family. That is not our God. We're not reluctantly saved and placed on an island far away from Him. Jesus paid to have us right in the middle of God's grace as family –for God's glory.

Church, I hope you come away with more assurance.

Here's how we apply our benefits.

Read 2 Cor 5:17-20a

From being reconciled to helping others become reconciled. We are God's rescued ambassadors.

There is always a chance someone here is asking, "What must I do to be reconciled with God?"

I'm going to use 2 words: **Surrender**. Lay all your ways and plans at the foot of the cross Jesus died on and trust God with all your heart. When you are truly sorry for going your own way, you confess it to God and look to Him for forgiveness. And God takes you as you are...with all your past. When you **believe** in Jesus, Son of God -the only Savior, God removes His wrath and condemnation and makes you new. You are completely reconciled. He sees the righteousness of Christ in you. He sends His Spirit to live in your heart to help you from the inside out. And specially to receive God's love, which overflows to others. Then you will have a new representative: Jesus. And a new hope and purpose as a child of God. Your new home is heaven.

Benediction: Ephesians prayer 3:16-18