

V-VIII

ROMANS

CHAPTERS 5–8

I. RECONCILIATION

CHAPTER 5

- *Peace with God (5:1–11)*
- *Grace greater than sin and death (5:12–21)*

II. FREEDOM FROM SIN AND THE LAW

CHAPTERS 6 & 7

- *Freedom from the slavery of sin (6:1–14)*
- *Slaves of God (6:15–23)*
- *Freedom from the law (7:1–6)*
- *Conflict with the law and sin (7:7–25)*

III. LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

CHAPTER 8

- *Freedom from the condemnation of sin and death (8:1–11)*
- *Assurance of victory through the Holy Spirit (8:12–39)*
- *The triumph of the hope of the Gospel (8:30–39)*

The Hope of the Gospel

CHAPTERS FIVE THROUGH EIGHT comprise the central section of Romans and contain some of the richest and most vital truths of the Gospel. In the first four chapters, Paul has laid a strong foundation in describing the heart of “the very purest Gospel” — to use Martin Luther’s expression. Now Paul turns to deal with the impact and benefits of justification by faith. What difference does it make in the lives of those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ? What may we now expect as we seek to live for the glory of God? Will we escape suffering? And if not, how are we to respond to it? What resources are available to us? What is the final result of this justification by faith?

These and many other questions are answered in these four chapters. All of Scripture is inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16–17), but these important chapters should be read, studied, and personally appropriated by every authentic follower of Jesus Christ. We rejoice that all of our “lawless deeds are forgiven” and our “sins are covered” through our Lord Jesus Christ (4:7–8), but we must now “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18). These chapters will be an indispensable help as we seek to “live by faith.”

GLORIOUS HOPE

Some commentators believe that chapter five should be understood in the same section as chapters one through four. While a case can be made for that, it is preferable to see Paul transitioning and beginning a new section with chapter

five. The “therefore” of 5:1 refers to the effects of the righteousness which comes from God and neatly summarizes the earlier chapters. So chapters five through eight describe the impact of our justification in the life of the believer and present the ultimate triumph of the hope of the Gospel. In the first four chapters, Paul presents the universality of sin and demolishes all contrary arguments in a powerful polemic. Now in chapter five, Paul writes in a more tender and pastoral tone. He unfolds the wonderful ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of all Christ-followers. We have the supernatural assurance of the “hope of the glory of God” — the hope of the Gospel. This theme begins in 5:1–2 and dominates chapters five through eight.

UNDERSTANDING GRACE

Paul writes of some of the gracious blessings received by those living by faith. We have peace with God and are also able to “rejoice in our sufferings” (5:3). As God graciously pours His love into our hearts “through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us,” the hope of the Gospel shines brighter and brighter. As we follow Jesus, we are very aware not only of the sin in the world, but our own sin. Yet, Paul reminds us that through the “one man Jesus Christ,” the grace of God abounds. And this grace is greater than our sin!

A true understanding of this grace of God in our lives does not mean that we continue in sin (6:1). On the contrary, through our union with our Lord Jesus Christ we “have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God” (6:22). The power of sin has been broken in our lives, and we are no longer under the bondage of the law.

Having been released from the law, we now serve God “in the new life of the Spirit” (7:6). Although we have been set free from the bondage of sin, sin still indwells us. This presents a very real struggle.

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

In chapter eight, Paul reminds us that God the Holy Spirit indwells every authentic follower of Jesus Christ and enables us to live lives pleasing to God as we live “according to the Spirit.” When we follow Christ, we soon discover that

not only do we continue to be tempted by sin, we are not immune from suffering. But we endure suffering through life in the Spirit, and we are assured that nothing in the whole universe can separate us from the love of God “in Christ Jesus our Lord.” No suffering, no temptation, no devil, no hardship, and not even death itself can stand in the way of our ultimate glorification. What God begins He will certainly bring to fruition in the ultimate triumph of the “**Hope of the Gospel.**”

SANCTIFICATION

The opening four chapters of Romans present “the Heart of the Gospel,” the great truth of **justification by faith**. Martin Luther said this the doctrine by which the church stands or falls. But now as we consider “the Hope of the Gospel,” we reflect on the truth of our **sanctification**. While this term “sanctification” can be looked at in many different ways, at its heart, it is the work of God whereby He produces His righteousness in the believer.

Justification is God declaring that the sinner is now justified.

Sanctification is the transforming process whereby the believer is conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Both justification and sanctification are accomplished on the basis of God’s grace by means of faith in Christ’s work. So our sanctification is the inevitable result of true justification. While our justification is completed at the moment of our conversion, our sanctification will not be completed until the time of our glorification! “When (Christ) appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is” (1 John 3:2).

Between our justification and our ultimate glorification is our present sanctification. In the period between our justification and our glorification, God graciously is at work in our lives “for good” (8:28). The “power of the God for salvation” (1:16) is available to every believer “who walk(s) not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit”(8:4).

In the security of the grace of God, every single person who is justified will be glorified. Those whom God justifies He also glorifies (Romans 8:30). This is the great hope of the Gospel. In our justification, we receive the *imputed*

righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. In our progressive sanctification, the righteousness of God is *imparted* to us as we become more and more like Jesus.

Following Jesus is truly a supernatural life — a life lived in the power of the Holy Spirit. We have an exciting study ahead of us! These chapters are not only rich in theology but are intensely helpful in living by faith each day. ✞



“There is
therefore now no
condemnation for
those who are in
Christ Jesus.”

ROMANS 8:1





MAY THE GOD OF HOPE FILL YOU WITH ALL JOY AND
PEACE IN BELIEVING, SO THAT BY THE POWER OF
THE HOLY SPIRIT YOU MAY ABOUND IN HOPE.

ROMANS 15:13