

WHAT'S THE BEST BLESSING?

October 08, 2023

WORSHIP

We Give Thanks, We Will Sing, You Are Faithful, You Are Holy, How Deep The Father's Love

WELCOME

If God were to ask you what one blessing you would like to receive, what would you say and why?

WORD

ROMANS 5:1-11

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. ³ And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; ⁴ and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; ⁵ and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. ⁶ For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. ¹¹ And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

The book of Romans has 16 chapters – we've gone through our problem – sin, the solution – salvation, and our study will continue towards sanctification, the sovereignty of God, and service in the Christian life. Now in Romans 5:1-11, we'll study WHAT IS THE BEST BLESSING from God. What kind of blessing should we ask for and seek? But why do you think God wants us to know about His blessings? He wants us to know the resources we have in Him to triumph over difficulties so that our lives will be inspiring and attractive to those who have not yet come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. There are seven blessings which we find at the beginning of Romans 5:

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|---------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Peace with God | (v.1-2) |
| 2. Access to God | (v.1-2) |
| 3. Hope of Glory | (v.1-2) |
| 4. Joy in Tribulation | (v.3-4) |
| 5. Love of God | (v.5-8) |
| 6. Saved from God's wrath | (v.9) |
| 7. Reconciled with God | (v.10-11) |

But all of those we receive only in Jesus Christ, the Best Blessing! Paul said that to "live is Christ, and to die is gain". A personal encounter with Jesus Christ allows us to enjoy all these blessings. **Romans 5:1** begins with the concept of being "justified by faith" – the blessings start with our JUSTIFICATION. Grammatically, it means you receive a divine declaration and power to declare you "not guilty", but also declared righteous! Christ's righteousness has been imparted to us, believers, as if we have not sinned. Because of these, these other blessings are given:

1. PEACE WITH GOD

Everybody loves peace. There is an **INNER PEACE** offered by Jesus in **John 14:27** and **John 16:33**. Opposite that is an anxious and fearful heart – the root is not knowing the future, so it is a usual source of fear. The other kind of peace is that which is **WITH GOD**. What does that mean? Once upon a time, because we are in sin, God was our enemy (**Romans 5:10-11**). Without peace with God, we will never have peace in our own lives nor in our human relationships (**Isaiah 48:22**).

The world offers superficial solutions to overcome guilt. Once our conscience is numb, we will be fine committing sins while even calling ourselves "Christians". John Stott said, "**You will only be healed of guilt to the degree you're willing to admit the magnitude of your sin.**" King David was also familiar with this difficulty of dealing with guilt, and was only able to overcome and be at peace once he made right with God and confessed (**Psalms 32:3-4**).

2. ACCESS TO GOD

Romans 5:2 mentions "introduction by faith" – the concept about having free access to an authority. That's why **Hebrews 4:16** tells us that we have access to the throne of grace and find grace and

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help in time of need. It is a great privilege that believers have. In **Ephesians 2:18**, Paul further reminds that this access is THROUGH JESUS. In prayer and in our study of His Word, we access this great benefit!

3. HOPE OF GLORY

Romans 5:2 continues with another layer of blessing--- that we can EXULT and be **CONFIDENTLY JOYFUL** as we reflect in the glory of God. **HOPE (Gk. Elpis)** in the Bible is certainty, except that the greater part of it is in the future. This "**hope of glory**" has to do with your own destiny (**Romans 8:18, 29-30**). When God talks about the future, the past tense is used to highlight the absolute certainty.

1 John 3:2-3 encourages us to look forward to the time in the future that we will all be like Jesus one day! This has a sanctifying effect, and it will help us overcome sin. Sin is temporal. It may be pleasurable, but it is all temporal. Don't exchange future benefit for temporal pleasures. Do not go on violating the will of God... we are destined for glory!

4. JOY IN TRIBULATION

Romans 5:3-4 again uses the same word EXULT, which is to rejoice – even in hardships, trials, and tribulations. It gives us perseverance (**Gk. Hupomone**), develops our character, and brings about hope if we fix our identity in Christ, even in times of injustice or depressing moments.

5. LOVE OF GOD & 6. SAVED FROM GOD'S WRATH

You will never know God is sufficient until the only thing you have is God. As long as you have substitutes, you will not understand this. **Romans 5:5** tells us this love of God is poured out for us, along with the Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ. **Romans 5:6-8** describes this amazing benefit of unconditional love given even to the worse of us. God puts this amazing love into action in a specific way – that even in our ungodly state, Jesus sacrificed Himself for us. We are so loved by a perfectly loving God! **Romans 5:9** continues to tell us this love saves us from the very real wrath of God.

7. RECONCILED WITH GOD

Romans 5:10-11 then mentions another benefit – reconciliation with God. Once upon a time, we were His enemies. When Jesus died for our sins and we placed our faith in Him as our Savior, we are justified, forgiven, and set free! Salvation also sustains us at present, as we go through trials, tribulations, and other sanctifying experiences.

Salvation saves us from greater wrath reserved for the future – when God judges sin, it is a picture of doom. **Revelation 6:16-17** describes the fear of people on judgment day – the wrath of God involves justice (**Revelation 20:11-15**). **1 Thessalonians 1:10** points us to what saves us from this wrath – JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF – the Greatest Blessing! All these blessings give us a mission: **2 Corinthians 5:18-20** having tasted this reconciliation with God, we must allow others to be reconciled with Him too, as God's ambassadors or messengers, to bring this fantastic news to others!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

What specific benefit of salvation are you most thankful for?

2. Setting It Right.

Is there anything in your life you have not fully surrendered to God?

3. Living It Out.

How will you share the BEST BLESSING to others this week?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for friends and loved ones to come to faith in Christ and experience God's blessings as in Romans 5. Pray that the Word and love of God will open their hearts and minds to this truth. Persevere to be a person live out Christ's joy that people will be attracted to the gospel. Share this message on the best blessing—Jesus, to others this week.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of newly-elected and incumbent public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- For the Russian invasion of Ukraine to stop; peace and order be restored, lives spared.
- God's intervention to restore peace and order in Israel and Palestine.

III. Church

- That CCFE Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Retreat Centre and Shelter

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends

MEMORY VERSE

ROMANS 5:8

⁸ But God demonstrates His own love towards us, in while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.