

THE ROAD OF THE RIGHTEOUS

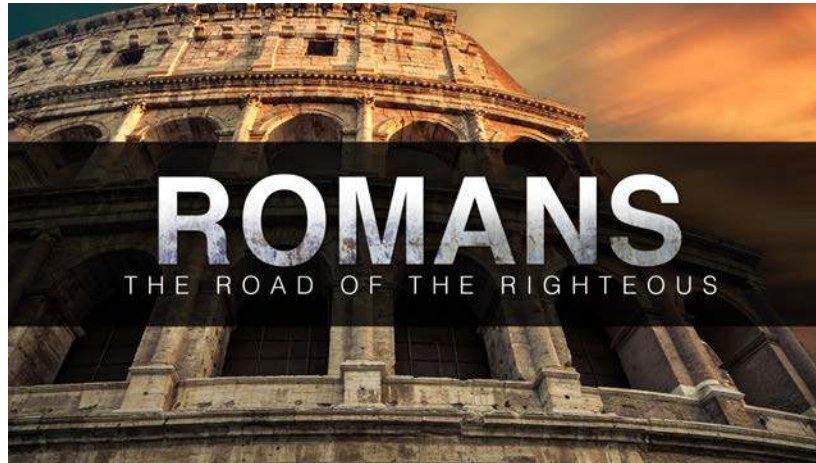
Expositional Study Of Romans

Romans 5:1-11

Written By

©Pastor Marty Baker

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From Romans chapter 1 to the end of chapter 4, Paul has made one thing perfectly clear: Every man (Gentile or Jew) is born a sinner at odds with God (Rom. 3:9), and there is no way he can get right with God unless he is declared righteous in God's courtroom by his faith in the redemptive work of Jesus, the long-awaited Messiah (Rom. 3:21-26; 4:23-25). This theological truth should make you stop and ask yourself the most important question in all of life: Have I, a sinner, been made righteous by my faith in Jesus, the Savior, or am deluding myself by erroneously thinking I'm not all that bad, or that I can work my way into God's presence, or that there might not be any heaven at all and I'm on my own to figure life out?

You will remember Paul warns in chapter 2, verse 16, there is a coming eschatological day when the living God will judge each person. And on that day, He will want to know if you are His child by coming on his limited, narrow faith-fact terms, or did you seek to selfishly come on your own terms? If you have not made this decision yet, I would counsel you to not let another day end without you coming to God on His terms of grace and forgiveness offered through the person and work of His Son, Jesus.

For those who lay their sin and pride at the foot of the cross of Christ, for those who say, "Lord, I need you. Lord, I need your forgiveness," for those who become justified in His holy courtroom by their faith in the facts of the substitutionary death and glorious resurrection of Jesus, to those who are truly the sons and daughters of God, what are the glorious additional benefits of this new standing? Thinking minds want to know and Paul does not let you down either. He excitedly answers this question in the first fast-moving five verses of chapter five. What is that question again?

What Are The Benefits of Believing in Jesus, The Messiah (Rom. 5:1-11)?

The opening word in the English NASB and NIV is “*Therefore*” (οὖν), and it grammatically serves to introduce us to the logical conclusion of what Paul has articulated and argued in the first four chapters. It is as if he says, “In light of the fact that sinful man is justified by faith alone, I must now turn and inform you of all the wonderful benefits of this divine relationship.” The phrase *having been justified by faith* (Δικαιωθέντες οὖν ἐκ πίστεως) follows the key connective, “*therefore*,” because Paul desires to move from the reality of justification by faith as being the only means of reaching God, to the results of this supreme status. (As a sidelight, this key phrase is woven carefully throughout the book: 3:20; 4:16; 9:30; 10:6). I would also add the participle which forms this unique and exciting phrase is a passive denoting the subject, the sinner, is acted upon from outside of himself by, in this instance, God, the Savior and Redeemer. Even the grammar underscores man’s futility to save himself. God is the one who does the saving. God is the Judge who says you are declared righteous and holy in His courtroom based on your faith in the person and redemptive work of Jesus, the Christ. This, of course, is denoted by the genitival prepositional phrase through faith (ἐκ πίστεως), which grammatically denotes either the means or the manner by which we, as sinners, secure this new spiritual standing. It is wholly *by means of* or *after the manner of* faith in Jesus’ work, not ours.

The saint’s new legal standing before a holy God is not the end of the matter. Far from it. With the introduction of the main verb “*we have*” (ἔχομεν) in second clause of verse 1 Paul introduces us to one of the first benefits of this new spiritual position.

Inner Peace Is Yours (Rom. 5:1)

Note Paul does not say “you might have peace.” On the contrary he uses the present tense verb, “*we have*” to denote an ongoing, perpetual reality. Just what kind of peace is this? Does this mean the Christian life is a tranquil, easy life? No, fact I agree with Jerry Bridges in his excellent book *Trusting God* when he says, “God’s people are not immune from such pain. In fact, it often seems as if there is more severe, more frequent, more unexplainable, and more deeply felt than that of the unbeliever.”¹ When you become a believer, God usually turns up the burner on your life. Why? To shape and mold you so you can spiritually grow. Text like Hebrews 12:3-8 and Jeremiah 18:6 tell us this much.

The wonderful by-product of justification by faith is the sinner, who is now a saint, possesses an inner peace of knowing he is right with God, regardless of what is going on around him. There is peace in the storms of life. No longer is there a barrier between a holy God and the sinner. No longer does God’s wrath rest upon sinner for rejecting the gospel of Jesus. At the moment of faith, the inner turmoil and worry that your life does not know peace no matter how hard you try is replaced by the abiding and inward peace of God. Here is how Paul puts this amazing reality:

“... we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . (Rom. 5:1)

Concerning this unique spiritual peace, Colin Kruse’s observations in *The Pillar New Testament Commentary on Romans* are most insightful:

¹Jerry Bridges, *Trusting God Even When Life Hurts* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1988), 16.

This peace is both objective and subjective. It is objective in the sense that it is a peace established through Christ's atoning sacrifice (3:25) when he made peace by the blood of his cross (cf. Col 1:20). It is subjective in that we then have a sense of being at peace with God as the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirits that we are children of God (cf. 8:15-16).²

And the preposition "through," *dia* (διὰ) with the following genitival phrase, "our Lord Jesus Christ" (τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) tells us this spectacular, inexorable inner peace only comes by means of His salvific work, not ours. Question, How could my sister Marla sing *Blessed Assurance* with great conviction while in a comatose state and preparing to meet Christ as her battle with three forms of ovarian cancer took its toll? With eyes closed, she sang with a strong voice the familiar words of the old hymn we learned as children:



Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine
 O what a foretaste of glory divine
 Heir of salvation, purchase of God
 Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood
 Perfect submission, all is at rest
 I in my Savior am happy and blessed
 Watching and waiting, looking above
 Filled with His goodness, lost in His love
 This is my story, this is my song
 Praising my Savior all the day long
 This is my story, this is my song
 Praising my Savior all the day long.³

She sang with joy because she had the inner peace which passes all understanding, a peace in her soul which came from the hand of a gracious, loving God the moment she trusted Him as her Savior. The question is, Do you have this peace, or does it elude you? If not, it is but a prayer of faith away. If so, then you know what I'm talking about. Though the winds of life blow upon you, those the seas of life batter your outer man, nothing touches the inner man. Yes, nothing tarnishes or diminishes the peace you have in your heart that you're going to be all right because you are forgiven and you are God's child.

A second benefit is equally jaw-dropping.

Introduction And Access Is Yours (Rom. 5:2)

Let's first read this intriguing verse and then circle back and offer some grammatical and lexical observations to open up its meaning:

²Colin G. Kruse, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, ed. D. A. Carson, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Cambridge, U.K.; Nottingham, England; Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Apollos, 2012), 226.

³Fanny Crosby, lyrics and musical score by Phoebe Palmer Knapp.

... 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 (Rom. 5:2 NAS).

You will notice how the NIV differs slightly with this translation:

... through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God (Rom. 5:2 NIV).

Before we analyze the differences between these two good translations, I would first like to bring to your attention how the opening genitival preposition phrase “through whom,” *dia ou* (δι’ οὗ), again, isolates the means by which the following statement is realized. Simply put, our *introduction* or *access* to the living God is *only* by means of the redemptive work of Jesus, and our faith in this as being historically and personally true.

But what are we to make of this interesting noun/word *prosagogen* (προσαγωγήν) which is translated quite differently in the NASB and the NIV? Kittle’s *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* tells us the word was used for the admission or introduction of ambassadors into the presence of a king.⁴ Arndt’s *Greek-English Lexicon* speaks of the word in contexts where “access” is the lexical emphasis:

προσαγωγή, ἡς, ἡ (Hdt. et al.; ins, pap, EpArist 42) intr. a way of approach, *access* (the intr. aspect is certain in Polyb. 10, 1, 6 access point for ships; Plut., Aem. Paul. 261 [13, 3] of ground that offered no access to enemy forces) abs. Eph 3:12. εἶς τι *to someth.* Ro 5:2. πρὸς τινα *to someone* Eph 2:18. A status factor is implied (cp. X., Cyr. 7, 5, 45 of access to Cyrus for an audience).—DELG s.v. ἄγω p. 18. M-M.⁵

Barclay brings out an even more interesting nuance of the word when he writes,

(1) It is the word normally used for introducing or ushering someone into the presence of royalty; and it is the word for the approach of the worshipper to God. It is as if Paul was saying: ‘Jesus ushers us into the very presence of God. He opens the door for us to the presence of the King of Kings; and when that door is opened what we find is *grace*; not condemnation, not judgment, not vengeance, but the sheer, undeserved, incredible kindness of God.’

(2) But *prosagōgē* brings to mind another picture. In late Greek, it is the word for the place where ships come in, a *harbour* or a *haven*. If we take it in that sense, it means that as long as we tried to depend on our own efforts we were tempest-tossed, like sailors striving with a sea which threatened to overwhelm them completely; but, now that we have heard the word of Christ, we have reached at

⁴Schmidt, Karl Ludwig. “Ἀγωγή, Παράγω, Προάγω, Προσάγω, Προσαγωγή,” edited by Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 133.

⁵William Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 876.

last the haven of God's grace, and we know the calm of depending not on what we can do for ourselves but on what God has done for us.

Because of Jesus, we have entry to the presence of the King of Kings and entry to the haven of God's grace.⁶

Beautiful word picture, wouldn't you agree?

But which nuance is it? Does it matter? . . . you are muttering under your interpretive breath. Yes. It matters. The word is a verb and it is a perfect tense here denoting a past act with an abiding result. Since Paul's whole argument here is built on Jesus's salvific work being that which gives the repentant sinner wonderful benefits, it is probably more logical to go with the NASB here over that of the NIV. The former speaks of Christ's introduction of the new saint to God, a truth which stands true for all time, while the latter stresses the saint's perpetual access, while downplaying the work of Jesus. The metaphor should not be missed. At the moment of faith, Jesus personally introduces you to the Father, and it is an introduction which can never be refuted, overturned, or annulled. And once you have his introduction you have, well, access to God's throne. The author of Hebrews speaks of this:

¹⁶Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need (Heb. 4:16).

You can draw near to the living God in all of his resplendent glory with total confidence because Jesus has introduced you as His new child.

My first night with the officers of the Army chaplaincy corps last week outside of Boston, Brigadier General Solhjem (a one star) introduced me to Major General Hurley (a two star), the Chief of Chaplains, at a meet and greet time in the dining room at the conference center. He introduced me to a leader I would not feel comfortable walking up to and meeting on my own, especially since various aids and (Green Beret) Colonels surrounded him. After that introduction, I felt more at ease speaking with Major General Hurley, and when he came and sat down with me and another speaker after the lunch room cleared out, I felt at ease in my chair. I know it is a crude illustration, but it speaks, in a way, of what Jesus has accomplished for His saints on a far grander scale. He has, as it were, taken you by the hand and walked you up to the throne of the Holy Father and introduced you. Please, put your name in the blank: "Father, I'd like to introduce you to your new son/daughter. His/her name is _____." Now you have eternal access to that throne because you are a child *by means of the faith* (δι' οὗ καὶ τὴν προσαγωγὴν ἐσχίκαμεν τῇ πίστει). God will never look at me, for instance, and say, "Marty who?" No, His deep, comforting voice will always say, "Ah, Marty."

Why will God always say, "Ah, Marty"? Paul puts a finer point on the answer when he says,

. . . through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace **in which we now stand**. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God (Rom. 5:2).

The prepositional phrase is composed, again, of a perfect tense verb, "*in which we now stand*" (ἐν ἣ ἐστήκαμεν). Once more, this unique verbal tense denotes a past act with an abiding result. Because

⁶ William Barclay, *The Letter to the Romans*, 3rd ed. fully rev. & updated., The New Daily Study Bible (Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 85–86.

the saints perpetually stand in the grace of God based in his faith in Jesus's redemptive person and work, he needs no further introduction to the Father. No, this amazing standing gives the saint uninterrupted access to God, forever. Do you understand this, you who know Christ but suffer from low self-esteem? Do you understand this, you who think your wandering out of the harbor of God's will has caused Him to turn His face from you? Perhaps it's time to start appreciating and acting upon the wonderful position which is yours in Christ.

A third benefit is detailed in the last part of verse 2:

Hope Is Yours (Rom. 5:2)

What hope? Paul explains the answer to the query in the last part of verse 2:

And we boast in the hope of the glory of God (Rom. 5:2).

What does this mean? It means the seed of hope is planted in your heart when you are saved, hope that one day you will truly see the magnificent Shekinah glory of God face to face. Now you can only read about what it is like when God appeared. Moses, who was privileged to get a glimpse of this glory this side of heaven, writes in Exodus 24:16-17:

And the glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; and on the seventh day He called to Moses from the midst of the cloud. Into the eyes of the sons of Israel the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the mountaintop.

Imagine what this theophany must have looked and sounded like? Had the thick cloud not shielded the Israelites, God's glory, the brightness of His holiness would have vaporized them. No wonder we read of the people's desire not to be this near to God's glory in Deuteronomy:

²² These words the LORD spoke to all your assembly at the mountain from the midst of the fire, of the cloud and of the thick gloom, with a great voice, and He added no more. And He wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me. ²³ And it came about, when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, that you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders. ²⁴ And you said, 'Behold, the LORD our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire; we have seen today that God speaks with man, yet he lives. ²⁵ 'Now then why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the LORD our God any longer, then we shall die. ²⁶ 'For who is there of all flesh, who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we *have*, and lived? ²⁷ 'Go near and hear all that the LORD our God says; then speak to us all that the LORD our God will speak to you, and we will hear and do it' (Deut. 5:22-27).

God's glory was so brilliant the people asked Moses to be their mediator so they didn't have to stand this close to the "fire." Amazing.

That same glory was revealed by Jesus to Peter, James, and John on the Mount of Transfiguration.

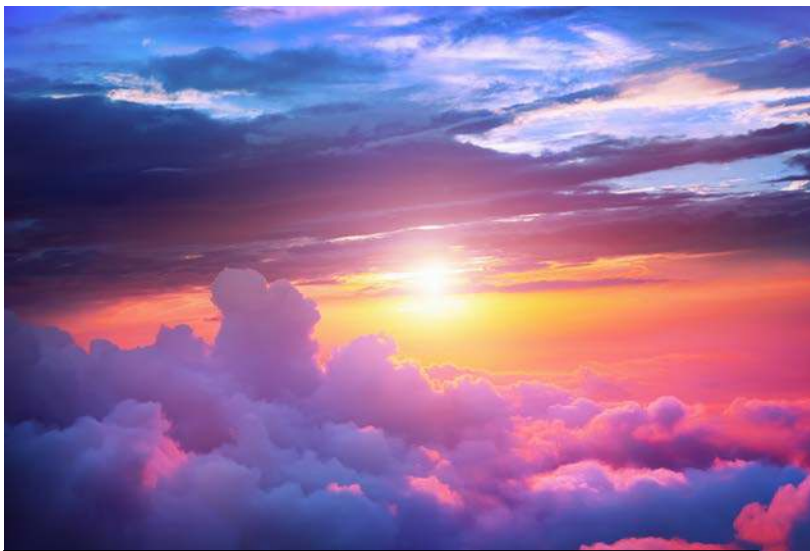
¹ And six days later Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and brought them up to a high mountain by themselves. ² And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light. (Matt. 17:1-2).

Jesus didn't just give them a taste of his divinity, he showed them what they would see when they came before his throne in the heavenlies. No wonder they bowed to worship.

This glory is also eschatological. It points to the time when the Messiah, Jesus, returns at the end of the tribulation to establish His Davidic empire, as prophesied. Of this day, Jesus states:

²⁹ But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, ³⁰ and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. (Matt. 24:29-30).

This is the multifaceted "glory of God" we hope for as saints. Jesus prayed that we would see His



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glory (John 17:24), and His prayers are always fulfilled, so you, as a saint, shall see His glory the moment you draw your last breath. Stephen saw that glory as he entered God's presence, and so shall you (Acts 7:55). The glory which comes when Jesus reveals Himself to all the world will also be something you will either see on earth or from your heavenly vantage point. But either way, all saints have the abiding hope that at death, or at the consummation of the age, they shall see the wonder and magnificence of God's jaw-dropping glory.

Flying back last week from Massachusetts last week at dusk, I couldn't help but have my face pressed against the window as we flew south. As the sun set in the distant horizon, it illumined the cumulus clouds looming above the earth. I must say it was a testimony to the greatness of God, and it gave me a glimpse of what God's glory must be like. It also moved me to prayer, thanking God for the view. I could not help but think of how this earthy picture points to the greater picture of God's glory. What a day that will be to see Him . . . face to face.

The hymnist captures the moment"

There is coming a day,
 When no heart aches shall come,
 No more clouds in the sky,
 No more tears to dim the eye,
 All is peace forever more,
 On that happy golden shore,
 What a day, glorious day that will be.

chorus

What a day that will be,
 When my Jesus I shall see,
 And I look upon His face,
 The One who saved me by His grace;
 When He takes me by the hand,
 And leads me through the Promised Land,
 What a day, glorious day that will be.⁷

Do you have the abiding hope that will you be here on this day? For believers in Christ, it comes with being justified by their faith in the redemptive work of Christ. If you lack this hope, God waits to give it to you the moment you place your faith in His Son as your Redeemer. What are you waiting for? What excuses are keeping you from making this all-important life decision? If you have this hope, then may it bring you much joy and encouragement as you make your earthly pilgrimage through a land full of sin and darkness. A greater day is coming and we, as saints, know it.

Paul's fourth benefit of being justified by faith is a logical outcropping of the believer's eschatological hope of verse 2.

Perspective In Trials Is Yours (Rom. 5:3-5)

This point sounds illogical, but it is true for the saint. Read on and you will see what Paul means:

³ And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, (Rom. 5:3a).

Stop for a moment and think on this opening statement.

The opening clause (οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ) is typically employed by Paul when he, like a skilled attorney, adds yet another proof to validate a sound, valid argument. In addition, this formula is predominately followed by the strong adversative "but," *alla* (ἀλλὰ) to powerfully present the next stellar proof (Rom. 5:11; 8:23; 9:10; 2 Cor. 8:19). Here Paul waxes eloquent about how a saint's justification by faith gives him a new paradigm of how to view pain, suffering, and trials in life.

His argument works like this: God exists. God is all-powerful, all-wise, and all-good. Hence, whatever God allows to occur in our lives this side of heaven has ultimate purpose and meaning built into it. Nothing happens to us which is not part of His plan for us. Nothing we encounter in life catches Him unaware. He is literally sovereign in the good and bad aspects of life as He says repeatedly throughout the Old Testament:

⁷Jim Hill, *What A Day What Will Be*, Copyright 1955.

¹⁴ In the day of prosperity be happy, But in the day of adversity consider-- God has made the one as well as the other So that man may not discover anything that will be after him. (Eccl. 7:14).

⁷ The One forming light and creating darkness, Causing well-being and creating calamity; I am the LORD who does all these. (Isa. 45:7).

³⁸ Is it not from the mouth of the Most High That both good and ill go forth? (Lam. 3:38).

Is God only sovereign in the good moments of our lives, when we have our health, when blessings flow toward us, when the children are easy to raise, when, well you fill in the proverbial blank. No. God is sovereign in the times of triumph and tragedy for His power, wisdom, and goodness are always at work to make sure all things work together for our ultimate good, either here or in the hereafter (Rom. 8:28). Are you willing to trust God at this level? Paul did because he understood the practical impact of his new position in Christ. The same God who redeemed him, is the same God who permitted him to experience everything from being stoned for preaching the gospel, to being shipwrecked in a violent storm on his way to a Roman court date.

No wonder, then, Paul writes that one of the benefits of being a believer is you can boast (NAS) or glory (KJV/NIV) in tribulations, *thlipsesin* (θλίψεις), which is a Greek word for real difficult pressure cooker hardships. For the Greek students at Dallas Seminary among us, you might like to read the lexical entry.

θλίψεις, εως, ή (s. θλίβω; on the accent s. B-D-F §13; W-S. §6, 3c; Mlt-H. 57.—KLipsius, Grammat. Untersuchungen über d. bibl. Gröz. 1863, 34f, prefers to write θλίψεις; so also W-H.) rare in extra-Biblical Gk., and there lit., ‘pressing, pressure’ (Aristot., Meteorol. 4, 4, 383a, 13; Epicurus p. 45, 9 Us.; Ps.-Aristot., De Mundo 4, 394a, 29; Strabo, Galen).

① in our lit. (as in LXX, En, Test12Patr, JosAs cod. A; Just., D. 116, 2; Mel.) freq. and in the metaph. sense **trouble that inflicts distress, oppression, affliction, tribulation** (so Vett. Val. 71, 16; Cat. Cod. Astr. VIII/3 p. 175, 5; 178, 8; pl. 169, 2 [s. Boll 134f]; OGI 444, 15 [II or I B.C.] διὰ τὰς τ. πόλεων θλίψεις; BGU 1139, 4 [I B.C.]; POxy 939, 13; PAmh 144, 18). Of distress that is brought about by outward circumstances (Jos., Ant. 4, 108; En, PsSol, Mel.; Did., Gen. 116, 10), in sg. and pl. Ac 11:19; Ro 5:3b; 12:12; 2 Cor 1:8; 6:4; 8:2; Rv 1:9; 2:9, 22; 1 Cl 22:7 (Ps 33:18); 59:4; 2 Cl 11:4 (quot. of unknown orig.); Hs 7:4ff. ἐπὶ πάση τῇ θ. ἡμῶν 2 Cor 1:4a; 7:4; 1 Th 3:7; ἐν πάση θ. (TestGad 4:4) 2 Cor 1:4b; ἐν (τ.) θ. Ro 5:3a; Eph 3:13; 1 Th 1:6; 3:3. ἐν πολλαῖς θ. καὶ ποικίλαις Hs 7, 4. θ. μεγάλη *great tribulation* (SibOr 3, 186) Mt 24:21 (1 Macc 9:27); Ac 7:11; Hv 4, 2, 4. Plural Hv 3, 2, 1. ή θ. ή μεγάλη *the great tribulation* Rv 7:14; τὸ ἐλαφρὸν τῆς θ. *slight affliction* 2 Cor 4:17. ἀνταποδοῦναι τινι θλίψιν *repay someone w. affliction* 2 Th 1:6. W. ἀνάγκη (q.v. 2) 1 Th 3:7. W. διωγμός Mt 13:21; Mk 4:17; Ac 8:1 D; 13:50 D; pl. 2 Th 1:4. W. δεσμά (TestJos 2:4) Ac 20:23. W. ὀνειδισμός Hb 10:33. W. στενοχωρία (q.v.) Ro 2:9. W. στενοχωρία and διωγμός 8:35 (w. λιμός and στενοχωρία Hippol., Ref. 5, 26, 12).—On the catalogue of hardships (peristasis) cp. 1 Cor 4:9–13; 2 Cor 4:8f; 6:4–10; 11:23–28; 12:10; Phil

4:11; s. FDanker, Augsburg Comm. 2 Cor '89, 89–91; 180f; idem, The Endangered Benefactor in Luke-Acts: SBLSP '81, 39–48; JFitzgerald, Cracks in an Earthen Vessel '88; MFerrari, Die Sprache des Leids in den paulinischen Persistenzen-katalogen '91; MEbner, Leidenslisten u. Apostelbrief '91.—ἡμέρα θλίψεως *day of affliction* (Gen 35:3; 2 Km 22:19; cp. En 103:9; TestLevi 5:5) 1 Cl 52:3 (Ps 49:15).—Of the tribulations of the last days (as Da 12:1) Mt 24:21, 29; Mk 13:19, 24. ἡ θ. ἡ ἐρχομένη ἡ μεγάλη *the great tribulation to come* Hv 2, 2, 7; cp. 2, 3, 4; 4, 1, 1; 4, 2, 5; 4, 3, 6.—Distress caused by war 1 Cl 57:4 (Pr 1:27). θ. θανάτου *affliction of death* B 12:5. Difficult circumstances 2 Cor 8:13; Js 1:27; συγκοινωνεῖν τῇ θ. *show an interest in (someone's) distress* Phil 4:14. Of a woman's birth-pangs J 16:21.—ὅταν γένηται θ. *when persecution comes* Hv 3, 6, 5. θλιῖν ἀκούειν *hear of persecution* Hs 9, 21, 3. θλιῖν ἔχειν J 16:33; 1 Cor 7:28; Rv 2:10; Hv 2, 3, 1; Hs 7:3. ἐὰν ὑπενέγκῃ τὰς θλίψεις τὰς ἐπερχομένας αὐτῷ Hs 7:4; cp. 7:6. ἐξείλατο αὐτὸν ἐκ πασῶν τῶν θλίψεων αὐτοῦ Ac 7:10. διὰ πολλῶν θ. εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τ. βασιλείαν 14:22. τότε παραδώσουσιν ὑμᾶς εἰς θλιῖν Mt 24:9; cp. B 12:5. ἀποστήσεται πᾶσα θ. ἀπὸ σοῦ ... ἀπὸ πάντων ἀποστήσεται ἡ θ. Hs 7, 7.—Of the sufferings of Christ θλίψεις τοῦ Χριστοῦ Col 1:24 (s. on ἀνταναπληρώω and πάθημα 1).

② inward experience of distress, *affliction, trouble* (Gen 35:3; 42:21 θ. τῆς ψυχῆς) θ. καὶ συνοχή καρδίας *trouble and anguish of heart* 2 Cor 2:4. θλιῖν ἐγείρειν τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου *cause trouble for me in my imprisonment* Phil 1:17. Ἄννα ... περιείλατο πᾶσαν θλιῖν ἀπ' αὐτῆς GJs 2:4 (cod. A, not par; s. περιαιρέω 1).—DELG s.v. θλίβω. M-M. TW.⁸

Life is chock-full of pressurized situations: at work, in marriage, with children as they exercise their free wills, with doctors reports from tests they have run, with the geo-political situation, in the midst of being 40 and single, with being 35 and divorced and raising two children with a non-supportive ex-husband/wife, and so on. Just because you are a saint does not mean you can, and will, escape them, be spared, or protected from them because they are wrapped up in the sovereign purpose(s) of God. I tend to think we forget this theological reality.

What are God's purposes in the pain, as it were? Paul excitedly tells us what he has learned on the anvil of experience:

knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; (Rom. 3:3).

Underscore God's intended cause/effect relationship between tribulation and what should naturally follow from it in our lives of faith.

Tribulation, be what it me, is divinely designed to teach us the high value of perseverance. The word rendered perseverance, *hypomonē* (ὑπομονήν), originally meant two things:

① the capacity to hold out or bear up in the face of difficulty, *patience, endurance, fortitude, steadfastness, perseverance* (Ps.-Pla., Def. 412c; Aristot., Stoics [Stoic. IV 150 index; Musonius; Epict.—PBarth, D. Stoa⁴ 1922, 119ff]; Polyb.,

⁸ William Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 457.

Plut., LXX; PsSol 2:36; TestJob 1:5; TestJos; Philo; Jos., Ant. 3, 16 al.; Just.; beside καρτερία Orig., C. Cels. 7, 55, 6; καθ' ὑπομονὴν διὰ ἔργων ἀγαθῶν Theoph. Ant. 1, 14 [p. 90, 17]) esp. as they are shown in the enduring of toil and suffering Lk 21:19; Rom 5:3f (on the 'climax' form of the saying cp. Maximus Tyr. 16, 3b τὴν ἀρετὴν διδόνασιν οἱ λόγοι, τοὺς δὲ λόγους ἢ ἄσκησις, τὴν δὲ ἄσκησιν ἢ ἀλήθεια, τὴν δὲ ἀλήθειαν ἢ σχολή); 15:4f; 2 Cor 6:4; 1 Th 1:3; 2 Th 1:4; 1 Ti 6:11; 2 Ti 3:10; Tit 2:2; Hb 10:36; Js 1:3f; 2 Pt 1:6ab; Rv 2:2f, 19; 1 Cl 5:5, 7; B 2:2; IEph 3:1; Hm 8:9; D 5:2. πᾶσα ὑπ. every kind of patience 2 Cor 12:12; Col 1:11. W. the subjective gen. ἡ ὑπ. Ἰωβ Js 5:11 (ACarr, The Patience of Job [Js 5:11]: Exp. 8th ser., 6, 1913, 511–17); αὐτοῦ (i.e. Χριστοῦ) the endurance that Christ showed Pol 8:2. Differently ἡ ὑπ. τοῦ Χριστοῦ a Christ-like fortitude, i.e. a fortitude that comes fr. association w. Christ 2 Th 3:5 (OSchmitz, D. Christugemeinschaft des Pls im Lichte seines Genetivbrauchs 1924, 139f); cp. IRo 10:3 (s. p 1040 also 2 below). W. the objective gen. ὑπ. ἔργου ἀγαθοῦ perseverance in doing what is right Ro 2:7 (Polyb. 4, 51, 1 ὑπ. τοῦ πολέμου). ὑπ. τῶν παθημάτων steadfast endurance of sufferings 2 Cor 1:6 (Ps.-Pla., Def. 412c ὑπ. λύπης; Plut., Pelop. 278 [1, 8] ὑπ. θανάτου; Jos., Ant. 2, 7 πόνων ὑπ.). ὁ λόγος τῆς ὑπομονῆς μου (λόγος λαβ) Rv 3:10 (s. also 2 below). δι' ὑπομονῆς with patience or fortitude Ro 8:25; Hb 12:1. διὰ τῆς ὑπομονῆς through his patient endurance MPol 19:2 (Just., A I, 16, 3). ἐν ὑπομονῇ (PsSol 2:36; TestJos 10:2) Lk 8:15 (LCerfaux, RB 64, '57, 481–91). ὑπομένειν πᾶσαν ὑπομονὴν practice endurance to the limit Pol 9:1. ὧδέ ἐστὶν ἡ ὑπ. τῶν ἁγίων here is (an opportunity for) endurance on the part of the saints (Weymouth) Rv 13:10 (s. JSchmid, ZNW 43, '50/51, 112–28); cp. 14:12. Text uncertain τὸν λόγον τῶν ὑ[πο]μονῶν AcPl Ha 6, 11f.—WMeikle, The Vocabulary of 'Patience' in the OT: Exp. 8th ser., 19, 1920, 219–25, The Voc. etc. in the NT: ibid. 304–13; CSPicq, Patientia: RSPT 19, 1930, 95–106; AFestugière, RSR 21, '31, 477–86; LMarshall, Challenge of NT Ethics '47, 91f.

② the act or state of patient waiting for someone or someth., *expectation* (Ps 9:19; 61:6; 2 Esdr 10:2) Rv 1:9 (on ὑπ. ἐν Ἰησοῦ s. IHeikel, StKr 106, '35, 317). Perh. (s. 1 above) 3:10 and 2 Th 3:5; IRo 10:3 might also be classed here (so. Lightf.).—RAC IX 658–65. DDenton notes a close connection w. ἐλπίς: SJT 34, '81, 313–20. See ὑπομένω, end.—M-M. ⁹

Christ, of course, is our model. No matter what vile accusations people unlovingly hurled at Him, how the intelligentsia mocked Him, how they took issue with everything He taught and said, and how they laughed at Him while He hung on the cross, nothing swayed Him from His faith and His mission. He doggedly held on and persevered. Do you? Will you push forward in your current pressurized circumstance? He is looking for this in your life so your faith can grow and flourish. He spared not Moses. He spared not John the Baptist. He spared not Stephen. He spared not Paul. He spared not Mary and Martha. In each of their lives He used affliction to mature and deepen their faith in relation to learn how to trust Him, no matter what.

When you begin to master the concept of preserving in trials, this naturally leads to the next thing God is looking for in your life of faith:

⁹William Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1039–1040.

⁴ and perseverance, proven character; (Rom. 5:4).

“Proven character” is one word in Greek: *dokimen* (δοκιμήν). Kittle’s world-renowned Greek dictionary informs us this word originally and literally denoted the testing of metals (Gen. 23:16; 1 Chron. 28:18; 29:4; 2 Chron. 9:17). Gold, for instance, in its raw form contains impurities including zinc, copper, silver, and iron. In order for gold to be gold, these impurities need to be removed. To accomplish this workers first turn up the heat and turn the gold mass into a molten state. Next, they add borax and soda ash to separate the gold from the impurities. Kept from the fire, gold would not be gold. Placed in the fire, the impurities are removed and we are left with something beautiful.

This is the word Paul utilizes when he speaks about “proven character.” It’s lexical meaning definitively demonstrates how God takes those who are justified by faith and sovereignly works to purify their character. Those who know God, know that trials teach us to live with fortitude, and to trust that God is shaping our character in profound ways to move us to maturity and to bring glory to Him. No wonder Paul says we rejoice in this divine process. He learned firsthand how God’s love, like that of a caring and wise father, worked in all the tough times of his Christian walk to grow his character by removing things in his character which diminished his faith. How is God proving your character? What about your character needs to go in the flame of the trial? What inferior, sinful character traits has He removed so far? Thank Him. What inferior, sinful character traits are you stubbornly hanging onto? Let them go so you can spiritually press on to a new height.

Is this not a stunning benefit of the faith? Possessing a divine view of the peaks and valleys of life which leads you to praise and trust God is a place reserved for those who know and walk with God. It logically leads, of course, to the final concept Paul mentions:

and proven character, hope; (Rom. 5:4).

Don’t miss how this all works in the sovereign scheme of things.

God sends/permits/allows tough times to come your way as a saint justified by faith. As you embrace them, be what they may, you learn how to hang on and push forward in life knowing He is at work in your life. When this occurs, your character is chiseled and shaped into God’s intended and lofty desire, and as your character matures through all of the trials your hope in God grows leaps and bounds because you know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that He is, in fact with you and this His intention is grounded in love toward you. This truth leads Paul to draw the obvious conclusion:

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 (Rom. 5:3-5).

Don’t miss the import of the fact that God’s love in all of this has been poured into our lives. He doesn’t let his love trickle into our lives of faith. On the contrary, His love descends on us like a mighty, powerful river because we learn in the refining process He does, in fact, love us enough to shape us into His image. What a benefit this is of being justified by faith . . . to know how to praise the God of love in the furnace of affliction. But this is just one of four timeless benefits saints of Jesus Christ enjoy. Let’s review them so we can praise God for them:

- Inner Peace Is Yours (Rom. 5:1)
- Introduction And Access Is Yours (Rom. 5:2)
- Hope Is Yours (Rom. 5:2)
- Perspective In Trials Is Yours (Rom. 5:3-5)

If your life lacks these priceless concept, I think you know what you need to do. Christ waits to build them into your life at the precise moment you come to Him in repentant, trusting faith that He is, in fact, the only Savior

