

THE FRUITS OF FAITH

Romans 5:1-6:1-23

Key Verse: 5:1

"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our [Lord Jesus Christ](#)."

In the previous chapter, Paul discussed God's free justification through faith. Romans 3:24 says, "...and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus." Paul continues his discussion of justification in chapters 5 and 6. In 5:1-5 Paul describes the results of justification through faith. These results are the fruits of faith, which are indeed glorious. In 5:6-21 Paul gives instructions about how to maintain a fruit-bearing life of faith. In 6:1-10 Paul explains what Jesus' baptism of death means, so that those who are justified freely through faith may not give in to the old sinful nature or give any foothold to Satan. In 6:11-23 Paul presents the new direction of life in Jesus and compares the results of a new life in Jesus with those of a sinful life, so that believers may serve God freely in holiness and righteousness.

I. The results of faith (5:1-5)

First, we have peace with God (1). Look at verse 1. "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." In this verse Paul exclaims that we have peace with God as an immediate result of faith. Before thinking about having peace with God, let's think about what "peace" means. Many define "peace" as a state of security, or freedom from disquieting or oppressive thoughts or emotions. In brief, peace is deep rest. Living in this real world, most people want peace foremost. One highly intellectual man knew that the world was like a turbulent sea. So he worked hard and saved enough money all his lifetime in the hope of traveling around the world. Finally he fulfilled his dream. During the time of traveling he enjoyed peace to some [degree](#). But after traveling he became even more restless. People want to experience euphoria; they really want peace. Nevertheless, instead of palliating their frustrations, they are haunted by bogeymen with x-ray vision. There is no real peace in the world. In an effort to enjoy peace of mind, people live according to their sinful desires. In effect they become objects of God's wrath (Eph 2:1-3).

However, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God. What does it mean to have peace with God? It means that we have a right relationship with God. We are no more slaves of Satan. We are no more enemies of God. We are no more at war with God: We are no more the objects of God's wrath; we have peace with God (9,10). In history, many people have proclaimed peace when there was no peace (Jer 8:11; Eze 13:10). Peace comes only from God. Therefore, there is no peace apart from God. When we have a right relationship with God, God keeps us in perfect peace (Isa 26:3), for the fruit of righteousness is peace (Isa 32:17). If we have peace with God, we can enjoy peace in our souls. If we have peace with God, we can have peace with others also. One young man was an angry American. His nickname was Rhino. He was angry at others all the time and angry at himself most of the time. He was angry not because of his human situation but because he did not have a right

relationship with God. But since he studied the Bible, he restored the right relationship with God. Since then, this young man has been changed into a most gentle person. Whenever he sees his wife he dances around her, making big smiles. Also, he has been a blessing to others. We can have real peace only when we have a right relationship with God.

Second, we have joy in Jesus (2,3). Let's read verses 2,3. In verse 2b, Paul says, "We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." The second fruit of faith is rejoicing, that is joy. Joy is defined as a lively emotion of happiness. People want to be joyful. Nobody wants to be depressed or distressed. This is the reason many people pretend to be lively and happy, making many plastic smiles. People seek joy in many ways. However, it is hard for anyone to discover real joy in the world. What is joy? Well, joy is joy. The word "joy" is spelled "J-O-Y," which means "J"--Jesus first, "O"--others second and "Y"--yourself third. We can have joy when we have Jesus in the first place in our hearts. Also, we can have real joy when we remember the grace of our Lord Jesus, who shed his precious blood to pronounce us "not guilty." We can never be happy by paralyzing our guilty conscience by means of drugs, alcohol and promiscuity. Joy does not come from the alloy of lower things. It comes from the Son of God as the fruit of faith.

Third, we have a living hope in the kingdom of God (2b). Paul says in verse 2b, "We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." In the past we had no real hope, for the things of the world, which all perish, spoil and fade away, cannot be our real hope (1 Pe 1:3,4). From time to time worldly hope makes us look like a monkey, who put his hand in a bottle and grabbed a banana, then could not get his hand out, but never let it go; thus, he was trapped. Worldly hopes demand endless labor and sacrifice. But they are temporal. Worldly hopes only lead men to despair, because after hope, despair comes. The fact that after hope despair comes is a universal truth. God made man this way so that man should have hope only in God. Now we have hope in his kingdom, which is forever.

In the past, we were burdened even to hear the word "God." But now, because of Jesus, we have gained access to God. (2a) Not only so, but also we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Look at verse 2b again. "We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." This verse is a summary of the whole Bible. The main flow of the Bible is lost paradise and the restoration of paradise. By the pure and precious blood of Jesus, the kingdom of heaven is fully reopened to those who believe in the Son. Since we are justified freely by the blood of Jesus through faith, we now have hope in the glorious kingdom of God. Romans 8:17 says, "Now if we are children, then we are heirs--heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory." Through redemption and justification by the blood of Jesus, we have a living hope. After our pilgrimage is over, we inherit the kingdom of God and we will share God's glory, power and honor as his princes and princesses in his eternal kingdom. (2 Ti 2:11,12) The good news of great joy for all men is the kingdom of God. This is the reason Jesus proclaimed in Mark 1:15, "The time has come. The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Fourth, we come to enjoy sufferings. (3) Look at verse 3a. "Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings..." Before we were justified through faith, sufferings produced in us restlessness and fear--the character

of Satan. Sufferings made our lives meaningless. Sufferings snatched away what little joy we found in such things as eating and sleeping. To our dismay, suffering never ends.

But to those who are justified freely through faith, sufferings are spiritual ingredients for spiritual growth. Read verses 3,4. "Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope." In the past, sufferings made us negative in our view of man and the world. But after we are redeemed and justified, God makes us positive toward sufferings. Not only do we have a positive attitude toward sufferings, but also we can enjoy them. The more we suffer, the more we think of Jesus, who suffered and died for us, and we come to love Jesus with many tears. Sufferings do not make us weak; they make us strong and refined (1 Pe 1:6,7). Suffering produces the immeasurable power of perseverance in our inner person. Suffering also forges in us the character of our Lord Jesus Christ. Not only this, but also we have a clear purpose in suffering. We do not suffer anymore for doing evil. We suffer for the glorious hope in the kingdom of God. Romans 8:18 says, "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us." Peter was a man with a big mouth. But he disowned his Master at the time of Jesus' crucifixion simply because he was afraid of suffering and dying like Jesus. After Jesus' death and resurrection, Peter learned the meaning of Jesus' suffering. Then he could have a positive attitude toward sufferings. He said in 1 Peter 4:13, "But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ..." When he said this, he really meant it. His disciples at last learned this attitude from Jesus and bravely fought against the evil of the world in the early centuries.

How do we know that this hope of the heavenly kingdom is real? Look at verse 5. "And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us." When we personally accept the blood of Jesus, the love of God sprouts in our hearts. It is a spiritual secret. At the same time, our spiritual eyes are opened to know that God is living and that his promises are true. Then the doubts of Satan melt away like snow in the early spring. This hope in God's love does not disappoint us. We have thought about the results of faith. They are peace, joy, hope and enjoying sufferings. If we don't have these things in our hearts, we are not normal Christians.

II. The maintenance of our new life in Jesus (5:6-21)

First, we must remember God's grace. (6-11) Up to this point Paul has mentioned the fruits of faith. After justification, God gives us spiritual fruits, such as peace, joy, hope and enjoying sufferings. But it is not easy for us to maintain our glorious new life in Jesus, because we are born to be forgetful of everything, sometimes even our own name, not to mention God's grace. (6:14) So Paul appeals to us to remember God's grace in light of our miserable past life. Before we were justified freely through faith, we were totally powerless to do anything. Because of sin, many people become powerless even to maintain their school studies or do their basic duties as human beings. Many people waste all their time overcoming mental distress, frustration and their putrid bodies. These kinds of people are lazy, proud, self-righteous. They are heartless, ruthless. They are masters of evil-doing. In addition, they are hostile

to other people and they are also enemies of God. (10) We groan even to look at such people. But what did God do for these people? Look at verse 6. "You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly." It is God's marvelous grace that Christ died for the ungodly. Verse 8 explains God's grace more deeply. It says, "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." In order to save men from their sins, God gave his one and only Son to die on the cross. Whenever we remember God's grace through his Son, we cannot be self-righteous. Rather we become pensive until we are moved to tears out of our thankful hearts. If we remember God's grace, we can maintain our new life in Jesus.

Second, the importance of one man's influence (12-21). This part teaches us the importance of one man, for one is the beginning of totality. Through one man Adam's disobedience, sin entered the world. All men were taken by sin, so all men are doomed to die. Through one man Jesus' obedience, all men become righteous through faith. 1 Corinthians 15:22 says more clearly: "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive." Disobedience is the root of sin, and sin comes from a proud mind. Sin is like a contagious disease that spreads over the whole world rapidly. We have talked about the importance of one person. Through one man Jesus' obedience, all men are saved through faith. In this part we learn that one person's influence is crucial. Also we learn that one person Jesus' obedience brought forth God's saving grace for all mankind. As long as each person thinks that he or she is very important in the sight of God, we can maintain our new life in Jesus.

III. New direction for our new life (6:1-23)

First, Jesus' baptism of death (1-10). There are many strange people who say, "We'd better commit more sin so that we can receive God's grace more." (1) Paul refutes their intellectual hedonism. Look at verse 2. "By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?" What does it mean that we died to sin? Look at verses 3,4. "Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into [Christ Jesus](#) were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life." Paul tells us that Christ received the baptism of death to save us from our sins, and was raised from the dead so that we too may live a new life. In short, we should not think of the past when we indulged in the life of sin. Instead, we must believe that we died to sin when Jesus Christ died for us. Paul explains this truth more clearly in Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Through Paul we learn that we must control our thought world in Jesus: We should believe strongly that we died to sin with Jesus Christ. Then God will help us overcome our sinful desires and be transformed into God's children. When we believe this truth in our hearts, the power of sin no longer has mastery over us. (6:9,14)

Second, the instruments of righteousness or the instruments of wickedness. (11-14) Here Paul urges us to believe that we died to sin so that we may be the instruments of righteousness. Look at verses 11,12. "In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that

you obey its evil desires." Why is it necessary to do so? It is because there are two kinds of instruments: the instruments of righteousness and the instruments of wickedness. Look at verses 13,14. "Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace." Here we learn that we must make a choice for our new life.

Third, the servant of God or the servant of sin. (15-23) In verses 15-23 the word "slave" is repeatedly used. This word has the connotation of belonging to or being on the side of. With our human limitations, we cannot stand on both sides at once. These days there are many "Chinese philosophers" among Americans who try to live with the philosophy of the "middle way." But in God's world there is no middle way. There are only two ways: to become God's servant or the servant of sin and Satan. We must be clear that we are either servants of God or servants of Satan.

In this passage we learn that the fruits of faith are remarkable: they are peace, joy, hope and enjoying sufferings.