**Romans 5 – Experiencing Peace With God**

We began in **Rom. 2** last week and now we are going to jump down to **Rom. 5**. Following on what Paul says in **Rom. 4** about salvation and being made right with God by faith, he tells us more about our relationship with the Lord. I want us to also see the theological (belief side) along with the practical side of what Paul is saying as we go through this passage in **Romans 5**.

As we are picking up in **Rom. 5** and Paul begins in **vs. 1** with an amazing truth. Note the first thing he tells us. Paul, in his writings, is very invested regarding our relationship with God and that is seen here in **Rom. 5**. So, let’s get started and jump right in.

The first thing to note, and it is important because it has to do with our relationship with God is this.

**1) We, who are Christ followers, are at peace with God.** What does this mean? Well, before we became a believer, we were not friends of God, nor were we in a close relationship with Him. Let us look at a few passages to get what we mean here.

Look first with me at **Jn. 3:16-19**. Christ came to offer salvation. **Vs. 18** tells us that those who refuse to believe in Christ are already under judgment, because they have made the decision and that point to reject Christ. Regarding anyone, if they have not accepted Jesus, they are not at peace with God. They are under His judgment, a righteous and pure judgment.

God cannot look upon sin and let it into His presence, per se. But He offers a way out, through faith in Christ. So, no one can have an excuse. That, in fact, is the teaching of **Rom. 1:18-20**. Man has no excuse for rejecting God.

God has made Himself known in four ways - creation, conscience **(Ps. 19:1; Rom. 1:18-20)**, the Bible **(2 Tim. 3:16-17)** and of course, the life of Christ as seen throughout the Bible, specifically in the Gospels. Now, one other thing to note from **Jn. 3**.

**Jn. 3:19** tells us what and why judgment occurs. People loved darkness rather than the light of God that offers salvation. Instead, they choose to do evil, and, in some cases, they may not recognize because they refuse to seek God, that what they are doing is wrong. But that does not excuse their behavior. Many people refuse to give up a sinful lifestyle. They choose to ignore God.

In the chapter we are in, **Rom. 5**, look at **vs. 10**. Here we read that were the enemies of God. The idea of being **“enemies” of God means that we were hostile and opposed Him in our life**. We may not have been openly hostile towards God, but we did not want Him in our life. We were not His friend. **Col. 1:21** says the same thing about our relationship with God before we became a believer.

Now, though, according to **Rom. 5:1**, if we have accepted Christ into our life, we are declared right (the idea of being justified) before God. He accepts us. He forgives us, adopts us into His family, makes us a new person in Him. We now have a right standing with God and our relationship with Him is one of peace and for a believer that acceptance by God never changes.

Some MSS have in **Rom. 5:1** the phrase **“let us have peace with God,”** the idea being, as the **BKC** notes, **“Let us keep on having (in the sense of enjoying) peace with God.”** You could say that there is the theological truth that we have peace with God, and from that the implications that we should and can experience that peace in our life.

Both thoughts are true. We have peace with God because of what Christ has done for us **(Rom. 4:25)** and we can experience His peace in our life as we navigate through life.

We do not have to fear judgment, for example. We can rest assured that God has accepted us because of what Jesus has done **(Rom. 5:1)**. No other religious belief system offers peace with God that Christianity does. We cannot earn this peace, it only comes through faith in Christ **(Rom. 4 tells us that, the need for faith in Jesus for salvation)**. We can relax in our relationship with God as far as knowing we are accepted and at peace with God and able to experience God’s peace in our life.

**Eph. 6** notes that we are to tell others about the Gospel of peace. In **Jn. 14:27**, Jesus promised peace to those who are His followers. There is the Holy Spirit given peace for practical living, as seen in **Gal. 5:22-23**.

In **Rom. 5:1** it is talking about our relationship with God, our standing before Him. We are at peace with God, nothing can change that. Jesus is the author of that peace with God, the reason we have peace with Him. We are not God’s enemy; we are accepted, and we are loved.

No condemnation **(Rom. 8:1)**. No judgment. The believer’s judgment seat of Christ is a place where we will be rewarded for what we have done for Him. But there is no negative judgment at the “bema” seat as we know it **(1 Cor. 3)**. The visual of this judgment for Christians is taken from the sporting world of the first century where winners of events received rewards for their activity.

Now, to a side note and then we will get back to **Rom. 5**. I want to show you a passage that is at times used to remind us that when we as Christians stand before God everything we have said and done will be brought to light at the judgment seat of Christ. God has completely forgiven us and there is no record of wrongs (sins) being kept by God **(Rom. 4:7-8)**. God knows when we sin, but that is because He is All-Knowing, but those sins are not used against us. God chastises us because He loves us.

There is a passage, **Mt. 12:33-37**, that some people use to tell us that as believers we are going to be held accountable for everything we have said and done. It is true that we do not, as Christians, have the freedom to live in sin **(Rom.6:1-2; Gal. 5:13)** but are we going to have to answer for everything we did or said while alive.

In fact, we cannot live in sin according to **Rom. 6-8**, as a way of life. We do sin, yes, but I want to clarify exactly what Jesus is saying in **Mt. 12:33-37**, and its relationship to us who are Christ followers. It would be difficult to have God’s peace as a part of our life if we had to answer for everything we said and did in the future. Again, what we are about to see does not mean we have the freedom to do and say anything we would like but I want to clarify a couple of things.

Christ is speaking in **Mt. 12** about a tree being known by its fruit and in doing so He is talking about a person’s life and character. He has just finished talking to the Pharisees about the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit and explaining to them what that means.

That sin was accusing the Holy Spirit of being a fallen angel and that Jesus did miracles through the power of our spiritual enemy. Jesus is still talking to the religious leaders in this passage in **Mt. 12:33-37**. He has the religious leaders in mind as He continues the conversation.

Before going further, there are those who think that **vs. 33** is talking about the life of Christ. The **Cornerstone Bible Commentary** writes,

**“The Pharisees must make a consistent decision. They must either view Jesus (the tree) and its fruit (his words and deeds) as worthless, or they must view them as good. Jesus’ good fruit demonstrates that he is good, but the Pharisees attribute the good deeds to a demonic source. When the Pharisees speak, their words are like the worthless fruit of a worthless tree because they speak from an evil heart (**[**12:34–35**](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt12.34-35)**; cf.** [**15:11**](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt15.11)**,** [**19**](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt15.19)**).”**

I, though, think that Jesus is challenging the Pharisees to look at their life. **Vs. 33** is speaking about a person’s character, who they are. Christ had discussed this concept earlier in **Mt. 7:15-20**. The character of an individual is seen in how they live and what they say.

The fruit, the evidence of our life shows whether we know Christ or not, and in all honesty, as **Rom. 5:1** says, whether we are at peace with God. The Pharisees in **Mt. 12** did not know God.

The **Life Application New Testament Commentary** notes, **“Fruit is a comprehensive word, referring to teaching, character, and action. Our character is revealed in our conduct.”**

In **Mt. 12:34** Jesus speaks directly to the Pharisees, who are not believers. Jesus is clear. The Pharisees cannot speak good or act right consistently because their character, their life, is evil, a word speaking to their nature (who they are). They are wicked in an ethical sense.

And the Pharisees did do things right at times but their hearts, for the most part, were far from God. They lied, they were arrogant and proud. They were lost and spiritually confused without Christ in their life. Again, what we say and do reveals who we are.

We all slip up at times and say and do things we should not have said or done. But in this case here, Jesus is clearly stating that what the religious leaders had said about the Holy Spirit earlier showed their true colors, their heart, shall we say. They accused the Holy Spirit of being of the enemy.

Jesus tells the Pharisees that they cannot speak good because they are evil. He calls them a **“brood of vipers” (vs. 34)**. In **vs. 35** Jesus shows the contrast between a person who is intrinsically good, meaning they have a relationship with God, and those who do not.

Anyone can put on a mask. Jesus, in **vs. 35**, makes it clear that God sees through the mask. Some people can say good things, but that does not mean they are good. Sinners will do sinful things, no matter how nice or gracious they may seem. People sin in various ways. The point here is that a good person will say things that come out of their heart, because of what Christ has done within them.

The idea of **“treasure” (storehouse) in vs. 35** has to do with our inner person, our thoughts, feelings, purposes. The person who is good, who knows Christ, will show it and the person does not, who is lost, evil, will also show that life, as the Pharisees did. They were religious, but they were lost.

This brings us to **vss. 36-37**. Note the audience Jesus is addressing. It is the lost Pharisees, not believers. What He is about to say does not apply to us and the judgment seat of Christ. The context shows that. Jesus is speaking of the unbelieving world.

In **vs. 36** the Lord says, on the day of **“judgment”**, a judgment that we as believers will not face. In fact, the word here is different for judgment than what we find when it speaks of the judgment seat of Christ. The word here is speaking of the judgment of the lost, those without Christ.

**Rev. 20:11-15** tells us that on the day of the Great White Throne Judgment, people’s works and words will speak against them as well as the fact they rejected Christ. **Mt. 12:36** says that people will give an **“account” (to give in answer to a claim or expectation, to render a due)**, of their actions or behavior as **William** **Mounce** notes.

Jesus says, and in keeping with the Pharisee’s blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, people will give an account for **“every careless word”** they speak. The idea of **“careless”** describes **“things from which no profit is derived, although they can and ought to be productive; as of fields, trees, gold and silver” (Thayer)**. Another Greek lexicon says, **“inactive, ineffective, worthless.”**

Nothing good comes out of much of what they say. **Mounce** says that the word can mean **“injurious.”** It is the words spoken that injure others, which have no profit, no positive side to them. They are hollow, meaning nothing. **Mt. 12:37** says people will be held accountable by what they say. The context in **Mt. 12** does not include Christians but as we have said, we are not free to live anyway we want. We are to guard what we say and do **(Col. 4:6)**.

**Practical:** We need to rest in the fact that God has accepted us, and nothing will separate us from God’s love **(Rom. 8:35-39)**. Also, remember that we are not under God’s judgment, that we are friends with God and His children - accepted, forgiven, adopted, the list goes on and on.

**Practical, continued:** Do not fear the bema seat, the judgment seat of Christ. It is a place of rewards. Our sins have been judged at the cross. We do, though, need to watch what we say and do as believers, as Christ followers. And, as **Col. 3:12-17**, we see that we are called to be at peace with others and we can have that as a reality as we live out these verses.

Now, back to Rom. 5. Yes, we went on a road trip but now we are back to **Rom. 5** and there is a second point I want to finish with this morning, and it is found in **Rom. 5:2**, and it is this point:

**2) We always have a direct connection with God.** In **vs. 2**, Paul tells us that through Him (Jesus) we have, in addition to being in right standing with God, and being at peace with God, we have **“obtained access by faith into the grace in which we stand.”** We also have a future that is guaranteed, the **“hope of the glory of God.”**

We experience the grace of God **(Rom. 3:24)**. Grace is getting what we do not deserve but it is much more than that. We know that because of God’s grace, He teaches us by His willingness to impart to us, not only salvation, but truths of how we are to live **(Titus 2:11-12)**. God does not have to do this for us, to help us become what He wants us to but in His grace He does so **(Phil. 2:12-13)**.

Let me point out a few things in **vs. 2** of Rom. 5 as we wrap up this morning. The word **“obtained”** is in the perfect tense of the Greek. That means that something that happened in the past has results continuing up to this moment of Paul’s writing, and subsequent, to us today. In other words, Paul says that we have obtained access into God’s grace, and we still have that access. The moment we became a Christian we gained that connection to God’s grace and to Him.

I like the word **“obtained.”** We have this access to God’s grace, not by anything we have done, but by God’s grace. This **“access”** to God is a good one, because we are acceptable to Him and have assurance that He accepts us and favors us as His children **(Eph. 2:18; Eph. 3:12)**. We can approach God directly. We do not need some person standing between us and God, Jesus is our Mediator, the One Who stands before the Father. We can directly connect to God.

**Note:** We as **Mounce** notes, have **“admission, to the presence of one,”** that being God. We can pray, we can seek His help in learning (the Holy Spirit teaches us according to the Gospel of John). We can ask for wisdom and guidance.

God’s forgiving grace is something we get to experience because of our relationship with God through Christ **(Rom. 5:1 - “through our Lord Jesus Christ)**.

**Practical:** The God we know is personal, loving, gracious and wants to help us grow in our Christian experience. We can talk to Him, seek His wisdom and guidance as found in the Word of God and we have direct access and we experience His grace, every day, as He takes care of us.

**Practical continued:** This access is something that belongs to us, but we must be willing to put in the time to know God and His Word, to pray, to allow Him to work in our life.