

know, however, that you are the second man in this firm who succumbed to temptation and was shown leniency. I was the first. What you have done, I did. The mercy you are receiving, I received. It is only the grace of God that can keep us both.”

We are justified by grace. Grace is the unmerited love of God. It is God reaching out to us, even though we do not deserve it. But it is even more here! It is **the grace in which we stand**. Going back to the imagery of the royal chamberlain admitting us to the presence of the king, **the grace in which we stand** is because the king wants us there and allows us to remain there. Even though we were once rebels, we do not have to face judgment, we are in his favor and remain in his favor. Just think, we stand in the place of undeserved privileged. This is not just with some earthly king or ruler, but with the sovereign, almighty God.

Only by grace can we enter
Only by grace can we stand
Not by our human endeavor
But by the blood of the lamb
Into your presence You call us
You call us to come
Into your presence You draw us
And now by your grace we come
Now by your grace we come

God’s grace is a present reality and a future hope. And so **we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God**. Not only rejoice, we can even boast about this. The glory we hope for is to share in God’s life, fulfill the purpose for which we were created. We can be confident because it all rests with God. It is not that we have done enough to earn this, but it is by the grace of God, that which God gives that we do not deserve and becomes a permanent possession and position.

CONCLUSION

This is why we can have peace with God. The Christian life is not about trying to appease and angry deity. We have peace with God because we have faith in Jesus, through him, access to God and it is all of grace and then: *glory!*

PEACE WITH GOD

Romans 5:1-2

INTRODUCTION

Rena, age three, sat with mom and dad during the baptismal Service, which was a new experience for her. “Why did the Pastor push that guy in the water?” she asked. Mom quietly tried to explain, but Rena wasn’t satisfied. Later that night they tried again. They talked about sin and how, when people decide to live for Jesus and “do good,” they want everyone to know. They told her that water symbolizes Jesus’ washing away people’s sin; when they come out “clean,” they will try to be “good.” A moment later, mom and dad realized they’d failed again when Rena asked, “Why didn’t the Pastor just spank him?”

Through Jesus we experience the grace of God, live in that grace and hope for something even better – actually sharing God’s glory. Wow! Doesn’t that just blow you away? This is that great, central, Reformation doctrine of Justification by faith. Let’s find out more, as this passage tells us of the benefits of justification.

Rom 5:1 - 2 ¹Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ²Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

FAITH IN JESUS

What does it mean to have faith in Jesus? Faith consists in the ability to look at the evidence and accept what it tells us. Paul argues that if people will only open their eyes and look around, there is the evidence for the existence of God which should lead men and women to believe in him and worship him. Faith is also a gift of God. We can believe in God and the truth about him because of the work of the Holy Spirit in us. The Bible tells us about the people of faith; people like Abraham, Sarah, Moses, David, Samuel, the prophets. They went forward, not stepping out into the darkness, but stepping into the light which God had given them.

Faith is both an attitude of spirit which we freely exercise, and the gift of God.

It has been described as throwing open our doors to God and discovering that he has thrown open his door to us.

Jesus said **Believe in God; believe also in me**. OT told people to expect the Messiah. There are descriptions of who he would be and what he would do. He would be born in Bethlehem. He would suffer, die and rise. The Gospels confirm all this and tell of the actual events.

¹ CCC February 5, 2012

Through the record of these events One who is Son of God and Son of Man is revealed. Men and women meet him and their lives are changed as they begin to live in the way he tells them. The woman of Samaria said to her neighbors, **Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?** The Samaritans went to see for themselves and they believed. Because of the Resurrection; because Jesus is alive we also meet him. Jesus said to Thomas, who found faith difficult, **Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.**

I think, when I read that sweet story of old,
When Jesus was here among men,
How He called little children as lambs to His fold,
I should like to have been with them then.
Yet still to His foot stool in prayer I may go;
And ask for a share in His love;
And if I thus earnestly seek Him below,
I shall see Him and hear Him above. (Jemima T. Luke)

We have evidence that we can weigh up. That is our part. We are opening the door. Faith is also a gift of God. Jesus asked his disciples **who do you say that I am?** And Peter replied that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. Jesus assured him that he had not come to this belief by reasoning it out, but it had been revealed to him by God. God had opened his door and given the gift of faith. Faith in Jesus comes by what we can know and what we are given; head and heart.

JESUS GIVES ACCESS TO GOD

Rom 5:2 ²Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand,

When a Jew heard of access, he would immediately think about going to the temple to worship God – having access to the place of God’s presence. To the Roman it would speak of access through the royal chamberlain into the presence of the Emperor. It can also be a nautical image. The picture is of the landing stage by which a weary seafarer can once more stand on firm ground. Paul is saying that here is another benefit of justification, of being considered by God as if we had never sinned, that through Jesus we have access to God. Jesus, himself, made it quite clear that he is **the way, the truth and the life**. He is the way by which we come to the Father. **No one comes to the Father except through me**. The access is more than coming near. In OT only Aaron the high priest was able to go into the holy of holies, into the very presence of God and represent Israel. Jesus is our representative

because we have faith in him. He and he alone can provide access to God.

In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song;
this Cornerstone, this solid Ground,
firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace,
when fears are stilled, when strivings cease!
My Comforter, my All in All,
here in the love of Christ I stand. (Sue Townsend)

A group of tourists were visiting the Holy Land. They had arrived in Jerusalem. One woman in the part went into the city looking for the Post Office. She stopped a man in the street and asked, “Can you tell me the way to the Post Office. He took her by the hand and said, “Come with me, I am the way.”

Look unto Him, ye nations, own
Your God, ye fallen race;
Look, and be saved through faith alone,
Be justified by grace. (C Wesley)

Another great benefit of justification – access to God. We do not have to pray to a saint or light a candle or help old ladies across the street. The Lord Jesus takes us and introduces us to his Father.

Eph 2:17 - 18 ¹⁷And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

GOD HOLDS OUT HIS GRACE

A young employee secretly misappropriated several hundred dollars of his business firm’s money. When this action was discovered the young man was told to report to the office of the senior partner of the firm. As he walked up the stairs toward the administrative office the young employee was heavyhearted. He knew without a doubt he would lose his position with the firm. He also feared the possibility of legal action taken against him. Seemingly his whole world had collapsed. Upon his arrival in the office of the senior executive the young man was questioned about the whole affair. He was asked if the allegations were true and he answered in the affirmative. Then the executive surprisingly asked this question: “If I keep you in your present capacity, can I trust you in the future?” The young worker brightened up and said, “Yes, sir, you surely can. I’ve learned my lesson.” The executive responded, “I’m not going to press charges, and you can continue in your present responsibility.” The employer concluded the conversation with his younger employee by saying, “I think you ought to