

## ROMANS 5:1-21

In less than three chapters, the Holy Spirit has painted a concise but accurate picture of man's real condition.

Be he relatively moral, or blatantly immoral, be he a Jew or a Gentile, **"there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."**

And, as far as man is concerned, that's the end of the story.

Yes, **"With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible."**

That's why we find these words written in Romans Chapter 3:21-22 **"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law**

**and the prophets;**

**22 Even the righteousness of God  
which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto  
all and upon all them that believe."**

Yes, as Paul pointed out, in Romans Chapter  
4, salvation is a gift obtained by  
faith, and by faith alone.

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In today's lesson, found in Romans Chapter  
5, we will discover the exceeding  
greatness of God's salvation.

To the lost sinner, the salvation of his  
precious soul is all-important, but  
that's only the beginning.

Romans 5:1 **"Therefore being justified by  
faith, we have peace with God through  
our Lord Jesus Christ."**

**"Being justified by faith"** --- that's where  
it all begins.

Our fruitless striving is finally over, and  
**"we have peace with God through our  
Lord Jesus Christ."**

Colossians 1:20-21 **"And, having made peace  
through the blood of his cross, by him  
to reconcile all things unto himself;  
by him, I say, whether they be things  
in earth, or things in heaven.**

<sup>21</sup> **And you, that were sometime  
alienated and enemies in your mind by  
wicked works, yet now hath he  
reconciled ---."**

That's right. We were the **"enemies"** of God,  
but now we are His dear children, and  
at **"peace with God."**

But there's more.

Romans 5:2 **"By whom also (that is by Christ)  
we have access by faith into this grace**

**wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope  
of the glory of God."**

For those in Christ, this is our past,  
present, and future:

- We were the **"enemies"** of God.
- But now we have **"access --- into this  
grace wherein we stand."**
- And we can rejoice **"in hope of the glory  
of God"** that lies before us.

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Let's take a moment to contemplate the  
**"access"** we have **"into this grace  
wherein we stand."**

Obviously, it is a present possession, and  
it involves many blessings.

After all, it is the grace of God.

One of these blessings is the **"access"**

Christ has provided for us into the  
very presence of His Heavenly Father.

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In Old Testament times, the average Israelite, even though he was part of God's chosen people, was kept at arm's-length, so to speak.

God's presence resided in the tabernacle which was located in the very middle of their camp, but he couldn't go there. By that I mean, he couldn't actually enter the tabernacle itself.

Only the high priest could enter the tabernacle and the holiest of all, where God dwelt, and then, only once a year, and under special conditions.

But, for the Christian, things are very different.

Our Great High Priest, the Lord Jesus, can bring us right into God's presence.

This remarkable privilege is examined in detail in the lessons on Hebrews found on this site, so I will simply refer you to them.

However, I would like to pass on an excellent illustration provided by John Phillips, which is very helpful.

*"A little boy once stood outside the gates of Buckingham Palace in London. He wanted to talk to the king, but was sternly repulsed by the guard at the gate. He rubbed a grimy hand to his cheek to wipe away a tear. Just then, along came a well-dressed man who asked the little fellow to explain his trouble. When he heard the story, the man smiled and said, 'Here, hold my hand, sonny. I'll get you in. Just you never mind those soldiers.' The*

little boy took the proffered hand, and, to his surprise, saw the soldiers leap to attention and present arms as his new-found friend approached. Past the guard he was led, along carpeted halls, through wide-flung doors, and on through a glittering throng right up to the throne of the king. He had taken the hand of the Prince of Wales, the king's son! Through him he had gained access!

*It is a glorious thing to have acceptance, to know that the war is over, and that God no longer looks upon us with disfavour and wrath. It is far better to have access. And those who have taken the pierced hand of the King's Son have access indeed. What a standing!"*

(End of quote.)

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So far we have talked about our acceptance  
and our access.

Both of these privileges, and many more, are  
the result of our standing as a  
Christian.

And might I say, this new standing is  
absolutely perfect and complete because  
it rests upon the finished work of  
Christ.

However, that's not true of our Christian  
state.

No, our personal development depends, to a  
large degree, upon our co-operation.

God does have a definite program, and His  
desire is to make us more like Christ.

The first step of this program is found in  
Romans Chapter 5 and verse 3.

"And not only so, but we glory in  
tribulations also ---" and I'll stop  
right there.

Actually, I would sooner "**rejoice in hope of  
the glory of God,**" than "**glory in  
tribulations,**" and I don't think that's  
too unusual.

However, "**tribulations**" are the first step  
in God's list, and for a good reason.

You see, "**--- tribulation worketh patience;**

<sup>4</sup> **And patience, experience; and  
experience, hope:**

<sup>5</sup> **And hope maketh not ashamed;  
because the love of God is shed abroad  
in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which  
is given unto us."** Romans 5:3-5

So, I suppose tribulations are necessary,  
but what's this part about glorying "**in  
tribulations?**"

No doubt some godly Christians do a pretty good job of enduring tribulations, but does anyone actually **"glory in tribulations?"**

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I remember a wedding my wife and I attended some years ago.

In his address, the father of the groom wished the newlyweds a happy and prosperous marriage.

Now, we all knew that would be highly unlikely. Life just isn't like that, but we would have all aspired to that ambition.

The truth is, we don't have a lot of room in our plans for tribulations.

In fact, there's a very successful, but might I say, false gospel going around today that monopolizes on this innate

desire: *Believe on the Lord Jesus  
Christ and life will be a bowl of  
cherries!*

But that's not what the Bible teaches, is  
it?

And that's not what Christ taught His  
disciples either.

Shortly before He returned to His Heavenly  
Father, He comforted them by promising  
them peace in the midst of tribulation.

John 16:33 **"These things I have spoken unto  
you, that in me ye might have peace. In  
the world ye shall have tribulation:  
but be of good cheer; I have overcome  
the world."**

No, peace isn't the absence of tribulation;  
it's the presence of Christ.

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And Paul wasn't a stranger to tribulation  
either.

In 2 Corinthians 4:8-11, he wrote, "**We are  
troubled on every side, yet not  
distressed; we are perplexed, but not  
in despair;**

**9: Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast  
down, but not destroyed;**

**10: Always bearing about in the body  
the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the  
life also of Jesus might be made  
manifest in our body.**

**11: For we which live are always  
delivered unto death for Jesus' sake,  
that the life also of Jesus might be  
made manifest in our mortal flesh."**

So, when we finally come around to God's way  
of thinking, we will "**glory in  
tribulations**" --- "**knowing that**

**tribulation worketh patience,"** and all those other good things that He wants to mould into our lives.

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And before we leave the subject, let's take a moment to see how God's agenda influenced Abraham's life.

Tribulations? Yes.

His herdsmen got into a fight with Lot's herdsmen, and they had to separate.

As it turned out, this situation opened the door for further blessings.

And then Lot was taken captive simply because he was in the wrong place at the right time.

Sodom and Gomorrah had been overthrown by their enemies, and Lot was part of the spoil.

There was simply no way of getting around it.

Uncle Abram, as he was then called, had to fight a whole army to get his nephew back.

But "**tribulation worketh patience,**" and I can't think of a man who needed more patience than Abram did.

In spite of God's assurances that his descendants would be "**as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore,**" Abram was still childless at the grand old age of 99.

**"And patience, experience; and experience, hope."**

Yes, Abram had gained a lot of "**experience**" during those years, and it had taught him to trust in God implicitly.

**"And hope maketh not ashamed."**

As an old man, I'm sure his greatest desire  
would have been for a son.

Did God give him a son?

Not immediately.

Instead, He gave him a new name!

He called him Abraham, which means the  
father of a multitude.

Was Abraham ashamed of his new name?

No, not at all.

The childless father of a multitude was

**"fully persuaded that, what he had  
promised, he was able also to perform."**

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But V 3 isn't about Abraham, is it?

It's about Christians, and if you're a  
believer in Jesus Christ, it's about  
you.

God wants you to **"glory in tribulations."**

Now, He didn't actually ask us to like tribulations, did He?

He asked us to "**glory in tribulations**," and that's quite a different story.

On the surface, tribulations play havoc with our plans, but, in most cases, they implement God's.

You see, even though tribulations can be quite uncomfortable, even devastating, there's something going on.

God is building a Christian from the ground up.

Tribulations, patience, experience, and hope; one brick laid upon another.

And the end result (if we let Him work) will be a mature faith, not a simplistic one that only looks for nice things, and is devastated by anything else.

Yes, God is building a faith that can follow His Son through the dark valley as well as the green pastures.

And that's why we should "**glory in tribulations.**"

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Romans 5:6-8 "**For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.**

<sup>7</sup> **For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.**

<sup>8</sup> **But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."**

Yes, Christ died for "**sinners.**"

Apart from the love of God, no one could have blamed Him if He had completely bypassed Calvary.

Apart from the love of God, He would have been completely justified in marching straight to Armageddon and destroying His Father's enemies.

But He didn't do that, did He?

No, He became **"sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."**

So the point Paul is making is this: *If the love of Jesus would constrain Him to die for His enemies, how will He treat His friends?*

I think the answer should be obvious.

And I think these next few verses should be obvious, but so often they're not.

V 9-11 **"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.**

<sup>10</sup> **For if, when we were enemies, we**

were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

<sup>11</sup> And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."

Paul is addressing a great paradox here.

Yes, there are multitudes of believers who have obviously placed the welfare of their immortal souls in Jesus' hands, and yet they seem to have trouble trusting Him with everything else.

Or, in other words, the problem seems to be unbelieving believers.

And that's what V 10 is all about --- **"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his**

**Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his *life*."**

Admittedly, the word "**saved**" might cause us some confusion.

That's because we normally connect this word with the salvation of our souls, but that's not the case here.

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C. I. Scofield does a good job of explaining the word "**saved**" or salvation in his footnotes.

I'm not quoting him directly, but simply giving you the gist of his remarks.

The word salvation (or saved) in scripture is the great inclusive word of the Gospel, gathering into itself all the redemptive acts and processes.

- (1) We have been saved from the guilt and penalty of sin, and now have a place in

heaven. (That's our usual understanding of the word.)

(2) Each day the Christian is being saved from the habit and dominion of sin. (That's what we have here, in V 10.)

(3) We will be saved at Christ's return. That is, our physical body will be raised incorruptible, and we will be brought into entire conformity to Christ.

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So, the real point of V10 is this: Not only has Jesus saved our souls, but He wants to preserve every aspect of our lives.

And that's a lesson we all need to learn.

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However, the Holy Spirit might have had an additional reason for emphasizing

Jesus' love, and indeed God's great love, at this particular point in scripture.

As you will remember, He had just asked us to **"glory in tribulations"** even though it is the medicine we all hate to take. So, at such a time when the bitter medicine touches our tongues and burns all the way down, it helps to remember Who's holding the spoon!

Otherwise, tribulation might produce bitterness rather than patience.

And there's another defence against bitterness that's very helpful.

We should **"--- consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."** Hebrews 12:3

Certainly Jesus' contemporaries would have been a bitter pill to swallow, but nothing to be compared to the shadow of the cross.

And yet, Hebrews 12:2 says, "**for the joy that was set before him**" Jesus "**endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.**"

Yes, as far as Jesus was concerned, the cross and the crown went together.

So, even though the very thought of being made "**sin for us**" caused Him to "**sweat**" --- "**as it were great drops of blood**" in the garden, the cross also provided Him with the glorious opportunity of doing His Father's will.

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From Romans chapter 3 and verse 21 to verse 11 of this chapter, we have been dealing with the problem of man's transgressions, that is, man's individual sins and God's remedy.

From this point on, and for several chapters to come, Paul will be dealing with the problem of man's sin nature, and the associated problem of physical death.

So let's begin.

V 12 **"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."**

Yes, it all began with Adam.

God had clearly warned him that **"in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,"** and that's exactly what happened.

On the very day of his disobedience, Adam died spiritually.

And although his physical body lived on to the grand old age of 930, he had begun his long march to the grave.

But there's more than Adam involved here.

Romans 5:12 says --- **"by one man sin entered into the world",** and as a result **"death passed upon all men."**

First of all, let's talk about physical death.

The moral man, the religious man, and the great sinner all die.

And we can see that progression over the short span of 3 verses, if we turn back to Genesis Chapter 5.

In V1 we read, **"This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that**

**God created man, in the likeness of God made he him."**

Yes, God had created man in His own image, and part of that image included the fact that his physical body was incorruptible.

However, when we come to V 3, we read, **"And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image."** Part of that new image involved physical death.

And this dismal truth has been duly recorded in Romans 5:12, **"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."**

By itself, this verse might seem a little confusing.

Certainly, the words, "**by one man sin entered into the world,**" points directly to Adam, but then the verse ends with the words, "**for that all have sinned.**"

So which is it?

Is this personal tragedy a result of our own sins, or Adam's?

Well, the answer is found in the next two verses, and Paul uses a rather unique example to prove his point.

V 13-14 "**(For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.**

<sup>14</sup> **Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come."**

The first point then is this: Until the Law of Moses was given, individual sins were not officially documented as such. Or, as V 13 puts it, --- **"sin is not imputed when there is no law."**

However, the end result was just the same --  
- **"death reigned from Adam to Moses."**

Why?

Because the root cause was Adam's sin, not ours --- **"by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin."**

Certainly, we are responsible for our own sins when eternal judgment is involved, but when it comes to physical death, Adam's sin is the culprit.

And we only need to look around us to observe this tragic principle.

Even a newborn baby, who is completely innocent of any personal sin, is still subject to physical death.

And, what about our sinful nature, and, for that matter, what about our sins?

Adam seems to have gotten us into a hopeless mess, hasn't he?

Well, yes and no.

You see, there's some very good news just ahead.

V 15-19 **"But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one (referring to Adam's sin) many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.**

<sup>16</sup> **And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the**

judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.

<sup>17</sup> For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)

<sup>18</sup> Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

<sup>19</sup> For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

There's a great deal to consider here, so we will take it slowly.

First of all, I would draw your attention to the words **"free gift."**

You would have thought the word **"gift,"** which appears twice in these verses, would have been enough to get the point across.

Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit adds the words **"free gift,"** and He does it 3 more times.

The emphasis is obvious, and, might I say, well founded.

Throughout the ages, beginning with Cain, mankind has consistently clung to his own good works, and rejected God's designated sacrifice.

But it's not about works. It's about God's **"free gift."**

So, why don't we open His **free gift** right now and look inside?

Let's untie the bow and take off the paper.

Do you see it?

It's in V 17, and it's "**the gift of righteousness.**"

That's right. It's Christ's perfect righteousness, and it provides complete "**justification**" even under the perfect scrutiny of God.

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And then we have the two little words, "**much more**" which appear twice in these verses.

Christ hasn't simply repaired the damage caused by Adam's sin, although He has certainly done that.

He has done "**much more**"!

If this whole situation hadn't happened in the first place, we could have lived on forever, as the sons of man, with incorruptible bodies.

We could have enjoyed the blessings of the garden and communion with God with no fear of death.

But Christ has provided **"much more"** than even that!

In the second Adam, **"they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ."**

That's right. As the sons of God, and in Christ, we can have victory in this present evil world, and we can look forward to the day when we will be with Him, in heaven.

Yes, He has promised, **"I will come again,  
and receive you unto myself; that where  
I am, there ye may be also."**

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And, lastly, we should consider what I call  
*the great multiplication factor.*

V 18 **"Therefore as by the offence of one  
judgment came upon all men to  
condemnation ---."**

One sin, and all mankind has been affected.  
And yet, such a test was absolutely  
necessary.

Because man had been made in the image of  
God, he must be given the opportunity  
to exercise his own free will.

And ,certainly, God made the consequences of  
disobedience absolutely clear: --- **"for  
in the day that thou eatest thereof  
thou shalt surely die."**

No, the problem wasn't ignorance.

Nor was it, as in the case of Eve, the result of deception.

1 Tim. 2:14 makes this quite clear --- **"And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."**

So why did he do it?

I suggested a possible answer in my lesson on Genesis 3:7-14, so I won't elaborate on it here.

Sufficient to say, Adam disobeyed God, and he did it with his eyes wide open.

And, as is often the case with sin, there was a tremendous multiplication factor.

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And then we come to Jesus' multiplication factor.

V 19 "--- so by the obedience of one shall  
**many be made righteous."**

Certainly, Adam was acting under pressure,  
as Eve had already sinned.

But his circumstances couldn't be compared  
to those that surrounded the Lord  
Jesus.

Apart from the physical suffering, Christ  
faced the prospect of being made "**sin  
for us**," and because of that, being  
rejected and punished by His Heavenly  
Father.

As God, He had made His decision in eternity  
past, and He had come to die.

But as a man, He had to wrestle with the  
awful prospect of becoming the ultimate  
sin sacrifice during those dark hours  
in the Garden of Gethsemane.

In Matthew 26:39, we can listen to His agonizing words and witness His steadfast obedience: "**--- O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.**"

And as a result of His obedience, many have been "**made righteous.**"

V19 "**For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.**"

That's right--"**made sinners**"--referring to the sin nature we inherited from Adam.

But we can be "**made righteous,**" referring to Christ's righteousness that can be placed on our account.

And it's God's only answer to the sin problem.

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V 20-21 **"Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:**  
21 **That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."**

Under the microscope of the Mosaic Law, man's hopeless condition was completely revealed.

Every sin, every spot, and every wrinkle was held up for judgment.

**"But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."**

Praise God!

*♪Amazing grace! How sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see."*