

“Standing in Grace”
Romans 5:1-2
(Preached at Trinity, March 9, 2008)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As we’ve seen, in the first four chapters Paul has been writing on the subject of justification by faith alone. This has been his theme. He’s looked at every aspect of this doctrine and answered every objection.
2. Now as we enter **Chapter 5** Paul begins a new section of the Book of Romans that will continue through **Chapter 8**. He introduces it with the word, “Therefore” which tells us he’s tying this section to Justification by Faith. Paul is now going to focus upon the result of Justification by Faith.
 - A. In the first four chapters Paul has been speaking primarily to the lost – those in need of justification and reconciliation. Now in Chapters 5-8 Paul is directing his instruction to the redeemed.
 - B. Paul is now directing our attention upon two new themes tied directly to justification: Assurance of our salvation and our Union with Christ.
 - C. In other words, if you have believed on Him “who was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification,” then your salvation is sure. Nothing shall ever cause you to lose it. Paul concludes this section in **Chapter 8** by writing, **Romans 8:35** – “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?”
To which he answers in conclusion:
Romans 8:39 – “*nothing* shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
3. In these first two verses Paul describes three immediate consequences of this justification.
 - It gives us peace with God.
 - It enables us to stand firmly in the grace of Christ’s reconciliation
 - And it enables us to rejoice in the prospect of our future glorification.
4. We’ve already looked at the first of these:
Romans 5:1 – “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
 - A. Notice the order of things. Paul places peace with God first and then he speaks of the blessings. It must be in that order.
 - B. The primary purpose of the Gospel is not to give us blessings. There are blessings that come but the primary purpose is to reconcile us to God.
There can be no blessings from God until we come to peace with Him.
 - C. Paul says this peace is something we already have
 1. Paul says we have been justified and we have peace, we have reconciliation – it is already our possession. There is an air of confidence in Paul’s words
 2. We have been fully reconciled with God

3. God's anger has been appeased—His wrath and curse removed
Harmony has been restored.
The redeemed man is no longer God's enemy – we are at peace
4. This peace brings us the knowledge and confidence that God loves us
- D. This peace is the ultimate strength of assurance
Our assurance is built upon justification by faith alone
 1. God has declared you to be not guilty
 2. You no longer stand under the curse of the Law
 3. God is no longer angry with you – He is on your side
5. This morning I want to examine the second result of justification by faith that Paul gives in these first two verses.
Not only does justification give us peace with God. It also enables us to stand firmly on the promise of God's blessings.
The starting point for all spiritual blessings is justification by faith alone. We must be at peace with God before we will be blessed of God.

I. Some Definitions

A. "Access"

1. The word is found three times in the NT
Ephesians 2:18 – "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."
Ephesians 3:12 – "In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him."
2. It is almost universally translated "access" except in the case of the NAS
Romans 5:2 – "through whom also we have obtained our introduction"
The NAS translators wanted to impart the idea of someone of a higher stature introducing someone of a lower stature. Christ our Mediator has introduced us into the presence of God.
3. There is no reason to depart from the normal use of the word – "access"
This speaks of the ability to approach God – the right to enter
It carries the idea of being made acceptable.
4. Paul has been teaching about the doctrine of justification – we are able to approach God not because of any good thing we have done or because of some outward religious ritual but all of Christ
Ephesians 2:18 – "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."
5. The controlling verb here is in the Perfect Active tense which is most accurately translated, "We *have* had access." It is something accomplished; something into which we have entered.
NAS – "have obtained"
NIV – "have gained"
6. It was accomplished in the past. It has a present reality. And it will continue into the future. We have been justified therefore we are justified and will remain justified. Sanctification may be progressive, but justification is accomplished once and for all.

B. “Faith”

1. Faith can be understood two ways in the NT – It can carry the sense of conduct; that is, being faithful. It can also be understood in the sense of believing God at His Word.
 - a. We can understand it either way as we consider the “Fruit of the Spirit.” The fruit of the Spirit is faith or trust as well as faithfulness
 - b. But here Paul is not talking about our faithfulness. This is not about our actions. Paul is talking about saving faith – simply resting upon the work of Christ.
2. This is the same sense of the word we see in **Verse 1**. Paul has made it clear that this justification can come only through faith
3. In **Chapter 3** as we examined the faith of Abraham we saw that:
 - Faith is the ability to believe on the promise of God’s Word
 - The ability to believe on God’s Word alone
 - The ability to believe on God’s Word in spite of appearances to the contrary with confidence and assurance
 - And the ability to act upon the belief of God’s Word

C. “Grace”

1. Usually grace is understood as God’s unmerited favor – God giving to us what we do not deserve.
Ephesians 2:8 – “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift of God:*”
 As we consider this unmerited favor we are talking about God’s entire plan of redemption.
2. But the grace Paul is speaking of here is more of a state or condition
 A clue is found in the demonstrative pronoun, “this” – Paul is referring to “this grace.” He has a *particular* grace in mind.
 In the context we have to go back to **Verse 1** – Paul is referring to the grace of the peace with God that we have through Jesus Christ. He is talking about the grace of reconciliation.
 Now we can begin to understand the nature of our access.

D. “Stand” - ἵστημι

1. It carries the idea of firmness, resoluteness – like a tree whose roots are deep.
Psalms 1:1-3 – “Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. ² But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. ³ And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”
2. By faith we have access into the grace of full reconciliation with God.
3. In our justification we shall not be moved – we are planted and we will stand. Christ has become our foundation and our Rock.

4. In Christ God holds us firm
John 10:27-29 – “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: ²⁸ And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand.”
5. This is one of Paul’s chief themes in Chapters 5-8 – Assurance, that our salvation is secure. We have confidence not because of ourselves but because of Christ and our union with Him.

II. This access has great significance for us

- A. First, it speaks of the great change that has taken place in our relationship with God
 1. In our sinful condition God is seen as our Creator before whom we stand as guilty criminals – guilty of high treason, guilty of failing to honor Him, to worship Him, to glorify Him, to obey Him.
Romans 1:21 – “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.”
 - a. God looked upon us as His enemies – He was angry with us
Romans 1:18 – “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;”
 - b. We were completely alienated and separated from God
 There was an infinite distance between us and God
 God’s eyes are too pure to look upon sinful men
 - c. It was as if there was a huge impenetrable door barring us from the throne room of God with a sign reading – NO ADMITTANCE, NO ACCESS
 2. We must also remember – to be barred from the presence of God is to be condemned.
 - a. Lost men are barred from His presence now.
 - b. But in eternity all lost men will be cast into hell. Eternal separation. Separation from any good. Pure, unrestrained evil.
 - c. In this life we have enjoyed mercy – God’s goodness upon His enemies.
 - d. In hell sinners will be forever cast from God – No Access
 3. In our justification we are brought to a new relationship with God
 “we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand”
 4. Not only are we granted access before the throne of God’s grace, we are now adopted as His children.
Romans 8:15 – “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”
Galatians 4:6 – “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.”
 5. In Christ, we have access to God as a child has access to his father. He looks upon us as His children. Children have certain rights, standing

6. And since Jesus is our Mediator we have direct access to God. There are no priests today as there was in the Old Covenant
1 Timothy 2:5 – “For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;”
- a. In the days before Christ any Gentile approaching the Temple would have quickly been confronted by a wall that divided the Courtyard of the Gentiles from the inner Temple.
 - b. Jews were allowed to proceed but they too soon came to another wall separating the Courtyard of the Women from the Courtyard of the men.
 - c. Beyond this was still another wall beyond which only the Jewish priests could enter to perform sacrifices for the people.
 - d. Finally, there was the Holy Place separated by still another great barrier – a huge curtain beyond which only the high priest could go.
 - c. Jesus is the final priest. The final Mediator. The temple veil has been torn. All have access to God through Christ.
Matthew 27:51 - “And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;”
- B. Second, this access has marvelous implications as it applies to prayer
1. First, God commands all men to pray to Him – both redeemed and unredeemed. But prayer is made acceptable only through Christ. We only have access through Christ.
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“Prayer, with thanksgiving, being one part of natural worship, is by God required of all men. But that it may be accepted it is to be made in the name of the Son, by the help of the Spirit, according to his will; with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love, and perseverance; and when with others, in a known tongue.”
 - a. Prayer is demanded of all men. All men should look to God as their Creator and sustainer. We should teach our children to pray.
 - b. But prayer is made acceptable only through Christ
John 14:6 – “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”
 2. Our access through faith in Christ has gained us access in prayer. We may come boldly to the throne of grace.
Ephesians 3:12 – “In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.”
 3. And when we come, we have confidence that He hears us
James 5:16 – “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

Conclusion:

1. Not only has God granted us peace wherein our weapons of warfare have been destroyed and we have been fully reconciled, He has also granted us access.
“we have obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand”
2. God has blessed us with infinite blessings through His gift of justification by faith through Jesus Christ.
3. Do you realize the blessing of this access? The boldness we have to come before God? Do others see this boldness in you?
Lloyd-Jones – “The masses of people are outside the Church because we who are Christian people are representing the Christian life so badly. We are living like spiritual paupers, whereas we are meant to be princes and children of the Heavenly King.”
4. In Christ we have access, boldness, and certainty that we are being kept secure until the end. Justification by faith alone grants us marvelous assurance as we live boldly before our great God.
5. Do you have access? I’m not asking if you *feel* like you have access. I’m asking you if you have trusted Christ. I asking you if you have abandoned all else to follow Christ. Access can only come through Him.