

96-05-03b

Okay, we're back from our break and one of the things that we started out talking about tonight in the lesson is the fact that, well I've used the illustration of these prospectors and one of them is tunneling deep into the ground and is finding certain things down there, but there's a lot to be gained by staying on the surface and making perhaps several passes over what can be seen up above and that's really the approach that we're taking here in Romans. And this next section of the letter in the last half of chapter 5 is an area where it's easy to bog down because Paul is making some fairly complex arguments based on the nature of the fall of Adam and making a comparison and contrast between that and the work of Jesus Christ. And I don't want this to slow us down or to throw us off track from the larger ideas that Paul is arguing here because these arguments, especially when they were addressed to the original audience, made the same point that Paul has been making all along.

But what he's really trying to do is to penetrate the religious thick skin that a lot of his audience has. A lot of the Jewish Christians do not understand and it's hard for them to accept that God is not justifying them based on what they do. And so Paul is going to go back to something that he feels like they do understand and that's the nature of their salvation and it's the nature of the fall.

There isn't much argument about the fact that Adam sinned. All the Jews had read Genesis and understood it. They knew that Adam disobeyed and that that was where sin and death entered the human race.

So Paul is going to use this as another angle to try to get beneath the armor of these people who are trying to be justified by works. So he's going to go back and talk about Adam and he says in verse 12 of chapter 5, just as through one man sin entered the world, he's referring back to Adam and Adam's fall, and death entered at the same time. Sin entered the world and death through sin and thus death spread to all men because all sinned.

And we immediately think well we're launching off on a theological thing here, but one of the features of that event is that all of us inherited sin and were accounted sinful without having done anything. As soon as we were born, we were born in sin. David says we were conceived in iniquity and we're born in sin.

We inherit these things, but we did not do anything to bring on ourselves. And in a way there's a comparison there because we're born and just by our existence as a human being, we are accounted sinful and we didn't do anything to get that. It comes from our birth.

In the same way, Paul is going to argue, being born in Christ results in the accounting of righteousness also without us having to do anything. And in the same way that because we are born into sin and we operate in a sinful fashion, when we are born in Christ and born into righteousness, it's natural and logical that we should operate and live in the sphere of that new

birth and in the sphere of righteousness. So that's kind of the direction that he's heading here.

So he said, then he has a little parenthesis here and it once again is aimed at the people who are trying to seek righteousness by the law. He says, you want to know about the law? When the law came in, that was when the scoreboard for sin came in. When there wasn't a law, even though there was sin in the world, sin wasn't counted.

It wasn't kept track of. But once the law came, sin started being scored. It started being reckoned.

And he's going to tell us later that when the law came, sin was multiplied. And that means that it was defined and it was easy to point out and demonstrate. Until the law of sin was in the world, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law.

Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned the way that Adam did. Who is a type or a comparison of him who is to come? And it doesn't mean that Adam, we can look at Adam and see a lot of things about Jesus Christ. It just means that in this comparison that Paul is making, we can see some things that happened through Adam and we can see things that happened through Christ.

And that's why he's going to say in verse 15, the free gift that comes through Christ is not like the offense that came through Adam. For if by the one man's offense many died, and that's the sin of Adam, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. And he's going to make this comparison several different ways.

He's going to state it in slightly different terms each time. He's going to state it about five different ways in this section. But here's the main thing, to not get bogged down in the verbiage and the phrases and the sheer immensity of this chapter, what is the point that Paul is making? He started out talking about the fact that righteousness comes to us by trusting God and not by what we do.

And now he's making the point here that look at how sin came to you. You didn't have to do anything to be accounted sinful. You were born into Adam and because Adam sinned, you are sinful.

You didn't have to work to be sinful. And at salvation, being born into Christ, you didn't have to work to be accounted righteous. So the sin and righteousness issue doesn't have anything to do with works.

And he's going to state this several different ways. And he's going to say the free gift is not like the offense. It's not like that which came through the one who sinned in verse 16.

The judgment which came from the one offense resulted in condemnation. But the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification. The condemnation that we're under before we come to Christ isn't a result of our actions.

It's a result of Adam's sin. We are condemned in Adam. And so we didn't have to work for our condemnation.

We didn't have to work for our sinfulness. The gift that comes through the many offenses that Christ bore on the cross results in the declaration of righteousness. That word justification in the passive there in verse 16, the last word, Paul is making the point this whole sin and righteousness equation doesn't have anything to do with works.

It has to do with position. It has to do with where God reckons you. In Adam all die.

In Christ all are made alive. And he says essentially the same thing again in verse 17. By the one man's offense death reigned through that one.

Much more those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness will reign in life through one Jesus Christ. He states it again in verse 18. Through one man's offense judgment came to all men resulting in condemnation.

In the same way through one man's righteous act free gift comes to all men resulting in justification of life. There are some subtle differences in each of these statements. We're not going to slow down and look at the nuances here.

But if you want to go back and reflect on this, some of these are talking about what happens at salvation. Some of these are talking about what happens in the justification of life that we have been discussing in chapter 3 and chapter 4 and the first part of chapter 5. And he's making distinct points about each of these and relating them all back to Adam. In verse 19 by one man's disobedience many were made sinners.

So also by one man's obedience many will be made righteous. The law entered so that offense might abound. The law defines sin and we suddenly found that under that definition there was quite a bit of sin in the world that had been undefined and unaccounted for before that.

But where sin abounded grace abounded much more so that just as sin reigned in death even so grace might reign through righteousness with a view toward eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. And this sums up the whole argument of verses 12 through 21. This last verse, this is the summary of everything Paul has just said.

And if you feel like we're kind of getting tangled up in the details and the nuances and all, this is the point of this section. Sin reigned in death. Sin came upon us without any action on our part.

We didn't have to go commit the first sin in our life to come under condemnation. We were condemned at the point of birth. We didn't work for it.

And in the same way that that came to us, irrespective of any works that we performed,

righteousness comes the same way. Paul is arguing that the sin-righteousness problem doesn't have anything to do with works. Sin reigned in death.

Even so grace may reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. God's grace makes it possible for us to be declared righteous through faith. And the purpose of that is laying hold on eternal life.

Not just getting a ticket out of the lake of fire, but laying hold on the reward and the opportunity and the blessings that come through eternal life. That's the point that he's making here in chapter 5. And again, I hope there aren't many unresolved issues or questions there that we haven't answered, but it's easy to get tangled up and to lose the flow of Paul's argument here. And that's the main thing that he's trying to get across.

He's using another technique to make it clear to us that we can't go to a works-based system to be declared righteous. We weren't declared sinful by a works-based system. We were declared sinful by God's reckoning.

And because we were born in Adam, God reckoned us sinful. And we confirmed that through our actions and through our fallen nature. And we confirmed that the justice of God and the judgment of God is accurate because as we grow up we produce the fruits of that birth in Adam.

And in the same way, when we trust Christ, both at the point of salvation and when we trust him on a daily ongoing basis, God in his righteous judgment credits us with righteousness. And that's also apart from works. Now, in the same way that the fact that God accounts us sinful, that's not the end of the story.

We wind up producing the fruits of sinfulness. Well, the same thing is going to happen in life. If we live the life of faith and God accounts us righteous, that life in Christ is also going to bear fruit.

And when we're in Adam and we're in death and we're in sin and God accounts us sinful, we produce the fruits of those things. And it's more than just a reckoning in the books. It's an experience that we have and it works itself out in our experience.

When we are in union with Christ, when we walk by faith and not by sight, when God accounts us righteous on that basis, that is also going to work itself out in our actions. But it's not the actions themselves that are the basis for us being declared righteous. They're the result of having been declared righteous.

So that's what he's trying to get across. But what I'd like to do here before we leave Chapter 5 and as we wrap up here this evening, is to just point out a couple of things here because this is a transitional place in Paul's letter. This is a transition in his argument.

And once again, we want to walk this land and we want to be familiar with this landscape and not go tunneling down under the ground and miss this. We saw and we reviewed tonight the

argument that Paul is making, the case that he's presenting when he says that justification doesn't come by what you do. The declaration that we're righteous comes from faith.

And Paul is going to move on from that point. He's not going to put a period here at the end of Chapter 5 and say, well, I got that point across and we're all done. He's making that point so that he can make another point.

And one of the ways we know this is by the construction of the first couple of verses there. We pointed out last time that this phrase when it says, therefore, having been justified by faith, that that's an aorist participle and that that precedes the action of the main verb, or in this case, the main verbs. And once we have been justified by faith, once we have fulfilled this calling that God has called us to as believers and we start walking by faith and living by faith and God declares us righteous, there are going to be some results that are given in these main verbs.

We will have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We will have access by faith into the grace in which we stand and we will rejoice in hope of the glory of God. If you diagram this sentence out, the two main verbs are we will have peace and we will rejoice in hope.

And it's interesting, most of the Greek manuscripts of these two verses don't read the way this translation reads. Depending on how familiar or how interested you are in grammar, these are not declarative statements in the best manuscripts of the Greek. This word that says we have peace is from the verb echo, E-C-H-O, which means to have and to hold.

And you can spell that two different ways. You can spell it with a short O or a long O. And the difference that that makes is if it has a short O, it's a declarative statement just like we have here. Having been justified by faith, we have peace, E-C-H-O.

That's the first person plural. We have peace with a short O in the middle. But most of the manuscripts, the vast weight of the textual evidence says that this word doesn't have a short O. It has a long O, which in Greek looks like a W, and it's E-C-H-O, which is a subjunctive.

And a subjunctive, the subjunctive mood is not a declarative. E-C-H-O with a short O is a declarative. It says if we've been justified by faith, we have peace.

That's a declaration. The subjunctive, E-C-H-O, says having been justified by faith, we may have peace. It's a subjunctive mood, which is the potential mood.

It suggests that this is not a certainty, but that there is some issue that needs to be resolved. And what most of the scholars have done when they get to this verse is they say, well, because this is a subjunctive, if we translate it that way, what kind of subjunctive could it be? Well, it must be the kind of subjunctive that's what they call a hortatory subjunctive. He's encouraging us to do this.

So he's saying, therefore, since we have been justified by faith, let us have peace with God. And

you can see the idea when you encourage somebody, let us do something. Let us have this.

Let us do that. There's an element of potential there. It's not a stated fact.

And that's what the subjunctive mood is used for. What I would submit to you, though, is that we've misunderstood this because, once again, we're trying to tie it back to salvation. And we're saying, since I was justified at the point of salvation by faith, let me now have peace with God.

And that's not what Paul is saying at all. He is saying that this is our opportunity. This is the potential that we have in a Christian life.

This is a potential subjunctive. Since we have the opportunity to live by faith and to be declared righteous by faith, let's do that. And when we do that, we can be declared we can have peace.

Having been declared righteous, we can have peace. Let's live the life of faith, and let's have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have access into this grace. And let us rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

So Paul is making his case here through these subjunctives. He starts out with the aorist participle, and he says, here's the condition on which this is based. We have to be declared righteous by faith.

And that is going to create the potential for peace with God and rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God. And so that's the point that he's making. And this is further communicated for us by the vocabulary that Paul has used in these chapters, because we're at a transition here at chapter 5. Paul in chapters 1 through 4, we saw that in chapter 1 verse 18, he starts the theological portion of the book.

And in 118 through the end of chapter 4, he's basically saying righteousness doesn't come by works, it comes by faith. If you summed up those four chapters, that's the gist. Righteousness comes through faith.

Summed up in 117, the just shall live by faith. Now in chapter 5, 7, and 8, chapters 5 through 8 are the next section of the book. He's going to assume that conclusion, and he's going to make a new point.

Since we can be justified or declared righteous by faith, since we can have that righteousness, what is the result? What's the goal of having that righteousness? Is it just an abstract on a set of books in the eternal throne room, or does it have consequences? Does it lead to something in this life? What is our goal? What is our purpose in seeking to be declared righteous by God? That's what he's going to address in these chapters. And we see this in the vocabulary. The word for faith, *pistis* or *pistuo*, P-I-S-T-E-U-O is the verb, and P-I-S-T-I-S is the noun form, faith or to trust.

That verb and noun form is found 33 times in the first four chapters. In 118 through 425, pistuo or pistis is found 33 times, and that makes sense to us. Paul is saying righteousness comes by faith.

It's by faith, it's by faith, and he says it 33 times. In this next section, chapter 5 through chapter 8, he's only going to use that word three times, and two of those times he is actually quoting himself from the first four chapters. He's referring back to what he said earlier.

He's going to remember when I said that righteousness comes by faith. So he's only going to use that word three times in the next four chapters, and the reason for that is he's made that point, and now he's going to move on and make a new point. What is that new point going to be? We're pretty clear now, I think, on the idea that righteousness comes by faith.

Well, the word for life, zoe, is also a word that has come up in Romans. We've seen it two times in the first four chapters. Zoe has occurred twice.

In chapter 5 through chapter 8, that word is going to occur 24 times, and so we're going to move from the argument that the declaration of righteousness comes through faith to the argument that when we have that righteousness, it leads to life. The fruit of that righteousness is laying hold on life, and that's why the word zoe is going to occur two dozen times in these next four chapters. Now, the word for righteousness, the one constant thread that runs all the way through these eight chapters is righteousness, and that word is used in the first four chapters 26 times.

Righteousness comes through faith. Righteousness does not come through works. In these next four chapters, it's going to occur 16 times.

What is the fruit of that righteousness? How does that righteousness work itself out in life? How do we lay hold on eternal life? That's going to be what he talks about in these next chapters. Righteousness comes through faith, and when we have that righteousness, that is the hope of glory. That's what he tells us in chapter 5, verse 2. Once we have been declared righteous, we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

That's what eternal life means to us. It's the hope of glory. It's the hope of the glory of God.

That's where Paul is going to take us now in the next chapters that we cover here, chapter 6 and chapter 7 and chapter 8. We're going to see when we get to chapter 8 that there are a lot of parallels. We're going to see that Paul opens some brackets in chapter 5 that he's going to close in chapter 8, and we're going to find some interesting details in the middle of those brackets. We'll see that there's this common Greek structure called a chiasm or a great X, which basically means you've got a series of brackets within brackets.

We're going to see some ideas that Paul has introduced in this chapter that we've seen tonight that he's going to bring back and draw to a conclusion. My encouragement is if you're feeling a little bit bewildered by some of the things that he has brought up in chapter 5, hold on to that and

wait for chapter 8, because he's going to bring those things back up and finish the thought and drive home his point. But overall, we know where he's going here.

He is encouraging us to get away from the false view that has been introduced by the enemy. Anything that Satan can introduce to distract us, to keep us from fulfilling God's plan, that's what he's going to do. And if he can do the denominations and works-oriented ministries, and as long as people are busy working, they're not going to be thinking, they're not going to be trusting, and they're not going to be seizing on to the righteousness that comes through faith.

And that's why there were so many problems in Paul's day with this great system of establishing our standing before God and before people, and in some cases before ourselves, by accomplishing something, by bringing something to pass so repeatedly that righteousness comes by what we think. Chapter 5, we've covered tonight, and in these next three chapters, he's going to talk about the life that we live in the light of that righteousness, that righteous declaration, and what that life means both now and in the eternal future. So that's what we have to look forward to.

There are many interesting things coming up in chapter 6 and chapter 7, sorting all of those out as we encounter them in our upcoming studies. But for now, we'll close in a word of prayer. Father, we thank you for the privilege that we have had to gather and to study your word.

We pray that we be called to our mind as we face the challenges that come our way through circumstances and through people and through the pressure of ours, and that we make the choices that we face, the choice between solutions and seeking to accomplish things in our own, and you to accomplish things in us through your strength. We pray that as a result, we be accounted righteous, that your goodness will be revealed in us. We ask it in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen.