

# Paul's Epistle to the Romans

LESSON X: THE BLESSINGS OF JUSTIFICATION — CHAP 5 VERSES 1-11

## A POINT OF MINOR DIVISION

Commentaries differ as to exactly where to place this chapter in relation to the whole of the book of Romans. All agree there is a division here but some place the division after this chapter (between chapters 5 and 6), some place it in the midst of this chapter (between 5:11 and 5:12), and others place it at the beginning of this chapter (between chapters 4 and 5). ***“To be sure, this whole question requires caution, lest we impose on the letter a rigidly logical, dogmatically oriented outline that Paul may never have intended. After all, he is writing a letter, not a systematic theology.”*** [Moo, *Romans*, pg 291] With that caution in mind, let's look at four arguments for placing the “minor” division at this point (from Moo, pg 292f):

- the opening phrase *“having been justified by faith”* summarizes the argument of 1:18 – 4:25 while preparing the way for a new topic to be built upon it
- there is a shift in tone: 1:18 – 4:25 has a polemic tone, as if Paul is arguing against a (mainly) Jewish viewpoint; but in 5:1 the first person plural (“we”) begins to dominate
- there is a shift in the use of key words: in chapters 1:18 – 4:25 there are 33 occurrences of *“faith”* and *“believe,”* but these words are only used 3 times in chapters 5 – 8; *“life”* and *“to live”* are used only 2 times in the first section but 24 times in chapters 5 – 8; the word *“righteousness”* and its cognates is used 26 times in 1:18 – 4:25 and 16 times in chapters 5 – 8, but how they are used is significant: in the first section they are used in connection with justification as a status obtained by faith by the sinner, but in chapters 5 – 8 the connection with faith is rare; rather, righteousness is used ethically or as an obligation of the Christian
- the final argument for connection chapter 5 with what follows rather than with what precedes is the connectivity of key words:

	5:1-11	5:12 – 8:16	8:18-39
<i>love (of God / Christ)</i>	5:5,8		8:35,39
<i>justify</i>	5:1,9	6:7	8:30 (twice), 33
<i>glory</i>	5:2	6:4	8:18,21,30 (glorify)
<i>peace</i>	5:1	8:6	
<i>hope</i>	5:2,4,5		8:20,24 (four times), 25
<i>tribulation</i>	5:3 (twice)		8:35
<i>save</i>	5:9,10		8:24
<i>endurance</i>	5:3,4		8:25

“Both 5:1-11 and 8:18-39 affirm, against the threat of tribulation and suffering, the certainty of the Christian’s final salvation because of God’s love, the work of Christ, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. This theme, the ‘hope of sharing in God’s glory’ (cf. 5:2 and 8:18,30), ‘brackets’ all of chaps. 5-8. Assurance of glory is, then, the overarching theme in this second major section of Romans. ***The verdict of justification, which Jews relegated to the day of judgment, has, Paul proclaims, already been rendered over the person who believes in Jesus. But can that verdict, ‘hidden’ to the senses, guarantee that one will be delivered from God’s wrath when it is poured out in the judgment? Yes, affirms Paul. Nothing can stand in its way: not death (5:12-21), not sin (chap. 6), not the law (chap. 7) — nothing! (chap. 8). What God has begun, having justified and reconciled us, he will bring to a triumphant conclusion, and save us from wrath.***” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 293]

## DEVELOPMENT OF PAUL’S TEACHING

As mentioned above, there appears to be brackets in this section with 5:1-11 and 8:18-39 sharing common themes. Between these “bookends” Paul focuses on the tension, conflict and stress within the Christian life caused by the sin which still influences the believer. Paul’s development might be illustrated as follows:

- A. 5:1-11 — assurance of future glory
- B. 5:12-21 — basis for this assurance is the work of Christ
- C: 6:1-23 — the problem of sin
- C’ 7:1-25 — the problem of the law
- B’ 8:1-17 — ground of assurance in the work of Christ, mediated by the Spirit
- A’ 8:18-39 — assurance of future glory

## TODAY'S LESSON IN A NUTSHELL

“In this paragraph, Paul invites us to join with him in celebrating the marvelous benefits conferred upon the justified believer: ‘the Apostle speaks as one who is extremely happy and full of joy’ (Luther); ‘it is now the believer who is speaking — in fact we might almost say, singing’ (Leenhardt). Paul highlights two blessings in particular: ‘peace with God’ (or reconciliation) and hope. The former theme occurs at the beginning (vv. 1-2a) and end (v. 11) of the paragraph while the latter is the focus of vv. 2b-10.... Paul proclaims that Christians are not only ‘justified’ — ‘acquitted’ in a legal sense — but placed into an entirely new situation, both in the present (‘reconciliation’) and in the future (‘sharing the glory of God’). Nevertheless, it is the topic of ‘hope’ that comes to dominate the paragraph — in v. 10, for instance, Paul argues from reconciliation to hope. Moreover, it is the topic of ‘hope’ and ‘glory’ that Paul elaborates on in 5:12-21 and 8:14-39, while reconciliation is mentioned without further attention or description.” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 297]

*Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: 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. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 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. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. (Rom 5:1-11 KJV)*

*Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us. You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. (Rom 5:1-11 NIV)*

*Having been declared righteous, then, by faith, we have peace toward God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have the access by the faith into this grace in which we have stood, and we boast on the hope of the glory of God. And not only [so], but we also boast in the tribulations, knowing that the tribulation doth work endurance; and the endurance, experience; and the experience, hope; and the hope doth not make ashamed, because the love of God hath been poured forth in our hearts through the Holy Spirit that hath been given to us. For in our being still ailing, Christ in due time did die for the impious; for scarcely for a righteous man will any one die, for for the good man perhaps some one also doth dare to die; and God doth commend His own love to us, that, in our being still sinners, Christ did die for us; much more, then, having been declared righteous now in his blood, we shall be saved through him from the wrath; for if, being enemies, we have been reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved in his life. And not only [so], but we are also boasting in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom now we did receive the reconciliation; (Rom 5:1-11 Young's Literal Translation)*

**v 1** — The opening phrase is transitional, summing up the central theme of chapters 1–4 as well as presenting it as a blessing experienced by his readers. In doing so, Paul presents justification as a completed, past act.

**PEACE** — not only includes the **negative** significance (*the cessation or absence of hostilities*) but the **positive** as well (*the well-being, prosperity, or salvation of the godly person*). This peace is primarily objective although there are obvious subjective elements to it as well.

**OBJECTIVE PEACE** — “The phrase εἰρήνην ἔχομεν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν (eirēnēn echomen pros ton theon), *we have peace in regard to God*, properly means, *God is at peace with us, his ὀργή (orgē, wrath) towards us is removed. It expresses, as Philippi says, ‘not a state of mind, but a relation to God.’ It is that relation which arises from the expiation of sin, and consequently justification. We are no longer his enemies, in the objective sense of the term, but are the objects of his favor.... It is peculiarly an evangelical doctrine, that pious affections are the fruit of this reconciliation to God, and not the cause of it. Paul says this peace is the result of justification by faith. He who relies on his works for justification, can have no peace. He can neither remove the displeasure of God, nor quiet the apprehension of punishment.*” [Hodge, *Romans*, pg 132]

**SUBJECTIVE PEACE** — “Resting on this righteousness, the believer beholds God at peace with him, perfectly reconciled. The belief of this satisfies his conscience, which, being purged by blood, Hebrews 9:14, he is freed from guilty fears, and

*reconciled to God. Through this sense of the pardon of sin, and of friendship with God, the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keeps his heart and mind through Christ Jesus. The maintenance of this peace, by preserving the conscience free from guilt by continual application to the blood of Christ, is the main point in the believer's walk with God and the powerful spring of His obedience. In the New Testament God is frequently denominated 'the God of peace.' The Apostle prays that the Lord Himself may give His people peace by all means, and enjoins that the peace of God should rule in the hearts of believers, to which they are also called in one body, and that they should be thankful. Peace is the fruit of the Spirit; and the kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."* [Haldane, *Romans*, pg 185] "The state of a sinner's mind is far from peace. He is often agitated, alarmed, trembling. He feels that he is alienated from God. For 'The wicked are like the troubled sea. For it never can be at rest; Whose waters cast up mire and dirt.' — Isaiah 57:20. The sinner in this state regards God as his enemy. He trembles when he thinks of his Law; fears his judgments; is alarmed when he thinks of hell. His bosom is a stranger to peace. This has been felt in all lands, alike under the thunders of the Law of Sinai among the Jews; in the pagan world; and in lands where the gospel is preached. It is the effect of an alarmed and troubled conscience. The plan of salvation by Christ reveals God as willing to be reconciled. He is ready to pardon, and to be at peace. If the sinner repents and believes, God can now consistently forgive him, and admit him to favor. It is therefore a plan by which the mind of God and of the sinner can become reconciled, or united in feeling and in purpose. The obstacles on the part of God to reconciliation, arising from his justice and Law, have been removed, and he is now willing to be at peace. The obstacles on the part of man, arising from his sin, his rebellion, and his conscious guilt, may be taken away, and he can now regard God as his friend. The effect of this plan, when the sinner embraces it, is to produce peace in his own mind. He experiences peace; a peace which the world gives not, and which the world cannot take away, Philippians 4:7; 1 Peter 1:8; John 16:22. Usually in the work of conversion to God, this peace is the first evidence that is felt of the change of heart. Before, the sinner was agitated and troubled. But often suddenly, a peace and calmness is felt, which is before unknown. The alarm subsides; the heart is calm; the fears die away, like the waves of the ocean after a storm. A sweet tranquillity visits the heart — a pure shining light, like the sunbeams that break through the opening clouds after a tempest. The views, the feelings, the desires are changed; and the bosom that was just before filled with agitation and alarm, that regarded God as its enemy, is now at peace with him, and with all the world." [Barne's *Notes on the Bible: Romans*]

**THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST** — *"Peace comes through the death of Jesus Christ. The faith, therefore, by which it is obtained, must refer to Him who made peace through the blood of His cross. He alone, as the one Mediator, can make peace between God, who is holy, and man, who is sinful.... This peace, then, is through Jesus Christ and His righteousness, which brings this quietness and assurance. He is the King of righteousness and Prince of Peace. In parting from His disciples before His death, He said, 'These things have I spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace;' and this peace He bequeathed to them. 'Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you.' When He met them again after His resurrection, His first salutation to them was, 'Peace be unto you.'"* [Haldane, *Romans*, pg 186] *"Since peace with God, or reconciliation, is one way of viewing the new relationship into which we have been put by God's justifying act in Christ, it can no more be achieved apart from Christ than can justification itself. That all God has for us is to be found 'in' or 'through' Jesus Christ our Lord is a persistent motif in Rom. 5-8: peace with God comes 'through our Lord Jesus Christ' (5:1); our boasting in God is 'through our Lord Jesus Christ' (5:11); grace reigns through righteousness, resulting in eternal life 'through Jesus Christ our Lord' (5:21); the gift of God bringing eternal life is 'in Jesus Christ our Lord' (6:23); thanks for deliverance are due to God 'through Jesus Christ our Lord' (7:25); the love of God, from which nothing can ever separate the believer is 'in Christ Jesus our Lord' (8:39). When we consider that these phrases occur in only one other verse in Romans (15:30), and that every chapter in this part of the letter concludes on this note, a very definite focus on this matter is evident here. It is well known that Romans lacks any extended christological discussion per se, but Paul's repeated insistence in these chapters that all the believer's experience of God's blessings comes only through Christ develops a very significant christological focus in its own right. **Christology, we might say, is not the topic of any part of Rom. 5-8, but it is the basis for everything in these chapters.**" [Moo, *Romans*, pg 299f]*

**THE IMPORTANCE OF FAITH** — It is important here to comment on the importance of faith in regards to peace. Objectively, peace is obtained when a person repents and places their faith in the finished work of Christ for their salvation. Several things may be commented upon concerning this salvation experience. First, the most important aspect of this transaction is not our faith but rather the object of our faith. A person may have strong faith but in the wrong object: their church, their good works, their heritage, etc. Regardless of how strong that person's faith may be, the object of their faith is wrong. In contrast to that, a person may have weak faith in the work of Christ, but that faith in the correct object (the sacrificial death of Christ for their atonement) will produce salvation. Secondly, as mentioned by some of the commentators above, there is no peace objectively unless the object of their faith is correct. If one wholly trusts in Christ, there is peace between them and God. Subjectively, faith is important to peace as well. Once a person is saved, if they do not understand the basic principles of justification, they may truly be saved yet in a condition of stress and worry. There may be no peace in their hearts because they feel unworthy, or they have been taught they may lose that salvation, or there may be sin in their life which they do not understand how to handle scripturally. Therefore they are not at peace. All of these things and more may rob a true believer of the peace God desires for their life. In this regard, we may see how important faith and correct bible doctrine is to having true faith. First is faith in scriptural matters, then peace comes to the heart. It cannot be reversed.

**v 2 — ACCESS** — not only do we have peace through Jesus Christ but we also have access. "The word προσαγωγή (prosaōgē) means either *introduction* or *access*. In Ephesians 2:18; and 3:12, it has the latter meaning, which may be retained

here. In both the other places in which it occurs, it is used of access to God.... The sense would then be, 'Through whom also we have had access to God, by faith on this grace.'" [Hodge, *Romans*, pg 133] "*Our access (tēn prosagōgēn)*. Old word from *prosagō*, to bring to, to introduce. Hence 'introduction,' 'approach.' Elsewhere in N.T. only Ephesians 2:18; 3:12." [Robertson, *Word Pictures*, vol 4 pg 355]

**GRACE BY WHICH WE STAND** — rather than making 'God' the object of 'access' as we would have expected, Paul makes the object of our access 'grace'. Not grace in general but rather the 'grace in which we stand.' This is not 'grace' by which God undeservingly gives the sinner that which he does not deserve. This 'grace' is rather the 'state' or 'realm' into which the believer is transferred. "[I]n which *grace* we stand; that is, we are firm; and immovably established. So in John 8:44, it is said of Satan, that *he stood not* in the truth, did not remain steadfast therein. 1 Corinthians 15:1, 'Wherein *ye stand*,' 2 Corinthians 1:24. **The state, therefore, into which the believer is introduced by Christ, is not a precarious one. He has not only firm ground on which to stand, but he has strength divinely imparted to enable him to keep his foothold.**" [Hodge, *Romans*, pg 133] "**Grace is here present as a field into which we have been introduced and where we stand and we should enjoy all the privileges of this grace about us.**" [Robertson, *Word Pictures*, vol 4 pg 355] "Without denying the presence of God's grace throughout human history, Paul, along with the rest of the NT (cf. John 1:17), so focuses on God's work in Christ as that act in which God's grace was decisively and finally realized that he can picture the new status of the believer as one in which grace is characteristic and dominant. While this state of grace includes our justification as a key element, the notion goes beyond justification to all that is conveyed to us by God in Christ." [Moo, *Romans*, pg 301]

**REJOICE** — *καυχώμεθα (kauchōmetha)* literally 'boast' and is so translated by Young: '*and we boast on the hope of the glory of God.*' "The word *καυχάομαι (kauchaomai)* is one of Paul's favorite terms. It properly means *to talk of one's self, to praise one's self, to boast; then to congratulate one's self, to speak of ourselves as glorious or blessed; and then to felicitate ourselves in anything as a ground of confidence and source of honor and blessedness. Men are commanded not to glory in themselves, or in men, or in the flesh, but in God alone. In this passage the word may be rendered, to rejoice, 'we rejoice in hope.' Still something more than mere joy is intended. It is a glorying, a self-felicitation and exultation, in view of the exaltation and blessedness which Christ has secured for us.*" [Hodge, *Romans*, pg 133]

**HOPE** — Paul has been considering the believer's past, now he begins to consider the believer's future. **Scriptural 'hope' is not a mere wish, e.g., "I hope I win the lottery."** **Rather the Christian hope is the firm expectation based upon the promises of God.** "Hope is a complex emotion made up of a desire for an object; and an expectation of obtaining it. Where either of these is lacking, there is not hope. Where they are mingled in improper proportions, there is not peace. But where the desire of obtaining an object is attended with an expectation of obtaining it, in proportion to that desire, there exists that peaceful, happy state of mind which we denominate hope. **And the apostle here implies that the Christian has an earnest desire for that glory; and that he has a confident expectation of obtaining it. The result of that he immediately states to be, that we are by it sustained in our afflictions.**" [Barne's *Notes on the Bible: Romans*]

**OF THE GLORY OF GOD** — "**As in 3:23, 'the glory of God' is that state of 'God-like-ness' which has been lost because of sin, and which will be restored in the last day to every Christian (cf. 8:17, 18, 21, 30). A joyful confidence in this prospect, overcoming our (proper) frustration at our present failure to be all that God would want us to be, should be the mark of every believer.**" [Moo, *Romans*, pg 302] "The word 'glory' usually means splendor, magnificence, honor; and the apostle here refers to that honor and dignity which will be conferred on the redeemed when they are raised up to the full honors of redemption; when they shall triumph in the completion of the work: and be freed from sin, and pain, and tears, and permitted to participate in the full splendors that shall encompass the throne of God in the heavens." [Barne's *Notes on the Bible: Romans*] "There is a joyful confidence expressed in these words, an assurance of ultimate salvation, which is the appropriate effect of justification. We are authorized and bound to feel sure that, having through Jesus Christ been reconciled to God, we shall certainly be saved. This is only a becoming confidence in the merit of his sacrifice, and in the sincerity of God's love. **This confidence is not founded on ourselves, neither on the preposterous idea that we deserve the favor of God, nor the equally preposterous idea that we have in ourselves strength to persevere in faith or obedience. Our confidence is solely on the merit of Christ, and the gratuitous and infinite love of God.**" [Hodge, *Romans*, pg 133f]

**v 3a — REJOICE IN TRIBULATIONS** — "As Paul in the parallel 8:18-30 contrasts the 'glory that will be revealed in us' with 'present sufferings' (v. 18), so he here turns quickly from our boasting in the hope of God's glory to our boasting in 'tribulations.' As Gifford puts it, '**No sooner has the Apostle pointed to "the glory of God," as a light shining afar to cheer the believer on his course, than he thinks of the contrast between that bright distance and the darkness that lies around him here.**' It is probably to head off criticism of his teaching that Paul introduces the 'problem' of suffering. For (particularly) Jewish objectors would be likely to question Paul sharply about his affirmation that the Christian is enjoying 'peace with God' when that same Christian is facing illness, persecution, and difficulties of all kinds. Indeed, Christians themselves, then as today, were surely wondering about the reality of these blessings in the face of suffering. Characteristically, Paul takes an offensive posture. **Not only do sufferings not overthrow the reality of these blessings, but they are themselves occasions for joyful boasting! The believer should boast 'not only' in the hope of the glory of God 'but also' in afflictions. This means not merely that we are to exult 'in the midst of' afflictions but that we are to exult 'in' the afflictions themselves: that is, to view them as a basis for further confidence in our redeemed status.**" [Moo, *Romans*, pg 302] "Not only do we rejoice in this hope of future glory, but we glory



in tribulations also. *Since our relation to God is changed, the relation of all things to us is changed. Afflictions, which before were the expressions of God's displeasure, are now the benevolent and beneficent manifestations of his love. And instead of being inconsistent with our filial relation to him, they serve to prove that he regards and loves us as his children; Romans 8:18; Hebrews 12:6. Tribulations, therefore, although for the present not joyous, but grievous, become to the believer matter of joy and thankfulness. The words καυχώμεθα ἐν ταῖς θλίψεσιν (kauchōmetha en tais thlipsesin) do not mean that we glory in the midst of afflictions, but on account of them. They are themselves the matter or ground of the glorying.* So the Jews are said to glory in the law, others glory in men, the believer glories in the Lord; so constantly. Afflictions themselves are to the Christian a ground of glorying; he feels them to be an honor and a blessing. This is a sentiment often expressed in the word of God. Our Lord says, 'Blessed are they who mourn;' 'Blessed are the persecuted;' 'Blessed are ye when men shall revile you.' He calls on his suffering disciples to rejoice and be exceeding glad when they are afflicted. Matthew 5:4, 10-12. The apostles departed from the Jewish council, 'rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ's name.' Acts 5:41. Peter calls upon Christians to rejoice when they are partakers of Christ's sufferings, and pronounces them happy when they are reproached for his sake. 1 Peter 4:13, 14. And Paul says, 'Most gladly therefore will I glory in (on account of) my infirmities,' (i.e. my sufferings.) 'I take pleasure,' he says, 'in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake.' 2 Corinthians 12:9, 10. *This is not irrational or fanatical. Christians do not glory in suffering, as such, or for its own sake, but as the Bible teaches, 1. Because they consider it an honor to suffer for Christ. 2. Because they rejoice in being the occasion of manifesting his power in their support and deliverance; and, 3. Because suffering is made the means of their own sanctification and preparation for usefulness here, and for heaven hereafter.*" [Hodge, *Romans*, pg 134] "Not only does the believer rejoice in hope of future glory, but he rejoices even in tribulations. *This rejoicing, however, is not in tribulations considered in themselves, but in their effects. It is only the knowledge of the effects of afflictions, and of their being appointed by his heavenly Father, that enables the Christian to rejoice in them. Being in themselves an evil, and not joyous but grievous, they would not otherwise be a matter of rejoicing, but of sorrow. But viewed as proceeding from his heavenly Father's love, Hebrews 12:6; Revelation 3:19, they are so far from depriving him of his joy, that they tend to increase it.* The way to the cross was to his Savior the way to the crown, and he knows that through much tribulation he must enter into the kingdom of God, Acts 14:22. The greatest tribulations are among those things that work together for his good. God comforts him in the midst of his sorrows, 2 Corinthians 1:4. Tribulation, even death itself, which is numbered among his privileges, 1 Corinthians 3:22, shall not separate him from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The Apostle Peter addresses believers as greatly rejoicing in the hope of salvation, though now, if need be, they are in heaviness through manifold trials." [Haldane, *Romans*, pg 188] "*It is one thing to submit to or endure tribulations without complaint, but it is another to find ground of glorying in the midst of them as Paul exhorts here.*" [Robertson, *Word Pictures*, vol 4 pg 356]

**KNOWING** — "Being assured of this. Paul's assurance might have arisen from reasoning on the nature of religion, and its tendency to produce comfort; or it is more probable that he was speaking here the language of his own experience. He had found it to be so. *This was written near the close of his life, and it states the personal experience of a man who endured, perhaps, as much as anyone ever did, in attempting to spread the gospel; and far more than commonly falls to the lot of mankind. Yet he, like all other Christians, could leave his deliberate testimony to the fact that Christianity was sufficient to sustain the soul in its severest trials;* see 2 Corinthians 1:3-6; 11:24-29; 12:9,10." [Barne's *Notes on the Bible: Romans*]

**WORKETH** — "Produces; the effect of afflictions on the minds of Christians is to make them patient. *Sinners are irritated and troubled by them; they complain, and become more and more obstinate and rebellious. They have no sources of consolation; they deem God a hard master; and they become fretful and rebellions just in proportion to the depth and continuance of their trials. But in the mind of a Christian, who regards his Father's hand in it; who sees that he deserves no mercy; who has confidence in the wisdom and goodness of God; who feels that it is necessary for his own good to be afflicted; and who experiences its happy, subduing, and mild effect in restraining his sinful passions, and in weaning him from the world the effect is to produce patience. Accordingly, it will usually be found that those Christians who are longest and most severely afflicted are the most patient. Year after year of suffering produces increased peace and calmness of soul; and at the end of his course the Christian is more willing to be afflicted, and bears his afflictions more calmly, than at the beginning. He who on earth was most afflicted was the most patient of all sufferers; and not less patient when he was 'led as a lamb to the slaughter,' than when he experienced the first trial in his great work.*" [Barne's *Notes on the Bible: Romans*]

**v 3b-4 — A SEQUENCE OF GROWTH** — What follows is a sequence in which suffering inaugurates a chain of events. Paul provides such a list to help the believer understand the purposes of tribulations and trials in this life. Similar sequences may be found in 1 Peter 1:6b-7 and James 1:2-4.

	<i>translations</i>	<i>explanation / comments</i>
θλίψις (thlipsis)	tribulations, sufferings	<i>These tribulations are not confined to only those which occur due to our profession of faith in Christ; rather, these tribulations are all-inclusive.</i> "Indeed, in a certain sense, all sufferings are 'on behalf of Christ.' This is so because all the evil that the Christian experiences reflects the conflict between 'this age,' dominated by Satan, and 'the age to come,' to which the Christian has been transferred by faith. <i>All sufferings betrays the presence of the enemy and involves attacks on our relationship to Christ. If met with doubt in God's goodness and</i>

		<i>promise, or bitterness toward others, or despair and even resignation, these sufferings can bring spiritual defeat to the believer. But if met with the attitude of ‘confidence and rejoicing’ that Paul encourages here, these sufferings will produce those valuable spiritual qualities that Paul lists in vv. 3b-4.” [Moo, Romans, pg 303] As Pastor Nile Fisher once said, “A Christian is saved, then spends the rest of his life learning Romans 8:28.”</i>
ὑπομονή (hupomonē)	patience, endurance, perseverance	<i>“Spiritual fortitude that bears up under, and is, indeed, made even stronger by, suffering. It suggests that ‘stick-to-itiveness’ which is required if the word of God is to produce fruit in us and that long-distance, marathoner’s endurance which will enable us to run the race set before us right to the finish line.” [Moo, Romans, pg 303] “Christians should be well instructed on this point, and should have it continually in their eye: their happiness is greatly concerned in it. If they forget the end and tendency of afflictions, they will murmur like the Israelites. Patience is a habit of endurance; and Christian patience implies submission to the will of God. Paul says here that affliction worketh patience, and James 1:3, says that the trying of faith worketh patience. This proves that the afflictions of a Christian are intended as a trial of his faith. What by the one Apostle is called tribulation, is by the other called trial of faith. The effect of affliction is patience, a grace which is so necessary, as we are all naturally impatient and unwilling to submit unreservedly to the dispensations of God. Patience gives occasion to the exercise of the graces of the Spirit, and of submission under afflictions to the will of God.” [Haldane, Romans, pg 188f]</i>
δοκιμή (dokimē)	experience, character	<i>If our attitude is right, our patience produces tested character, tried integrity, a state of mind which has stood the test. Job sensed its worth, saying in the midst of his troubles, “When he has tried me, I shall come forth as gold” (Job 23:10). “The word rendered ‘experience’ means trial, testing, or that thorough examination by which we ascertain the quality or nature of a thing, as when we test a metal by fire, or in any other way, to ascertain that it is genuine. It also means approbations, or the result of such a trial; the being approved, and accepted as the effect of a trying process. <b>The meaning is, that long afflictions borne patiently show a Christian what he is; they test his religion, and prove that it is genuine. Afflictions are often sent for this purpose, and patience in the midst of them shows that the religion which can sustain them is from God.</b>” [Barne’s Notes on the Bible: Romans]</i>
ἐλπίδα (elpida)	hope	<i>A Christian who responds to sufferings with a proper attitude will find hope has been strengthened. “Hope, like a muscle, will not be strong if it goes unused. It is in suffering that we must exercise with deliberation and fortitude our hope, and the constant reaffirmation of hope in the midst of apparently ‘hopeless’ circumstances will bring ever-deeper conviction of the reality and certainty of that for which we hope.” [Moo, Romans, pg 303f] <b>“The result of such long trial is to produce hope. They show that religion is genuine; that it is from God; and not only so, but they direct the mind onward to another world; and sustain the soul by the prospect of a glorious immortality there.”</b> [Barne’s Notes on the Bible: Romans] “For we thus calculate, that he who has supported us in the past will support us in those which may yet come; and as we have received so much spiritual profiting by means of the sufferings through which we have already passed, we may profit equally by those which are yet to come: and this hope prevents us from dreading coming trials; we receive them as means of grace, and find that all things work together for good to them that love God.” [Clarke, Romans]</i>

**v 5 — HINGE VERSE** — “This verse makes clear that ‘hope’ is the focal point of 5:1-11. It functions as a ‘hinge’ in the paragraph (Godet), attached on the one side to v. 2b, which v. 5a reiterates and expands, and on the other side to vv. 6-10, which v. 5b introduces. We can rejoice in hope, knowing it will not disappoint us, because of the ‘amazing grace’ of God’s love (vv. 5b-8) and because of the decisive and final significance of what God has done for us in Christ (vv. 9-10).” [Moo, Romans, pg 304]

**THE SECURITY OF TRUSTING IN GOD** — Paul’s comments here is reminiscent of OT passages; e.g.,

*“In you our fathers put their trust; they trusted and you delivered them. They cried to you and were saved; in you they trusted and were not disappointed.” (Ps 22:4,5 NIV)*

*“In you I trust, O my God. Do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me. No one whose hope is in you will ever be put to shame ... Guard my life and rescue me; let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.” (Ps 25:2, 3a, 20 NIV)*

*“So this is what the Sovereign LORD says: See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed.” (Isa 28:16 NIV)*

**What Paul is saying is those who trust in the finished work of Christ for our redemption will not be ‘put to shame,’ i.e., the foundation we have built upon is sure and will not prove inadequate, it will not put us to the shame of disappointment. “That**

*is, this hope will not disappoint, or deceive. When we hope for an object which we do not obtain, we are conscious of disappointment; perhaps sometimes of a feeling of shame. But the apostle says that the Christian hope is such that it will be fulfilled; it will not disappoint; what we hope for we shall certainly obtain.*” [Barne’s Notes on the Bible: Romans]

**THE REASON FOR OUR SECURITY** — “The last clause of the verse is causal: Christians are confident that they will not be put to shame ‘because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.’ ... *The confidence we have for the day of judgment is not based only on our intellectual recognition of the fact of God’s love, or even only on the demonstration of God’s love on the cross (although that is important; cf. vv. 6-8), but also on the inner, subjective certainty that God does love us.*” [Moo, Romans, pg 304] Note this is not our love for God but rather his love for us.

**POURED OUT** — ἐκκέχυται (ekkechutai), from ἐκχύνω (ekchunō) denotes an abundant, extravagant effusion: “*He does not say ‘given’ but ‘shed abroad in our hearts,’ so showing the profusion of it.*” [Chrysostom; q.v. Moo, Romans, pg 304] *Two things are being said here: God’s love has been poured into our hearts in the past, and this love is now within us. This love is conveyed to our senses by the Holy Spirit who resides in every believer.* “*To shed abroad, (it has been, and continues to be shed abroad) is to communicate abundantly, and hence to evince clearly, Acts 2:17, 10:45; Titus 3:6.*” [Hodge, Romans, pg 135] “This word is properly applied to water, or to any other liquid that is poured out, or diffused. It is used also to denote imparting, or communicating freely or abundantly, and is thus expressive of the influence of the Holy Spirit poured down, or abundantly imparted to people; Acts 10:45. Here it means that love toward God is copiously or abundantly given to a Christian; his heart is conscious of high and abundant love to God, and by this he is sustained in his afflictions.” [Barne’s Notes on the Bible: Romans]

**PAUL’S FIRST MENTION OF GOD’S LOVE** — This verse is the first time in Romans that Paul mentions the love of God. “Paul stresses that God’s love for us is active — it is a love that gives to us and takes possession of us (cf., e.g., 2 Cor 5:14: ‘the love of Christ controls us’), and which can stand for all that God has done and will do for us (cf. 8:35: ‘Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?’). Paul’s language reflects prophetic descriptions of the eschatological gift of God’s Spirit as part of the inauguration of the New Covenant (Joel 2:28; Jer 31:31-34; Ezek 36:25-27). That covenant promises a new and permanent relationship between God and his people, a relationship in which our ‘sins are remembered no more’ (Jer. 31:34) and in which we are given a hope that involves ‘being changed into Christ’s likeness from one degree of glory to another’ (2 Cor 3:12-18).” [Moo, Romans, pg 305]

**V 6 — THE NATURE OF THE LOVE OF GOD** — “Verses 6-8 form a single argument that demonstrates the abundant and absolute nature of God’s love for us. We may summarize Paul’s argument (making explicit some points that are implicit) as follows:

- a. Human love, at its best, will motivate a person to give his or her life for a truly ‘good’ person (v. 7);
- b. Christ, sent by God, died, not for ‘righteous’ people, or even for ‘good’ people, but for rebellious and undeserving people (v. 6);
- c. Therefore: God’s love is far greater in its magnitude and dependability than even the greatest human love (v. 8).” [Moo, Romans, pg 305f]

**CHRIST DIED FOR GODLESS AND WEAK PEOPLE** — Verse 6 is clear that the human beings Christ died for are both godless and weak. ‘Weak’ is not always negative but here designates ‘total incapacity for good.’ *Paul’s point therefore is God’s love came to us when we were anti-God and utterly helpless. “The scriptures represent the love of God to sinners as independent of the work of Christ, and anterior to it... The weakness here intended is spiritual weakness, destitution of strength for what is spiritually good, a weakness arising from, and consisting in sinfulness.* The same idea, therefore, is expressed in ver. 8, by the words, *when we were yet sinners.* What, in Isaiah 53:4, is expressed by the LXX. in the words *he bears our sins,* is, in Matthew 8:17, expressed by saying, *he took our weaknesses.*” [Hodge, Romans, pg 136]

**AT THE RIGHT TIME** — Commentators differ as to what Paul means by this comment. Paul may have meant Christ came at the right time in history to die for his people and for the proclamation of the gospel (cf. Gal 4:4). Paul may have meant it was the right time because if Christ had not come when he did, the wrath of God would have fallen upon mankind (cf. Godet). Murray states it as ‘the culminating, eschatological time of God’s intervention in Christ.’ Moo takes it in a less theological sense, ‘Christ died for the ungodly just at that very time when we were weak.’ The differences between these suggestions are unimportant to Paul’s main meaning.

**THE TRIUNE GOD INVOLVED IN OUR REDEMPTION** — While not the main thrust, it is important to note all three Divine Persons of the trinity is involved in bringing those God loves to full salvation. “Paul never thinks of God’s love for us apart from the cross, and he never thinks of Christ’s dying for us apart from the Father’s giving of the Son (cf. Rom 3:25).” [Moo, Romans, pg 307] Add to this Paul’s reference to the Holy Spirit in v. 5 and we have the entire Trinity.

**V7 — THE TENDENCY TO OVER-INTERPRET** — As we think of v. 7 we might be tempted to draw distinctions between Paul’s use of ‘righteous man’ vs. ‘good man,’ or ‘rarely’ vs. ‘perhaps someone might possibly.’ Paul’s point is clear without making such distinctions. Paul is accentuating the love of God by reminding us of what we might consider the pinnacle of human love: giving one’s life for another — a spouse, our children or even for a combat buddy. “*The design of this verse and the following is, to illustrate the great love of God by comparing it with what man was willing to do. ‘It is an unusual occurrence,*

*an event which is all that we can hope for from the highest human benevolence and the purest friendship, that one would be willing to die for a good man. There are none who would be willing to die for a man who was seeking to do us injury, to calumniate our character, to destroy our happiness or our property. But Christ was willing to die for bitter foes.*” [Barne’s Notes on the Bible: Romans]

**v 8** — In contrast to human love is the love of God as evidenced in the death of Christ.

**COMMENDS** — συνίστημι (sunistēmi) = ‘demonstrates, proves, exhibits his love in this unusual and remarkable manner.’  
*“What renders the love of God so peculiarly conspicuous, is his sending his Son to die, not for the good, nor even for the righteous, but for sinners, for those who were deserving of wrath instead of love.”* [Hodge, Romans, pg 138]

**CHRIST DIED FOR US** — “In our stead; to save us from death. He took our place; and by dying himself on the cross, saved us from dying eternally in hell.” [Barne’s Notes on the Bible: Romans]

**v 9 — PARALLEL STATEMENTS** — “In vv. 9-10, Paul gathers together the main pieces of vv. 1-8 into a synthesis that reiterates and expands the central point of the paragraph as a whole: the certainty of Christian hope (vv. 2b, 5a). The two verses are parallel statements of the same point, as the following layout shows:

v. 9	v. 10
	<i>if, while we were enemies,</i>
<i>having now been justified</i>	<i>we were reconciled to God</i>
<i>through his death</i>	<i>through the death of his Son</i>
<i>how much more</i>	<i>how much more</i>
	<i>being reconciled</i>
<i>will we be saved</i>	<i>will we be saved</i>
<i>from wrath</i>	
<i>through him</i>	<i>through his life</i>

The argument in each of the verses takes the form of a popular logical sequence, called by the rabbis *qal wayyōmer* (‘light and heavy’) and in the wester tradition *a minori ad maius* (‘from the minor to the major’). *In this case, however, the ‘how much more’ in Paul’s transition suggests that the argument proceeds from the ‘major’ to the ‘minor’: if God has already done the most difficult thing – reconcile and justify unworthy sinners — how much more can he be depended on to accomplish the ‘easier’ thing — save from eschatological wrath those who have been brought into such relationship with him.*” [Moo, Romans, pg 309f]

**BEING JUSTIFIED** — Paul’s use here points to a past declaration of acquittal pronounced over the sinner with a continuing ‘just’ status.

**FUTURE WRATH** — “The justified status conveyed to the believer on the basis of Christ’s sacrificial death issues in salvation from wrath. The temporal element in the verse makes clear that wrath refers here to eschatological judgment (cf. 2:5). ‘We will be saved’ is, then, a genuine temporal future. *As he typically does, Paul uses salvation language to depict the final deliverance of the believer from sin, death, and judgment. Salvation, accomplished in Christ and the believer’s appropriation of Christ, is finally realized only in the last day.* This double temporal conception is typical of NT teaching, which insists on the absolute and final nature of the believer’s acceptance of salvation while also maintaining that salvation is not complete until the body is redeemed and glorified (cf. Rom 8:23; Phil 3:21). It is precisely the tension set up by this ‘already — not yet’ perspective that gives rise to the need to proclaim the unbreakable connection between the believer’s justification and his or her salvation from the wrath of God still to be poured out in the last day.” [Moo, Romans, pg 310f]

**v 10 — RECONCILIATION** — Since this verse is the parallel of the preceding, the differences between the two verses are significant. One of the differences is Paul’s usage of ‘justified’ in v. 9 which parallels ‘reconciled’ in v. 10. *“Justification language is legal, law-court language, picturing the believer being declared innocent by the judge. Reconciliation language, on the other hand, comes from the world of personal relationships. ‘To reconcile’ means to bring together, or make peace between, two estranged or hostile parties* (cf. 1 Cor 7:11). The language of reconciliation is seldom used in other religions because the relationship between human beings and the deity is not conceived there in the personal categories for which the language is appropriate. Reconciliation in Paul has two aspects, or ‘moments’: the accomplishment of reconciliation through Christ on the cross (cf. 2 Cor 5:19: ‘in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself’) and the acceptance of that completed work by the believer (cf. 2 Cor 5:20b: ‘We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God’). Naturally, while the focus can be on one of these moments or the other, the reconciling activity of God is ultimately one act; and in the present verse the complete process is in view.” [Moo, Romans, pg 311f]

**WE WERE GOD’S ENEMIES** — The sinner is represented as the enemy of God several times throughout this paragraph and is



supported elsewhere; e.g., Rom 8:7; Eph 2:16; James 4:4; John 15:18,24; 17:14; Rom 1:30. *“We have peace with God. — This shows that all men, till they are justified, are at war with God, and that He is at war with them. But when they are justified by faith, the wrath of God, which abideth on those who believe not on His Son, John 3:36, is turned away, and they cease to be enemies to God.”* [Haldane, *Romans*, pg 185] This is more than we were simply sinners, rebellious towards God, violating his laws and putting other gods in his place. *“But, as Paul has repeatedly affirmed in this letter (cf. 1:18; 3:25), God is also ‘hostile’ towards us — our sins have justly incurred his wrath, which stands as a sentence over us (1:19-32), to be climactically carried out on the day of judgment (2:5). Probably, then, the ‘enmity’ to which Paul refers here includes God’s hostility toward human beings as well as human beings’ hostility toward God. Outside of Christ, people are in a situation of ‘enmity’ with God; and in reconciliation, it is that status, or relationship, that changes: we go from being God’s ‘enemies’ to being his ‘children’ (cf. Rom 8:14-17).”* [Moo, *Romans*, pg 312]

**SAVED BY HIS LIFE** — Paul has spoken of our justification and reconciliation through the blood / death, but it is unusual to speak of also being saved ‘by his life.’ *“If we were reconciled by His death, much more clear is it that we shall be saved by His life. Some find a difficulty in this, as if it implied that the atonement and price of redemption were not complete at the death of Christ. But the Apostle is not speaking on that point. He is speaking of the security of the believer from any danger, by Christ as alive. The meaning is, we shall be saved by Him as existing alive, or as living, Hebrews 7:25. We need Christ raised from the dead to intercede for our daily transgressions, and to save us from wrath. The efficacy of the death and the intercession of Jesus Christ have the same objects and the same extent, John 17:9. He intercedes for all those for whom He died. ‘It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us,’ Romans 8:34.”* [Haldane, *Romans*, pg 197] *“We shall be saved by his life.* This rather unusual mode of expression was doubtless adopted for the sake of its correspondence to the words, *by his death*, in the preceding clause, and is a striking example of Paul’s fondness for such antithetical constructions; see chap. 4:25; Galatians 3:3; 2 Corinthians 3:6. The meaning is obvious: ‘If while we were enemies, we were restored to the favor of God by the death of his Son, the fact that he lives will certainly secure our final salvation.’ (1) His life is a pledge and security for the life of all his people; see John 14:19, ‘Because I live, ye shall live also;’ Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 15:23. (2) He is able to save to the uttermost, ‘because he ever lives to make intercession for us,’ Hebrews 7:25, etc. (3) At his resurrection, all power in heaven and earth was committed to his hands, Matthew 28:18; and this power he exercises for the salvation of his people; Ephesians 1:22, ‘He is head over all things, for the benefit of his Church;’ Revelation 1:18; Hebrews 2:10; 1 Corinthians 15:25, etc. *There is, therefore, most abundant ground for confidence for the final blessedness of believers, not only in the amazing love of God, by which, though sinners and enemies, they have been justified and reconciled by the death of his Son, but also in the consideration that this same Savior that died for them still lives, and ever lives to sanctify, protect, and save them.”* [Hodge, *Romans*, pg 140]

**v 11 — SUMMARY VERSE** — *“This verse wraps up the section by rehearsing many of its key elements: ‘boasting / rejoicing’ (cf. vv. 2-3); the present experience of reconciliation with God (vv. 1b, 10); and, most of all, the fact that this boasting, and this reconciliation, are ‘through our Lord Jesus Christ’ (vv. 1, 2, 6-8, 9, 10).”* [Moo, *Romans*, pg 312f] *“We now feel that God is reconciled to us, and we are reconciled to him: the enmity is removed from our souls; and He, for Christ’s sake, through whom we have received the atonement, the reconciliation, has remitted the wrath, the punishment which we deserved: and now, through this reconciliation, we expect an eternal glory.... God is reconciled to us, and we are reconciled to him by the death of his Son; and thus there is a glorious change from enmity to friendship; and we can exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received this reconciliation. Though boasting is forbidden to a Jew, because his is a false confidence, yet boasting is enjoined to a Christian, to one reconciled to God; for, his boasting is only in that reconciliation, and the endless mercy by which it is procured. So he that glorieth (boasteth) must glory in the Lord.”* [Clarke, *Romans*]