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What We All Need – Peace With God

Romans 5:1-11

Introduction

1. I want to share with you a statement made 32 years ago by a British theologian named John Stott which is just as true today as the day he wrote it.

   "The pursuit of peace is a universal human obsession, whether it is international, industrial, domestic or personal peace."

2. In the international scene we are constantly reminded of Jesus statement, "You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars . . . nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom" (Matthew 24:6,7, NASB95).
3. On the industrial front we hear of strikes and walkouts for various reasons.
4. Many of us know of families who have lost homes, incomes, even marriages that are teetering on the brink of divorce.
5. Personally, there are those who struggle with physical and mental health.
6. I am reminded of a line from a song by the Canadian singer, Anne Murray, written over 40 years ago, "Sure could use a little good news today."
7. There is a peace which is more fundamental than all of these, a peace which all of us need — "peace with God."
8. Prior to our obedience to the gospel those of us who are now Christians were in the same boat as everyone else.
9. Because of our sins, we were destined to face the wrath of God.

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   a. In the beginning of this letter, the apostle Paul spoke of this wrath and indicated that it was directed against those "who suppress the truth in unrighteousness," (Romans 1:18b, NASB95)

> "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness," (Romans 1:18, NASB95)

b. In chapter 2, he addressed those who, because of "stubbornness and [an] unrepentant heart" were "storing up" for themselves "wrath" that is to come "in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Romans 2:5).

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c. In the second chapter of his letter to the Christians in Ephesus, the apostle Paul told them that prior to their salvation, they were "dead in [their] trespasses and sins" and that because they had previously indulged in "the desires of the flesh and of the mind" they were "by nature children of wrath" (Ephesians 2:1, 3).

10. In each of these passages we see that it is God's wrath which we were destined to experience because of our sins.
11. However, as Christians, we now have what we truly need, "peace with God."
12. This peace brings with it some added blessings, things in which we can rejoice.
13. This morning, I would like for us to look at these blessings and how they make our peace even more reassuring.

[First, our peace with God allows us to rejoice in . . .]

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I. Our Hope of the Glory of God

> "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God." (Romans 5:1–2, NASB95)

A. ALREADY, BRIEF GLIMPSES OF GOD'S GLORY ARE BEING REVEALED

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1. In the heavens and the earth (Psalm 19:1).

   "The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands." (Psalm 19:1, NASB95)

2. Through the Word become flesh (John 1:14).

   "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14, NASB95)

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3. By Jesus' death and resurrection (John 17:1-2).

   "Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You, even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life." (John 17:1–2, NASB95)

B. THE COMPLETE REVELATION OF GOD'S GLORY IS COMING

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1. One day the curtain will be raised and God will display His glory in all its brilliance.
2. Our Lord will Himself will appear "in clouds with great power and glory" (Mark 13:26).
3. Not only will we see His glory, but we will be changed into it (1 John 3:2)

   "We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is." (1 John 3:2, NASB95)

4. Even "the creation itself . . . will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God" (Romans 8:21, NASB95).

C. EVERY CHRISTIAN'S HOPE

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1. You and I were created in "the image and glory of God" (1 Corinthians 11:7).
2. However, as Paul wrote earlier, in Romans 3:23, we "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."
2. Now, however, because of what Jesus did for us on the cross, we as Christians eagerly anticipate the day when we will share Christ's glory.
3. In his letter to the saints in Colosse, Paul wrote, "When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory" (Colossians 3:4, NASB95).
4. In his letter to the brethren in Corinth, he wrote that the "momentary, light affliction" which we experience in this life, "is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison" (2 Corinthians 4:17, NASB95).

❑ All of this has to do with *the glory of God* and is therefore the object of our hope.

[Secondly, our peace with God makes it possible for us to . . .

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II. Rejoice In Our Tribulations

"And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us." (Romans 5:3–5, NASB95)

A. TRIBULATION = OPPRESSION AND AFFLICTION

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1. Not the "trials and tribulations" of daily life:
   a. Aches and pains

b. Fears and frustrations

c. Deprivations and disappointments

2. This is the opposition and persecution we experience because we live in a world that is hostile toward God and His saints.

a. ". . . In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33, NASB95)

b. "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."" (Acts 14:22, NASB95)

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B. WHY REJOICE IN OUR TRIBULATIONS

1. Suffering is the one and only path to glory.

a. It was true of our Lord, it is true for us.

b. "The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him." (Romans 8:16–17, NASB95)

2. Suffering for Christ's sake leads us to maturity.

a. It is productive, but only if we respond to it positively, not with anger or bitterness.

b. Paul lists the character building qualities developed by our suffering:

1) Perseverance

"Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." (James 1:2–4, NASB95)

2) Proven character

3) Hope

3. Our suffering assures us of God's love.
    a. After telling us that our tribulation results in hope, he states that this "hope does not disappoint" (v. 5a).
    b. The reason this hope does not disappoint is "because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (v. 5b)
    c. The ultimate foundation upon which our hope of glory rests is the steadfast love of God.
    d. Our hope will never let us down because God will never let us down.
    e. His love will never give up.

[Finally, our peace with God allows us to rejoice . . .]

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III. In God Himself

A. BECAUSE OF WHO WE WERE

"For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die." (Romans 5:6–7, NASB95)

1. "Helpless" — powerless, we had no strength of our own to save ourselves
2. "Ungodly"
    a. Rebellious against God.
    b. Whatever characteristics you might use to describe God, we were the opposite.

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"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were

enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." (Romans 5:8–10, NASB95)

3. "Sinners"
   a. People who had departed from the way of righteousness
   b. Those who had fallen short of God's glory
   c. Individuals who had missed the target
4. "Enemies"
   a. We held a deep-seated hostility toward God.
   b. Paul wrote that "the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God . . . it is not even able to do so" (Romans 8:7).

❑ People would try to help a "righteous man" and a "good man" but ungodly sinners and those who are openly hostile toward God even the best of us tend to avoid.

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B. BECAUSE OF WHAT HE DID FOR US

1. "God demonstrates His own love toward us" in the midst of our sin and hostility.
2. He sent His only Son to die for us (v. 6)
3. He "justified" us "by His [Christ's] blood" (v. 9).
3. He saved us from His own wrath through Jesus Christ (v. 9b).
4. He "reconciled" us to Himself "through the death of His Son" (v. 10a).
5. Because we "[have] been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (v. 10b)
   a. Because He lives, we too shall live.
   b. As the apostle Paul wrote, "we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Corinthians 5:1, NASB95).

Conclusion

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1. As we conclude this morning, there is one question I want you to consider: "Do you have peace with God?"
2. If you have peace with God, you can rejoice . . .
   a. In whatever tribulations which come your way.
   b. In the hope of the glory which you will experience on the last day.
   c. In God Himself who loved you so much that He sent His Son to die for you.
3. If you do not have peace with God this morning, please know that it is found in only one source — Jesus Christ our Lord!