

Booklet Three
The Hope of Salvation
(Assurance of the Gospel)
Part 1

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| <i>May 27th</i> | <i>Romans 5:1-11</i> | <i>Hope</i> |
| <i>June 3rd</i> | <i>Romans 5:12-21</i> | <i>Eternal Life</i> |
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"²¹ But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²² This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe."

Romans 2:21-22

Romans 5:1-11

Hope

Martin Luther said, “Everything done in the world is done by hope.” I think he was on to something. Hope is one of the most powerful human motivators. The question is where does true hope come from? The reality in our world is that hope is many times reduced to a wish or a dream. For many these wishes and dreams are dashed and crushed under the weight of disappointments and failures. In this passage Paul point us to infinite hope. A Hope that cannot be crushed, lost, or taken away by any circumstance in life. This hope is found in the glory of God (v.2). Martin Luther King Jr. once said, “We must accept finite disappointments, but never lose infinite hope”. Paul speaks of this infinite hope when he says, “And hope does not put us to shame because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us”. This is the kind of hope that creates life giving movement in our world!

1. In verses 1-2 of Chapter 5 Paul builds on the power of faith in Jesus to make us justified (righteous) before God. This faith in Jesus gives us peace with God. How would you describe peace? How does peace affect our daily lives? What would it be like to live without peace?
2. In verse 2 Paul say’s he “boast in the hope of the glory of God”. How does this definition of hope differ from the worlds definition? How would you say the world defines hope? How does the object of our hope affect the nature of our hope? How would you define hope as a Christian?
3. The worlds hope is affected by circumstances. In verses 3-4 Paul says suffering does not diminish our godly hope rather it strengthens it. How is this possible? What are some of the things listed in verse 3-4 that you have seen developed through suffering in your life? Share a story of how suffering has produced character and infinite hope in your life?
4. God’s love frees us from shame. In verses 5-8 Paul says godly hope allows us to know the love of God. How does God demonstrate love to us? What is so radical about this love? How does knowing this love produce hope in our lives? In your group make the connections between, peace, hope and love? How does Jesus make all these 3 things possible? How do these three things make the justification (in Christ) of God tangible and experienced in our lives? Describe times in your lives where you have experienced these 3 things in Jesus and times where you have not? What makes the difference?
5. In verses 9-11 Paul builds on his understanding of justification in Jesus. In your group discuss a definition of justification based on your study of Romans 3-5. How would you define justification?
6. Part of this definition is found in the word “reconciliation” (v.11). This is a relational word that helps describe peace, hope, and love. Describe a time in your life where you were estranged from a relationship but then your friendship was restored? How did it happen and how did that restored relationship bring peace and love into your life? If human relationships affect us so much how much more our relationship with God our creator and Savior! How is this reconciliation with God good news for you today?

Romans 5:12-21

Eternal Life

Living happily ever after is a popular imaginative conclusion to a great story full of danger and climax and resolution. The human heart longs for every story to end with happily ever after, but as we get older we get cynical about this possibility. Real life does not always seem to bring resolution to the real problems we face in our world. Paul discusses this desire and longing for happily ever after in every human heart with the reality of human brokenness and confusion. God's story in the Bible illustrates this reality with two men, Adam and Jesus Christ. In one sense we are all Adam. We have run from God and hidden from Him and covered ourselves with fig leaves to hide our shame and guilt from sin. The good news is that there is another story in Jesus Christ that provides a resolution to our condition and leads to living happily ever after. This is possible through the righteousness of Jesus. This righteousness is gifted to men and women who receive God's grace through faith. This results in eternal life for us!

1. In this next section Paul is going to explain the good news of Jesus as it relates to our sinful condition as human beings descended from Adam. Paul compares the act of sin of Adam and the gift of God in Jesus Christ, and in comparing we find the gift far outweighs the sin.
2. In verse 12 we see that we inherited sin from Adam but that we are also guilty of our own sin. Why is it important to understand the reality of sin by inheritance, as well as, by our own actions? What would be the consequences of not understanding this dual reality (believing sin is only inherited or only by our own actions)?
3. Verses 13-14 addresses the world before the law was given through Moses. How is sin present even when the law is not? What is the primary evidence of sin?
4. Verses 15-17 compare the sin of Adam with the gift of God. How does the idea of a gift help us understand grace? Jesus is God's grace. What are the things listed as the overflow of that grace to many?
5. In verses 18-21 Paul concludes his point that the gift of Jesus is greater than sin. How does the idea of Jesus as being the new Adam help us understand the importance of His full humanity? Part of the good news of Jesus is that he lived a fully righteous life. Why is this so important for our understanding of salvation and righteousness?
6. How does sin increase the beauty of grace? What comes to your mind when you hear the term, "the reign of grace"? What is the difference between living in grace and under the law? How does grace make righteousness possible for us? How would you define eternal life? How does grace lead us to eternal life in Jesus? As you think about your own life and the world we live in where do you see evidence of a longing for eternal life? Why do you think this longing is in every human heart?

Romans 6:1-14

Living a New Life

If you are a believer in Christ, the old you is dead, the new you is alive. You are now a completely different being than before, over whom sin no longer has rule. Through living by faith, in dependence and union with the Holy Spirit within, you can experience the abundant life God has provided you.

The believer has become a new creation, a new person, having Christ's perfectly righteous life imparted to him or her. This righteousness is both "past tense" – something that has already been imparted to the believer, and "present tense" – something that is being progressively accomplished in the believer as, day by day, the Christian is being gradually conformed to the image of Christ. This is what the Bible calls **sanctification**.

Glorification - One day, God will fully and finally conform us to His image and give us a resurrection body. This righteousness is "future tense", and is a completed or perfect righteousness

Justification - Having been judicially declared righteous on the basis of faith alone.

Dead to sin - We who have experienced new birth in Christ are no longer in bondage to the control of sin in our lives. It is not that we cannot sin. We can and do sin, but our Union with Christ has given us the ability not to have to sin any longer.

Spirit baptism - The act of the Holy Spirit placing the believer into spiritual union with Christ, including union in his death, burial and resurrection.

Water baptism - The outward sign used to indicate that a person has died, been buried, been raised with Christ. Baptism therefore is an outward, visible symbol of an inward, spiritual reality.

1. In verses 1-4 Paul asks a series of rhetorical questions in order to capture the tension between grace and sin. Paul argues we must not see intentional sin as a means to grace. How does the idea of our identity influence how we see sin and grace (v.2)? How does baptism speak to our new identity in Jesus? How does the physical act of submersion in water illustrate the new spiritual reality in our lives?
2. Read Matthew 28:18-20. What is the significance of being baptized into the **name** of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? How does this speak to our new identity?
3. In verses 5-10 we learn of the significance of Jesus death and resurrection in our identity as well as in our practical daily lives. What does it mean to be "united" with Jesus? Why is this term "united" so significant for our lives? How does "united with Jesus" help explain and define sanctification?
4. In verse 6 it says, "that we should no longer be slaves to sin". How is slavery a good illustration of sins holds on our lives? What is the significance of freedom from slavery? What does it mean to no longer live as a slave (v.10)?
5. Verses 11-14 describe the life of grace. This life of grace is a process of realizing and living out our true identity as children of God. What are some of the words Paul uses to help us understand this new life of grace?
6. How does the idea of offering yourself illustrate our new freedom in Christ? What are some of the opportunities we have with this new freedom? What does it look like to offer ourselves to God (v.13)?

Romans 6:15-23

Slaves

In Paul's day when he wrote Romans, slavery was an integral part of the economic and social system of the Roman empire. It was an economic reality for most people in the Roman Empire; something most people would have understood and identified with on a societal and personal level. The vast majority of the population of the Roman Empire were slaves. In fact many of the people who were part of the early church were slaves. This is why Paul uses this illustration to help us understand the process of sanctification. Slavery in Paul's day helps us understand the powerful truth of identity and who we belong to. In Jesus we are no longer slaves to sin and death but to God's righteousness (the good life) and eternal life. God's way is freedom from sin for the believer's life through the gift of God's Grace. Because we belong to God we are free to live!

1. Paul repeats the rhetorical question from 6:1 in verse 15. Paul is making a point that our new life in Christ is no longer to be characterized by sin but rather grace. Grace means we no longer desire to continue sinning.
2. Verses 16-23 Paul uses the illustration of slavery to help us understand Sanctification- the process of living a new unique life with God. Why do you think Paul uses this illustration? How does slavery help us understand the power of identity and how we live?
3. Paul says there are two kinds of spiritual slavery (v.16). What is the fruit of each kind of slavery?
4. Verse 17 is key to understanding what being a slave of righteousness means. What is the significance of the words "from your heart" and "allegiance" to understanding "slaves to righteousness"?
5. For many people in the Roman Empire slavery was a choice based upon economic need. Paul uses the term "offer yourselves" (v.19). How do we offer ourselves in our daily lives? How do we offer ourselves to righteousness and holiness as opposed to sin and wickedness?
6. In verse 21 Paul asks about the results or benefits of these two ways of offering ourselves. What have been some of the consequences of sin in your life? How does this relate to death?
7. In verse 22-23 Paul contrasts the consequences of sin with the benefits of offering ourselves to God. What are the benefits of doing this? How have you seen this in your own life? How would you define holiness?
8. According to verse 23 the benefit of holiness in our life results in eternal life. Is this something we work to earn or is it a gift from God? How does this change our understanding of holiness? How would you define eternal life? How have you seen a longing for eternal life in your life or in others?