

071419 I am now a friend of God

I believe that perhaps this summer will be the most life-changing summer for you with regards to 4 things: 1. Your Perception of God ...Paul is not sure of what image they have been given of God....but he want to give them greater image and understanding...2. Your Perception of You, you are worse off, than you think... 3.Your Position in Christ is far greater than you think ... 4. Your Purpose in Christ ...you have a job to do here...lets review The concept of seeing life and living life through the lens of Scripture...that's what we are mandated to do as believers...(expound)

- **So Paul, in Romans 1** paints the foundation of the Gospel and the foundation of understanding when it comes to our situation with God...*We are in trouble because we are sinful people and all the sin that human beings involve themselves in have no place in the presence of a holy and perfect God.*
- *Without the basic understanding (that we are sinful and incapable of having a right relationship with God on our own) the Gospel becomes foolishness to you and you have no need for it.*

**Then Paul goes on in Romans 2** to explain that because of that basic understanding and truth...you and I apart from Christ have only one thing to look forward to: *God's furious judgment.*

**Then in Romans 3**, Paul continues to show *the absolute absurdity in thinking that we can "earn" our way in becoming right with God...*he said this:

3: <sup>20</sup> *For no one can ever be made right with God by doing what the law commands. The law simply shows us how sinful we are.*

**But then Paul changes course** and begins to paint the picture of how there is hope for you and me:

3:<sup>21</sup> *But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. <sup>22</sup> We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are.*

- What great news! That news is the Great Gospel that has power to save our souls!

**In chapter 4 he tells us how this works**

Romans 4:<sup>16</sup> *So the promise is received by faith. It is given as a free gift. And we are all certain to receive it, whether or not we live according to the law of Moses, if we have faith like Abraham's. For Abraham is the father of all who believe. <sup>17</sup> That is what the Scriptures mean when God told him, "I have made you the father of many nations." This happened because Abraham believed in the God who brings the dead back to life and who creates new things out of nothing.*

- *What a great word right there that is not just a sentence and a promise about something physical...but even more powerfully something spiritual.*
- **God brings those who have dead in sin...back to life...New Life in Him...Born again to the Spirit!**

**And He takes a stuck in the pit sinner (you and me) who has nothing of great value to offer to Him...and He creates something new and much more beautiful and useful!**

*Romans 4:18* Even when there was no reason for hope, Abraham kept hoping—believing that he would become the father of many nations. For God had said to him, “That’s how many descendants you will have!”<sup>19</sup> And Abraham’s faith did not weaken, even though, at about 100 years of age, he figured his body was as good as dead—and so was Sarah’s womb.<sup>20</sup> Abraham never wavered in believing God’s promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God.<sup>21</sup> **He was fully convinced that God is able to do whatever he promises.**<sup>22</sup> **And because of Abraham’s faith, God counted him as righteous.**<sup>23</sup> **And when God counted him as righteous, it wasn’t just for Abraham’s benefit. It was recorded<sup>24</sup> for our benefit, too, assuring us that God will also count us as righteous if we believe in him, the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.**<sup>25</sup> **He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God.**

- **When the call of God does come to a life, it is a call for that person to sever all ties with the past faithless life. To leave the old life behind and to begin a new life of faith, where every moment is lived in utter dependence upon the Lord alone for every need...**
- **That is the nature of the divine call! God's call is for you to follow without your being concerned about the destination.**
- **His call is for you to leave the details to Him. His call is for surrender to His call, regardless of what it costs, where it leads or how much it hurts. His call is still follow me and his promise are for me...!)**

*NLT GAL 3: 14* Through Christ Jesus, God has blessed the Gentiles with the same blessing he promised to Abraham, so that we who are believers might receive the promised Holy Spirit through faith.

**and He is called a friend of God!**

*James 2: 23* And so it happened just as the Scriptures say: “Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith.” He was even called the friend of God.<sup>1</sup>

***And then we come to Romans 5 and Paul begins to outline the benefits of this new life and hope in Christ in comparison to not having faith in Christ:***

*“In the whole Bible there is hardly another chapter which can equal this triumphant text.”* (Martin Luther)

***Romans 5:1-2 (NLT)*** <sup>1</sup> *Therefore, since we have been made right in God’s sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us.* <sup>2</sup> *Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God’s glory.*

- **Therefore, having been made right...justified by faith:** because of what Jesus did, the righteousness of God is given to all who believe. Since we have been made right ..justified by grace through faith. The guilty sentence is transformed into a sentence of **justified** ...Now he will tell us what the practical benefits of this are, explaining that it is more than an interesting idea.
- **Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:** This is the first benefit. Because the price is paid in full by the work of Jesus on the cross, God’s justice towards us is eternally satisfied.
- **This is not the peace of God This is peace with God;** This peace can only come **through our Lord Jesus Christ**
- the battle between God and our self is *finished* – and He won, winning us. Some never knew they were *out of peace* with God, but they were like drivers ignoring the red lights of a police car in their rear-view mirror – they are in trouble even if they don’t know it, and it will soon catch up to them.
- *Remember that the Bible doesn’t say we have peace with the devil, peace with the world, peace with the flesh, or peace with sin.*
- Life is still a battle for the Christian but it is no longer a battle against God – it is fighting for Him and with Him.
- **The second Benefit we stand in Grace:** Grace (God’s undeserved favor towards us) is not only the *way* salvation comes to us, it is also a description of our present standing before God.
- It is not only the *beginning* principle of the Christian life, it is also the *continuing* principle of the Christian life. ***“We stand is a perfect tense, used in this sense of the present, and with the thought of a continuing attitude.”***
- Many Christians begin in grace, but then think they must go on to perfection and maturity by dealing with God on the principle of law – on the ideas of

earning and deserving. Paul spoke against this in Galatians 3:2-3 and Galatians 5:1-4.

- **A standing in grace reassures us: God's present attitude towards the believer in Christ Jesus is one of favor, seeing them in terms of joy, beauty, and pleasure. He doesn't just love us; He *likes* us because we are in Jesus.**
- Standing in grace means that: I don't have to prove I am worthy of God's love. God is my friend. The door of access is permanently open to me.
- I am free from the "score sheet" – the account is settled in Jesus.

**“We are brought into a place of high favor with God – The great secret to walking this out is to embrace that I am loved and accepted as I am through Christ!**

· **To be certain of God's future favor; yet to be ever more tender in conscience toward Him. To rely on God's disciplining hand as a mark of His kindness.**

- **Through whom also we have access by faith: Our access into this standing of grace is only by faith, and through Jesus; we cannot *work* ourselves into this standing. The access isn't just into a standing of grace, but into the very courts of heaven. This is a blessing beyond peace with God. we are brought into his presence.”**
- We have access: The perfect verb tense of have access also indicates that this is a standing, permanent possession. Because our standing is based on grace, we really can stand and have peace, because we know that our access is a permanent possession. It cannot be taken away at a later time.

**We confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory...we look forward to our future with God always...**

**\*\*\*\*Paul anticipates the accusation that he is too “pie in the sky,” that glory for the Christian applies only to the sweet bye-and-bye. Paul replies, “I know we have many tribulations now but we rejoice in those also.”**

Romans 5:3 *We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. <sup>4</sup> And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation.<sup>5</sup> And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.*

- **problems and trials is “a strong term.** It does not refer to minor inconveniences, but to real hardships”
- Second, Paul *lived a life full of problems and trials.* Paul knew the truth of this better than most anyone.

- **Knowing that problems and trials produce endurance:** problems and trials create stress and pressure...A runner must be stressed to gain endurance. Sailors must go to sea. Soldiers go to battle. For the Christian, tribulation is just part of our Christian life.
- **God knows how much tribulation we can take, and He carefully measures the tribulation we face.**
- Those who are not Christians face trials also. Whatever faith trials find you in, that faith will be developed more fully ...if you walk by your flesh, trials will make you more carnal, weak, blind, wicked and irritable.
- On the other hand, if one is spiritual, strong, wise, pious, gentle and humble, he will become more spiritual, powerful, wise, pious, gentle and humble.” faith must be tested to harden it and create endurance

“trials work endurance,’ and creates the fruit of experience, and experiences teaches us hope...they say the difference between an expert and a beginner ...is that the expert has failed more than the beginner has tried!

Perseverance, character; and character, hope: **This is a golden chain of Christian growth and maturity.** One virtue builds upon another as we grow in the pattern of Jesus.

listen Endurance always builds Hope...I did not think I could do this or that but I did...my hope increases...

I would rather have God just sprinkle perseverance and character and hope on me as I sleep. I could wake up a much better Christian! But that isn't God's plan for me or for any Christian.

**Trials make your faith strong...strong faith makes your heart strong...a strong heart makes your mind strong!**

**I don't give up I don't give in...I believe no matter what!**

NKJV Psalm 56:11 *In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. **What can man do to me?***

Therefore we say – soberly, reverently – we say about problems and trials, “Lord, I know you love me and carefully measure every trial and have a loving purpose to accomplish in every tribulation. Lord, I won't seek trials and search out problems, but I won't despise them or lose hope when they come. I trust Your love in everything You allow.”

- Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.



- a. **We are assured of this because God has proved His intention to complete His work in us – the proof being the love of God... poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. love isn't given to us in a trickle**
- b. **The love of God... poured out in our hearts: Every Christian should have some experience of this, to have a deep inner awareness of God's love for us.**
- i. **The Apostle Paul wants us to think the right thoughts about God, but he also wants us to have the right experience with God – the love of God... poured out in our hearts.**

**\*\*\*Jesus did all of this when we were utterly helpless in sin.. and his enemy...he will certainly not forsake us now as his friends!**

*Romans 5:6 When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. <sup>7</sup> Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. <sup>8</sup> But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.*

- *most people would not be willing to die for an upright person: God's love is a love beyond even the best love among humans. A good man might die a noble martyrdom for the "right kind" of person – a **good man**. But Jesus died for those who were neither righteous nor good.*
- **Who are these people? Who are the ungodly and wicked people Jesus died for? Paul spent the first two-and-a-half chapters of the Book of Romans telling us that we *all* are those people.**

• **If God showed such dramatic love to us when we were enemies in sin, If God does this much for His enemies, how much more will He do for His friends!**

*<sup>9</sup> And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation. <sup>10</sup> For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son. <sup>11</sup> So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God.*

**When we are in Christ and fully understand the price to which God paid to save us... there is NO WAY after saving us He's going to let me sink as his friend! That's called HOPE! you are not a stranger ! you are a Friend**  
**end**

- a. **When we were still without strength:** Paul describes the greatness of God’s love. It is love given to the undeserving, to those **without strength**, to the **ungodly**, to **sinners**. This emphasizes the fact that the reasons for God’s love are found *in Him*, not in us.
- i. Who are these people? Who are the ungodly and wicked people Jesus died for? Paul spent the first two-and-a-half chapters of the Book of Romans telling us that we *all* are those people.
- b. **In due time Christ died for the ungodly:** God sent the Son at the right time, at the **due time**. It may have seemed late to some but Jesus’ work was done at the perfect time in God’s plan: *when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son* ([Galatians 4:4](#)).
- i. The world was prepared spiritually, economically, linguistically, politically, philosophically and geographically for the coming of Jesus and the spread of the Gospel.
- ii. **In due time** also has the meaning that Jesus died at the due time *for us*. He died when we were sinners who needed a Savior. His timing was just right for us.
- c. **Christ died for the ungodly:** Paul mentioned the idea of a substitutionary sacrifice with the word *propitiation* in [Romans 3:25](#). Here, he makes the point again by saying that **Christ died for the ungodly**. The ancient Greek word **for** is the word *huper*, which means “for the sake of, in behalf of, instead of.”
- i. Other places where *huper* is used in the New Testament help us to understand this. In [John 11:50](#), we read: *nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for [huper] the people*. [Galatians 3:13](#) says, *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for [huper] us*.
- ii. Therefore to genuinely say, “Jesus died for me” you must also say, “I have no strength to save myself. I am ungodly. I am a sinner.” Jesus died to save and transform *these*.
- iii. “You will say, ‘Oh, I am one of the worst in the world.’ Christ died for the worst in the world. ‘Oh, but I have no power to be better.’ Christ died for those that were without strength. ‘Oh, but my case condemns itself.’ Christ died for those that legally are condemned. ‘Ay, but my case is hopeless.’ Christ died for the hopeless. He is the hope of the hopeless. He is the Savior not of those partly lost, but of the wholly lost.” (Spurgeon)
- iv. “If Christ died for the ungodly, *this fact leaves the ungodly no excuse if they do not come to him*, and believe in him unto salvation. Had it been otherwise they might

have pleaded, ‘We are not fit to come.’ But you are ungodly, and Christ died for the ungodly, why not for you?’ (Spurgeon)

d. **For scarcely for a righteous man will one die:** God’s love is a love beyond even the best love among humans. A good man might die a noble martyrdom for the “right kind” of person – such as a **righteous man** or a **good man**. But Jesus died for those who were neither righteous nor good.

i. Is there a difference between **a righteous man** and **a good man** in Paul’s thinking? The difference in [Romans 5:7](#) seems to be that the **righteous man** is only that – righteous in his personal life but perhaps lacking in feeling for others. The **good man** by contrast goes beyond the other man by also being kind and benevolent.

e. **But God demonstrates His own love:** How does the death of the Son demonstrate the love of the Father? Because it was harder for the Father to send His only Son, and because *God [the Father] was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself* ([2 Corinthians 5:19](#)).

i. “It would be easy to see the cross as demonstrating the indifference of God, a God who let the innocent Jesus be taken by wicked men, tortured, and crucified while he did nothing... Unless there is a sense in which the Father and Christ are one, it is not the love of God that the cross shows.” (Morris)

ii. The work of Jesus on the cross for us is God’s ultimate proof of His love for you. He may give additional proof, but He can give no greater proof. If the cross is the ultimate demonstration of God’s love, it is also the ultimate demonstration of man’s hatred. It also proves that the height of man’s hatred can’t defeat the height of God’s love.

iii. The *demonstration* of God’s love isn’t displayed so much in that Jesus died, but it is seen in whom Jesus died *for* – undeserving sinners and rebels against Him.

a. **Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath:** If we are justified by the work of Jesus, we can be assured that we are also **saved from wrath through Him**. The wrath of God that was *revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men* ([Romans 1:18](#)) was placed on Jesus as a substitute in the place of the believer.

i. By nature, some are inclined to preface these great promises of God with “*much less then*” regarding themselves. God wants them to see it plain and clear: **Much more then** is the love and goodness of God given to us and **much more then** can we have confidence in Him.



ii. **Saved from wrath:** Whose wrath? God’s righteous wrath. It is true that we must be saved from the world, the flesh, and the devil but most of all we must be rescued from the righteous wrath of God.

iii. John Trapp on **much more then:** “It is a greater work of God to bring men to grace, than, being in the state of grace, to bring them to glory; because sin is far more distant from grace than grace is from glory.”

b. **For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God:** If God showed such dramatic love to us when **we were enemies**, think of the blessings we will enjoy once we are reconciled to God! If God does this much for His enemies, how much more will He do for His friends!

i. Wuest, quoting Alford: “Not only has the reconciled man confidence that he shall escape God’s wrath, but triumphant confidence – joyful hope in God.”

c. **Much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life:**

This *reconciliation* isn’t only helpful when we die; it also touches our life *right now*. God is forever done dealing with believers on the basis of **wrath**. He may chasten them as a loving Father, but not in punishment or payment for their sins. God only allows chastening to bring loving correction and guidance.

d. **Saved from wrath through Him... we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son... rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus... through whom we have now received the reconciliation:** The point is clearly emphasized. What matters is what we have **through** Jesus. What we have through our own works doesn’t matter and can’t help us. It’s all **through** Jesus.