

“Peace Amidst Adversity”

Psalm 8; **Romans 5: 1-5**

Pearl: In Christ we can experience confidence and peace through suffering and adversity.

Function: To encourage worshippers to be confident even through suffering because the incredible grace of God in Jesus Christ gives us a peace that surpasses all understanding.

In what way do you experience peace? Do you find it in the outdoors? Do you find it with a favorite music group or through certain kinds of music? Do you find it through a particular hobby or avocation? Do you find it through the Lord God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

1. These wonderful first verses in Romans, chapter 5, speak volumes. This is a rich passage—almost poetry. It is rich in theological meat.
 - a. In no uncertain terms Paul wrote that “we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
 - i. Perhaps you have many ways in which to experience peace. The testimony of scripture and down through the ages of the church is that Christ is our peace. In these few seconds right now, enter into the peace of Christ. It is an open door. We are all welcome.
 - ii. The Lord Jesus Christ is our ultimate peace. Is there any peace which surpasses the peace that we have in Christ Jesus? This is because he alone is able to deal with the source of our chaos—sin. Jesus Christ dealt with the source of our unrest on the cross.
 1. So the Lord Jesus said, **“My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid”** (John 14: 24, 25). Let that sink in for a moment.
 - b. Perhaps the greatest true source of anxiety for everyone has to do with whether we are at peace with God. We wonder if things are all right between us and God.
 - i. Friends, we can be sure; we can be at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. I have preached before this congregation

for 14 years and I continue to run across people who are not sure that they are at peace with God.

1. The “good news” really is good news! Read these first five verses in Romans 5 and then find your peace. If you do not have confident assurance that you are “right with God” then this assurance and peace awaits you! **“Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand”** (Romans 5: 1, 2).
 - a. Sometimes we may well hear a message time after time in season and out of season but **never completely act upon it**. Friends, enter into your peace. Enter into the peace that was meant for you before you were even born. Accept Jesus Christ as your Master and Commander; accept him as your Savior and Deliverer. By doing so, you can have peace with God! Do it through prayer. Do it without delay! Through Jesus Christ we have peace with God!

Do you like to boast? Most of us are trained not to boast. We are to be humble not boastful. Yet the Apostle Paul encourages boasting.

1. Having found peace with God we may boast about our “hope of sharing in the glory of God” (Romans 5: 2). Why would we want to boast about this?
 - a. It may be an evangelistic reason. This is the way that others may come to know the peace we have found. We should boast about and call attention to all of the wondrous things that God has done. We should glory in him above all others and above all things. This is boasting appropriately. Boast about the Lord God!

First we boast about the Lord and all that we have in him and then Paul suggested that followers of Christ boast about something else. He actually said to “boast in our sufferings” (Romans 5: 3).

2. We can all understand boasting in what we have in Jesus. We are good at boasting about good things. What about boasting in our sufferings? This scripture gives us great insight into the benefits of suffering. There are benefits in suffering, thank the Lord!
 - a. As the Apostle wrote: “...**suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us...**” (Romans 5: 3, 4). So suffering leads to endurance which leads to character which leads to hope in God. Hope in God does not disappoint us!
 - b. Do we like to suffer? Are we even open to suffering?
 - i. Women understand the suffering of childbirth and continually choose to become mothers. They are willing to endure this suffering in order to have the gift of a child.
 - ii. We endure the pain and suffering of a surgery and then the physical therapy which is no picnic in order to gain better quality of life.
 - iii. We know that “good things come to those who wait.” In the displeasure of waiting for something we become patient. This suffering leads to a virtuous character trait—even a fruit of the Spirit of God.
 - iv. We cannot help but think of the people of the along the Louisiana coast along the Gulf of Mexico. They are still recovering from the effects of Hurricane Katrina. And now this gigantic oil leak has brought to a stand still the lives and livelihoods of so many along the coast. These people are suffering.
 1. Have they not learned to endure? And their endurance is leading to greater character, for sure. This will lead them to hope. The Lord is with them working with them in this time. We have to believe this. How else can sense be made of any tragedy?

We put our hope in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit!

1. Psalm 8 so aptly assures us of the faithfulness and constancy of the Lord God. It begins and ends with “**O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!**” There is plenty in between but first and last is the constancy of our Lord.
2. Then in Romans we have the certainty of peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. The fifth verse of Romans 5 brings us hoping in God which brings us into a direct encounter with the love of God. This love is made known to us by the Holy Spirit of God. The Spirit pours the love of God into our hearts.

That, my friends, is the essence of peace! Peace comes through our Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing can prevent us from this peace. Not even all of the slings and arrows of a cruel world which causes so much suffering. No, even through suffering, comes the peace of God.