

Cascading Blessings

Harmony M.B.C., March 25, 2012

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Rom. 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Have you ever seen a picture of a waterfall coming over a cliff and creating pools and more waterfalls as it falls down the side of that cliff. What you are looking at is what we call a cascading effect. This describes our blessings from the Lord which result from being justified by faith through Jesus Christ!

I like the way God has stated the effect of faith in our text. What He states here is the beginning of the cascade of blessings we enjoy as a result of justification that Christ wrought for us through His substitutionary death and resurrection. So, this is what we want to think about today. That is, how Christ has brought a cascade of blessings to us.

I. We see the first of these spelled out in our text verse

■ we have peace with God

- ▶ There are billions of people on earth right now who can't say this
- ▶ Peace with God is not a right, nor even something self-attained by someone who really tries to get it
- ▶ It is a gift from God, and cannot be bought, stolen, found, nor gotten from any source except through this justification process
- ▶ How precious peace with God is to those who have it!
 - There was once a bumper sticker that said, "War is costly. Peace is priceless."
- ▶ There is compelling evidence that a lot of professing Christians do not have peace with God. What does this mean?
- ▶ And it has with it a special benefit for others: (**2 Corinthians 1:4**) - "(God) comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

II. In verse 2, we see the second and third blessings in the cascade - **Rom. 5:2**

- ▶ By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand,
- ▶ **Psalms 37:23-24** "The steps of a *good* man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. **24** Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth *him* with his hand."
- ▶ Concerning we who are subjects of the Lord (**Rom.14:4**) "...Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand."
- ▶ It is this grace-blessing from God that supported the souls of a million Baptists in ages past who faced persecutors and had the resolve to tell them that they would not deny their faith, nor reject the doctrine of Christ.
- ▶ It is this same grace-blessing that will support us today as we face mainstream Christianity again and refuse to follow the path of heresy and false worship in order to fit in with their modern methods of religion.

- ▶ and **rejoice in hope of the glory** of God.
- ▶ We are looking for a day when we shall be changed...when this mortal will put on immortality...when we shall be like Him. This is the hope of the glory of God!
- ▶ We shall be raised incorruptible, snatched forever from the threat and pain of death and decay

III. The third in this cascade of blessings is seen in verse 3 - Rom 5:3

- And not only *so*, but we **glory in tribulations** also:(Tribulation = Gr. “thlipsis”- pressure (literally or figuratively): - afflicted, (-tion), anguish, burdened, persecution, tribulation, trouble)
 - ▶ What stories do you suppose Peter told to fellow-believers after getting out of jail when the angel came and whacked him on his side and said “Get up, and follow me.” When the prison doors swung open and they simply walked out.
 - ▶ What stories do you suppose Paul and Silas told fellow-believers after they got out of the jail at Philippi?
- Reading on - ...knowing that tribulation worketh patience; (**Rom. 5:4**) And patience, experience; and experience, hope:
 - ▶ Glorifying (or bragging) about trials, burdens, trouble, pressure can only come when we really do realize that such things work patience, which broadens the benefit of our experience and builds our hope...our confident expectancy of the fulfillment of the promises of the Lord.

IV. The fourth and fifth are seen in verse 5 - Rom. 5:5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because

- the **love of God is shed abroad in our hearts**
 - ▶ What kind of cold, indifferent, loveless, self-serving persons would we be without the love of God shed abroad in our hearts
 - ▶ This love of God comes in, then goes out (shed abroad) - this is about having a heart for expressing love, for acting out love
 - ▶ (Old German Proverb) - Charity gives itself rich; covetousness hoards itself poor.
- by the **Holy Ghost which is given unto us.**
 - ▶ What a gift! The Holy Spirit GIVEN to us
 - ▶ What would we be, where would we be without His all-knowing guidance and protection?

V. We can read on and see that the Lord sets the stage for showing us the sixth in the cascade of blessings down in **verse 9 - Rom. 5:6** For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

Rom. 5:7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

Rom. 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Rom. 5:9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be

- **saved from wrath through him.**
- Have you ever thought of being one of those people who are going to be there before the

white throne facing the wrath of a God who has all power?

- Have you ever thought about the extent of the power that can come from a God who has no limits?
- Have you ever thought about how totally complete must be the sentencing of the wicked to the everlasting flames if this is the expression (and it is) of a God who holds all power?
- All this and more, is what we are saved from through Jesus Christ

VI. Then we see the seventh and eighth in v. 10 - Rom 5:10 For if, when we were enemies,

- we were **reconciled to God by the death of his Son**,
 - ▶ To understand the enormity of this blessing to us, let me illustrate:
 - A drunken, dope addicted, hate-filled, mass murderer comes into your house and beats all your children and grandchildren to death except one teenage son who is away. This contemptible man is arrested, tried, sentenced to death. On the day of his execution, you take your remaining son down to the prison to the execution. As the prison guards walk the prisoner to the execution chamber, you step out in front of the warden and say, “I want this man to go free, so I want you to take my son and execute him as a substitute for this guy, so he and I can be friends.”
 - much more, being reconciled, we shall be **saved by his life**.
 - ▶ Illustrate: Our big oak trees are starting to put out leaves. Each leaf has its place on the oak tree. It has its own stem, its own place on that stem. The oak tree provides it with moisture and a link to the ground where minerals are to be gotten. The leaf flourishes as it photosynthesizes, using the sunlight to give back to the oak tree as the oak tree provides its life flow. But, let that oak tree die, and the leaf will automatically die. As long as that oak tree lives, its leaves will live each season. At the end of the growing life of a leaf (fall) the tree cuts off the sap flow to the leaf and it withers and dies, goes back to the soil.

VII. Then, we see the ninth (and last mentioned here) in this cascade of blessings in verse 11 - Rom 5:11 And not only so, but we also

- **joy in God** through our Lord Jesus Christ,