

"Our Benefits Package"

Romans 5:1-5

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connect groups

PATH

Why is being a Christian so great? Every unbeliever you meet is asking that question as they observe your life. What are the benefits of living with a committed faith in Jesus? After explaining what it means to be right with God by believing in Christ, and after illustrating that principle with Abraham, Paul gives a short list of some of the benefits of a saved life.

I. Peace with God (v. 1)

III. Preview of the Future (v. 2b)

II. Privilege of Access (v. 2a)

IV. Purpose in Pain (vv. 3-5)

POINTS

Peace with God (v. 1)

- The church is the greatest organization on earth:
 - We provide a universal product: Christ's salvation is for all
 - We have offices worldwide: churches in every country and culture
 - Exceptional benefits: forgiveness and peace for the past, present, and future
 - Retirement is like no other: eternity spent with God in paradise
- In Romans 4, Paul presented the concept of justification: believers are declared righteous by grace through faith. Paul gave two words that outline our benefits as believers: "we have" (5:2).
- The first benefit we have is "peace with God." The immediate effect of justification is that our personal war with God is over.
- Unbelievers may feel peaceful, but they are not at peace *with* God because of sin. Jesus made peace with God possible at the cross. Because the believer is declared righteous through justification, the result is real, objective peace. We have peace with God, knowing it produces spiritual peace (see Philippians 4:6-7).
- Jesus as Savior brings peace with God, and Jesus as Lord brings the peace of God to the lives of believers. Jesus is the Prince of Peace; He is the only way to true, lasting peace with God.

Privilege of Access (v. 2a)

- Another benefit of justification is access to God. The idea of access is like a person who secures an audience with a king, but who must be brought into the king's presence properly attired. Jesus clothes us in His righteousness so we can enter God's presence.
- The idea of access to God was a foreign concept in the ancient world. Pagans believed that gods were unapproachable, and even the Jews had strict boundaries between themselves and God.
- Jesus put an end to the boundaries; He was the bridge, tearing the veil in the temple from top to bottom, breaking down the wall of separation (see Ephesians 2:12-16 and Hebrews 4:14-16).
- Notice the word "stand" in verse 2; it means "stand firm" and "immovable." Even if we fall or fail, God's faithfulness picks us up; His mercies are new every morning.

Preview of the Future (v. 2b)

- Salvation is anchored in the past, because Jesus gave us peace with God; it's anchored in the present because of our access to God; and it's anchored in the future because we have His promise.
- In verse 2, we find the ultimate effect of salvation: to be in the presence of God, seeing His glory. The "glory of God" is a reference to heaven, where

God's glory is on full display. Moses asked to see God's glory but couldn't handle it in his mortal body; with our resurrected bodies in heaven, we will be able to.

- We have hope because Jesus prayed for us (see John 17:2-23), and He rose from the dead to ensure it (see 1 Peter 1:3). Jesus will bring hope and healing into your life.

Purpose in Pain (vv. 3-5)

- We have purpose between salvation and heaven. Purpose is our ultimate benefit: we have meaning, drive, and adventure with God. But, salvation is not a fairy tale where believers live happily ever after in this life. Jesus suffered in this life, and so will we.
- The English word for *tribulation* is from the Latin *tribulum*: a heavy piece of timber with spikes, used to separate the wheat from the chaff. Our trials purify us.
- As Christians, we understand that God is working all things for good (see Romans 8:28). We are not asked to grin and bear the tribulation, but we should rejoice that God is bringing about His perfect will through our trials.
- Because we are justified by faith, we have peace with God, access to God, we have hope to be with God, and we have purpose in life—even during trials.

PRACTICE

Connect Up: It's good to talk about the moment God justified you (your salvation). Share your personal testimony. Talk about God's peace, and how it brought purpose to your life.

Connect In: Access to God is a privilege for Christians and the church. Discuss how we have access in the following ways:

- Bible study: How does Bible study with the Holy Spirit's guidance give us access to God's truth? See John 16:13.
- Prayer: What does access to God via prayer provide? See Matthew 18:19.

- Worship/Communion: How does access to God complement our worship, allowing us direct access to His throne? See Ephesians 2:18; 3:12, and Hebrews 10:19.

As Prophet, Priest, and King, how does Christ fulfill each of the above areas? For example, as High Priest, He gives us access to God's throne. As Prophet He proclaims (and is) the Word of God, giving us access to God's truth. And as King, He is worthy of prayer and honor, giving us access to a personal relationship with the King of Heaven. (If time permits, see Christian Apologetics & Research Ministry for more

information: <https://carm.org/prophet-priest-king>.) What other connections can you make?

Connect Out: How can you use Pastor Skip's summary points as a guide in sharing your faith with others, highlighting the benefits of the Christian life? As an example: a Christian has peace with God (justification, evangelism), access to God (via prayer, worship, and Bible study), hope to be with God in heaven, and purpose in life, even in trials (trusting God in all areas).