

Lesson # 8 in the Book of Romans

Last time I got a bit afield in my comments about what is bothering me. I am so very sad at the position that many of the Christ centered churches are taking.

I guess it is in line with where we are in end times prophesy. Men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful and proud, abusive and disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy etc. (2 Tim 3:2). I should probably rejoice, The truth is -that because they have rejected the truth – GOD WILL SEND THEM STRONG DELUSION so that they will believe this lie.(2nd Thes. 2:11)

Any way, off my soap box and back to **Romans 5**.

You have heard it said that there is **peace with God** (which is what we discussed last time from Romans 5:1). How many believers are under the assumption that God is somehow angry with them. Nothing could be further from the truth.

God is getting the only thing He ever expects from us. That is for us to “miss the mark” or sin. He is not looking for righteous behavior on our part. He is looking for the reflection of His Son in our lives. He is not interested in what I feel I can do for Him, rather He is looking for a vessel in which He can move for Himself. A tool – He can use at His disposal, an earthen vessel in which contains Himself.

That is the reason He doesn't care about the condition of the vessel. Only that it contains His glory. We spend so much energy on trying to improve the condition of the vessel (which if we knew the truth, we would refrain from the whole endeavor) that we forget the purpose of the vessel...

Why would He refer to us as containers, vessels and temples all of which contain something?

Why would Jesus be concerned about what comes out of a man, rather than what goes into a man? **Matthew 15:11** “Not what goes into the mouth of a man, but what comes out of the mouth that defiles” Do you not understand that whatever enters the mouth of a man goes into the stomach and is eliminated” but those things that come out of the mouth of a man, comes from the heart, and they defile the man.” For out of the heart of a man proceed evil thoughts etc.-**Matt 15:18**

What is coming out of the vessel is what He is looking at.

Anyway, because of what He has done for us, we NOW have peace with Him.

The second kind of peace available to the believer today is the **Peace from God.**; this peace is necessary in our daily walk as we look not at the things we see, but at the unseen looking for His hand in everything. Further in this chapter (starting in verse 3) Paul deals with the things that we go through on a daily basis. It is during these times that we need special peace from Him regarding our situations. We will discuss this in more detail, but the 3rd peace is known as the **Peace of God**.

This peace passes all understanding. You know when you have it. It is not something that you muster up, you just have it. It is that peace that says “all will be O.K. I can relax and know His hand is at work somewhere here. I probably do not see the end as of this moment, but I know it will be alright. Nothing is coming to me unless it passes through Him, and whatever it is it will be to my benefit.

Now referring a bit to **peace from God**, I want to remind us of what Paul is saying here in Romans 5.

The process which we go through in our daily walk with Him starts with “through whom” in verse 2. The “through whom” is the Lord Jesus.

“we have access” which means we have the privilege to approach. *Continual approaching* is what we have and nothing can change that. We have access to the throne of God through Jesus Christ, and nothing changes that.

Verse 2 says “where-in-we stand – the where in stand means a *continual standing*. It is a completed action – ongoing – and again, nothing can change that.

The balance of this verse 2 states “into this grace” in which we stand. Again, as in previous verses, this is a gift. We do not deserve to come into His presence, it is a gift given to all believers. It is beyond anything we could earn or merit. (Romans 11:6)

Now here Paul is changing gears. He starts with “:and not only that” Think about that beloved. Paul is building on the above facts to know- here he hit a very powerful understanding that we all must have.

We are to glory in tribulations.

The word glory is unique here – It actually means to “*exalt*” or to “*leap for joy*” – Imagine that beloved.

Glory in what? In **tribulations**. The word here means – to press together – under pressure. The word can also mean oppression affliction, distress, straits or trials all brought about by difficult circumstances.

Well we say, I will glory when they are removed, but this is not the idea here. We are to glory in the midst of these pressures.

Paul goes on with the word *knowing* (verse 3). There are many types of knowing in scripture, but here it means” to perceive, notice or discern and discover.

Now at this point you might ask, O.K. Paul, what is your point. You are writing to believers but first telling us that we are that, through no activity on our part in fact we have all been separated from God because of our past both in behavior and in position, in this world without hope and now brought near through the blood of His Son Jesus. So what are you after here?

The issue before us now is one of **Maturity**.

Having seen ourselves in light of who we were before He got a hold of us, telling us now that we are in Him but going further in our relationship with Him, Paul deals with the steps toward maturity in this relationship.

Understand first that the process is as follows: Tribulation is producing something in us. And as we move through this step, we develop patience (or perseverance) then experience then the ultimate- which is HOPE

Experience produces character and character keeps on producing Hope

The end result of our going through things like tribulations is to bring us to the ultimate end - Hope.

If you re-read **2nd Corinthians 6 – 1-10** you will find the admonition to “keep on keeping on”

How do you measure maturity in the life of the believer? He/she has the presence of **HOPE**. The hope is the confidence in the future over the present.

Hope is the faith aimed at the future things.

Without hope in the future, we draw back, we crumble

, we dissolve under the pressure. Difficulties are designed by God to develop proven character.

As one brother once said, if you squeeze a lemon, you will get lemonade. If you squeeze an orange, you get orange juice. If you squeeze a Christian, expect to see Christ.

There is a process to maturity which face us all.

Highest form of maturity – **Hope**

Hope is the confidence in the future over the present

Faith aimed at future things

When we lack hope (as so many believers do) we tend to fret over the smallest of circumstances and we lose our perspective.

Joy should be the results of things happening to us, knowing we are not alone.

We must realize that in the midst of our trials, God is after our *character*. It is best revealed in the midst of the tribulations and trials.

You have had believers say that, “well if God is a loving God, why is there such and such going on”?

Let me take a second to examine the issue of **why believers have trials**.

In **Daniel chapter 3** the three children of Israel (we know as Shadrach Meshach and Abed-Nego) were sent into the fiery furnace by the king and they survived the ordeal with the presence of the fourth person in the fire (The Lord Jesus) and the result was to **glorify God**

Hebrews 12:5-11 Tell us that God chastises and rebukes His kids. "He whom the Lord loves, He chastens" We are told not to despise this chastening- He disciplines for known sin..

1st Peter 4: 1&2 tells us that we may be prevented from falling into sin

2nd Cor 12: 7-10 Paul's testimony was to keep him from pride he had this thorn in the flesh

According to **1st Peter 1 6-7** it builds faith in the believer.

Romans 3: 5-6 tells us it causes growth

Phil 4:11-13 it causes obedience and discipline

2nd Corinthians 1st 3&4 teaches us to comfort others in similar situations- When we lost our daughter in a house fire, I could not see much of the future. In fact there were times when I could not breathe properly. When I saw the pain and suffering around me, it killed me inside. Yet somehow, I still had hope that one day all would be well. We will get through this. We were going in, and will be so when we come out the other side. I have had many occasions to comfort others who have experienced the loss of a child.

2nd Corinthians 4: 7-11 to prove the reality of Christ in our lives

Ephesians 3: 8-11 to teach angels about redemption and God

Nothing is without purpose. God uses even the smallest of details in our lives to honor Him, to bring glory to His Name and to encourage other believers.

As James says – "count it all joy when you find yourself in various trials and temptations" God is purifying His people preparing us for greater and greater encounters.

When we become frustrated in what we are going through, we tend to lose hope.

Proverbs 13:12 says "hope deferred makes the heart sick"

Something very serious is happening in the life of the believer as he is experiencing hope.

Complacency and **apathy** are going to become a challenging thing in the life of the believer in the next few years. It does not take a prophet to see what is in front of us and coming at us with lightning speed.

Those who wish to remain neutral are in for a rude awakening. Those on the fence are going to have to get off of it. You are forced to take sides whether you like it or not. You and I are not going to be able to just “sit by” and say nothing.

I do not know if you are aware or not, but we are ambassadors of the King. As you know the ambassador actually has his citizenship in another country. He is representing his home country in his present dwelling place.

We would do well to understand that we are to take the position of our King to our present surroundings. We need to be able to take on the “name of our Lord” in this very strange land we live in.

Have you ever considered the 3rd commandment – “you shall not take the name of the Lord in **vain**” “do not wrongly take God’s name” might have something to do with our “speaking out” about what is going on?

We tend to see this commandment as cursing. I realize we do not live by them, but they are now written on our hearts.

The word “vain” actually means – to not take the Lord’s name as something *worthless* or *of no value*.

More to come *in lesson #9* – www.TomMorrisonGodcast.com