

The Security of Salvation, Part 2

Scripture: Romans 5:2b–5a

Code: 45-41

INTRODUCTION

The message of Romans 5:1-11 is simple: you can't lose your salvation. It is forever, eternal, everlasting, and unchanging. In 1 Peter 1:5 Peter says we "are kept by the power of God." Without question the most comforting, most assuring, and most joy-producing of all Christian truth is that our salvation is forever. The believer's joy and comfort depends on his assurance of his salvation. In Romans 5 Paul affirms that our salvation is secure in the power of God.

A. Harmony and Righteousness

Paul began the epistle of Romans by discussing God's wrath against sinful men (1:1[en]3:20). Then he explained how to escape from that wrath (3:21[en]4:25). If one wholeheartedly believes in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, he is justified (made right with God). There is no work or self-effort involved--it is simply a matter of believing what God has done in Christ.

B. Humanity and Religion

That simple plan of salvation was difficult for the Jewish people to understand because they were reared in a works-oriented religious system. It also was difficult for Gentiles, who adhered to religions based on human achievement (a description of all false religion). To hear that all they need do was believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and they would be made right with God was more than they could have hoped for. Their natural inclination was to think that kind of salvation was too easy--that it wouldn't be enough to allow them to survive the Day of Judgment. That would certainly be the concern of a new convert. So Paul approaches Romans 5 in such a way to assure them of their salvation.

C. Hope and Riches

1. The guarantee of the Spirit

Ephesians 1:13 says, "After ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." That means you were stamped permanently as the possession of God. Ephesians 1:14 says the Holy Spirit is the "earnest" (Gk., arrab[ma]on)--the down payment or guarantee of your salvation.

2. The glory of the saints

After articulating the gospel of salvation Paul said, "After I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, [I] cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints" (Eph. 1:15-18). Paul wanted the Ephesian Christians to comprehend what they had been given in Christ. What Christ began in their lives He would ultimately fulfill.

REVIEW

In Romans 5:1-11 Paul gives us six links in a chain that eternally secures us to the Savior. When the enemy hits you with doubt about the reality of your salvation, you can retreat to the promises of this passage.

I. PEACE WITH GOD (v. 1)

"Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

God is at war with men whether men are consciously at war with Him. But Christ bore the wrath of God on the cross and became our substitute, having received the punishment meant for us. As a result those who trust in Him have peace with God. Isaiah 32:17 says, "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever."

II. STANDING IN GRACE (v. 2a)

"By whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand."

Is It Possible to Fall from Grace?

People who argue that a believer can fall from grace deny that salvation is secure. They base that conclusion on Galatians 5:4: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." Paul did say it was possible to fall from grace, but notice to whom he said it. Paul was addressing people who tried to be saved by law. Verse 2 says, "Behold, I, Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." Christ can't do you any good if you believe you can be saved by some kind of physical operation. Then in verse 4 Paul says, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law." If you think you can be made right with God by keeping the law or by your own self-righteousness, Christ is useless to you.

Those kind of people have fallen from grace--from the grace principle of salvation. So Galatians 5:4 gives us commentary on the fate of those who attempt to come to God in some way other than through grace. A Christian standing in grace cannot fall out of grace. Galatians 5:5 says, "We through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith"--not by law.

LESSON

III. HOPE OF GLORY (vv. 2b-5a)

We exult, or actually boast "in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:2). God has promised us future glory. Romans 8:28-29 says, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." God didn't just predestine our initiation into salvation; He predestined the completion of it.

Romans 8:30 says, "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." If you're predestined to begin; you're predestined to end. If you're predestined to be in Christ; you're predestined to be like Christ. The hope of the believer and the doctrine of security are based on the hope of glory.

Security--Past, Present, and Future

The first three links in the chain of security need to be drawn together. First, the security of the believer is anchored in the past--Christ made peace with God. Second, the security of the believer is anchored and maintained in the present--we stand in grace and Christ lives to intercede on our behalf. And third, the security of the believer is anchored in the future--our future glory is guaranteed because we have been redeemed to exult in hope of ultimate glory. The past, present, and future work of God unite to secure the believer forever.

A. The Praise of Our Hope (v. 2b)

"[We] rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

1. The gift of God

a) Rejoicing in a secure future The Greek word translated "rejoice" (kauchaomai) refers to a confident boast or exultant jubilation. It is a strong word that speaks of rejoicing at the highest level. We rejoice in a secure future. We have no fear because Christ said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me.... I should lose nothing, but should raise [them] up again at the last day" (John 6:37,

39). b) Hoping in a secure future First Timothy 1:1 says that our Savior, Jesus Christ, is our hope. First Peter 1:18-21 explains, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver and gold, from your vain manner of life received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, who raised him up from the dead and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God." Since God raised up Jesus from the grave, we can trust Him to raise us up by the same promise. In John 17:22 Jesus prays, "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them." At that time the fulfillment of Christ's prayer was yet future. It still remains future for us, but we have the hope of ultimate glorification. Our rejoicing in future glory is not based on our own worthiness; it is based on the promise and power of God.

2. The glory of God

Romans 5:2 says, "[We] rejoice in hope of the glory of God." The glory of God is the expression of God's person--His intrinsic revelation of Himself. Someday God in the fullest and purest way will reflect His eternal character through us.

a) The redemption of glory In Romans 8:18 Paul says, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." One day God will pour through us His eternal, infinite glory. Verse 19 says, "The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." Right now "we have this treasure in earthen vessels" (2 Cor. 4:7). We are limited. But we and all creation are "waiting for the adoption, that is, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope" (Rom. 8:23-24). What is our hope? We hope to lose our humanness--our earthiness--and become glorified, eternal persons through whom God can reveal His glory. The consummation of our redemption and the ultimate fulfillment of our salvation is the manifestation of God's glory in us.

The Flashing Crown of Jewels

There's no need for a lamp in heaven because the Lord is light (Rev. 21:23; 22:5). Much of heaven is transparent: the streets are made of sheer gold, and the layers and foundations are made of jewels through which the glory of God will radiate (Rev. 21:11-21). Heaven must be like an incomprehensible flashing crown of jewels as the glory of God radiates out of every refracted element. We will be caught up in that incredible display of glory and become eternal reflectors of the full majesty and glory of our infinite and majestic God.

However, it is impossible for us to glorify God in that way while we are in our present bodies. That's why we groan, waiting for the redemption of our bodies. Jesus will return in power and great glory (Matt. 24:30), and His blazing glory will be radiated through us.

b) The reflection of glory (1) Romans 8:29--We will "be conformed to the image of his Son." We're going to be like Jesus. When He was transfigured before the disciples, He gave them but a glimpse of God's full glory, yet they were shaken to the core of their being (Matt. 17:1-8). (2) 2 Corinthians 3:18--"We all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory." Even now, as we gaze on the glory of the Lord, we are being changed. Moses is the illustration of the passage. In Exodus 34:29-35 God revealed His glory to Moses and it caused his face to shine. The people were afraid of Him. So Moses veiled his face because he didn't want the people to see that the glory was fading (cf. 2 Cor. 3:13). In our human bodies the glory fades fast. The revelation of God's afterglow didn't last in Moses' case. But there will come a time when we will be lifted from one level of glory to another level of glory, until we reach that ultimate level of glory: when we become the image of Jesus Christ manifesting the full glory of God. (3) Philippians 3:20-21--"Our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our lowly body, that it may be fashioned like his glorious body." (4) Colossians 3:4--"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with

him in glory." (5) Hebrews 2:9-10--Jesus was "crowned with glory and honor, that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory." God's purpose in saving us was to bring us to glory. We were redeemed to be glorified. Christ is our salvation captain who brings many sons to glory through what He suffered (Heb. 2:10). (6) Romans 9:23--"That he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had before prepared unto glory." Those of us who are ordained to glory are ordained through mercy, not because we deserved it. Any other thought misconstrues the reality of our redemption.(7) 1 Corinthians 2:7--"We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the ages unto our glory."(8) 2 Corinthians 4:17--"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (9) Colossians 1:27--"Christ in you [is] the hope of glory."(10) 1 Thessalonians 2:12--"Walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory." (11) 1 Peter 5:1--"The elders who are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed."c) The recognition of gloryDoes all that mean you can do what you want to do and still be glorified? Hebrews 3:6 says, "Christ [is] a Son over his own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." Our hope is secured by God. We prove we belong to God when we hold firm our confidence in that hope. Perseverance is a proof of salvation. Those who are truly part of the house of God will not depart from the faith. The one who wanders into sin and believes he'll be glorified no matter how he lives proves he never belonged to the household of God. God not only secures His own, but also implants within His own the power of the Spirit to keep alive our hope and obedience to the faith. God will keep His promise for those who are genuine. Hebrews 3:14 affirms that truth: "We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." That doesn't mean you remain saved by hanging on; it means you reveal you are saved by hanging on.

The Solid Rock of Hope

In "The Solid Rock" the nineteenth-century hymn writer Edward Mote said:

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

When darkness veils His lovely face,
I rest on His unchanging grace.
In ev'ry high and stormy gale
My anchor holds within the veil.

His oath, His covenant, His blood,
Support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay.

On Christ, the solid rock, I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand.

B. The Proof of Our Hope (vv. 3-4)

"We glory [rejoice] in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience,

experience [character]; and experience, hope."

1. The purpose of tribulation

The believer rejoices not only in the glory to come, but also in present tribulation. Tribulation produces the kind of character that has a greater capacity to rejoice about the future. Why? Because no matter how severe or devastating our trials are, they can never take away our promised glory, steal our hope, or touch our joy. So when we are faced with tribulation, we don't curse God or question Him like the rest of the world, but rejoice in the good that comes from it.

2. The products of tribulation

The Greek word translated "tribulation" (thlipsis) means "pressure." It was used in reference to squeezing olives for oil, or squeezing grapes for wine. When the pressure is on, the oil and wine of rejoicing oozes out of us. The words that follow explain why.

a) "Patience" Tribulation works patience (Gk., hupomon[ma]e, "patient endurance"). When you experience trouble, you learn to endure. The more troubles you have, the more you learn to endure. b) "Experience" Endurance produces "experience" (Gk., dokim[ma]en). The verb form is dokimaz[ma]o, which means, "to be approved" or "to put to the test for the purpose of approving." It has the same sense as testing gold or silver to remove the impurities. (1) The recognition A good way to translate dokim[ma]en is "proven character." Since it is used of metal, it is similar to the way we use the word sterling, as in sterling silver. We also say someone has a sterling character when he has no observable flaws. (2) The reinforcement Through tribulation we learn to trust God. It is not a problem for us because it is an honor to suffer for Christ (1 Pet. 4:14). It also is a joy to learn to experience His sustaining power in the midst of suffering (Phil 3:8-10). Tribulation increases our faith, purges us, sanctifies us, and strengthens us. It is like spiritual weight-lifting--it builds our spiritual muscles and raises our level of holiness. (3) The reward When we face tribulation we have reason to rejoice. We don't have to wait until we get to heaven to rejoice. That's because Scripture says our troubles build proven character. James 1:12 says, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life." The stronger we grow spiritually the richer our hope and the greater our rejoicing becomes. That's because the greater the reward awaiting us in heaven, the greater joy we will have in receiving it and in turn casting it before the feet of Jesus. (4) The refinement Salvation doesn't instantaneously refine character. If a bitter, angry, cantankerous person becomes saved, he is a bitter, angry, cantankerous Christian. However, salvation has planted within him the capacity to be perfected. After salvation the purging process begins--the Lord uses trials and tribulations to improve your character. c) "Hope" One thing trials can never do is take away your future hope, because that is secure. No matter how bad the attacks or how severe the tribulations, they do nothing but strengthen your spiritual character. That's why 1 Thessalonians 3:3 says, "No man should be moved by these afflictions; for ye yourselves know that we are appointed to these things."

C. The Promise of Our Hope (v. 5a)

"Hope maketh not ashamed."

Hope is never disappointed. You don't have to be ashamed of God. You will never come to the point where you say, "I put all my faith in Christ and He deceived me." Hope will not be ashamed when it is in Jesus Christ.

Hope will never be disappointed because it will receive the promised glory. We are at peace with God through Christ's death on the cross, we stand in grace, and we have a promised future glory. I am not ashamed to tell anyone that one day I will be in glory with Jesus Christ, radiating the eternal glory of God. That's my destiny. When you come to Jesus Christ, and embrace Him, you will never be disappointed--your hope is secure.

Focusing on the Facts

1. According to Ephesians 1:13, what is the significance of the Holy Spirit in salvation?

2. What was Paul's prayer request for the Ephesians (Eph. 1:15-18)?
3. What kind of people fall from grace?
4. What reason do Christians have for rejoicing?
5. What should our rejoicing be based on?
6. What is the "glory of God" that Paul refers to in Romans 5:2?
7. What is the Christian's hope?
8. What was God's purpose in saving man (Heb. 2:9-10)?
9. How are believers ordained to glory?
10. What is one way a person can prove he is a true believer (Heb. 3:6)?
11. How is the believer able to do that?
12. Why is it important to rejoice in the midst of tribulation?
13. What does tribulation do for our character? How?
14. Why will our hope not be disappointed?

Pondering the Principles

1. In Romans 8:29 Paul says that God had predestined us to be conformed to the image of His Son. What does that mean to you? Look up the following verses: Romans 13:14; 1 Corinthians 15:49; Ephesians 1:4; 4:24; Philippians 3:20-21; 1 John 3:2. Identify the verses that refer to our present obligations and those that refer to our future glorification. What similarities can you find between our present and future? What contrasts? Does the goal of your life need to change? Ask God to confirm in your own heart the emphasis of your life.
2. According to Hebrews 3:6, 14 we are to hold fast our confidence of future glory to the end. Look up the following verses: Matthew 10:22; 24:13; Colossians 1:21-23; Hebrews 4:9-11; 6:10-11; 10:23. Why is it important for us to endure? How should you respond to that knowledge? Is your confidence in other things besides the hope of future glory? If so, what kind of effect have those things had on your security in your salvation? Put your confidence in God alone. Thank Him for His faithfulness in bringing you to glory.
3. How do you respond to tribulation? Why? What are some trials you are presently experiencing? According to Romans 5:3-4 how should you be responding to them? Ask God to give you the wisdom to respond in the appropriate manner.

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