The Book of Romans

Chapter 5

 We have gotten a solid background on the attributes of faith, haven't we? Paul, writing to the combined Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome, is taking deliberate steps in explaining the concept of Grace along with the 'justification through faith’. Then we learned in chapter 3 the definition of 'justification': which is to "pronounce free from guilt", then we remember that these Christians have not had the benefit of having Apostles come to them and explain the Faith in doctrinal teaching, so Paul is giving them a primer before he can come to them. A sort of, 'bringing them up to date' on the fabric of Christian theology.

 I look back over my own life, and I can see the early mistakes I had been making since my accepting Christ at the Graham crusade. The church I attended in my High School years was a growing church, but issuing the confirming salvation message was not on their agenda, therefore I was left to study the materials and Gospel of John, (that was given me by the Graham group,) on my own time and, well friends, leaving a teenager to study Christian material on his own is not, in most cases, going to breed a strong Christian, just a very confused one. If I had one complaint about the Graham Evangelism Crusades, was the lack of follow up by the local Churches. Are you seeing the parallels here? Here were professing Christians, but no one to bring them the Gospel, (good News) how on earth were they going to get the proper education to grow and become mature Christians.

 A] Romans 5: 1 through 5; (read)

 1] "*Therefore having been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,-----"*

 So, to start off this chapter, Paul tells us we have been 'justified by faith' and what does this give us? Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Now there are different types of peace to look at, one being a cessation of hostilities. The one we look at here is a calming of the soul or spirit. When I have been ‘saved and come to the knowledge of Jesus as my Lord and Savior’ I am then 'justified' by the faith I have with this knowledge, and this then, brings me a confidence in the new relationship with God the Father. With that assurance, I can be at peace. You all follow this?

 2] *"---through Whom we also have access by faith, into this Grace in which we stand and rejoice in hope of the Glory of God."*

 Previous to this, the Gentile had absolutely no access to God and the Jew had access only through the Priests in the Temple. Access was very limited. But something happened at the Crucifixion of Jesus. Remember the Temple and the Holy of Holies which was the inner room where God met with the priest of the hour and that opening was covered by a hanging drape, so the priest was also limited in his real access to God. When Jesus died, God tore that drape from top to bottom, signifying that now full access would be possible. That access came when we became children of God through our Salvation.

 So now with a peace in my heart and a newfound access to God the Father, through Christ, I can rejoice, because I do have this relationship with my Father. There is that earnest desire of obtaining that glory which is the Glory of a full relationship with God the Father.

 So, we start off with having Peace with God, Access to God, and Hope of attaining the Glory with God. Now we find we can overcome severe trials.

 3] "*And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and Character, hope."*

 Whoa! NOW! Glory in 'tribulations'? I think NOT! There are folks who may read the beginning of a sentence but halfway into it may not like what they are reading and not finish it. But this is one you read all the way through because Paul explains himself. When I really parse out this action, trials do make me stronger if I weather the storm with faith, and with faith, grace, and with grace, the relationship with God the Father.

 I use the illustration of tempering steel or annealing glass sometimes to distraction, but it is the perfect set of examples. Through patience and faith that God sees me through my trials I learn to withstand the difficulties and that teaches me patience when I persevere, when I hang in there, and in this patience I develop character, or reputation of strength and faith that stamps me as a person of God. So now with all of this I have that hope because I have grown strong and reliable in God.

 4] "*Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, Who was given to us."*

 This will be the first time in this letter the idea of the Holy Spirit will be rendered. There is one thing Paul emphasizes here and that is God's love (agape) is installed in us by the Holy Spirit. And remember when Jesus told his disciples that he must go but then the 'comforter' will them come to them? And this is the Holy Spirit, who God has now sent to all who believe. HOPE!!! So how can we be disappointed? When our hope is there with us?

 So it is **Peace** with God, **access** to God, **hope** in God, and **overcoming** with God and we have the **love** (agape) of God. We now have God through the Holy Spirit.

 B] Romans 5: 6 through 11; (read)

 1] "*For when we were still without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly."*

 The first point is, that God came down to earth to die for sinners. We were sinners, we had no strength to stand against the evil of this world. In other words, we could not save ourselves (we had no power to save ourselves) from the certain death that would surely come to every man. God selected the time when Jesus was to come and for the purpose He was to come. Why? Go back again to John 3:16. There is that agape love.

 2] "*For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die."*

 Paul says, who would actually put his life on the line for another? Some would say with great bravado, ‘I will stand in or I will die for a friend’, but what will his demeanor be when the time comes to really die for that friend? As some wag once put it, "Talk is cheap." Yet friends, some will and do put their lives on the line, think of our first responders, police men and women and firefighters; or our men and women in military service to our country. Many of us have met this challenge, we have faced the perils of the fight; but Jesus came for ALL, friends, **ALL!** And purposely died.

 3] "*But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

 Now again, we go back to the original context, first to the uneducated believers in Rome, both Jew and gentile, who probably have not been fed the milk of scripture, and do not have that agape understanding for the true reason for Christ's sacrifice for all. And second, Paul carefully explains step by step what Jesus Christ was all about.

 4] "*Much more then, having now been justified, by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him."*

 There is a day of judgment coming, a great judgment. The prophets spoke of the great day of wrath, this could be the great, last and final judgment. This is what we are saved from. We believe and our sins are removed from us, we are declared 'just' in God's eyes, because of the sacrifice of Jesus and this saves the believer.-------Are we getting any of this?

 5] "*For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His son, much more having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."*

 So it lays out like this; Jesus dies as the ultimate sacrifice, thus our sins are forgiven through his blood that was shed. But Jesus then rose again and that assures the believer that we shall, live again in Him. As repeated again through John 3: 16 "*For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, (only begotten) that whosoever would believe in Him, would not perish but have everlasting life."*

 6] "*And not only that, but we shall also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have now received the reconciliation."*

 The eighth point is Joy in the Salvation of God. Because of what God through Jesus did for me, and for you, we should have true joy because He loved us that much. Reconciliation means to reestablish a relationship with, and this is what God has done. In regard to His creation of the world, of all creation it was His mankind creation that turned its collective back on Him from the very beginning, and God did, from time to time, try to bring His creation back to Himself, including bringing Abraham to Himself and creating a people from Abraham’s seed who would be His own people, and even that failed. But now the real relationship is possible through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Isn't this something to be joyful about? Knowing that I CAN have that relationship with God?

 C] Romans 5: 12 through 17; (read)

 1] "*Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned."*

 So to begin this, we know that Adam sinned. But if we say, well there was no law back then, how could Adam have sinned? Because in reality, there was a 'law' when God gave expressed orders not to do a specific thing. The first law. Do not eat of the Tree of knowledge of Good and Evil. (Genesis 2: 16). Adam did disobey and because of that disobedience, death was brought into the world. Up to that point, evidently there was no death, but from that point on there was ordained that all living things had a limited shelf life. And it was proved that all men sinned.

 2] "*For until the law, sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law."*

 Basically, there was what we now call sin, but without law to define it how can one call what was going on, sin? Do we see the difference? Adam may not have had the Law as we know it, but he did have a command from God not to do a specific thing and blew it. Plain and simple. But except for that example, there was no law, and how could there be sin, if there was nothing to describe what was sinful?

 3] "*Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come."*

 Death is a separation of man from his life. Death came through Adam, and even babies who were innocent would die. Everybody would now die, they would have a limited lifespan. Now there is a physical death, and spiritual death, which is separation from God, and then there is an eternal death which is eternal damnation.

 Sin was not really counted as sin until Moses, who wrote the Law as God commanded him to write, and now there was accountability.' This next phrase, I'll be frank, I truly never understood where the scholars as well as Paul, equate Adam being the first man to Jesus Christ. What I can see is, by Adam came death, by Christ came life.

 4] "*But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the one man Jesus Christ abounded to many."*

 This is the first time we encounter a "free Gift" which is Grace, which cannot be earned, but is a gift free without encumbrances. Now as it reads that one man was Adam, and because of Adam all died (not just many), so then, life through the risen Christ is the promise or the ‘gift’, and although through Adam all die, yet by grace, that free gift, is a new life in Christ. This is afforded to all who would believe. Friends, do we really grasp what we are reading?

 5] "*And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For judgment which came from one offense, resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses, resulted in justification."*

 In essence Adam's sin plunged mankind into a life of darkness and death. That free gift is light and life, and is in opposition to death. In other words, the concept of judgment came because of wrongdoing, and was exemplified through the giving of the law. But through the work of the Cross, that free gift of grace brought the forgiveness of sin. Justification.

 6] "*For if by one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness will reign in the life through the one, Jesus Christ."*

 This whole section of Paul's treatise centers on the actions of Adam and the resultant response of death. All are sinners and all die, but then with the righteous action of Jesus, all who believe will be made alive. Now that gift of righteousness is the resultant of Grace, through the atoning death of Jesus, that final act of the atoning sacrifice as called for from the Law.

 D] Romans 5: 18 through 21; (read)

 1] “*Therefore, as through one man's offense, judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in the justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one man's obedience many will be made righteous."*

 The word 'Therefore' simply means Paul is summing up what he has been saying since verse 12. Through Adam, because of his sin, all die! And now because of Jesus Christ and His death of Atonement, we have the free gift of grace and in that gift there is that justification for the believer and the declaration of righteousness.

 2] "*Moreover the Law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."*

 When God gave the law, He also gave judgments but also the sacrifices of atonement. The law defined the offenses, so man would know the offense he was committing. Man could take a choice and repent and offer up a sacrifice in atonement, but the specter of death was always there.

 Now through the final atonement death of that one righteous man, grace enters the picture. Now because of sinful man taking on this atonement in belief man is forgiven by grace. So, Paul sums up this argument, but this opens the door to other questions which these folks had, and we will look into them one by one.