

Peace, Access, Glory

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[0:00] Good morning. My name is Matthew Capone, and I'm one of the pastors here at Cheyenne Mountain Presbyterian Church, and it's my joy to bring God's word to you today.

What I'm about to tell you has nothing to do with the sermon. Years ago, I was at a wonderful Presbyterian Church in another part of the country, and a man walked up to me after service one time, and he said, you know, things seem a little sleepy around here.

And I tell you that because as I was singing with you all this morning, and I was looking out at our church, you know, I thought, our church is not perfect, but no one would ever accuse us of being sleepy.

And one of the things I just love about this church, among many things, is how bright it is. And it's bright because of you all, because you're hungry and eager and excited to be here.

So, thank you. Thanks for bringing your energy and your joy to our church. We're continuing our series in the book of Romans.

[1:02] You'll remember that Romans is a letter written by the Apostle Paul in the 50s A.D. And Romans is called Romans for a very simple reason, which is that it is written to the churches in the city of Rome.

And this letter is about the gospel. It's about the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection. We have exited chapter 4. We're entering chapter 5, and we are, in a sense, getting a certain amount of payoff because after having done all the work of chapters 1 through 4, looking at this one concept, justification by faith, Paul is now here to tell us about the benefits that flow from it.

We're going to look just at two verses this morning. Two verses, by the way, that Martin Lloyd-Jones, the famous preacher of Romans, and spent a grand total of four sermons on.

And I'll tell you, after living in these two verses this week, that might seem excessive, but he's not crazy. It's not crazy because there's so much going on just in these two verses.

There's incredibly dense. There's so much to say. We're really only going to be able to say so much, and I'm going to try to keep us on track. So on page 8, you'll see the sermon title, which is also our outline.

[2:18] And I'm going to remind you of that throughout so we don't get lost. We're going to talk about peace. We're going to talk about access. We're going to talk about glory. These are all benefits of justification.

Because of our limits this morning, we're going to spend more time on the first and the last, on peace and on glory. With that, I invite you to turn with me to Romans 5, verses 1 and 2.

You'll find it on page 8 of your worship guide. As we go there, remember that this is God's word. Jeremiah 23 tells us God's word is a hammer that breaks a rock into pieces, which means there is nothing so powerful that it can stand against the word of God, which is why we read now Romans 5, starting at verse 1.

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him, we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

I invite you to pray with me as we come to this portion of God's word. Our Father in heaven, we do thank you that you have given us great hope, the hope of glory.

[3 : 43] We ask that you would remind us of that this morning. You would set our eyes exactly where they need to be, that we would see clearly, we would understand what things in this world are big and which ones are small.

We would put things in their proper place. Most of all, you would grow our love and affection for Jesus Christ. We ask these things in his mighty name. Amen.

One of my favorite movies came out in 2011. It's called The Descendants, and it features George Clooney, who plays a very wealthy man named Matt King, who lives in Honolulu.

His family owns 25,000 acres on one of the islands of this beautiful, pristine land. And, as we start the movie, his wife has been in this tragic boating accident that ends up being fatal.

And as the movie unfolds, we end up finding out not only that, but his wife has been unfaithful to him. And so as the movie progresses, everything just sort of unravels in many ways. And the opening of the film is this montage of scenes from Hawaii, and there's this voiceover from Matt King as he's describing his life.

[4 : 57] And he says this. It's on page eight of your worship guide. My friends on the mainland think just because I live in Hawaii, I live in paradise. Like a permanent vacation, we're all just out here sipping Mai Tais, shaking our hips, and catching waves.

Are they insane? Do they think we're immune to life? How can they possibly think our families are less screwed up, our cancers less fatal, our heartaches less painful?

And the point is this. There is a war that touches everything.

You can't escape it. There are some wars you can hold at a distance. You cannot do that with this one.

It doesn't matter if your family owns 25,000 acres of the most beautiful land in Hawaii. It doesn't matter how rich or how smart or how conscientious you are.

[6 : 06] This is a war you cannot get away from. As Coloradans, we might say this. You can own property in Eagle County.

You can go to Summit County as much as you want. The war will follow you there. And it's a war that's between us and God, right?

It began with Adam and Eve in the garden when they rebelled against God. We were called to worship God, to serve him, to love him, to obey him. Instead of those things, we decided to rebel against him, to disobey him, to serve and love ourselves.

We took the gifts, and then we rejected the giver. That's what we've been looking at all through Romans, especially chapters 1 through 3. Paul's been telling us over and over again, we're all at war with God.

We all deserve God's punishment. The problems of this life are all downstream of that. sickness and disease and death and strife and estrangement, cutoff, anger, violence, murder.

[7 : 14] And no matter how great a moment in your life is, sin is always lurking in the corner, staining it somehow.

I say all that, because as we start Romans chapter 5, Paul is here to announce to us, that there is now peace with God.

And peace with God does not make sense. It is not good news, unless we see and acknowledge, how bad the war we are in is. until we realize the war with God is the root of every problem.

If we realize that, verse 1 is a spectacular announcement. Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God.

the war is coming to an end. Now, usually wars have winners and losers, and it's the loser that has to sacrifice things.

[8 : 35] We talk of terms, when there's a war and there's an end, we might say, you know, they're negotiating the terms of defeat. How much is the loser going to give up? Here, Paul tells us, the opposite is actually the case.

It is the winner who gives up. We have peace through our Lord Jesus Christ. Here, it's the winner who sacrifices.

We have peace with God because Jesus took the punishment. Are you at peace with God?

Are you at peace with God? Do you have peace as you look back at your life and you see your guilt and your mistakes and your sin?

Do you know in that moment that you have God's forgiveness? Are you at peace with other people?

[9 : 56] By the way, peace with God and peace with other people are tied together. Have you stopped trying to impress them because you know you have God's favor?

peace with God peace with God is the end of nursing grudges and seeking revenge.

It's what Jesus says in Matthew chapter 5 that if someone harms you, you turn the other cheek. By the way, I'm going to suggest this morning if you are nursing grudges and seeking revenge and you call yourself a Christian, it's time for revival.

It's time to pray that God would be at work in your heart in a new way. One pastor says the test of peace is this. Are you ready to die?

As a pastor, I have the privilege and task of meeting with people as they know that death is close. And the one question I always ask is this.

[11 : 15] Are you ready? Are you ready? Do you have peace with God? Do you live with the freedom and joy that comes from knowing what is most true about you is that you belong to God?

Is your hope that God is one day bringing full and final peace to this world? It's what we sing about at Christmas.

Isaiah chapter 26 verse 3 says this. You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you because he trusts in you.

Do you have peace with God? I told you before and I'll tell you again.

Romans is called the fifth gospel. It's called the fifth gospel because what Paul teaches Jesus taught first. Jesus says this in John 14. Peace I leave with you my peace I give to you not as the world gives do I give to you.

[12 : 51] let not your hearts be troubled neither let them be afraid. Do you have peace with God?

I told you we had three points this morning.

Peace which now takes us to access and there's a logical order here. You can't have access to someone unless you have peace. I'm not going to come and ask a favor from you if I know that you are violently mad at me.

Right? We need peace before we have access. Access here in verse 2 is a relational word that's being used and there's a very simple principle which is this.

there are some people you have access to and some people you don't. There's some people you literally don't know how to get a hold of.

[13:55] Right? There's some crazy people who work hard to try to figure out how can I contact such and such celebrity? How do I get access? What is a man asking a woman when he asks her for her number?

He is asking for access. He is saying I want to be in your presence. I want to relate to you. The grace that's being spoken about in verse 2 is referring back to justification.

Because of justification because of what God has done for you in Jesus Christ you have access to him. Christian you have God's phone number.

He will take your call and he will take it because of Jesus Christ. You have access to him.

This is part of what Moses talks about in Deuteronomy chapter 4 which is on page 3 of your worship guide which Scott read to us. For what great nation is there that has a God so near to it as the Lord our God is to us whenever we call upon him.

[15:24] You have God's phone number and you have it because of Jesus Christ. Because of Jesus God takes your call.

So we have peace with God. We have access to God that leads to joy in our future with God.

It takes us to glory. verse 2 he says this we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

What Paul is saying is this what Christians dream about what thrills them what fills their minds when they have nothing else to think about is the glory of God.

That is what we're supposed to be excited about more than anything else. I've already prepped the ground for this a little bit in our confession of faith. One way to define glory is this being in God's presence.

[16:45] To experience glory is to be with God completely. And why is that to experience his glory?

Well it tells us here that's the glory we're celebrating. That's the glory we rejoice in. The glory of God. Now you might say okay actually I don't rejoice in the glory of God.

That's not what fills my heart and my mind. That sounds like the kind of thing that maybe monks do in monasteries doesn't sound like the sort of thing a normal sane person does.

Right? There's that old phrase that someone can be so heavenly minded that they're of no earthly good. And I think that appears and comes to some of our minds when we hear phrases like this okay rejoice in the glory of God that's great for maybe a pastor who's able to take a day of prayer and meditate on heavenly things.

And so I have a task this morning and I'm going to try to convince you that you should as a normal Christian rejoice in the glory of God. God's God's glory is what should fill your mind.

[18:00] Okay? First is this. God's glory is the most beautiful experience you will ever have.

God's glory is the most beautiful experience you will ever have. You have seen God's art. You've seen it.

You've been to God's museum. You know what sort of things are in God's museum? Sunsets, sex, starry skies.

Whenever you see those things you are seeing God's artwork. And you know what you're supposed to think in those moments? You're supposed to say this.

if the art is this good, what must the artist be like? If the art is this good, what must the artist be like?

[19:08] And I can make you a promise this morning. The artist is greater than the art. the artist is greater than the art.

You think mountains are great? I'll tell you what's greater than a mountain. The one who made them. That is the glory of God.

God. beauty is so great that it will be almost too much to bear.

It is greater than anything you've experienced in this world. Some of you may know that Garden of the Gods for a time was ranked number one in the United States of all the locations on Trip Advisor.

And at one point it was ranked number nine in the world. If God's glory was on Trip Advisor it would be number one every year.

[20:31] By the way why is it that house prices are so expensive in most of Colorado the front range but in some places in particular.

They're so expensive because people will pay a premium to be close to glory. And I'm here to tell you God's glory the greatest glory is free.

You should rejoice in the glory of God because it is more beautiful than anything you can imagine. Second reason you should rejoice in the glory of God this great benefit that you have access to because of justification and it's this when we see God we will become like God when we see God we will become like God I didn't say we will become God that's not what I said I said we will be like God that's what we already read in our confession of faith remember I pointed out to you 1 John chapter 3 verse 2 we read all of this together beloved we are God's children now and what we will be has not yet appeared but we know that when he appears we shall be like him because we shall see him as he is told you earlier people like to talk about my real self who

I was meant to be I am going to tell you this morning who your real self is and what you were meant to be you were meant to be like God do you want to meet your real self the true you you will meet it as you see the face of Jesus Christ when you are in glory God will clear away all the sin and disease from your life and you will finally be who you were created to be what people seek through surgery only God can provide what the world only promises God delivers rejoice in the glory of

God rejoice in God's glory because it is more beautiful than anything you've ever seen rejoice in God's glory because when you see it you will be like him third we rejoice in the glory of God because to be with God is the fulfillment of everything we desire we rejoice in the glory of God because to be with God is the fulfillment of everything we desire see this on page seven of your worship guide a quote from Les Mis by Victor Hugo the supreme happiness of life is the conviction that we are loved loved for ourselves say rather loved in spite of ourselves what is shame if not someone seeing us and turning away and what is love if not someone seeing us and staying and what is it that the human heart longs for more than that first

[24:46] Corinthians chapter 13 verse 12 says this for now we see in a mirror dimly but then face to face now I know in part then I shall know fully even as I have been fully known when you go to the concert a concert when you want live music what are most of the songs about and which songs does everyone sing along to I don't think I've ever been to a concert where people have sung a song about how wonderful it is to work a nine to five job some songs are laments they're songs about suffering and heartache and loss some songs are about the joy of being alive about returning home and what are the songs that people stand up and cheer for what are the songs that caused people in the 90s to whip out their

Zippo lighters and people today to turn on the lights on their cell phone it's love songs it's love songs because those are the most powerful songs and those are the most powerful songs because they are songs about seeing and being seen so on page seven of your worship guide from Kurt Thompson we are all born into the world looking for someone looking for us and we remain in this mode of searching for the rest of our lives Christian that desire is only fully met in Jesus Christ Jesus

Christ is the only one with whom we are fully loved and fully known relationships and romance on this earth are merely an appetizer and a signpost every other glory is a replacement for that nothing can compete with the glory that is to come no matter what has happened to you in this life no matter what will happen to you before the end if you are in Christ you cannot lose that glory our world loves to separate people to winners and losers if you're a winner

I have bad news for you no matter what you have if you don't have this you don't have glory that's why Mary in her song in Luke chapter 2 talks about God scattering the proud in the thoughts of their hearts if you're a loser in the eyes of the world I have good news for you no matter what you lose you can't lose this you can't lose the glory that is to come!

you make this your hope will you rejoice! more than anything else in the glory of God will you allow that to clarify what in this world is big and what is small if you do it will change you from the inside out that sort of hope will make you a different person it will cut down to size what needs to be cut down to size and it will magnify what needs to be magnified what Paul taught Jesus taught first Jesus in John chapter 17 tells God the father that he wants you to see his glory father

[29:59] I desire that they also whom you have given me may be with me where I am to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world we might say this when I gaze upon his beauty when I see him as I should then my eyes are lifted upward for his glory and my good will you gaze upon the glory of Jesus Christ will you rejoice in that more than anything else when you do it will change you from the inside out let's pray our father in heaven we do praise you and thank you for the great glory that is ours in

Jesus Christ we thank you for the security of that inheritance that it cannot be touched by anything in this world and no matter what we lose here we cannot lose that we ask that you would set that glory before us as our great hope and desire that it would be what we rejoice in more than anything else we ask