

# The Certainty of our Assurance

By Grant Castleberry

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Romans 5:1, 2

This week marks the 505<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the PROTESTANT REFORMATION.

- On October 31, 1517 Luther nailed 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg.
- The Roman Catholic Church, in order to build St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, decided to sell a "Papal Indulgence."
  - An indulgence was a PROMISE given by the POPE that you were FORGIVEN of your SINS (and would receive MERIT) from the meritorious lives of other saints, so that you would NOT have to spend time in PURGATORY.

Johannes Tetzel campaigned throughout EUROPE – selling indulgences, saying, *"A COIN in the COFFER CLINGS... a SOUL from PURGATORY SPRINGS."*

- When this was happening in the FALL of 1517, Luther wrote the 95 THESES in protest.
- 1) *"When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said "Repent [Matt 4:17] he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance."*
- 5) *"The pope neither desires nor is able to remit any penalties except those imposed by his own authority or that of the canons."*
- 62) *"The true treasure of the church is the most holy gospel of the glory and grace of God."*

These *theses* strike @ the VERY CENTER of the human predicament.

That predicament is this – *how can a SINFUL MAN's GUILT be assuaged before a holy God? How can YOU arrive at a DEGREE of ASSURANCE that your SOUL will go to HEAVEN?*

- This is the FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION that true CHRISTIANITY answers.
- Sometimes this is called "ASSURANCE" – *Assurance is the knowledge and confidence that you are saved by Christ and will inherit all of His benefits including Heaven.*
- *Roman Catholicism* said that you could NEVER have assurance in this LIFE.
  - The REASON was Two-Fold – 1) *How could you know how many good works are enough for salvation;* 2) *There is always the possibility that you would commit a mortal sin and LOSE your SALVATION.*
- *Mainline Protestantism* has the opposite PROBLEM – *Gives false assurance to everyone.*
  - *But it's a wrong ASSURANCE and MANY go to HELL thinking they are on the way to HEAVEN*

The Bible says that you can arrive at complete assurance. But it's REAL CERTAINTY.

## 1) Know the Doctrine of Justification by Faith

This is MASSIVELY important. Romans 5:1: [1] *Therefore, having been justified by faith.*

- Paul is making an ARGUMENT (Therefore)... and this ARGUMENT has to do with this word JUSTIFICATION.
  - JUSTIFICATION –The GREEK word *dikaio* – Means to RENDER a favorable courtroom verdict...
    - *"To vindicate"* (You are tried for a CRIME you didn't commit – you are vindicated; You are JUSTIFIED. The JUDGE pronounces you INNOCENT).
- In this CASE the word speaks to the TRIBUNAL of GOD – that God renders a verdict of BEING JUSTIFIED and VINDICATED of no WRONG-Doing.
- But HERE's the PROBLEM – God cannot simply declare GUILTY sinners RIGHTEOUS.

What PAUL is seeking to ESTABLISH is UNIVERSAL GUILT before a HOLY GOD.

- Romans 3:9 – [9] *For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin,*
- Romans 3:19 – [10] *as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one;”*
- Romans 3:23 – [23] *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*
- The message of the BIBLE is not there are some BAD and some GOOD. The message is that we are all BAD.
  - *Babies are born with CIGARS in their MOUTHS (That’s NLT).*
  - *We are born SINNERS.*
  - *The BIBLE says we are all deserving of JUDGMENT.*
  - *You COULD never earn your way to HEAVEN.*
  - Romans 3:20 – [20] *For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.*

This is where the GOOD news comes in. GOD made a WAY for SINNERS to be JUSTIFIED.

- God SENT His SON. To become a MAN. LIVE a PERFECT, RIGHTEOUS LIFE.
- It’s right here in Romans 3:25 – [25] *whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.*
- A propitiation is A SACRIFICE that pleases GOD by SATISFYING His WRATH and ANGER.
  - John Murray – “Propitiation contemplates our liability to the wrath of God and is the provision of grace whereby we may be freed from that wrath.”
  - The BLOOD goes back to the OLD TESTAMENT sacrifices. The BLOOD represents LIFE.
  - The HIGH PRIEST would sacrifice a GOAT on the DAY of the ATONEMENT... and then sprinkle the blood on the MERCY SEAT on the ARK of the COVENANT in the HOLY of HOLIES.
  - *That blood symbolized and pointed forward to the BLOOD that CHRIST would shed for SINNERS.*
  - Hebrews 9:12 – [12] *he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.*
  - 1 John 2:2 – [2] *He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*

Christ dying in your PLACE as a substitute. The way that we are saved by Christ is what is called IMPUTATION. *That is that God credits all YOUR SIN to CHRIST and All of His RIGHTEOUSNESS to you.*

- Romans 3:24 – [24] *and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*
  - So God Declares SINNERS righteous as a GIFT.
  - And this GIFT is credited through FAITH in CHRIST.
  - In Romans 4 – Abraham is the archetype of FAITH. The MODEL of FAITH.
  - Romans 4:3 – [3] *For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.”*
  - Romans 4:5 – [5] *And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness.*

## 2) Rest in the Peace with God

REST in the Result of JUSTIFICATION. Paul says it is PEACE with GOD through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Romans 5:1 - *we have peace with God though our Lord Jesus Christ.*

- This peace is NOT a FEELING.
- This is the REALITY of true PEACE with God. It is TERMS of PEACE that are drawn up after a WAR!
  - The implication is two-fold:
    - 1) *We were once enemies of GOD. Hostile to God.*
      - Romans 5:10 – [10] *For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son...*
      - Colossians 1:21 – [21] *And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds*
      - MAN is NOT born NEUTRAL to GOD. Man is OPPOSED to GOD.
    - 2) *God was once enemies of us. We often don't think of God having enemies.*
      - 1 Corinthians 15:25 – [25] *For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.*
      - Psalm 7:12 – [12] *If a man does not repent, God will whet his sword; he has bent and readied his bow; [13] he has prepared for him his deadly weapons, making his arrows fiery shafts.*
      - Revelation 19:15 – [15] *From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.*
      - Jonathan Edwards – “What a terrible things to fall into the hands of an angry God.”
- What Paul is saying is that if you are JUSTIFIED by FAITH you are now under these TERMS of PEACE. A TREATY between you and GOD has been drawn.
  - And the TREATY was made by the LORD JESUS CHRIST!
  - R. C. Sproul – “Christ is our peace, so for us there is no more war with God.”
    - *That the Christian through Jesus CHRIST are now at PEACE with GOD.*
    - This is why Paul calls the gospel the “*gospel of peace*” in Ephesians 6:15.
  - This is why the gospel is called a gospel of RECONCILIATION.
    - 1 Corinthians 5:20 – [20] *Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.*

### 3) Press into the Access to God

This is the BENEFIT of JUSTIFICATION by FAITH.

- If you have TRUSTED CHRIST the door is open wide to the FATHER.
- This BENEFIT is clearly articulated. Romans 5:2 – [2] *Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand*
- ACCESS speaks to an appearance before a GREAT KING. It's used in the OLD TESTAMENT to describe access to King Cyrus's COURT.
  - The NASB translates it as 'INTRODUCTION.'
  - In a King's Court the NAME of the PERSON entering is ANNOUNCED.
- And what PAUL is SAYING – this is the NEW BENEFIT of the CHRISTIAN. *We have this access to GOD. ACCESS to KNOW HIM. To PRAY to HIM.*
  - He uses the word two other times – Ephesians 2:18 saying that both Jews and Gentiles have this access – [18] *“gain access to the Father by one Spirit.”*
  - Ephesians 3:12 – [12] *in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.*
- God saved us in order to have this BOLDNESS to have RELATIONSHIP with HIM. This is ASTOUNDING. Before we were an ENEMY – now we have BOLD ACCESS.
  - And we have constant access because we “stand in grace” – it's a sphere of grace.

- Paul says – PRESENT TENSE – *we stand in this sphere of GRACE of constant access to GOD.*
- This is the CONSTANT state of the CHRISTIAN... we have ACCESS to HIM.
- And the reason you are in this SPHERE of GRACE is because you are an adopted child. John 1:12 – [12] *But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,*
- We who were once strangers and enemies of God are now called His children.
- So we can come to CHRIST boldly. NO FEAR of being turned AWAY. Just as a CHILD is not afraid of being turned away from their FATHER.
  - And we stand in this sphere of GRACE.
  - Matthew 7:7 – [7] *Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. [8] “For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. [9] “or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone?*

#### 4) Exalt in the Hope of the Glory of God

Romans 5:2 – [2]... *we EXALT in the hope of the glory of God.*

- HOPE of the GLORY of GOD...
  - HOPE – tells us it’s something in the FUTURE. It’s not presently experienced. But PAUL is certain that will HAPPEN.
  - The glory of GOD is the radiance of His attributes.
  - Mark 8:38 – [38] *For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.*
  - Titus 2:13 – [13] *waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ*
  - 1 Peter 4:13 – [13] *But rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.*
  - Jude 24 – [24] *Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy.*
  - AND WHEN CRIST RETURNS WE WILL BE TRANSFORMED INTO HIS GLORY.
  - 1 John 3:2 – [2] *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.*
  - 1 Corinthians 15:51 – [51] *Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, [52] in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable and we shall be changed. [53] For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.*

PAUL says the BELIEVER EXALTS in this HOPE. The BELIEVER boasts in this HOPE. That is a DEEP ASSURANCE.