

Sunday, Sept.20, 2009

Living Hope EFC

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So...what's different, now that we're justified by faith? Rom.5:1-5, Part 3. We rejoice in the hope of future glory & in present sufferings.

ILLUS "I own everything!"

Dr. George Truett was entertained on one occasion in the home of a **wealthy oilman** in Texas. After dinner the man took him up on the roof of his house & pointed out *huge fields of oil derricks*.

He said, "Dr. Truett, **that's all mine**. I came to this country 25 years ago penniless & now *I own everything as far as you can see in that direction*"

Then he turned to the opposite direction that looked out on **fields of grain** and again said: "it's all mine. I own everything as far as you can see."

Then he turned to the east & pointed to huge **herds of cattle** & said again, "It's all mine, everything as far as you can see in that direction."

One final time he turned toward the west & pointed to **great virgin forest** & said again, "It's all mine. 25 years ago I was penniless, but I worked hard & saved & today *I own everything as far as the eye sees.*"

He paused for a response of praise. But to his astonishment it didn't come. **Dr. Truett** laid his hand lovingly on his shoulder, pointed upward and said, "*My friend, how much do you own in that direction?*"

The man dropped his head in shame & said: "I never thought of that."

- Lee Tan, 6043

What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his soul?

Q: What does it profit **the Christian** if he owns all the wealth of heaven but forfeits it because he either doesn't know it or he doesn't believe it?

In Rom.1-4 Paul has explained: "*Those who believe in Christ =Justified*"

In Rom.5-8 He explains the **treasure of benefits** for those NOW justified.

- To all those who have been declared righteous **by faith in Christ**, **God NOW** distributes the **benefits of His abundant provision of grace**, immediately and eternally, which are His means for the believer's radical transformation both for eternity & for his daily living

Rom. 5: Paul begins listing the Benefits of those who are *justified*:

(1) Peace with God. (2) **We NOW stand in GRACE!**

Dr. Chafer: 33 divine accomplishments **instantaneously, simultaneously & eternally accomplished** for every believer –the moment he believes.

- **They can be summed up by Eph.1:3- "every spiritual blessing."**
- Col.3:1-4. **Rom.8:16-17** "We ARE Joint heirs with Christ!"

ILLUS: BY THE WAY...have you ever thought about this? **What kind of Person** is it that **gives you permanent possession in his house?** Opens up his checkbook, gives you full rights & shared

ownership of **everything** he owns? What kind of a Person would do such a think? This is your God

- How difficult is it for us to open our wallet & give someone \$500?
- What is the biggest gift you've ever received?

Q: What kind of a person is this God, in whose grace we stand? **Eph.3:20**

We are **not** "naturally" aware of this supernatural transaction.

These benefits of Grace:

1: Are not experienced.

-We don't feel them with our 5 senses.

2. They are not progressive.

Example: Sonship. A child is as much a son at birth as he is later.

- **God always speaks of us as present possessors.** – Col.2:9,10

3. They are not related to human merit.

-They are blessings because of Christ's merit.

4. They are eternal in their character.

-Based on the enduring perfection of Christ.

5. They are known only by Revelation.

-Human imagination & speculation give us no information about grace.

6. They are accomplished by God alone.

-By their very nature divine accomplishments are the work of

7. They are not accomplished by man.

-Salvation provides our most radical transformations in heaven itself.

Salvation by Grace brings the believer into divine realities of blessing given **instantaneously & simultaneously** at spiritual birth, and that can **never change**, because all rests upon the value and incorruptibility of Christ's redemptive work. **The Son brings us into the wealth of Father.**

Benefit 3: We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, -5:2

It is important to see what Paul is & is not saying here.

- He is not saying: "By Christ's sacrifice we have been justified, been given peace with God, stand in Grace, and **we hope we might even get into heaven/ glory** – if we're really lucky. Cross your fingers!"
- **HOPE:** is rather the confident anticipation of that which we do not yet see, but has already been guaranteed! The outcome is not in Q!

NOTE what the Bible says about our coming "glory."

- By nature, we all fall short of God's glory: Rom.3:23.
- Christ prayed that we might see/share His glory: Jn.17:24

- Every believer is being transformed into Christ's glory: 2 Cor.3:18.
 - God Himself has made a glorified body for the bel'r: 2 Cor.5:1,4-5.
 - What is our guarantee of glory? Col.1:27.
- ILLUS:** *Trees in the fall* don't appear alive. In the spring they blossom.
- The "blossom life" was there in them all the time, awaiting the spring!

"HOPE of Glory" – Has no connotation of chance or wish about it.

- Rom.8:29-30. Col.3:1-4. **1 Pet.1:3-6a.**

QUESTION: Do you own all this...in that direction?

- Is your treasure in heaven financing your lifestyle on earth?
- What an incredible HOPE of GLORY every believer has to look forward to. This HOPE changed Paul's whole life – on earth!

"The quality of our earthly life, with all its disappointments, shortcomings, frailties and losses – will be determined by how great a value we put upon the quality of our heavenly hope."

Benefit 4: We rejoice in our sufferings...5:3-5

Now, this, at first, sounds very strange,
until we look to divine Revelation for help.

Paul says: "In light of the fact that we are God's children – trials & suffer- ings are actually a part of God's process in our coming Glory –

- **2 Cor. 4:16-18;** 3:18 Rom.8:18

5:3-5: NOW justified, at peace with God, standing in Grace, the Hope of Glory our future,

- Our Father - takes the initiative to develop His character in us.
- We "**know**" tribulations produce endurance, approved character, HOPE – that does not disappoint. Because all is couched in His love.

EXAMPLE: Child training, parenting.

- How many hours does a mom or dad put into training, correcting, disciplining – his child? WHY?
- μΕΥ: Because **we love them.**
- δε: Because character does not develop naturally. It takes time, trials
- But as that character begins to be seen in the child, how encouraging is it? What hope and joy for the future – it gives us.
- **Rom.8:18,28; James 1:2-3** - "Mature and complete." That is joy!

Part of the wealth God gives to those who are JUSTIFIED, **is knowing** that even our trials are measured with divine wisdom & purpose.

- BUT we will only enjoy this wealth if we BELIEVE God's Word! **Eph.6: "Take the shield of faith..."**

QUESTION: How are we responding to the trials in our life?

- Are we learning patience? Endurance? Longsuffering? Peace? Joy? Love for others? Gentleness? Goodness? –Rom.12:12-20?
- The just shall LIVE BY FAITH...daily, hourly, moment-by-moment.
- Character & hope come – as we respond correctly to our trials.

<i>ABOUT OUR CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES AT LIVING HOPE:</i>

- We have done all that we know to do to grow our church plant.
- Our first Public Preview service - 85 people!
- When we moved into our current location: about 50 people.
- Currently: 45- our big #. 20-40 in weekly attenders?
- WHY aren't we growing? We wonder. We fret. We worry.

Q: WHY ARE WE TAKING SO LONG TO GROW...

Q: What does the Bible say is the purpose of trials? **A:** = **OUR maturity!**

WW: Our values will determine our evaluations.

- IF we value comfort more than character = trials will upset us.
- IF we value material things more than spiritual = we won't count joy.
- IF we live for the present & not the future – trials will make us bitter.

Can we count "all joy" the trials we are facing?

IS JESUS ENOUGH FOR US...if we stay small a while? **Abr**– Rom.4:17-