

Does the Bible Really Say That?

Introduction

We often hear expressions that people think come *straight out of the Bible* but may or may not originate in the Bible. Let's look at three examples. One such expression is "cleanliness is next to godliness". Is that in the Bible? Sorry Moms, but it is not. Another one that we frequently hear is, "God moves in mysterious ways". What do you think? Actually, it's a trick question. The concept or principle can certainly be found in many Biblical texts, but not the *exact* wording. The wording of the expression comes from an old hymn, written by William Cowper in 1773 (Light Shining Out of Darkness). Cowper was friends with John Newton, who wrote, "Amazing Grace" the year before.

A third expression that we still sometimes hear today is, "God helps those who help themselves". Our text in Romans will directly answer this question.

The Benefits of Righteousness

You might have a job, or retired from a job like me, which has provided benefits. Let me tell you that those benefits pale in comparison to those we have received through faith in Christ.

After having demonstrated in the first two and a half chapters of Romans that man is totally depraved and deserving of eternal condemnation, Paul then spent most of the next two chapters proving that man is justified through faith alone.

5:1¹ -2a Peace with God

Many Bible students don't realize that there is a difference between peace *with* God, like we have here, and the peace *of* God. At the end of your notes, I attached a table that differentiates between the two. There are actually different constructions in the original. Peace *with* God is objective and immutable, it cannot change. This is because it's basis, as we see here in verse one, is our justification, which is an accomplished fact and unchangeable itself.

¹ For advanced students: Either reading is understandable as having arisen from a scribe hearing an omega or omicron in a similar fashion and confusing one for the other. Actually, there is evidence that the differences in sound were disappearing in the 1st century AD. But the omega reading would result in a subjective exhortation, which would have no place in the text. The first imperative in the book doesn't occur until chapter 6, but only in a grammatical sense. The section on exhortation doesn't begin until chapter 12! 5:1 is still in the section on justification, which is purely *objective*! The testimony of uncial 0220 makes the omicron reading at least as old as the omega reading (3rd century), and in fact, quality mss. with omega have corrections. Although the majority and quality mss. testify to the omega reading, the subjective reading in context isn't just difficult, but impossible, and thus the vast majority of translations and expositors. If number of mss. is such a factor, then why not return to the Textus Receptus?

The protestant definition, for 509 years now, of “to justify” is to *declare* righteous, not to *make* righteous, which would be unbiblical. We won’t be *made* righteous until the resurrection. “Justified” is a forensic or legal term, part of our position or standing before God. Since the peace *with* God is given on that basis, it too is part of our standing before God. So, you always have it, even if you can’t *feel* it. It is unconditional.

Now there is the peace *of* God, which you can read about in Phillipians 4:5-6. Many of you have probably memorized those verses. The peace *of* God is subjective, something that occurs in the right environment, “being anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, let your requests be known to God”. It is experiential, something you can experience in your everyday life. It is in consequence to that prayer environment and exceeds logic. More on that later.

Sometimes prepositions matter, especially in the Bible.

But I need to make one more important point about the peace *of* God. There are various schemes out there for determining the will of God. I’m certain that they are well intended, but often, they come across to me as the equivalent to Christian divination. Understand that it is God’s will that we experience His peace 100% of the time. And we are all on a learning curve, but the more we grow in Christ, the more we experience the peace *of* God. At this stage of my growth, it’s rare for me *not* to experience His peace. The Bible nowhere actually teaches that as a method of determining God’s will is to “feel peace”.

So, when someone says, “I feel a real peace about my decision”, I have to wonder if they are confusing feeling relief from taking the path of least resistance with true peace. Sometimes we must face serious opposition when taking a stand for Christ or when we do God’s will. In conflict we might be tempted to take that path of least resistance, and, confuse relief with peace.

5:2a-11 Exultation

:2-4 We exult in hope

I wish that I had a nickel for every time that I have heard a believer say, “why is this happening to me?”. Tribulation in the life of a believer is standard equipment, not optional. It is one of the Lord’s main methods of training us. As you might know, the method for getting the impurities out of gold is to heat it up at an extremely high temperature. The same thing happens to the believer. If the Lord is putting you through serious trials and tribulations, He might be training you for something important.

Here it says that tribulation results in perseverance, which is the word *hupomenai*. It can also be translated endurance, but this an endurance that weathers the big storms. When I worked in Mexico for GM, I usually stayed at the hotel Nicco. It was built to

withstand a serious earthquake. The believer is supposed to be like that. Over time, we learn through withstanding trials to endure even greater tribulations.

And, according to our text, tribulation produces proven character. Just like the previously-mentioned process of refining gold. The tribulations in a believer's life leach out the impurities. The Lord is still working on me, personally. But He had quite a project when He started on me.

Not that we ever "arrive", short of the resurrection, but this process results in hope, regardless of the circumstances. When Paul and Silas were thrown into jail in Philippi, they didn't ask, "why is this happening to us?" Instead, they sang hymns of rejoicing. I firmly believe that their behavior was at least partially instrumental in the jailor's conversion. Something like that was instrumental in my own conversion to faith in Christ.

By the time I was a senior in high school, I had become an agnostic. A friend of mine, David Driscoll, had repeatedly invited me to a home Bible study, taught by a missionary on furlough. But I didn't want any part of that. Another friend of mine, Mike Faulk, stole a car and accidentally killed David, who was out hiking around dusk. Although David's family mourned David's passing, they actually went to console Mike, assuring him that David was in heaven, and that they would see him again someday. The Bible study was continued in David's name, which I then attended. I wanted to find out what made the Driscolls tick. They were clearly different. The missionary used something called apologetics which convinced me that Jesus was who He claimed to be. So, I came to faith in Christ. A number of my classmates also came to faith in Christ in that Bible study.

:5 Hope delivers, because the love *from* God is poured into the seat of our emotions by the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is repeatedly called a gift in the Bible, so it's not something that we earn. We are able to love others because the Holy Spirit continually refills our emotional reservoir with love. So, to speak, the Lord loves others *through* us, because it is God's love in the first place.

:6-8 These benefits are through the substitutionary death of Christ

:6 Here is the answer to our question. God doesn't help those who help themselves. He helps those who *cannot help themselves* because they are *unable* to help themselves (Rom. 8:7; I Cor. 2:14). We call that total depravity, which Paul made clear in the first two and a half chapters of Romans (Rom. 3:23). They are lost and cannot remedy their own situation.

:7 It is improbable that someone would die for someone else, though there is a chance that someone would die for a good person. But remember that we are *not* good (Mk. 10:18).

:8 There is a reason that this verse is so well known. Christ died in a substitutionary way *for* us, *in our place*, while we were depraved sinners (he's already called us

helpless and ungodly in verse six). He took the penalty upon Himself which we deserved. He was punished in our place.

:9-11 More benefits

:9 In this substitutionary sacrifice that Christ made, God poured out all of His wrath upon Christ, so that we don't need to suffer His wrath. We don't hear much about God's wrath these days from pulpits or Christian books, but every unbeliever is currently under a sentence of God's wrath (Jn. 3:36). If they die without having placed their faith in Christ, they must suffer the Lord's wrath for all of eternity. They go straight to Hades, and do not pass Go and collect \$200. There is no 2nd chance or purgatory. Either we trust in Christ, who paid the penalty *for* our sin, or we pay for our own sin *for all of eternity*. There is no plan B.

And what a joy, or as we are saying here, *exultation*, to know that having accepted Christ through faith, we will go straight to heaven when we die! And, what he doesn't say here, we will have immortal resurrection bodies and a resurrection home. I hope that I won't have to do yardwork at that house.

:10-11 Reconciled

:10 This passage is not very complimentary of fallen man. From verse six through this verse, we have been called helpless, ungodly, sinners, and now *enemies of God* by nature. Without Christ, we were children of Satan, 100% opposed to the purpose and plan of God, under a sentence of His wrath.

When you study the Bible, pay attention to the verb tenses. Verbs are action words. Notice here that it says that we *shall* be saved, *future* tense. You see, there are actually three tenses to salvation:

- 1) The *past* tense of salvation, or we *have been saved* from the *penalty* of sin (Eph. 1:7; 2:8-9). We call this *justification, declared righteous*. This is usually to what folks refer when they say that they have been saved,
- 2) The *present* tense of salvation, or we are being saved from the *power* of sin (I Cor. 1:18). As we grow in faith, more-and-more areas of our lives are being brought under the Lord's control. Beware of thinking of instant maturity. It doesn't happen. We typically call this sanctification, and,
- 3) The *future* tense of salvation, about which we just discussed. We *shall be saved* from the *presence* of sin, both within and without. We typically call this *glorification*.

Salvation: all tensed up?

Past tense: Justification = "I have been saved" = "declared righteous" = saved from the **penalty of sin**; Rom. 3:28; 4:5; 5:1; 8:1; Cf. II Cor. 5:21; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-9

Present tense: Sanctification (experiential) = “I am being saved” = “the process of being set apart” = saved from the **power of sin**; Jn. 15:5; 17:7; Rom. 6:1-23; I Cor. 1:18; II Cor. 3:18; 4:16-18; Gal. 3:2-3; 5:16, 22, 23; Eph. 2:10; Phil. 1:6; Col. 2:6-7; Heb. 12:3-11; II Pet. 3:18; I Jn. 3:2-3

Future tense: Glorification = “I will be saved” = saved from the **presence of sin**; Rom. 5:9-11; Phil 3:20-21; I Thess. 5:23; I Pet. 1:5, 13; I Jn. 3:2-3

Back to verse ten, we are saved by His life. Because Jesus was raised from death-to-life, He will also use that resurrection life to empower us today and raise us from the dead in the future.

:11 That future salvation is founded upon our *present* reconciliation. We are reconciled with God *now*! That is, in turn, founded upon the death of Christ and faith through grace teaching. This means that we can have a personal relationship with God through Christ. Lance, who was a helpless, ungodly person, a sinner, and enemy of God, now through Christ is a child of God, having a relationship with God through Christ. And I can go to Him at any time. We call that direct access. You don’t need to go through another person like a “priest”, or a pastor, or even another adult. His throne is called a throne of grace, to which we are encouraged to come with confidence or “boldly”, because it doesn’t depend on our own merit.

If you have never made the decision to place your faith in Christ, you can do that right now in your seat quietly. You don’t need to pray, but you do need to admit that you are a lost sinner. Then you need to accept the Lord Jesus in faith. Just as Paul said to the Philippian jailer, “Believe on the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31). If you have questions, you are welcome to talk to myself or one of the leaders after our closing hymn. I know that Blake is faithfully up here after the services.

Distinctions in God's Peace

1. Large subject; word alone occurs 99 times in NT
2. "Blessed are the peacemakers..." (Mt. 5:9) = horizontal peace, man-to-man; obvious distinctions within horizontal peace
3. This subject is vertical peace, God-to-man; distinctions here also
4. Horizontal peace is built on foundation of vertical peace
5. Both have God as source
6. Comparison with distinctions in other doctrines – standing or position vs. practice or experience:
 - Resurrection – Eph. 2:4-7; vs. I Thess. 4:13-18
 - Righteousness – Rom. 3:28; 4:5; II Cor. 5:21 vs. Rom. 6:12-23; I Tim. 6:11; Heb. 12:11 (Eph. 6:14 likely represents both)

Peace *with* God
Romans 5:1-2

Peace *of* God
Phil. 4:6-7

Objective	Subjective
Factual	Emotional
Permanent, immutable	Temporal, changeable
Unconditional	Conditional
Made real at justification	Made real during sanctification
Our position or standing	Our practice or experience
Occurs at union with God	Occurs during communion with God
Legal declaration	Spiritual infusion
Theological - doctrinal	Practical - applicable

Look up peace and decide first if it is horizontal or vertical. Then decide what kind of each: Jn. 16:33; Acts 9:31; 10:36; Rom. 3:17; 14:17, 19; 15:13, II Cor. 13:11; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 2:14-17; Col. 3:15 etc.

Lance Swanson
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