TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Bobby Rader / Opening Prayer by: Ken Coleman
Morning Assembly Song Leader: Danny Balch

#742 When Upon Life's Billows
#453 Love Lifted Me

Scripture Reading by: Parker Balch
#701 My Jesus I Love Thee

Communion Devotional by: Zach Arthur
Lord's Supper and Contribution

#3 Hallelujah! Praise Jehovah
Sermon: "A Word to the Wise"
Proverbs 1:7

#947 Jesus Is Tenderly Calling
#867 To Canaan's Land
Closing Prayer by: David Smith

We will be watching the second season of "The Chosen" at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday nights in the fellowship room.

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 5:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

July 9, 2023

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

Confidence in Christ: Peace with God

Last week, we began a short series in this space on why we should have more confidence in Christ. We focused on the big picture of Scripture and what it reveals to us about God's nature and purpose. In short, God is perpetually reaching out to his Creation, acting on behalf of humanity to restore the relationship he had with us in the beginning that has been broken by sin. We must always keep in mind that his heart is geared toward us, and his goal is for us to be reconciled to him.

What we find in the NT is that we are reconciled to God in Christ:

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 hope of the glory of God. **(Rom 5:1-2)**

But to fully understand what it means to *have peace with God*, we need to understand we were once his enemies. Paul reminds us a bit earlier in the letter that *all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God* **(Rom 3:23).** The apostle John calls sin *lawlessness* in **1 John 3:4.** So sins are acts that violate God's law; that makes us outlaws—his enemies.

God is perfectly just, and his justice demands that he punish transgressors. Thus, we are headed for judgment, inevitably to be punished, and we are completely powerless to do anything about it. Yet Paul says *we have peace with God.* How is that possible?

That is where the peacemaker comes in. Paul mentions that too: *through our Lord Jesus Christ.* God's justice demands that he punish sin. But his love is *unwilling that any should perish, but desires all to come to repentance* **(2 Pet 3:9).** How do we solve this dilemma? Jesus.

To really wrap our minds around that, consider that word *justified* in **Rom 5:1.** It is a passive verb—that is, it is not something we do for ourselves; it is something that is done to us. The word means "to be acquitted, be pronounced and treated as righteous." Paul is not saying we are righteous. Rather he says we are treated <u>as if we were</u> righteous.

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Robert Modisette is on hospice care.

Gerald Bagwell, Joe Edd Stifflemire's brother in law, is on hospice.

Winston Leifester had a stroke, and his cancer has returned.

Continued Prayers
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Geri Cryer, Steve Ward, Oscar Cantu, Caitlin Smith, Virginia Cole, Ka'Leisha Jones, Ken Coleman, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Donna Wilson, Bryan Senegal, Cynthis Deblanc, Patricia Prater, Richard Prater, Edna Semien, Wilson Semien, Gloria Moore, Betty Spencer, Willie Spencer, James Wilson, Jo Ella McKewen, Brooke Ann Smith, Tony Fontenot

Shut Ins
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Myrtle Sheffield, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh, Lois Watts, Willo Dean Ellis

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique , Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Minister meet Monday, June 10th at 5:30 p.m.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Wednesday, July 19th at 8:00 a.m.

Summer Book Club

The book we are reading and studying is "Gentle and Lowly". A sign up sheet is on the bulletin board. We will meet each Thursday at 6:00 p.m. If you are interested in this see Bryant.

Food Bank

We served 86 families on Thursday, May 18th at our food bank. That equals to about 251 individuals. We had 20 volunteers.

Elders	Deacons	Minister
Ken Coleman	Zach Arthur	Bryant Perkins
Bobby Rader	Daniel Balch	
Don Taylor	Danny Balch	
Robert Ward	Walden David	
	Gus Tristan	

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Consider what he says in another place: *For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness."* **(Rom 4:3).** Based on his faith, Abraham was accounted—treated—as righteous, though he wasn't. The same thing is true for us:

But the words "it was counted to him" were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification. **(Rom 4:23-25)**

Our spiritual bank account was empty, so to speak. Christ made deposit. His righteousness was credited to our account.

As it has often been put over the years, justification means Jesus was treated "just as if" he had lived my life, so that I can be treated "just as if" I had lived his life. Jesus received what we deserved, so that we can receive what he deserves.

God's justice has thus been satisfied. We can be reconciled to God and enjoy his love. We have peace with God. The message of Romans—and specifically of **Romans 5:1**—is that God is the peacemaker. This is consistent with the big story we saw reaching back into the OT last week: God was taking action on behalf of humanity to make peace. The one who by all rights should be our enemy has become our peacemaker.

Now, all of that should be familiar to those of us who are Christians. But I'm not sure we fully appreciate the implications of it. *We have peace with God through Christ.* We come into that relationship with him through baptism. But what then? We will explore that more next week.

Bryant Perkins