

Faith Faces Life

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: Romans 5:1-11.

B. The text deals with growth truths.

II. The first results of the Christian life: peace with God, access to God and the certain hope of sharing heaven.

A. This is cause for rejoicing—this gift of God we could never earn.

B. However, there is more to the Christian life than these facts.

III. More than the initial facts of salvation, we rejoice in suffering.

A. This is preparing for life.

B. Paul takes the worst things about life—the heartbreak of life—and says it makes the Christian rejoice.

1. This is no special standard reserved for just a few Christians—it is the normal expectation for every Christian.

2. The definition of a Christian is someone who is completely fearless, continually cheerful and constantly in trouble.

C. There is a process at work—suffering produces patience and character.

D. Suffering is a mark of God's love. (Hebrews 12)

E. The mark of the Christian is that he accepts everything that happens to him and rejoices because it comes by the choice of God regardless of whether Satan is used in the process.

IV. Jesus' death makes us fit for heaven, and His life makes us fit for earth.

A. Jesus' life makes us fit for the wrath of God—the silent destruction of soul and body that inevitably make us fit for God.

B. God does not stop with justification—He has made full provision to save us from present evil in the life. (Ephesians 3)

C. God changes us through the impartation of Jesus' life in us.

D. Jesus has come to prepare us through hardship because it is producing what God wants in us.

Application questions:

1. On what grounds can the Christian genuinely rejoice in suffering?

2. What saving work does God do after the initial results of salvation? Explain.

3. What situations have you faced suffering? In light of the message, how might you look at that event differently, if at all?
