Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

The Divine Guarantee of an Eternal Salvation, Part 1
Scripture: Romans 5:1–2
Code: 80-350

Well, as you know, we've been working our way through the part of the book of Romans, chapters 3, 4 and tonight we come to chapter 5...Romans chapter 5. Of course this is Paul's great treatment of the gospel, powerful...spiritually powerful, life-transforming truth. And we come, finally, to chapter 5, having looked at least from chapter 3 briefly the beginning part, but seriously from the middle of the chapter right on through the faith of Abraham in chapter 4, we now come to chapter 5.

And up to now, we have learned that salvation is by faith alone through grace alone. It is not a matter of Law, it is not a matter of works, it is not a matter of human effort. The question that poses itself at this point is, is it possible having received this salvation by faith alone through grace alone, apart from works, it is possible to lose this salvation? Can it be lost? Believe me, this question is a dividing question in the Christian world. It has been literally for centuries, for millennia. People have debated whether our salvation is permanent, whether it is eternally secure, or not. The issue of "once saved, always saved" has been debated literally through the centuries of Christian history.

Now there are some who have taught that salvation must be maintained. You receive it by grace apart from works, but you keep it by works. In other words, if you fail to obey, or if you openly disobey, you can lose your salvation. One of the historic groups or denominations or associations that holds to this view is the Salvation Army. I think we all understand the Salvation Army, we see them around at the Christmas season in particular, but The Salvation Army has been around for a long time. And here is what it says in The Salvation Army doctrine, quote: "Some truly converted people have fallen from grace and the danger of doing so threatens every Christian."

That is a very serious claim. Do we all live in mortal danger? As Christians, do we all live on the brink of damnation? Is our salvation conditional on our ability to maintain it? To maintain works sufficient to keep it? Is it true that if we fail to maintain those works, salvation is forfeited? That's the issue. Or on the other hand, is salvation something that cannot be lost?

Now the reason this issue comes up at the end of chapter 4, kind of goes along this path of thinking, the Jew would say to Paul, "All right, Paul, you say that faith is all that is needed for salvation. Faith is all that is needed. Are you sure it is enough? Are you sure that faith alone can secure that salvation permanently? Are you sure it will work? What about the future? Is faith really enough to escape judgment from God? Can faith alone keep us saved and is faith itself sustained?

So Paul moves immediately to this issue in chapter 5, and it's a very powerful chapter, maybe the most convincing chapter in the Bible on the issue of the security of salvation. That's why we title the sermon, "The Security of Salvation." We're going to begin to look at chapter 5, and truthfully, we're not even going to get out of verse 1 because Paul presents six great links in the chain that ties the Christian eternally to the Savior. Six great realities which demonstrate the security of salvation by faith, six great truths inherent in salvation which constitute its eternal character, its eternal nature and therefore the divine guarantee.

The six things are familiar to us. There are six gifts that come with salvation. They are six components that define salvation. They are these: peace with God, standing in grace, hope of glory, assurance of love, certainly of deliverance, and joy in God. These are the six articles in the guarantee of your eternal salvation. So we need to learn them well.

None of us is impervious to the assault of the enemy in the matter of our assurance, our confidence, our certainty. All of us at some point, some of us at many points, struggle with doubt. "I don't know if I'm really saved. I don't know if I still am saved. I don't know but that I've lost my salvation." And whenever you are assaulted with doubt and you will be assaulted, that's why you wear the "helmet of salvation," to protect you from the blows of the enemies who wants to crush your confidence in your salvation. Whenever that assault comes, you retreat to these six principles.

You can doubt what you don't know, but you need not doubt what you know. So let me help you to know the right things that will mitigate against needless doubt.

The first of these links, the first of these elements, realities in the divine guarantee of an eternal salvation and security is peace with God. And that's how the chapter begins. "Therefore, having been justified by faith," and that sums up everything that's been said since chapter 3 and verse 21, right on through chapter 4, and having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore...is the way this begins, the truth consequent to the foundation laid in chapter 3 verse 21, through the end of chapter 4 verse 25. Justification comes to us by faith, we have been justified by faith, thus, therefore we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We have present possession...present possession, peace. This is not psychological tranquility. This is not positive feelings. This is not feelings of well-being. This isn't feelings at all.

When we talk about peace a lot, we have in mind feelings. You feel peaceful. You feel comfortable. We're not talking about that here. This is a peace that is not subjective, this is a peace that is objective. This is not talking about some kind of inner tranquility. This has nothing to do with feelings, and everything to do with actual relationship. The point is this, justification by faith in Jesus Christ establishes a new relationship between the believer and holy God. The prior relationship was defined by the fact that we were enemies...enemies of God. Scripture is clear about that. We, in verse 10 of

chapter 5, read, "For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son."

It must be understood that every human being on the planet, apart from salvation, is an enemy of God and God is an enemy of that individual. There is real war. The issue is not our attitude, the issue is not how we feel, the issue is our relationship to God. God is the enemy of the sinner and the sinner is the enemy of God. God is at war with the sinner and the sinner is at war with God.

I was saying to the pastors at the Moody Bible Institute on, I think it was Thursday night when I was ministering there this last week, that the unregenerate hate the Bible. You shouldn't be surprised if they reject it. You hear people say today, "You know, you can't just teach the Bible in your church because unbelievers aren't going to respond to it. So get the Bible out and get something in that they're going to respond to."

Well, in the first place, we don't come together as a church for the sake of unbelievers, we come together as a church for the sake of feeding the flock of God, over which the Lord has given us oversight." But apart from that, we ought not be surprised that the unbelievers hate the Bible. And even if you repackage the Bible in some other format, unless you strip it of its truthfulness, they're going to hate that too. They're going to hate divine truth in any package because it is the nature of man to hate the Bible because it is the nature of man to hate God. The sinner by nature hates the truth, both written and incarnate. God is the enemy of the sinner and the sinner is the enemy of God.

We read from our Lord Jesus in John 8 that the unregenerate are under the power of Satan. He said, "Your father is the devil." Ephesians 2 says that the whole world literally is under the power of the prince of the air, the spirit that works in the children of disobedience. First John 5:19, "The whole world lies in the lap of the evil one."

That is the issue. You have people who belong to Satan's realm, who have Satan's disposition , who are Satan driven. Rejection of the Bible, folks, is not academic, it's never academic, it is a reflection of the hatred of God that is part of what it means to be fallen. And it's so powerful, let me give you a little note on that. It is so powerful in fallen man to hate the Bible that it's residual in Christians, right? When you were saved, your flesh wasn't eliminated. It's still there. And one of the elements of your flesh is resistance to the truth of God. So I'm not surprised when people say, "Unbelievers don't want to hear the Bible," nor am I surprised when I hear that even believers resist the Scripture, cause it's residual in them, too. But it's dominant in the unregenerate. They are at war with God and God is at war with them. Exodus 22:24, God says, "My wrath shall wax hot and I will kill you with a sword and your wives will be widows and your children fatherless." Deuteronomy 32:21, "They have moved Me to jealousy with that which is not God. They have provoked Me to anger with their vanities. I will move them to jealousy with those who are not a people. I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation, for a fire is kindled in My anger and will burn unto the lowest hell and consume the earth with her

increase and set on fire the foundations of the mountains." That's how angry God is.

Joshua 23:16, "When you have transgressed the covenant of the Lord your God which He commanded you," that is disobeyed and resisted His Word, "you've gone and served other gods, bowed yourself to them, then shall the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, you shall perish quickly off the good land which He had given you."

Second Kings 22:13, "Great is the wrath of the Lord that has kindled against us because our fathers have not listened to the words of this book to do according to all that is written concerning us." Resistance to the Scripture because the Scripture is the revelation of God is resistance to God and God reacts in anger.

Isaiah five, "Therefore is the anger of the Lord kindled against His people and He has stretched forth His hand against them, smitten them and the hills did tremble. Their carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets, for all this His anger is not turned away but His hand is stretched out still."

One of the greatest illustrations of this...this built-in fallen animosity to divine truth is Israel. Even though they were the people of God who had been given the oracles of God, the Scripture they resented it, resisted it and hated it. In Isaiah 13:9 it says, "Behold, the say of the Lord comes cruel, both with wrath and fierce anger. To lay the land desolate, He will destroy sinners out of it."

Isaiah 63:3, "I have trodden the winepress alone and of the people there was none with Me for I will tread them in My anger, trample them in My fury. Their blood shall be sprinkled upon My garments, I will stain all My clothing, for the day of vengeance is in My heart and the year of My redeemed is come and I looked and there was none to help and wondered that there was none to uphold, therefore My own arm brought salvation unto Me and My fury upheld Me. I will tread down the people in My anger and make them drink in My fury, bring down their strength to the ground."

Isaiah 66:15, "Behold, the Lord will come with fire, His chariots like a whirlwind to render His anger with fury, His rebuke with flames of fire." Jeremiah 21:5, "I Myself, says God, will fight against you with an outstretched hand, with a strong arm, even in anger and fury and in great wrath." And Nahum, "God is jealous and the Lord revenges, the Lord revenges, the Lord is furious and reserves wrath for His enemies."

That's the condition of the unregenerate. That is to say you are not on God's good side, putting it mildly. You may not be that angry with God but God is that angry with sinners...very angry, very angry. The wrath of God, says Romans 1:18, is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. Ephesians 5:6, "Let no man deceive you with vain words because of these things comes the wrath of God on the children of disobedience." Revelation 14 says that men will drink of the wine of the wrath of God which is poured out without mixture in the cup of His indignation.

Psalm 7:11, "God is angry with the wicked every day...every day." That is the way you define the relationship between the unconverted and God. Now you may never have heard that before, but that's the truth. That's why I read you about 20 different scriptures.

What does peace with God mean then in that context? It means the war is over, that's what it means. It means that God is no longer fighting us, no longer our enemy, no longer promising judgment, death and hell. Peace with God is the new status between God and the believer which flows from the reconciliation accomplished in Jesus Christ.

Now remember, when Jesus died on the cross, He bore our sins in His own body and God was propitiated. God was satisfied. The penalty of sin was paid in full. Nothing left to be paid. That's why Jesus said, "It is finished."

In Colossians 1:20 it says, "Through Him," that is through Christ, "to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross...having made peace through the blood of His cross." Peace with whom? Peace between the sinner and God...Peace between the sinner and God. God no longer needs to be angry with us. God no longer needs to punish us because our sins have all been punished. All of God's anger was spent on Jesus Christ. So the new reality is a new peace. Instead of being the enemies of God, we're the friends of God. We're the sons of God. We're the beloved of God. God's wrath toward us which would ultimately catapult us into eternal hell is removed, having been fully absorbed and resolved on Christ at the cross. And that's what verse 1 says, "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the reconciler. He's the provider of this peace, and certainly He promised this peace.

Back in the gospel of John, a couple of verses you might want to think about. One is in John 10:36, they hated Him, they resented Him, they despised Him, they called Him a blasphemer who said He was the Son of God. This is...this is an illustration of the enemy status, the violent hostility between the sinner and God. And while not all sinners would say that, all sinners find themselves in that situation. They are blasphemers, whether they acknowledge that or not.

In spite of that, Jesus said in the Upper Room in John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you. Don't let your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid." He offers peace, peace with God which then produces peace in the heart. Objective peace which then leads to subjective peace.

This is a new status. Now what is important for you to understand that this status change comes because of the cross. Christ's work being complete, full, the status then is complete. Christ's work never needed to be repeated, the status never changes. That's the point.

We have entered into a new dimension, a new kind of relationship with God. God's wrath is settled, having been spent on Christ. We are at peace with God, subjective tranquility, subjective calmness of soul, feelings of security flow out of that, but the objective fact is an unchanging reality. We are friends of God, sons of God, brothers of Christ, joint-heirs with Him. This is our new status. Psalm 37:24 says, and this is a promise, "The steps of a righteous man are ordered by the Lord and He delights in His way. Though He fall, He shall not be utterly cast down. For the Lord holds him up." The new status. Ephesians 6:15 talks about the armor of the Christian and our feet are shod with the gospel of peace. What is the gospel of peace? It is not that Jesus brings you peace of mind, it is that Jesus provides peace with God.

It leads to peace of mind. That's why Ephesians 2:14 says of Christ, "He is our peace. He is our peace." Our peace with God was secured by the Prince of Peace. So hear it, my friend, the reason you have peace with God is because God was satisfied with the sacrifice of Christ, paid in full the penalty for your sins. You are now at peace with God and that is a permanent condition because the sacrifice of Christ who rendered it permanent by satisfying in full the wrath of God. If God was not fully satisfied with the work of Christ, there could be no permanent peace. Since God is fully sacrificed with the work of Christ, there is permanent peace. That is an unchanging status.

Let me take you to a second one in verse 2. The second link in the chain that eternally binds us to God, the first being peace, the second is grace...standing in grace. This is just magnificent. "Through whom," referring back to our Lord Jesus Christ, "also not only peace with God, but also we have obtained our introduction by faith," always by faith, verse 1, justified by faith, verse 2, our introduction by faith, "into this grace in which we stand."

The first link, peace with God. Second link, standing in grace...standing in grace. This truth is so rich that its boundaries are inconceivable and certainly untouchable. It is a vast, profound reality.

I want to see if I can expand you a little bit as you think about...by whom, or through whom, meaning Jesus Christ, the antecedent, the end of verse 1, everything comes salvifically through Him, everything is because of Him. Everything comes through the mediation of Jesus Christ, marvelous mediation by His death, brings us to God and peace with God, and also we have obtained our introduction into this grace. The word introduction is actually the word access, access. And again, this is a shift in our very...our very paradigm in which we exist. We have access. That's a monumental word. That's a staggering word. That's a shocking word. It's an infinitely wonderful word, to have access to God, to have access into grace. We have access, according to Ephesians 2:18, in one Spirit to the Father. We have access. Chapter 3 of Ephesians, verse 12, "Confident, bold access through faith." In Hebrews we have access to the throne of mercy to find help in the time of need.

All through their history, the one thing that was true for the Jews was no access, no access. God was the utterly unapproachable Holy One and that was laid down in no uncertain terms. I don't want to

take time to read the whole account but just a little bit of a look, and you can do it on your own, at Exodus chapter 19, indicates to us how inaccessible God was. God appears in a dark thick cloud in chapter 19 of Exodus, and people are told basically don't go near, don't even get close. Verse 21, "The Lord spoke to Moses, ‘Go down, warn the people so that they do not break through to the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish.'" People cannot come up to Mount Sinai for You warned us saying, "Set bounds about the mountain and consecrate." So Moses went down to the people and told them, "Don't get near God."

The whole Old Testament of offerings is both defined for us in the tabernacle and the temple. Where did God dwell? Well the presence of God was symbolically in the Holy of Holies, right? In the inner sanctuary and it was out of bounds for everybody, out of bounds for absolutely everybody.

But even the structure of the temple and the structure of the tabernacle originally, particularly the temple had a series of courtyards. Gentiles could only get so close to God, the Court of the Gentiles. Women could only get so close to God, a place called "The Court of the Women." Men could get a little closer. Priests could get a little closer with proper cleansing and proper ritual. But anybody who got too close to God was in serious danger. Uzzah got a little too close, touched the Ark, was killed. Nadab and Abihu got too close and they were killed. Korah, Dathan and Abiram got a little too close and they were killed. And the high priest who alone could go into the Holy of Holies one time a year on Yom Kippur, the Day of the Atonement, could only go in after serious ceremonial purification and he would go in there and get out as fast as possible. He had bells on his robe so that they would know if he was still moving around or if he had been struck dead.

Access was not a word in the vocabulary of the Jews. In terms of Man's relationship to a holy God, he had no access. Sinful man, no real access, but Christ's death forever altered that and you remember Matthew 27:51 tells us that at the time and the moment that Jesus died, the temple that separated the Holy of Holies was split from top to bottom and the whole thing was thrown wide open and all who desired to come were given access.

Now that's the richness of that word. Listen to 1 Peter 3:18, "Christ also died for our sins, once for all, the just for the unjust so that He might bring us to God." In the Jewish concept, that's a huge idea...bring us into the presence of God.

Now this is promised in the New Covenant, Jeremiah 32, listen to verses 38 and 40 in Jeremiah 32 where the New Covenant, portions of the New Covenant are described. "They shall be My people, I will be their God. They shall be My people, I will be their God. I will not turn away from them. They shall not depart from Me."

There is then in New Covenant salvation an access, an opening into the presence of God. The word access, or introduction here is a rich word, secularly it is used of a harbor, or a haven, a place of

safety and security.

Now let's go back to verse 2 and see what it is to which we have access. I love this, "We have obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand." When you came to the Lord Jesus Christ, you basically had access to a realm of grace, to a dimension of grace. You now live in grace. You stand engulfed in grace...stand, *histemi*, to abide, to be firmly set, fixed, grounded. By the way, the Apostle Paul loves this word. He loves this verb. It says in 1 Corinthians 15:1, "Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preach to you which also you received...I love this...in which also you stand."

We're not now in this Kingdom moving around wavering, wobbling, hanging on the edge, sitting on the brink hoping not to fall off. We abide in a settled, firm, permanent condition of grace. Now that is so very important, I think you're beginning to feel just having me say that, the import of that. If the entire environment in which we live is grace, then it is not Law, right? And if it's grace, it's not works. If it is grace, it assumes sin, but it provides for it. You're not in a condition where you having been saved by grace now live in Law. So if you obey the Law and you're righteous enough, you hang on to your salvation. No, no, no.

You were ushered by your salvation into a domain of grace which is the same thing you received when you were saved and that is undeserved forgiveness...undeserved forgiveness. That's the realm in which we live. And I'll tell you, folks, there are those who think for sure that they were saved by grace and now they have to keep saved by Law. Not true...not true.

Peter ends his epistle, maybe you've forgotten this, with a little doxology, "To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen." Then he has another thought. "Through Silvanus, our faithful brother, for so I regard him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!"

You say, "What if I sin?" Romans 5:20, "Where sin abounds, grace much more abounds." We live in grace. We stand in grace. We are fixed in grace. Romans 14:4 says, "God is able to make us stand." He's anchored us there.

This is the testimony at the end of Jude, the familiar and beloved benediction, "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and make you stand in the presence of His glory, blameless with great joy..." How does He do that? How does He get us there? "By grace," our sins never cancel out our salvation because we live in grace. "He is able," He has the power. We are held in safe custody, that's what the other verse in 1 Peter says. We stand immovable in a realm dominated by grace...which is God's unmerited favor by which He saves us, makes us righteous and keeps on cleansing us from all sin, 1 John.

Now it's a horrible thing to tell people, I think, that you were saved by grace and grace alone, but you're going to live the rest of you life in danger of losing your salvation. If that's true, then I went from the realm of grace in my salvation, to the realm of Law in my sanctification. That is not what Scripture teaches. We stand in grace. Never does that change. Since our peace and our access, listen, is purely on the merits of Christ and His work, it is all by grace, we can't earn it, nor can we maintain it, it is all grace and grace always forgives, and always forgives, and always forgives that is its nature, that is its essence.

You know, in Galatians chapter 5, you might look at this for a minute, Galatians chapter 5, you have been severed from Christ...verse 4. "You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by Law, you've fallen from grace." Can't have both. You're either saved by grace or kept by grace, or saved by Law and kept by Law. You're not saved by grace and kept by Law. And I've said this through the years...Look, if I have to keep myself saved, I can't. To put it another way,...If I could lose my salvation, I would. I would. And if I could get it back, I'd get it back and lose it again. If it was possible for a believer to lose salvation, every believer would do it. If it was up to me, I can't maintain it...I can't maintain it.

Peter says, "Grow in grace." We live in grace. We breathe the air of grace. And we grow in grace. The state of salvation is a state of grace, it is Christ's gracious mediation that brought us in, keeps us in. By grace all our sins are forgiven...past, present and future...never in the realm of grace does Law play any role at all in keeping us saved.

Jesus in His high priestly prayer in John 17 says, "Holy Father, keep them in Your name. Keep them in Your name. Hang on to them." Verse 15, "Keep them from the evil one that they all may be one, even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in us." Keep them. And we are kept in the realm of grace. We are protected in the realm of grace. Even in Luke 22 when Satan wanted to have Peter, Jesus said, "Go ahead, do what you want to him." Right? He said, "Peter, he's going to sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith fail not." We are upheld by the intercessory prayer of the Lord Jesus by the intervening power of the Holy Spirit. And I will say this, it is absolutely impossible, utterly unthinkable that the sentence of the divine judge should ever be revoked or reversed. There's no other court of appeal, by the way. There are no appellate courts in the divine realm. God rendered the final verdict, rendered salvation, granted it on the merits of Christ, cannot be overturned.

Now look at Romans 8 and see that that's behind the language of that great chapter, Romans 8, verse 28, "God causing all things to work together for good to those that love Him and have been called according to His purpose. God predestining, justifying, glorifying. Verse 31 then says, "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who's against us? Who successfully can be against us? He didn't spare His own Son, delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also freely give

us all things?" It all goes back to sufficiency and finality and completion of the work of Christ. "Who can bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who is the one who justifies? Who can condemn? Christ has died, rather died and raised again at the right hand of God interceding for us." No one can successfully bring a charge against us, no one can successfully overturn God's commitment to us. No one can condemn us. No one can separate us from the love of Christ. No one and no thing is able, as verse 39 says, to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

It is an unspeakable blessing to understand the fullness of our salvation. We live in permanent relationship of peace with God and we live in a permanent state of grace which overrules all our sin. Romans chapter 8 verse 1 actually began this way, "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." No condemnation. There can't be. No one can condemn for Christ has paid in full. First Thessalonians 5:24 says, "Faithful is He that calls you and He will bring it to pass."

Well, there are four more, but we'll save them for next time. Join me in a word of prayer.

Our Father, we thank You for the time we've had tonight to worship for a little while and then to look at the precious truth of Your Word. We just thank You for these two great realities that we live in the realm of settled peace and permanent grace. Thank You that is a gift, completely a gift, a gift of sovereign love. We don't want to go any further because we just want to rest in these things and let them soak into our souls. We thank You for them. Thank You for Your mighty work on our behalf, for Your great kindness and mercy to us. And we love You in return and we want to love You more and serve You more faithfully, and we want to spread the Word of grace far and wide. Help us then to enjoy our salvation, to rest in it, for it is called rest to be not troubled or anxious, but rest in peace and grace. And we know that that's the benediction again and again in the New Testament, grace and peace, grace and peace to our Lord Jesus Christ. And we ask that You would use us to extend that to others, we pray for Your glory in Christ's name. Amen.

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