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

Your Salvation Is Secure!
Scripture: Selected Scriptures
Code: 80-84

From time to time I, perhaps like you, read about people who have panic attacks. I remember being on a ship one time when a particular person had a panic attack. So I at least was able to observe one close at hand. They seem to be become more and more common in our society. They're usually related to some fear that is so overwhelming and so overpowering that it grips the heart of a person and they're really unable to cope with that fear.

More often than that, it relates to the fear of death. If not death, some looming potential disaster. These panic attacks seem to occur not because people have discovered there is an eternal hell, not because people have learned there is a God of justice and judgment who will condemn the ungodly to that eternal hell. They are panic attacks then that occur with great severity over some less significant, impending reality.

And one can only wonder what number of panic attacks might occur if people really understood there was an eternal place of torment where those who do not embrace the Lord Jesus Christ would spend forever. It would be a legitimate reason for a panic attack, or rather a sort of constant state of panic if one really came to grips with that reality. Even among believers, there are probably times when we who have made a commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and are a part of His family, don't have perhaps a fleeting thought about eternal hell that might even include the idea, "Well, maybe I'm not really saved and I might end up there." Or, "Maybe I've done something to forfeit my salvation and now I'm liable to get sentenced there."

It is not uncommon for Christians to be hit with a temptation to doubt their salvation, to fear God's love might be taken away from them, or God's care might be removed or God's keeping power might somehow turn into indifference. And so it is always, I suppose, a discussion among Christians, how can we know we're truly saved and truly secure? And in what do we put our trust? Are there any guarantees that my salvation is permanent? Can I lose it? If I can't lose it, what holds it, or better, who holds it? What is my contribution to that holding?

The question of the security of the believer is an age-old one. And in those moments when we're all alone and we have the fleeting thought that there is a reality called eternal hell and it would be horrible to go there and I hope I'm not on the way but maybe I am, we need to have something to which we can find ourselves anchored.

Salvation Army handbook on doctrine says, "Some truly converted people have fallen from grace. And the danger of doing so threatens every Christian." To believe that is to live under fear, not an irrational fear but a rational fear because its based on a bad theology. You can have a spiritual panic attack momentarily or even prolonged, fearing you might end up in hell. One, if you were sinful as a believer and your sin was causing you to doubt the reality of your conversion, you could have a panic attack, a spiritual panic attack, if Satan just let loose all the guns on you and fired all that he could of doubt at you.

And it is possible for you to have a spiritual panic attack because you have bad theology and you believe it is a reality that you could lose your salvation and so you live in constant fear that you might. This concept that salvation is conditional on our ability to maintain it has lead many people to live whole lives of fear.

How do we answer this? How do we deal with this? Where do we go to find an anchor to hold on to? Certainly this would be the question that any Jewish reader of Romans would by now be asking. You see, the Jews believe that they were saved by works and then they were kept by works. Your works got you, your works keep you in.

Paul had just said, "No, you're saved by faith. You're saved by grace through faith. It's not of works." He just spent chapter 3 and chapter 4 laying that out in Romans when all of the sudden chapter 5 steps in. And he's got to answer the obvious question. If I am saved by grace through faith and it's not by works, if my works don't save me and my works don't keep me then what keeps me? What holds me? What secures me or better who?

The Roman letter answers that question then in chapter 5 and I want you to turn to it. Romans chapter 5. Romans 3 and 4, Paul was saying salvation is by faith alone, salvation is by faith alone. He said it over and over and over and illustrated it and elucidated it. And now the question comes, "Well, what if I don't do anything to get saved and I don't do anything to stay saved, who keeps me? Who holds on to me? And how?"

This should relieve us of any burden of panic attacks that are needless because what you have in the first 11 versus of chapter 5 is a chain -- an unbreakable chain that links us eternally to God -- an unbreakable chain that links us eternally to God. And there are six links in the chain. Any one of them would be enough to hold us but God in his magnanimity has made a six-link chain that holds us eternally to God.

The intent of this message this morning is to comfort you, to encourage you, to relieve the burden of fear, worry, doubt or ignorance that might cause you to panic about the security of your salvation. There are six links, each of them eternally unbreakable that tie you to God and secure forever your

genuine salvation.

Let's look at the first one in verse 1: "Therefore, having been justified by faith," and that's scooping up everything from chapter 3 and chapter 4 in that statement. "Since what I have just said is so and we have been saved by faith, here are the results. First, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." The first link in the chain that ties the believer eternally to God is peace with God. Peace with God.

This is utterly foundational. And again, it reminds us of the query that must be in the mind of the reader. "All right, you say we're justified by faith; is that the end of it?" No. Having been justified, we now are linked to God. We were hooked into Him and here are the links that bind us that are ours as a result of our salvation. First, peace with God.

The verb we have is a present tense continuous statement, "We continue to have, in our possession, peace with God." Now, we're not talking here about peace as psychologically tranquility. We're not talking about peace as positive feelings of security. We're not talking about peace in any subjective way at all. In no sense is this an attitude. In no sense is this a feeling. In no sense is this some kind of tranquility or calm of the soul. That is not what we're talking about.

We're talking here, not about a subjective peace, but an objective one. Not about a feeling but about a fact. The issue is not our attitude of comfort or confidence. It is not our attitude at all. What we're seeing here is that we had been at war with God but now we are at peace. It is a statement about the fact of our relationship to God. Justification by grace through faith in Jesus Christ has established a new relationship between a man or a woman and God.

Prior to coming to Christ and being saved, we were at war with God. Now, you need to understand that. We were God's avowed enemy. Now, somebody's going to say, "Now wait a minute. Before I became a Christian, I liked God, I had good thoughts about God. Every once in a while I talked to God and I prayed to God and I even went to church and I was a religious person. And I even had good feelings about Jesus and I thought the Christmas story was nice. I wasn't an enemy of God and I'm not an atheist. And I wasn't an enemy of Jesus."

When I say you were at war with God, listen very carefully, I'm not necessarily saying that you consciously were at war with God. What I am saying is that God, consciously, was at war with you. You may not have known you were His enemy but He knew you were His enemy. You may not have considered Him to be your enemy but He considered you to be His enemy. That is a very important concept; a very important reality. You might not have perceived yourself as the enemy of God but I want to let you know that you are His enemy. God is at war with you even though you may not consciously be at war with Him.

Why? Because if you're not a part of the kingdom of God through Christ, you're a part of the kingdom of this world which is under the power of Satan who is the avowed enemy of God. You are a part of the kingdom of darkness and sin which is God's enemy. God is at war with every sinner, everyone outside of Christ.

In Exodus 22:24, the Bible says of God, "And my wrath shall wax hot and I will kill you with a sword and your wives shall be widows and your children fatherless."

Deuteronomy 32:21 says, "They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; that is a false God. They have provoked me to anger with their vanities and I will move them to jealousy with those people who are not a people. I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation for a fire is kindled in my anger and shall burn unto the lowest hell."

God is very angry when He says that. In Joshua 23:16, "When you have transgressed the convenient of the Lord your God which commanded you. And you have gone and served other Gods and bowed yourself to them, then shall the anger of the Lord be kindled against you and you shall perish quickly.

In 2 Kings 22:13, "Great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us."

In Isaiah chapter 5, the prophet writes in verse 25, "Therefore is the anger of the Lord kindled against his people and He stretched for his hand against them, has smitten them and the hills did tremble and 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."

In the 13thchapter of Isaiah in the 9thverse, it says, "The day of the Lord comes cruel both with wrath and fierce anger to lay the land desolate." And God, in all of these cases, is describing His anger.

"The Lord will come with fire, chariots like a whirlwind will render His anger with fury and rebuke with flames of fire," says Isaiah 66:15.

To Jeremiah, He said 21:5, "I will myself hide against You with an outstretched hand, a strong arm, even in anger and fury and great wrath."

And Nahom, the prophet, said, "God is jealous. The Lord revengeth. The Lord revengeth and is furious." Some people have the idea, strangely, that God just goes around loving all the wicked sinners. Not so. Not so. God is angry with sin and the sinner.

In fact, in Psalm 7:11 it says, "God is angry with the wicked everyday." In Romans 1:18 it says, "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness." God is angry. God is at war with the sinner.

Now what does peace with God mean then? It means that God is no longer at war with us. It means He no longer is fighting us. He no longer is waiting to take vengeance on us. He is no longer waiting to pour out His anger and His fury and His hatred. He is no longer our enemy. That is the great truth. I suppose there are people in the world who think that because they live and breathe and have a certain modicum of success in life and a bit of happiness and fulfillment that somehow God is on their side. God is never on the side of a sinful man -- never.

But when one comes to Christ and is justified by grace through faith, having believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as God, as the one who paid the price for sin on the cross and rose again the third day, turning from sin and giving his life to Christ, that person enters into a relationship of peace with God. On what basis is the peace granted? On the basis that God's wrath, vengeance, anger was satisfied because you poured it out on Christ.

Christ not only bore our sins but He bore the fury of God for our sons. He not only bore the iniquities that we commit but He bore the vengeance of God for committing them. And so it is then that in the death of Jesus Christ, God becomes satisfied. That's what we said last time. Christ was the propitiation or the satisfaction to God. And so where you have justification, you have reconciliation. The two terms can be distinguished in terms of definition; they cannot be distinguished in terms of experience. Those who are justified are reconciled.

God's wrath toward us will eventually damn us to an eternal hell unless that wrath is satisfied. And that wrath was satisfied in Christ to those who receive Him. The wrath of God is permanently and eternally set aside. And thus says Paul in Romans 8, "There is therefore now no," what? "Condemnation for those who are in Christ."

Why will God not condemn them? Why will He not be angry and wrathful toward them? Why will He not wreck revenge on them? Because it is already spent on Christ. We have peace with God. That is settled. You say, "Well, what if God gets mad at me for sinning?" God has already spent His anger on Christ who bore the wrath of God, listen to this, for the sins you have not yet committed. Understood? Whatever sin you may yet commit in your life, whatever sin you may yet commit in years down the road that are unforeseen, was a sin for which Jesus Christ paid the penalty and bore the wrath of God for those who are Gods.

When you come to the spotless Son of God and receive the perfect sacrifice that He gave, it is a sacrifice that satisfies the wrath of God and his vengeance against all the sins that you will ever commit. And so you are at peace with God. You have become His friend, His son, His child. Peace with God then is the first link that ties us eternally to Him. No matter what we might do, we will never violate that peace because whatever vengeance would come against our sin has already been settled. God is satisfied with Christ's sacrifice for your sin. His wrath was spent fully on the cross.

Look at this way: when Christ died on the cross, God poured out his wrath on all the sin that was there. He knew in his omniscience that you were chosen, that you belonged to Him, that you were to be His. And your sin was there, sins you haven't committed because you haven't been born. And He poured out his vengeance on those sins. So the sins yet to be committed by those who believe in Christ have already known the wrath of God. And God was fully satisfied, having spent his wrath on Christ. And so we are linked to God inseparably because peace has been made -- permanent and eternal peace.

Secondly, the second link is our standing in grace. First is peace with God, second is standing in grace. This is so powerful. You need to grasp this.

Verse 2, through whom, through the Lord Jesus Christ, also we have obtained our access, it's a better word than introduction. Our access. Access to whom? To God by faith. But more than just to God, this access by faith into this grace in which we stand.

This is so overwhelming and we could spend months just on this concept. This is so rich it's boundless. It's almost untouchable, so vast. Through our faith in Christ and through the perfect work of Christ, we have obtained an access. Now, that alone is remarkable; an access into grace, into God's grace.

What does He mean? It means when we became saved, we stepped into a new environment, the environment of the grace of God. We went into His presence and we found grace. That is a foreign concept to an Old Testament reader. The Old Testament makes one thing very clear: if you get near God, you go up in smoke, basically. With very few exceptions.

We have no access to God. The gentiles could go to an outer court, the women could go to an outer court, the men could go a step further because they were the spiritual leaders. The priests could go a step further. Only once a year could one priest, after many cleansings, ever go into the holy of holy's which represented the presence of God. He went in quickly, He dispensed the blood as a sacrifice and He got out of their fast. Men had no access. Always the veil was there, wasn't it?

There was no access. And if you did go in there, what you found wasn't grace. What you found was holy fury. There were some who tried to intrude on God's presence: Cora, Dothan, Abyrun, Nadab, Abyhuh, others. They were all killed.

This concept is shocking because all the Jews ever knew was there was no access. Don't go in that place. This is the holy mountain Sinai. Don't touch it. Go back and read Exodus chapter 19. Don't you dare come near God. There was no access. Sinful man never had access. And if he did get in there, what he saw was frightening.

I think about Isaiah chapter 6 when he saw the vision of God, fire and smoke and the buildings shaking. And he cries out, "Woe is me." And that means, "I'm about to be damned." But Christ's death changed all that. Christ's death made access. And when you got in there, there wasn't fury and law, there was what? There was grace. Wow. There was grace. That's the essence of the new covenant.

Go back to Jeremiah 32, you get a glimpse of the new covenant there -- no need to look it up. And you'll read, "God says they shall be my people and I will be their God. I'll not turn away from them. And in then the new covenant is access. And Jesus dies on the cross. And when he's dying right there on the cross, God symbolically sends a message. He rips the temple veil to the holy of holies to the top to the bottom. And the whole of the holy of holies is exposed for everybody. And God is saying there's access now. And when you get in there, you're going to find what? Grace. Grace.

In what sense is that my security? In this sense. That when you sin, what do you receive? Grace. We stand in grace. This grace in which we stand -- that word stand, isdayme, to stand firm, to abide, if you want to use John's term. We abide in Grace. It's being in a firmly fixed state. We're in the environment of grace, the atmosphere of grace, we live in grace, we abide in grace.

What does that mean? That means when I sin, God deals with it with what? With grace. You say, "But how can He do that?" Because He has already been satisfied that the price for that sin is paid. So we stand in grace.

My, what a glorious truth that is. We live in grace. We breathe grace. You say, "You know, I became a Christian and ever since I became a Christian, I still sin." Right.

"Doesn't God condemn me every time? Don't I forfeit my salvation?" No, my friend. You do not live in law, you live in what? In grace. We abide in grace. We stand in grace. That's the reason we're so secure. Because there's nothing that can ever condemn us. Why? Because God has already declared that all our sin is paid for. And all that is left is for Him to dispense grace.

If we were living in a sphere of law, we wouldn't have any security. If sin expelled us, there wouldn't be any assurance, there wouldn't be peace, and we'd all have constant panic attacks. We live in grace, God's unmerited love and forgiveness. We can't earn grace or it wouldn't be grace; and we can't un-earn grace.

That's why Paul wrote to the Galatians and said, "Why are you preaching law? You're fallen from grace. You're making Christ nothing." The state of salvation is the state of grace. Christ constantly mediates for us, constantly intercedes for us. God continually forgives us. Whenever we go to him, we find mercy and grace. That's why the hymn writer said "Amazing Grace". The state of grace precludes any condemnation. And so He holds us closely to himself. When sin comes, the grace in

which we stand provides instant forgiveness because Christ has already paid the penalty and God is satisfied with the penalty and God is satisfied with the penalty.

There's a third link. Hope of glory -- feast with God, standing in grace and hope of glory. Look at the end of verse 2, we rejoice, or literally, we joy in the hope of the glory of God. This, too, is a marvelous and thrilling link holding us to God. Now listen to this very carefully. The security of the believer is anchored you in the past because Christ made peace with God on our behalf. The security of the believer is anchored in the present because we stand in grace. The security of the believer is anchored in the future because we have the hope of glory. All three dimensions are covered.

He says we rejoice in the hope of glory. What do you mean? Well, our future is secure. And we have hope for that future. Hope is confidence about the future, not wishful thinking but settled with confidence.

1 Timothy 1:1 says, "Our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ who is our hope." Our hope and future glory is based on Him. It's in Him that we have our hope. And our hope is secure.

In face, in 1 Peter 1:21, through Him, it says, "Our faith and hope are in God."

Jesus, you remember praying in John 17:22 said, "The glory which you gave me, I have given them." He's promised us glory. He's promised us eternal life. He's promised us heaven. He's promised us that we will see Him as He is. He's promised us that we will be like Him. He's promised us a place where there's no death and no disease and no tears and no pain. He's promised us a perfect eternity. He's promised us all of that based on His death, not on our merit. That promise linked to His sacrifice and His resurrection. We are secured in the hope of glory.

You say, "But wait a minute, can't I do something and God will say, 'No, I don't want you in my heaven'?" No. Whatever you do has been covered by Christ and God is satisfied and we are under grace and therefore we are secured in hope. In fact, the consummation of our redemption, the ultimate consummation and fulfillment of our salvation is going to be the manifestation of the glorious sons of God, as Paul calls it in Romans 8.

The redemption of our body. Jesus said, "All the Father gives to me will come to me and I've lost none of them. But I'll raise them all up on the last day," John 6. He won't lose any of us. We're secure in hope. He who has begun a good work in us will perform it till the day of Jesus Christ. Because He lives, we shall live also. We can stand and stare death in the face an say, "Oh death, where is your stain? Oh death, where is your victory? You have none with us. Christ has purchased the victory though his death and resurrection. We live in hope."

And even when troubles and trials and difficulties come, all they do is increase our hope. Why? They make us long for heaven. Why? Because when we suffer in this world, we receive a greater weight of glory and that increases our hope. For all the sufferings of this life there will be a balancing reward in the life to come. And therefore, while suffering on behalf of Christ, we are accumulating a greater glory which intensifies and increases our hope of that glory.

"Our hope," said the hymn writer, "is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood in righteousness. And we dare not trust the sweetest frame but only lean on Jesus' name. When all around, He said, 'My soul gives way', He is still my hope and stay."

And so we are secure in the work of Christ, his death, his resurrection. Because He lives, we will live. When He conquered death, He conquered it for us. Nothing can make us die. We live forever. We are secure in that hope. And it is a hope unto glory. And as I said, the tougher the life is, the greater the weight of glory.

Look at verses 3 and 4. He says and not only this, but we also rejoice in our tribulations, knowing that our tribulations bring about perseverance. And perseverance proven character and proven character increases hope. Why? Because proven character -- when my character matures and I've been put through trials and difficulties and I've endured and I'm stronger, I know I have a greater glory to come and that increases my hope.

If I thought when I got to heaven I'd receive some little small thing, I wouldn't have a great hope. But if I have suffered for the cause of Christ and if my character has been strengthened and proven and built and matured, then I know there will be a greater weight of glory for me in facing Jesus Christ, then my hope is intensified. My hope is increased.

It is an honor to suffer for Christ. It is a joy to experience his sustaining grace in that suffering. It makes me strong and it sets aside for me a greater weight of glory. And so I rejoice in my tribulation. I rejoice in my trouble. I endure it patiently because it produces proven character which increases my hope.

Just like the refining fire of the goldsmith frees the gold and silver from its impurities, so the patient endurance of the believer makes them evermore pure, proven character and thus increases his hope for the reward that proven character will bring. Listen, beloved. The severest tribulations of life, the most difficult onslaught that comes will strengthen you and increase your future glory and bring you greater hope.

Andrew Murray has the idea. He wrote this, "First ye brought me here. It is by His will I am in the straight place. In that fact I will rejoice. Next, He will keep me here in His love and give me grace to behave as His child. Then He will make the trial a blessing, teaching me the lessons He intends me to

learn. And working in me the grace He means to bestow. Last, in His good time, He can bring me out again. How and when? He knows. And then I will be all glorious in His presence."

We then can say what He says in verse 5, "And hope doesn't disappoint." Our hope will never be disappointed. Some translations say hope makes not ashamed. Same idea. You'll never be ashamed of your hope in Christ. You're never going to come to the day where you say, "I'm ashamed of that. I'm ashamed that I put so much stock in that. It never panned out. I'm disappointed. I put my trust in Christ, I hoped in Christ and I'm ashamed of Him. And I'm ashamed to say I ever trusted Him because He deceived me." No, you'll never say that. Hope will never been ashamed. Hope will never be disappointed?

Why? Because God is satisfied with the sacrifice of Christ. Your hope is secure. And even the chastening that God brings and the difficulty He brings, it's only to increase your hope because it increases your potential glory.

Fourth, not only is there this link of peace with God in standing in grace and the hope of glory. But fourthly, there is the link of experiencing the love of God, possessing love. This is marvelous, marvelous.

Verse 5, "The love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who is given to us." Please understand this; this is not your love for God. This is God's love for you. That's the idea. It's God's love for you.

Here is the fourth unbreakable link. God loves you so much that He proved it by pouring out into your heart His love through the gift of the Holy Spirit that He gave to you. How much does He love you? Enough to give you the Spirit. I suppose we could make a simple illustration by saying, "You may like a lot of women in the world as you grow up but one of them you will love so much, you will say, "I want to live with you. I want to live with you the rest of my life. You surpass all women."

Some of you women in the reverse situation would say, "There are many men and there are many who would be my friend and there are many who would enrich my life. But there is you and you are above them all and I wish to live with you for the rest of my life." That sets you apart. And we would say then that that is the essence of love. That is the epitome of human love.

And so it is God who says, "I love you and I love you so supremely that as holy as I am, yet it is my desire to come and live with you permanently and so I will take up residence in you through my Holy Spirit." That's how much He loves you. And maybe when your husband was not your husband and he came to you and said, "I love you so much. I want to spend my life with you." You may have said, "I'm not worthy of that. There are others that would be better for you. I've got lots of faults. Maybe you ought to think about it. I think you better go home and write up a list, put the pros and cons down. I'd

like to introduce you to 10 or 15 of my best girlfriends. You really are making a big decision here. You need to make sure you have full information on this. I'm not worthy of it."

You might even remember the story of Jonathan Edwards who had a daughter and was proposed to by a young man. And in order to gain the favor of that daughter's hand in marriage, he had to plead to Jonathan Edwards and Jonathan Edwards said, "No." And he said, "No, not because of you, my young man, but because there are some people who are tolerable only to the grace of God." And he was speaking of his own daughter.

There are some young men in the world who had wished their wife's father had been so objective. And the reverse, I'm sure. The point is, when you make the commitment to take up permanent residence with someone, you are demonstrating the generosity, the compassion, the comprehensiveness and the single mindedness of your life.

So what it says here, God loves you so much that He wants to live in you. And you say, "Wait a minute, God. You don't know understand. I'm a mess. I've got a lot of problems. You sure? I know it was tough in a tent. And it wasn't a lot better in a building. But if you want it really bad, just come in here. This is worse than anything you've yet experienced."

God says, "But I love you." It is a non-fluctuating and an irreversible love. And the thing that proves to me and to you that God loves us is that He gave us Himself in the form of His Holy Spirit to take up residence in us. That is magnanimous. God didn't just drip a little love on us. He took up his residence in us. "I want to be with you. I want to be with you. I want your fellowship. I want communion with you." Amazing.

The sense of love that we should have from God by the gift of the Holy Spirit should overwhelm us. And then He wants to expand on this love so look what He says in the next section. Verse 6, "While we were still helpless, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly. But one will hardly doubt for a righteous man. They'll, perhaps, for the good man someone would dare even to die. That God demonstrates His own love towards us and that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

This answers the obvious argument. "Well, okay, God. I understand that You love me so much that You want to live in me. But that's because I'm better now than I used to be. You see, you saved me. That's why you want to live with me. If you had known me before, you couldn't stand me God."

So Paul says, "Wait a minute, while we were still helpless, Christ died for the ungodly." That's very rare but God demonstrated His love toward us and that while we were yet sinners, He died for us.

Do you question God's love? Don't. It's one thing to die for a righteous man. Maybe somebody would even die for a good man. That's sort of degree number two. But who in their right mind is going to die

for a wretched, wicked, vile, rotten, hell-bound sinner? Only somebody with a love that we don't comprehend.

So Paul's point is this, look, God not only loves you now as a believer but He loved you then as an unbeliever. We can understand if God loves the good, the Godly, the pure. We can understand if God loves those who have been washed and cleansed. But Paul's point is look, if you're questioning why He would ever love you now, then ask yourself why He loved you before. And conclude that if He loved you before, He's certainly going to love you now. And He proved it by giving you the spirit. That's what all that means.

He loved you when you were his enemy. He's certainly going to love you when you're His friend. He loved you when you were the devil's child. He'll certainly love you when you're His child. And the proof of that love is that He put Himself in you in the form of His spirit. That's our security. You say, "Well, I'll tell you one thing, He may love me now but I know I'm going to commit some sins and He'll stop loving me. I mean, I know I'm doing real good now. I've been a Christian and I'm kind of obeying Him and I'm doing all right but I know somebody -- what happens if I blow it big? He'll stop loving me." No, no. See, He loved you when you blew it all the time. He loved you when you were wretched. Do you see the point? Do you see what a security that is?

There is nothing you as a believer can do to lose the love of God. If God could love you when you were all sin, He can love you when you're not all righteousness. Great reality. Overwhelming reality. If He loved me when I hated Him, won't He love me when I love Him even if my love is imperfect? If He loved me when I loved sin, won't He love me if I hate sin even though I don't hate it like I should? If He loved me when I was always disobedient, won't He love me when I'm not always obedient? Yes, yes, yes.

He has already proven that He could love you at your worst and He can certainly love you anything short of that. So when you worry about your salvation, you get a spiritual panic attack, remember that there is permanent peace between you and God because Jesus took all God's vengeance. The war ended and God is satisfied. Remember that no matter what sin you might commit, you stand in grace, not in law. You have access to His presence. It's a gracious presence. Any sin is immediately forgiven.

Remember, too, that you live in hope that every promise that God ever gave you in Christ is secure forever. God's word is at stake and Christ, through his resurrection, provided the future for you. And then whatever difficulty comes in life is only intended to increase your glory, if you respond to it by letting it make proven character.

And before you have a spiritual panic attack and worry about your salvation, remember that God loves you. And no matter what you do, He will love you in spite of what you do because He loved you

when everything you did made Him sick.

Number five, promise of deliverance. This fifth link in the unbreakable chain that binds us permanently to God is marvelous. These two verses, verses 9 and 10, are often devotionalized, spiritualized and therefore their meaning is lost. A very simple meaning. Verses 9 and 10, and very powerful. "Much more then, having been justified now by His blood," that means His atoning death, "we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him." Now that's the promise.

It promises what? Well, we have been justified by His blood and His death. That's past. In the future, we shall be delivered from God's wrath. In other words, we will never experience the wrath of God. Never; no matter what happens. We're never going to experience it. He means here the lake of fire, eternal judgment, final damnation. We're not going to receive that. We're not going to get God's fury. It isn't going to happen.

Why? Well, look at this. Verse 10, "For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled of God through the death of His son, much more having been reconciled, we shall be delivered by His life." What is that? Very simple. It's a contrast between death and life. His death reconciled us. His life delivers us. Well, what do we mean by that?

Here's the thought: we were enemies, right? We were hostile enemies. Now, follow the thought. We were hostile enemies against God. The object of His vengeance and hatred and wrath. When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His son. Now follow this. As bad as our condition was, as demanding as it was, the death of Christ could change it. That's how powerful His death was.

Now, if His death was powerful enough to take enemies and make them friends, then won't His life be powerful enough to keep His friends friends? That's the point. If we were delivered and reconciled through death, can't we be kept by His life? To put it simply, if Jesus dead can accomplish our salvation, can't Jesus living keep us? Well, of course.

It's an amazing contrast, isn't it? He's so powerful that dead He could redeem us. Imagine what He could do alive. Incredible. People say, "Well, boy, I know I was saved and I know His death saved me but I don't know if His life can keep me." What? That's bizarre to imagine such a thing.

How does He do it? Hebrews says, "H ever lives." To what? Make intercession for us. His life is an interceding life as a high priest before the throne of God, interceding on our behalf constantly so that we will never experience the wrath of God. Christ's dead gave us peace with God, grace, hope, love and brought us to a point where we will never know the wrath of God. Christ delivered us through His death and He will see to it by his protecting intercessory, high priestly work on our behalf that we will never experience the judgment of God. What a tremendous truth. We were reconciled by His death.

We are kept by His life.

Then a last point. As if that isn't enough, anyone of those links would be enough, we are linked eternally to God not only by peace with God standing in grace, hope of glory, possession of love, promise of deliverance. But finally there is another link. And this one more subjective than the others.

Joy in God. Verse 11, "Not only this," it's almost like, "If this isn't enough folks, there's more."

"And not only this but we also rejoice in God." Stop it there. We rejoice in God. What is He saying there? He is saying that there is, in the life of every true believer, a present and abundant joy. No matter how tough life gets, no matter how difficult our trials or how besetting our sins or how powerful the temptations that come against us, no matter how we may be failing or whatever, even in the deepest moments of our spiritual struggle, we can reach down to that rock-solid bottom and say, "God, thank you for saving me. I'm an unworthy sinner. Thank you for saving me."

It is that joy which is the joy in the Holy Spirit that is the essence of the kingdom, according to Romans 14, which is in our inner mark of security. The believers' joy is a note that is sung, as it were, by the redeemed heart. He says, "With the believers of old, my soul shall make her boast in the Lord."

He says, "Oh magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt His name together." The believer says, "I'll rejoice in the Lord. I'm joy in the God of my salvation." The believer says, "I'll go into the alter of my God and the God, my exceeding joy." And when something violates that joy, He says with the Psalmist, "Oh God, restore to me the," what? The joy. "I want it back."

Here we find that, sort of, a climactic truth that says we're linked inseparably to God is the happiness and the deep-down joy that causes us to praise Him and thank Him for saving us. We don't boast in ourselves. Our joy is in Him. We don't congratulate ourselves. We don't pat ourselves on the back. WE boast in Him. We go around saying, "I am what I am by the grace of God. I'm not much. I'm not much. I'm not what I ought to be but I am what I am by the grace of God."

We gladly will say with the songwriter, "Oh for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise. The glories of my God and king, the triumphs of His grace. Here him, ye deaf. Praise ye dumb, your loosened tongues implore you. Blind behold your Savior's come and leap ye lame for joy."

We are tied to God by the well spring of joy that He puts within us that causes us to be ever and always desiring to thank Him. So we're secure in peace, in grace, in hope, in love, in promise, in joy. And we never need to have a panic attack because the one who began the work in us will make sure that it gets finished. That's His promise.

Father, we thank you for this comforting, encouraging reminder this morning that our salvation is secure and eternal and it's nothing that we have done. You saved us. You gave us peace, grace, hope of glory, love, deliverance, joy. And thus forever and ever, tied us to Yourself. And we can confidently say that He who began a good work in us will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. And that whom He justified is sanctified. And whom He sanctified, He glorified. Nothing can separate us from Your love which is ours in Christ through His reconciliation. We thank you. Amen.

Available online at: http://www.gty.org
COPYRIGHT (C) 2014 Grace to You
You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (http://www.gty.org/connect/copyright).