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SEVEN BLESSINGS.

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L.



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SEVEN BLESSINGS.

I SUPPOSE we all know that the Bible was not originally divided into chapters and verses; so Paul wrote the fourth and fifth chapters of Romans without the break which we find in our Bibles. The fifth chapter begins with "Therefore," which shows that what is about to be said is consequent upon something which has gone before. Read chapter iv. 23-25, and you will see upon what foundation chapter v. is built.

All the blessings of chapter v. rest on the facts that Christ "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." *God* raised

Him from the dead. Christ bore all the judgment against sin ; upon Him were heaped the sins of every one who shall ever believe on Him ; and He went down into death. *God* raised Him from the dead, a proof of His perfect satisfaction with the work accomplished ; therefore, in consequence of what Christ has done, we, being justified by faith, have the sevenfold blessings of chapter v.

To make these seven blessings more easily remembered, we will let each begin with the letter P.

The first is :

“PEACE

with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” So perfectly has Christ done the work, so entirely is God satisfied with it, that I can look up into His blessed face without a tremor, without a ruffle, without a fear ! People talk about *making*

their peace with God. How can you set to work? You are a sinner—a condemned sinner—utterly helpless; how can *you* make your peace with God? Ah, dear friends, *God* has done it for you; *Christ* has made peace through the blood of His cross (Col. i. 20), and faith lays hold of what He has done. Nothing can touch the peace made by Christ, for He Himself *is* our peace (Eph. ii. 14), and He never changes.

“I change, He changes not.”

Look at Leviticus vi. 13: “The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall *never* go out.” That is the type; the antitype is that the work of Christ on Calvary’s cross is as precious to God to-day as it was the day it was accomplished. We say it was done more than one thousand eight hundred years ago; but *God* has no dates; the work of

Christ will never lose its preciousness in His sight. God wants you by faith to rest your soul on that work of Christ, and so have peace with Him.

Great as peace with God is, it is but the first of the blessings unfolded in this chapter. "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand." (v. 2.) That is a new

PLACE

before God. I stand before God, not as one waiting to see if all will be right with me, not as one doubting and questioning what God may think of me, but as one who has access into the favour of God, one brought into the presence of God in unclouded favour. I am taken out of a place where death, judgment, and the lake of fire were before me, and put into a place in the very presence of God, in changeless favour. Nothing can

describe that place so well as Eph. i. 6: "Accepted in *the Beloved*." The "beloved ones" are often referred to in Scripture, but in no other place is *the Beloved One* spoken of; and here it is a question of our acceptance. God says that the place we have before Him is *in the Beloved*. Again, in Colossians i. 13, we are translated "into the kingdom of His dear Son." Peace with God and a place so near Him.

What is the next blessing? We "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." There is our

PROSPECT.

People often talk of their prospects; they live in hope of something in the future. What would this world be like without hope? If your child is ill, you *hope* it may recover; you *hope* your son may pass his examination, that your daughter's

marriage may turn out well, and a thousand other things. Can anything on earth compare with the Christian's prospect? We "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." (v. 2.) Rejoice! That is what Christians ought always to do! We have peace with God; we are in a place of favour, and our prospect is the glory of God through the countless ages of eternity.

With these three blessings we need a fourth to support us while in the world. We are poor, weak, fainting things; evil is around us, within us; and Satan is ever ready to use his subtlety against us. We need a

POWER

to help us through, and we *get it*. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (v. 5.) The Holy Ghost is given to us, the Power to help us through this scene. There

are three great characteristics of Christianity :

I. The efficacy of the work of Christ.

II. There is a Man in the glory of God.

III. God the Holy Ghost is on earth.

The Holy Ghost is on earth to conduct us to our home. He is the Comforter, the Paraclete sent down from the Man in glory.

This is a cold, hard world, and if you stand for Christ there will be opposition. We have the power to support us; do we need anything beside? Yes; we need sympathy, and we have *that* too. "Much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." (v. 10.) The One who died for us lives for us. He is our

PRIEST.

Christ has undertaken everything fo

us. People say, "May we not fall by the way?" Turn to John vi. 37, 38, 39 for an answer: "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me." Then, if you have come to the Lord Jesus, you are the Father's gift to Him. Anyone may come; for it goes on to say, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." Now read verse 39: "This is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose *nothing*."

Have you ever thought, that if a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ were lost, the Father's *will* would not be done? What eternal security this gives! Christ has been down here: He knew what it was to be weary, hungry, to have not a penny; now He is in glory, and can feel for us. Ah! no one can feel for another unless he has been in like circumstances himself. Christ has been in our circumstances,

was in all points tempted like as we are, sin apart, and now He can sympathize with us in our every trial. It is wonderful to think of the tender sympathy of our Priest — God, yet Man!

In verse 11 is the sixth blessing—
our

PORTION.

“We joy in God.” God Himself is our portion, not what He has done. People are occupied with their blessings; great, indeed, they are; but God wants us to be occupied, outside the blessings, with the *Blessor*, what He Himself *is*. God’s heart has been ever toward us, but His love could not be manifested until Christ came; *He* made it known. Now we can *joy* in God, in all that He is, in His very righteousness; for the more righteous I can prove God to be, the more certain am I that I am eternally forgiven; for if Christ has paid my

debt, will a righteous God demand it of me? If Christ has borne my sins, will a righteous God impute them to me? Never; so I can delight in God, His righteousness, and His love.

Through whom do all these blessings come? "Through our Lord Jesus Christ." He is the

PERSON,

the blessed One, to whom we owe all. Christianity is connected with a *Person*, not with a series of doctrines, words, dogmas. 1 John iv. 9 proves that: "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent *His only begotten Son*"—a *Person*. No one could make known to us what the heart of God is but He who "is in the bosom of the Father." That blessed Person has come here to make known to us the love of God by dying on Calvary's cross.

Here then are these seven marvellous blessings :

PEACE with God.

A PLACE in His favour.

A PROSPECT of His glory.

A POWER to take us through the world.

A PRIEST to sympathize.

A PORTION—God Himself, in whom we joy.

A PERSON—the Lord Jesus Christ, through whom all comes.

“Oh,” you say, “these wonderful things are surely reserved for the best people on earth! I do not set up to be among them; so these things cannot be for me.”

You think so? We will look to see for whom these blessings are; and the same verses which tell us of the sevenfold blessing give a fourfold description of the kind of people to whom they belong. First, in verse 6, it says, “When we were

yet *without strength*." Helpless sort of people! Do you know that you are without strength? People like to try to save themselves. There was a man in Lincolnshire who read his Bible and said his prayers to procure salvation. He could not do it, so he left off his tobacco. That was no good; so, kneeling down before God, he said, "If I am to be saved You must save me Yourself."

That is what we must all come to. If only people would be simple, how much anxiety would be avoided!

What does the word Saviour mean? Does it not mean "One who saves"? We were utterly helpless, without strength, and "Christ died for the *ungodly*." That is the second characteristic. It is of no use trying to make yourself godly, in order to have a claim upon the Saviour. If you own that you are ungodly, you have a claim upon God's Christ, who died

for such as you. "God commendeth His love to us, in that, while we were yet *sinner*s, Christ died for us." Not only *without strength* and *ungodly*, but *sinner*s also; and, fourthly, "when we were *enemies*." God was never our enemy; we were enemies to Him; and He, in the love of His heart, said, "You are helpless, ungodly *sinner*s, enemies in your heart to Me. I will send My beloved Son to die on Calvary's cross, and I will break your hearts."

Dear friends, are your hearts broken by God's love? Can you say, "That fourfold description describes me. I am helpless, and I have found it out; ungodly, and I know it; a *sinner*, and I feel it; an enemy to God, though I scarcely like to own it"? Then you are the very one to whom are offered, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, these sevenfold blessings. If you have one, you have all. You cannot

understand them, but you can ponder them, delight in them, and joy in God who gives them.

May our hearts enter more into the marvellous love which offers peace, a place, a prospect, power, a portion, and a Person, to helpless, ungodly sinners, at enmity to God.

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