

“Building Our Foundation on God”*Romans 5: 1-5*

Rev. Ed Hoekstra

Having Peace with God. Worldly peace is temporary. It is external peace which seems to flipflop to conflict quickly. Trusting by placing one's life (one's weight) on God gives us everlasting peace in spite of the outside circumstances. The 'three in one' triune God helps us to put our weight on him because the Holy Spirit lives in our hearts and supplies us with peace regardless of our outside circumstances.

Access to Grace. Through Jesus Christ we are given the gift of direct access to the solid foundation of God's Grace. 'Grace' is God's steadfast love that will always hold us up. Grace is God's steadfast love where God forgives us of our sins regardless of what we have done or did not do – we are loved unconditionally. We are enough in God's eyes.

Boast in the hope of sharing the Glory of God. Not arrogant boasting but humble boasting. There is good boasting in praising God and giving thanks for what God has done through Jesus to win the victory over sin, suffering and death. The theology of the cross is how we are to live. The theology of glory is how we celebrate Christ's victory over sin and death. We easily forget the theology of the cross because we want to go too quickly to the theology of glory. The theology of the cross matters because that is how we know God's love (grace). God's grace became evident through Jesus' suffering and death for his people.

³ **And not only that, but we^[d] also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance....** We do not boast because of our suffering but in spite of our suffering. Everyone suffers and will suffer pain in this life to various degrees. Everyone will die. Western culture does not deal with suffering well. We tend to see it as all bad and work so hard to mitigate suffering and death. When we know we are weak, vulnerable and will die and know our lives are temporary, we are free to rest in the everlasting arms of God's grace. Then we hang on the sure foundation of God and not the temporary pleasures and successes in life. Then even in the midst of hard times (whatever that may be) God's everlasting arms will hold us up. The more suffering knocks on our door – we are drawn to the certain foundation of God's grace where God will not let our foot slip (Psalm 121). Theologian and author Tim Keller wrote, “You don't realize Jesus is all you need until Jesus is all you have.” The gods of our society of money, sex, power, comfort, etcetera entice us, but let us fall.

⁴ **and endurance produces character, and character produces hope...** one could say that character is the result of developing a habit - the habit of standing on the promises of God and acknowledging you are weak - and you need Jesus as the solid rock to stand on through your life and through death. That character can look forward into the future with hope because we know the suffering is only temporary.

The Holy Spirit - the ever-present Grace of God with us. Know in your vulnerability and weakness that we have access to Christ the firm foundation. Practice standing on the solid ground of his grace today and forever.

On what foundation are you building your life?