Romans 5:1-2 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2Through him we also have obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand. And we rejoice confidently on the basis of our hope for the glory of God.

 Do you understand and grasp the kind of peace that is being spoken of in this text? Better yet, what I am really asking is if you have this peace that is being spoken of, this thing called **“peace with God?”**

 I have seen and been touched by this peace. I have been at the bedside of those who are dying and have seen this peace. I have been in hospitals with those stricken with the most horrendous of diseases and difficulties and have seen through them the peace spoken of here. I have met people who have suffered loss of all and yet have shown and dwelt in this peace. When difficulty and tribulation have reared their ugly heads, I have in my own life rejoiced in this peace of God that is found here. It is a peace that I don’t think any man should live without.

 But beware! This peace spoken of here is not the peace the world would throw at us. The world’s kind of peace is one where they believe there is nothing but harmony and joy, where all things go beautifully, where all our needs and wants are met, where men know no strife because all men will have all things in common and we are simply creatures of love and care.

 Now don’t get me wrong, I do like the sound of what the world promotes. My problem is that I am a realist. My problem is that I don’t believe the world is ever going to be capable of such living and harmony. My problem is that I know what God says of sin in this world and exactly how mankind has been terribly scarred by this sin. I know that God says that until Jesus returns and restores this world to the perfect, sinless place it once was that this world will be one filled with **“wars and rumors of wars…Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places.”** And as if that isn’t bad enough we are also told: **“Many will fall away from the faith. They will betray each other and hate each other. Many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because lawlessness will increase, the love of many will grow cold.”** In other words, on the basis of what God says, I do not expect there will ever be any kind of earthly peace as the world likes to promise.

 So then, how can I stand before you and ask if you know the peace that our text speaks of? Because it is not a worldly peace spoken of. If is not a peace based on man and the things of this world but rather is a peace based on the wonder, the marvel and awesome redemption that is found Jesus Christ our Lord. It is the peace, as God’s Word states, **“which surpasses all understanding.”** True peace, lasting peace, the only peace that counts. Let’s contemplate this peace under the theme: **THE PEACE OF GOD.**

 Indeed what a worthy topic to have before us. Peace! Not ordinary peace but rather what our text calls **“peace with God.”** Note how this peace is spoken of in the text. It says, **“We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”** There is the foundation. There is the secret to this peace. It is our Lord Jesus Christ.

 It is in speaking of Jesus that you will grasp why the world cannot get this peace. Because of its sinful nature the world wants nothing to do with Jesus and the truth of God that Jesus has come to reveal. Indeed, even when Jesus did walk in this world, the very people he had been promised to and ministered among chose to hate him rather than to accept what they saw and heard in Jesus. They denied his words of truth that spoke of salvation from sin. They rejected his miracles, thousands upon thousands of them, not by denying he did them but rather by claiming he did them by the power of the devil. Worse yet, the one clear demonstration of the divine nature of Jesus they shunned. Jesus Christ, the crucified, had risen from the dead. He who was dead was made alive again and although many of them saw Him they refused to believe that Jesus is God!

 But isn’t that the way God said it would be? And isn’t that the way that it still is today? Tell me, what harm or horror is there in the message of Jesus? I can’t help it that over the centuries, false teachers and prophets have taught and done things to bring shame to the name of Jesus. Those things are the acts of men, not of Jesus. So tell me, what harm or horror is there in the message of Jesus? Is it a horror to show men their sins and how those sins have separated them from God? Is it harmful to speak of how God sent his Son to forgive our sins and grant eternal life and salvation? Is there some sort of shame in the moral base that God’s Word encourages in man? Is there shame in being forgiving, loving, caring and gracious to our neighbor and all of mankind? What is there in the message of Jesus that is harmful?

 The truth is that the message of God’s Word has nothing horrifying or harmful. It is a message of the Savior, the good news of God’s eternal love that has taken and acted on our behalf that we might be delivered from the true and real problem we have: sin! But there is the problem! The world doesn’t want to hear of sin. The world doesn’t want to be answerable to a supreme being even though that God is the one who supplies all the answers and offers all the grace and love. The world still wants to be Adam and Eve when they were lead to believe that eating that forbidden fruit would make them equal to God. And so they ate and then ran away from God to hide. God had not changed but clearly these two had. And just like we still do today, they simply cast all the blame and fault on God!

 It was because of this change brought about by sin that God took the steps to bring about our justification. What a beautiful word this is. How sad that so many take this wonderful word and its lesson and twist it into something it is not. There are those who claim this word means “the process of making innocent.” How sad that is. They make this beautiful and meaningful word something that we must do rather than believe what the word says. The word “justify” or “justification” speaks of God **“declaring us innocent of all charges brought against us.”** Please note that. It is a word that speaks of what God has declared, what God has promised and given through his divine power and love. It is a word that shows us the true nature of the peace we have with God.

 In truth, the word we are speaking of is a word that comes to us from the ancient Greek courtroom. It is a word that says the case has been heard and that the judge is declaring the defendant free of all charges and accusations against him. It is a word that is the equivalent of the jury saying, “We find the defendant not guilty on all charges!”

 But dear people, remember this is God’s courtroom! There is nothing hidden or left out in the testimony against us. God know all things. God knows that we are guilty of sin in thought, word, and deed! God looks right into our hearts and see everything that is there. On the basis of what God’s law says there is no doubt that each of us deserves nothing but the death sentence, the eternal death sentence of hell. Yet God, because of Jesus, declares us innocent. God, because of Jesus and the fact that Jesus paid for our sins, God announces that there is no charge against us. Jesus has covered our guilt. God declares that all the evidence against us is inadmissible in his courtroom. Thus we are pronounced “not guilty,” not because that’s the reality of our life but rather because that the reality of Jesus’ life.

 Why is it that the world just doesn’t want to hear about this marvel of Jesus? Why is it that they seem to be so opposed to Jesus and what He declares? Jesus is about our forgiveness and redemption. Jesus is about God’s love for a lost world and how God worked to bring that world back to him. Jesus is about eternal life and salvation, not based on us but rather based entirely on what He did and accomplished. Through Jesus we are made right with God. Through Jesus our sins are forgiven and yes, heaven becomes our eternal home now and always.

 That what our text tells us, isn’t it? It says to us, **“Through him we also have obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand.”** The “**through him”** is Jesus. It tells us that in Jesus we gain access to God’s grace. That is another word worthy of note for us. The word we translate “obtained access” has the fuller meaning of **“the means of admission into the presence of a person of higher position.”** It is a word that tells us that without Jesus we couldn’t and wouldn’t be able to enjoy the favor and presence of God. But with Jesus we are in the very presence of God and we are the recipients of God’s grace. Grace is God’s free and certain love. Grace is love that God has for us, a love that moved him to send His son to win forgiveness and eternal life.

 It is because of Jesus that you find that other little set of words in this section that is so important. You know, that set of words that speaks of “faith.” We have all of these things because God has done them and God has declared them so. We have these things when we simply believe God. That’s what “faith” means. It means to believe God, or if you want to be more specific, to believe God message demonstrated and realized in Jesus.

 Recently in a discussion with a friend online, the issue turned religious. In order to try and help this person understand the reality of Jesus I wrote this: *“Please note that Christianity does not say you are going to hell for your sin. I don’t know of a single person without sin (Jesus, the exception, of course). Nope, Scripture does not damn you for sin but rather for unbelief. God sent his Son to die for your sins. Jesus went to hell for you so that you don’t have to. All God asks is that you believe and yes, follow Jesus. Part of following Jesus is that I wrestle with, fight against and strive not to be filled with sin. God’s Holy Spirit helps in that. But when we humans decide that I want this sin and I want to live this way in sin and I will do what I want and God, you can stuff it…well, He is God. He sets the rules. God is gracious and will indeed give you exactly what you want, nothing to do with Him. So because of unbelief, the refusal to believe that God is God and that God’s Son paid for your sins, God does decree that you can have your sins back and pay for them yourself! That is our prerogative. Whoever believes and whoever does not believe is the point of judgment.”*

 I point out that statement because our text draws us to the same conclusion. **“We obtain access by faith into this grace.”** That’s what faith is about. To believe and trust in God is the point. We have access to God’s grace by this faith given in Jesus. Perhaps we forget the role of faith in salvation. Faith says, “I hear and believe God and his promise of love and forgiveness.” It is not faith to think, “Okay god, here is what I think and want and will do.” Faith changes us, puts us in the room with God’s grace in Jesus.

 Did you get the most awesome thing about this last section we looked at? Not only did it talk about our access to the grace of God by faith in Jesus but it spoke of that grace with the words; **“in which we stand.”** God’s grace is ours now. God’s love and care is ours now. All of this goes to reiterate what we heard last week. God has sent his Holy Spirit to call, gather and enlighten us in the one truth faith in Jesus. Our faith grants us the hope, comfort and joy of knowing we are already heirs of eternal life in Jesus.

 Now, after you have learned all of these things about this verse, listen again to what it says and tell me if you don’t have a greater appreciation for its message and the peace it proclaims. **Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2Through him we also have obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand. And we rejoice confidently on the basis of our hope for the glory of God.**

God’s grace, eternal life and heaven are ours in Jesus. Ours because we are declared justified in Jesus. Ours now and always in Jesus. Yes, dear people, we have peace with God. Amen.