

## A Commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Romans [5]

*Continued from previous article...*

### Chapter 5:1-21: New Humanity fashioned by Grace in Christ

**Verses 1-11: Process of Justification:** Paul defines relationship with God as fruit of faith, what he calls 'being justified'! Experience of justification by God is an awareness of being reconciled with God and others by accepting grace through the redemptive work of Christ. Christ's grace is at work in all who respect their humanness in relation to God [faith] and live justly before God-human's fundamental calling. Through the expression 'into grace we stand', Paul envisions grace as entering into a dwelling place [what Jesus says, remain in me', John 15:4]. Being justified by faith is sharing in Christ's glory. Paul says, 'we have peace in Christ'; it is the promise and purpose of Christ's coming, wellbeing/salvation of all ['God sent his Son that all may be saved', John 3:16]. Right relationship with God [justified] is experienced as peace. This peace is a process and its fullness will be revealed in eternal life. Faith gets us through this process-life as faith journey. Work for peace is a Christian calling.

Assurance of justification in Christ gives us hope of sharing in his glory. Hope helps to rejoice in Christ, which is already a sharing in eternal joy! Paul acknowledges the tribulations Christians are in; the only thing a believer can boast about is trust that God will accomplish his purpose no matter how dire human situation is. Paul speaks of Christian patience as power of grace that faces suffering with courage and hope, a mark of union with Christ who conquered suffering and death. All sufferings in this life fall into perspective in faith, reality of our redeemed existence in Christ. Christian attitude in suffering is inspired by the crucified Christ-a hope of joy is the promise inherent in Christ's suffering. The depth of God's love for the ungodly is manifested in Christ's death, love that cancels out human transgressions. Dying for another is highest form of love, especially dying for an enemy. God reaches out to the unjust, sinful world with the purpose of healing, freeing the sinner and reconciling with God. All agree that the ungodly incur the 'wrath' of God, however God's love in Christ's death redeems the sinner.

**Verses 12-21: The New Humanity:** Paul explains that the first Adam as origin of humanity, represents the fallen state of the world. Christ is the second Adam, the head of the new redeemed humanity. Sin has been already in the world since Adam. Sin and death are hopeless conditions of humans. Sin as transgression of law, simply reveals law's powerlessness to save. Works of law and sin is a transactional system, on the other hand, grace of salvation is an invitation to relationship with God. Salvation is God's initiative manifested in Christ. True salvific action of God needed to touch the entire human family. It is in the death and resurrection of Christ, the new Adam, humanity's hope of sharing in God's life is being actualized. The reign of death ended in Christ's resurrection. Christ the new Adam is the answer to universality of sin.

Grace of salvation is unmerited gift of God, manifestation of God's love for human beings created in divine image. In the Adam typology, Paul emphasizes the unity of human family and

creation; sin is a disruption of this unity. In Adam humans remained sinful and in Christ, the new Adam, human situation is as being redeemed. Humans are now in the reign of grace!

*Father Jose*