

Hope Based on Faith

Key Verse: “*Hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.*”
—**Romans 5:5**

Selected Scripture:
Romans 5:1-11

ALTHOUGH ABRAHAM'S faith justified him to friendship with God, through faith in Christ Jesus' ransom sacrifice, consecrated believers today are reckoned as being justified to life. The imputation of the merit of Christ's righteousness covers our sins, and we have peace with God through the begetting of the Holy Spirit.—Rom. 5:1

Justified believers may now entertain the hope of the High Calling which, if faithfully pursued, will result in attainment of the divine nature. In view of this vital relationship we now enjoy with the Lord, our perspective is such that we can rejoice in our tribulations. We appreciate that such difficult experiences are necessary to crystallize our character as we patiently endure such trials. We can be confident that if we hold fast to the promises we have received, having begun the good work of transformation in our lives, the Lord will see it through to a successful completion.—Phil 1:6; Rom. 5:2-4

Our Key Verse should be a source of great encouragement to us. It affirms that the hope we entertain will not be a source of disappointment because it is an outgrowth of God's great love for us. We experience this love through the influence of his Holy Spirit, as it daily works in and through the experiences of our life.

Our lesson continues with an expansion of God's love that became manifest through the unfathomable gift of Christ on our behalf. All this, Paul says, was when we were estranged from God and slaves to sin. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."—vss. 6-8

The capacity for keeping God's law is an evidence of perfection. Adam willfully sinned and as a consequence, all of his progeny were born imperfect. As sinners by birth, it was impossible for them to keep God's perfect law. It is for this reason that Jesus came to earth. Having his perfect life principle transferred by God into Mary's womb, he was born with human perfection. (Gal. 4:4) In God's grand plan of salvation, Christ had the ability to render perfect obedience in every particular. Thus he could provide the ransom price as he laid down his life in sacrifice. He purchased the nation of Israel, who were under the condemnation of the Mosaic Law, as well as the entire human family who inherited sin as a result of Adam's disobedience. "As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."—Rom. 5:18

Consecrated believers in Christ are especially blessed at this time. By accepting the benefits of Christ's sacrifice and being justified to life, they are freed from the condemnation that rests upon the remainder of the human family. In addition to this, if faithful they will also be used as instruments of reconciling mankind back to God during his kingdom. May the prospect of reigning with Christ for the purpose of forever eradicating sin encourage us towards faithfulness in our Christian sojourn each day.—Rev. 20:6; 21:1-5 ■