

# How can we stand tall when we fall short?

Romans 3:23

"For all have sinned and **fall short** of the glory of God."



Ephesians 6:14

"**Stand firm** therefore, *having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,*"

# What is justifying faith?

Romans 4:16-25 (last week)

- ✓ It is based on the Word of God.
- ✓ It is activated by our weakness.
- ✓ It is able to wait.

Romans 5:1-11 (this week)

It resists a spirituality that is oriented toward:

- ✓ Fickle feelings (vs.1-2) "If I don't feel it, is it real?"
- ✓ Troubling circumstances (vs.4-5) "If God loves me, why is life so disappointing?"
- ✓ Performance anxiety (vs.6-11) "What if I fail?"

## The tenses say it all.

"<sup>1</sup> Therefore **having been justified** by faith, we **have peace** with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup> through whom also **we have** obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we **exult** in hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup> And not only this, but we also **exult** in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; <sup>4</sup> and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; <sup>5</sup> and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God **has been poured out** within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. <sup>6</sup> For while **we were still helpless**, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. <sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ **died** for us. <sup>9</sup> Much more then, **having now been justified** by His blood, **we shall be** saved from the wrath of God through Him. <sup>10</sup> For if while we were enemies, we **were reconciled** to God through the death of His Son, much more, **having been reconciled**, **we shall be** saved by His life. <sup>11</sup> And not only this, but we also **exult** in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we **have now received** the reconciliation."

## A dramatic shift in mood

Romans 5

### "<sup>1</sup> Therefore

having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

The dark side of the Gospel narrative.

ch.1-4

The glory of God's grace in the work of Christ offered to those who believe.

ch.5-16

- |                        |                              |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| ✓ From condemnation    | to commendation.             |
| ✓ From despair & wrath | to joy & love.               |
| ✓ From life in Adam    | to life in Christ.           |
| ✓ From past tense      | to present and future tense. |

- ✓ Faith resists a feeling oriented spirituality. (vs.1-2) "If I don't feel it, is it real?"

"<sup>1</sup> Therefore having been **justified by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup> through whom also we have obtained our **introduction by faith** into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God."

- Feelings make the train a pleasant place to ride.



- But we can't expect feelings to pull the train.

## When can we trust our feelings?

Our feelings follow our faith and will reflect the object of our faith as well as its values.

If our values are worldly then worldly principles will guide our feelings.

If our values are Godly then kingdom principles will guide our feelings.



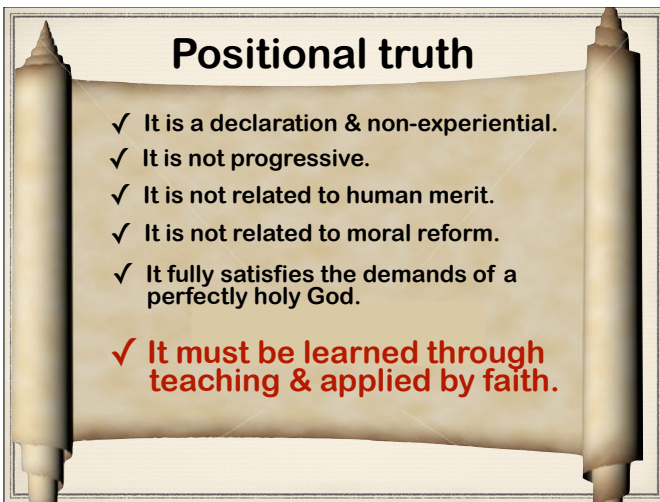
### Three stumbling blocks to Gospel truths

1. Confusing the New **and Old covenants**
2. Confusing the work of Christ **and the work of the Spirit**
3. Confusing positional holiness through the Imputed righteousness by faith **and practiced holiness through love**



### Positional truth

- ✓ It is a declaration & non-experiential.
- ✓ It is not progressive.
- ✓ It is not related to human merit.
- ✓ It is not related to moral reform.
- ✓ It fully satisfies the demands of a perfectly holy God.
- ✓ **It must be learned through teaching & applied by faith.**



#### *The work of Christ received by faith*

"<sup>1</sup> Therefore having been **justified by faith**, we have peace with God **through our Lord Jesus Christ**, <sup>2</sup> through whom also we have obtained our **introduction by faith** into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup> And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; <sup>4</sup> and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; <sup>5</sup> and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. <sup>6</sup> For while we were still helpless, at the right time **Christ died for the ungodly**. <sup>7</sup> For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. <sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, **Christ died for us**. <sup>9</sup> Much more then, having now been justified **by His blood**, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. <sup>10</sup> For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God **through the death of His Son**, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. <sup>11</sup> And not only this, but we also exult in God **through our Lord Jesus Christ**, through whom we have now received the reconciliation."

### Concerns with Positional truth

- ✓ It is not relational, personal, or felt.
- ✓ It promotes moral irresponsibility.
- ✓ It is too intellectual and philosophical.
- ✓ It places too much emphasis on legal justification.
- ✓ It ignores the importance of "moral discipline."

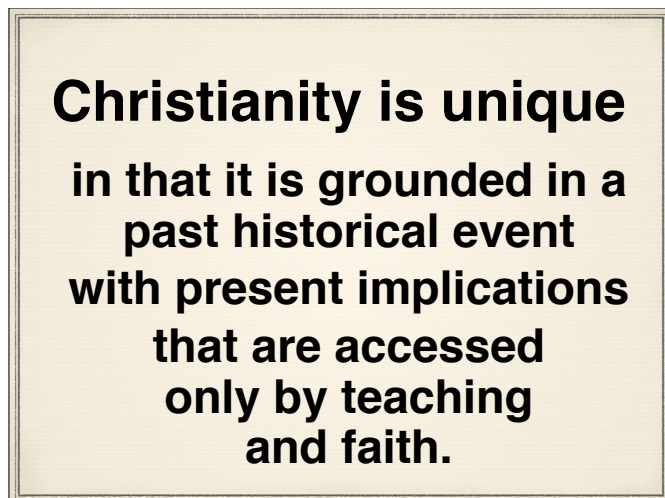


### Why Positional truth is important

- ✓ It is clearly taught in the Old and New Testaments.
- ✓ It is at the heart of the Gospel.
- ✓ It puts the attention on what God has done in Christ not on what we must do.
- ✓ It grounds our relationship in what is finished and secure not in our feelings or circumstances.



**Christianity is unique**  
in that it is grounded in a  
past historical event  
with present implications  
that are accessed  
only by teaching  
and faith.





**Romans**  
**is not a tutorial in some**  
**subjective, gnostic, spiritual**  
**encounter**  
**but is an appeal to a logical**  
**application of faith to**  
**historical facts.**

✓ **It resists a circumstance oriented spirituality. (vs.3-5)**  
“If God loves me, why is life so disappointing?”

“<sup>3</sup> And not only this, but we also **exult in our tribulations**, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; <sup>4</sup> and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; <sup>5</sup> and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”

*Two challenges*

- ✓ **Bad times** - Unexpected hard times like injustice, pain, loss, etc. tempt us to doubt God's love.
- ✓ **Good times** - Worldly blessings tend to kill our appetite for the the true blessings of the kingdom.

*Romans 8*

“<sup>18</sup> For I consider that the **sufferings of this present time** are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”

“<sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

*1 Corinthians 15:19*

“If we have hoped in Christ **in this life only**, we are of all men most to be pitied.”

*1 Peter 2:21*

“For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also **suffered** for you, leaving you an **example** for you to **follow** in His steps.”



**Rob Bell**

**With respect to our suffering:**

“The cross is God taking on flesh and blood and saying, “Me too.”

**Nelson Mandela**



“One of the most difficult things is not to change society - but to change yourself.”



Nelson Mandela



"Bitterness is like taking poison and hoping that our enemies die."

Nelson Mandela



"As I walked out the door toward the gate that would lead to my freedom, I knew if I didn't leave my hatred and bitterness behind, I'd still be in prison."

- ✓ **It resists a fear oriented spirituality. (vs.6-11)**  
"What if I have really blown it?"

"<sup>10</sup> For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, **much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.** <sup>11</sup> And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation."

*The finished work of Christ is what secures our relationship with God - through faith.*

- ✓ **We did nothing to deserve our position in Christ and we can do nothing to forfeit it.**

*Romans 8:35*

"Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"

## What does it mean to fear God?

**Our fear of God is shaped by our relationship with God's Son through faith.**

either  
dread with  
insecurity,  
autonomy,  
and pride.

or  
respect with  
confidence,  
intimacy,  
and love.

## **Saving faith assures the believer of:**

- **Freedom from fear** - We will never be condemned for our sins.
- **Freedom from toxic guilt & psychological shame** - We have no reason to feel insecure in our relationship with God.
- **Freedom from bondage to spiritual poverty** - We have no need to strive for life on worldly paths.

## **How can these truths become installed in our lives?**

- **Fellowship** - Cultivate relationships with others who pursue these values.
- **Worship** - Celebrate what Christ has done for us and is doing in and through us.
- **Scripture** - Expose ourselves to sound teaching coupled with personal study.