

Verses 10 and 11 both speak of reconciliation to God, from whom we were estranged by our sin. In verse 10 we read of reconciliation having been accomplished, and in verse 11 we read of reconciliation having been applied and received.

What wonderful blessings these are that accompany justification by faith!

- D. This brings us to the fourth and final segment of this second major section of the epistle to the Romans (5:12-21)

But what shall we say about this powerful sustained parallel which compares and contrasts the condemnation which falls upon those who are in Adam, and the justification which comes upon those who are in Christ?

Proper treatment would take a whole session in itself, and probably more. Some of the themes stressed here have been referred to (not in the same way, of course) in previous segments of the epistle.

However, perhaps a highlight or two should be noted.

In verse 15 "the gift" is mentioned. Also in verse 15 we find "the gift that came by . . . grace." In verse 16 we read of "the gift of God," and "the gift that brought justification." And in verse 17 we read of "the gift of righteousness."

Here we have a third meaning of the righteousness of God. We have previously noted two meanings: God's characteristic (attribute) of righteousness, and God's standard of righteousness (His perfect Law). Now we learn of God's gift of righteousness, which we see is a gift of a right standing before the Law of God (legal righteousness).

However, although this gift comes from God's grace (verse 17 speaks of "God's abundant provision of grace"), and by the grace of Jesus Christ (verse 15 speaks of the "gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ"), nevertheless it needs to be stressed that this gracious gift is possible only because of Christ's act of righteousness in living a life of perfect fulfillment of the requirements of the Law of God, and in dying a death of perfect expiation of the guilt and penalty of the broken Law of God.

Verse 18 states that "the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life"; and verse 19 states that "through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous."

What a wonderful gospel Paul has expounded for us thus far!

Think of it! The Law is a perfect standard of righteousness, and requires perfect obedience if it is to pronounce us "righteous." But this perfect Law comes to sinners who transgress it and continually fall short of it; and all that it can do for sinners is to condemn them -- declare them "guilty!" and pronounce their doom!

But God in His pure grace sends His Son to satisfy all of the demands of the Law and all of its claims; He graciously unites many sinners to His Son by