St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth Sunday, June 12th, 2022 Rev. Gerry Gallant

Justified Trinity Sunday Romans 5:1-5

<u>Welcome</u>

Announcements

Call to Worship

God calls us to worship, and we come, some with laughter and songs of joy.

God calls us to worship, and we come, some from a sense of obligation or habit.

God calls us to worship, and we come, some with hearts heavy with grief.

God calls us to worship, and we come, some with distraction or exhaustion.

God calls us to worship, and we come, some with eagerness and enthusiasm.

God calls us to worship, and we come, some with stress, loneliness, or depression.

As God's dearly loved children, we bring all our joy and pain, hurt and hope into this place of Spirit-given grace, love, and hope

Prayer of Adoration

O God, our Father, you seek men and women, boys and girls,

who will worship you in spirit and in truth; and so we ask you to inspire and bless the worship week by week in this church, in words and music, prayers and hymns, psalms and lessons.

Open the hearts and lips of those who worship you today all over the world, that all of us may listen with an alert conscience to the preaching of your Word.

We ask this in the name of him through whom alone our worship is acceptable to you: our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Opening Hymn # 466: "Praise the Lord With the Sound of Trumpet" (V 1, 2)

Praise the Lord with the sound of trumpet,
Praise the Lord with the harp and lute,
Praise the Lord with the gentle-sounding flute.
Praise the Lord in the field and forest,
Praise the Lord in the city square,
Praise the Lord anytime and anywhere.
Praise the Lord in the wind and sunshine,
Praise the Lord in the dark of night,
Praise the Lord in the rain or snow or in the morning light.
Praise the Lord on the highest hill,
Praise the Lord; never let your voice be still.

Praise the Lord with the crashing cymbal,

Praise the Lord with the pipe and string,
Praise the Lord with the joyful songs you sing.
Praise the Lord on a weekday morning,
Praise the Lord on a Sunday noon,
Praise the Lord by the light of sun or moon.
Praise the Lord in the time of sorrow,
Praise the Lord in the time of joy,
Praise the Lord every moment; nothing let your praise destroy.
Praise the Lord in the peace and quiet,
Praise the Lord in your work or play,
Praise the Lord everywhere in every way!

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Triune God,
we praise you as the God of love and life.
Though Jesus prayed that we would be one,
we confess that we fail to live in unity with each other and with you.
We break our communion through hostile words and unkind actions.
We long for your Spirit to heal us and to correct us.
We long for you to help us experience communion
with you and with each other
as we gather around your Word.
Even now, dependent on your grace, we commit ourselves
to live more fully in the unity you desire.
Through Christ, our Lord, Amen

Assurance of Pardon

You did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption.

When you cry, "Abba! Father!"
it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, we are forgiven.

Thanks be to the triune God.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One.
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory,
Forever and ever. Amen.

Responsive Reading

Question 43. How did Jesus fulfil the office of king?

Jesus was a servant king. His royal power was shown in his mastery over sickness, sin and death, yet revealed in weakness, lowliness, and the apparent defeat of the cross. As the exalted and resurrected Son of God, he reigns as King over all creation. Jn 18:36, Mt 2:1-2, Mt 27:37, Rev 19:16

Question 44. What does Jesus ministry teach us about God?

In his ministry of healing the sick, feeding the hungry, freeing people from bondage to demons and proclaiming the reign of God, Jesus revealed a loving God who is concerned with all of life. In sharing meals with outsiders, showing mercy to sinners and even forgiving those who nailed him to the cross, Jesus revealed a God who embraces all and whose salvation extends to the ends of the earth.

Mt 4:23, Acts 10:38, Mt 9:11, Lk 23:34

Question 45. Why does the Apostles' Creed emphasize that Jesus "suffered under Pontius Pilate?"

First, it locates God's saving act in history. Secondly, it teaches us that the Judge was judged in our place, so that through him we might stand acquitted before God. Thirdly, it reminds us of the complicity of people of authority in the death of Jesus. Mt 27:26, Gal 3:13, 2 Cor 5:21, Lk 18:32-33

Music Ministry: "A Prayer" by Choir

Prayer for illumination

Almighty, gracious Father, the true understanding of your holy Word helps us to grow into the fulness of the salvation you so freely offer in Christ. Grant to all of us that our hearts, being freed from worldly affairs, may hear and grasp your holy Word with all diligence and faith, that we may rightly understand your gracious will, cherish it, and live by it with all earnestness, to your praise and honor. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Scripture

Romans 5:1-5

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ² Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not put us to shame,

because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Children's Hymn # 773: "Jesus Bids Us Shine" (V 1, 3)

Jesus bids us shine with a pure, clear light, like a little candle burning in the night. In the world is darkness, so we must shine, you in your small corner, and I in mine.

Jesus bids us shine, then, for all around; many kinds of darkness in this world abound: sin and want and sorrow; so we must shine, you in your small corner, and I in mine.

Children's Lesson

Sermon

What does it mean to have peace of mind? That is a difficult question for people to answer, especially in a world where we are always under pressure and always connected. Surveys upon surveys over the years have been conducted by magazines, new papers, and researchers, all looking for the ultimate answer of what will bring peace of mind to people.

Some of the responses given in these surveys are:

Walking along deserted roads, old streams and in fields, alone or with pets.

Hobbies such as bird watching, painting, photography, in modern times even video games, music, television and reading.

Some claimed they had peace of mind in solitude and others have said it was when they were socially engaged.

Some people found it when with friends, others with strangers and most said that they experience peace of mind when they spend time with family on holidays.

What is interesting is how varied the responses are and how much each response depends on both the individual and that persons experience and life situation at the moment of asking. Every response reflects the desire for an ideal world, a quiet place to be with your thoughts, a

busy place to get away from your thoughts, a place surrounded by people who love us, and we feel safe, or a place of solitude away from all the chaos of the world.

Everyone of us here has experienced a longing for peace of mind at some point in our lives and perhaps one of these ideals passed through our mind. In fact, everyone ever surveyed has said that they are seeking peace of mind. It is universally sought after regardless of language, culture, nationality, race, social status, economic status, or any other criteria that mankind uses to categorize people.

However, it needs to be noted that the responses to what someone seeks for peace of mind are never the things that we most often seek in life. It is not power, wealth, fame, carnal pleasures, or success that people believe will bring them peace of mind.

Yet, these are the things that the world teaches us to pursue. Ask any person with incredible amounts of money if it brings them happiness and they will invariably answer no. Ask anyone who has power if they are happy, and they will ultimately reply the same. This holds true for fame, success, and carnal pleasures as well. No matter how much of these worldly possessions one has, they are never satisfied. This is the essential teaching that Solomon gives to us in the book of Ecclesiastes. The issue lies that no matter how much we have, we will always be craving more, the next promotion, the next level of wealth, the next pleasurable experience. What we have is never enough because our eyes are always focused on the one who has more.

If none of these things bring someone peace of mind, then we need to ask what is it that brings someone peace of mind, true peace of mind and the only answer we can reliably come up with is that it must be something not of this world. When nothing in the world can universally satisfy peoples desire to be at peace, then the answer must come from something greater — God. Satisfaction comes from God alone, all good thigs come from God alone, this was the ultimate realization that Solomon comes to in his pursuit in Ecclesiastes.

Augustine states it clearly, "You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you"

Every human has a God shaped hole in their being, a void which they try to fill with the pleasures of this world. With the things that they believe will satisfy them, only to discover that no matter how much they put into that place, they are always left with the desire for more. There is only one way to fill the void, that sense of unease or emptiness that we all have inside – God.

God is the one way we can fill the void inside each of us, God is the one place that we can find peace of mind in this chaotic world. When we hear the Good News of the Gospel, begin our relationship with God and receive our salvation by grace through faith we are filled and finally find peace in our hearts.

And that whole process can be summed up in one word that Paul uses in today's scripture: Justification. To be declared righteous, in the court of law when a person is acquitted. As Robert Mounce said, "To be justified means to be acquitted, to gain a right standing. Justification frees the guilty man from paying the just penalty of his sin."

That moment when a Christian expresses their repentance and faith in Jesus, that exact moment when the Holy Spirit baptizes them and begins its work in them is the very moment that they are justified, they are declared righteous in the eyes of God, regardless of all past, present, and future sins, because Jesus Christ has already paid the just penalty of those sins with his blood on the cross.

This is the grace of God; he made a plan by which he could justify the guilty and still be a just and moral God. God created a way to repair our relationship with him and offered that way freely to anyone who is willing to accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. God loves each and every person so much that he allowed his Son, Jesus, to go to the cross and pay the debts we owed to God for our sins, and there is nothing we can do or add to this fact. We received our salvation, by our Faith alone, In Christ alone, through the Grace of God alone.

Every Christian, every true believer of Christ is justified. Regardless of our church affiliation, our denomination, our version of the bible, our length of time being a Christian or even our knowledge of the scripture. We are justified by Christ from the very instant we place our Faith and trust in him.

There is no such thing as an 'unjustified' Christian. If you are not a true believer and baptized by the Holy Spirit you are not a Christian, regardless of what church you attend, what denomination you are affiliated with, what bible version you use, how many of your family members go to church, how much you volunteer or how much you give.

The only way to be justified with God is to trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and for those who are justified Paul is going to explain three of the blessings that all Christians receive from the Lord our God in their lives

The first is peace with God through Jesus. Peace is much more than the simple end of a conflict. Peace means the repair or restoration of a broken relationship, not just the end of the fight. Peace is a positive change where both sides seek to pursue a better relationship, those who were once enemies begin to seek friendship.

Adam and Eve had this peace with God in the garden of Eden, then they sinned and brought all of mankind into an enmity with God. Humans began to seek their own desires and their own pleasures, and it is for this reason we live in a world that wages war against God. Yet here Paul is telling us that once we are justified, we are at peace with God.

Notice the wording, peace 'with God' not the peace 'of God'. These are two different things, and you will never experience the peace 'of God' until you are at peace 'with God'.

When we are at peace with God, we have accepted Jesus Christ into our lives, we are changing our ways and seeking to obey his word in our lives. We have salvation, because we have justification and that means God's wrath is no longer a threat to our eternal lives. God's justice and penalty for our sin has been satisfied by the price of Blood that Christ paid for us on the cross.

Jesus is the one whom made peace with God for each and every one of his followers. He made the peace, and we are granted the peace freely through his grace, mercy, and love when we become one of his followers and a child of God.

After we are at peace with God, we begin to experience the peace of God in our lives. We learn to trust in him as we work through the things in our life and constantly, we will find moments when we have a sense of peace of mind, even in the midst of tribulations or troubles. We know that we can trust in our heavenly father and his plan and that gives us peace, in our lives, in our minds and in our hearts.

This is because of the second blessing that Paul speaks of for those who are led by the Holy Spirit – God's Grace.

Through the Grace of God, we have obtained access to God. The word that is translated as access means to be given permission to enter into the presence of a King. Those of you who studied the book of Esther, know that even queen Esther risked her life by entering the king's presence without his permission.

No one was allowed to just walk in on a king, they had to be announced and invited or they risked death. This was true of entering the presence of God as well in Jewish Culture. Paul is telling Christians that they no longer have this fear, they can go to God directly anytime they wish.

To the early Christians this was unheard of, the design of the temple was the only way they knew and understood how to communicate with God. Gentiles stayed the furthest away, women could come a little closer, men closer still, Priests could enter into the inner sanctums where they performed the sacrifices, but only the high priest could enter into the Holy of Holies and communicate directly with God, and only once a year on the day of Atonement.

When he entered on that day, he did so with a rope that was tied around his waist, and bells on the bottom of his robes, so that the other priests could drag his body out if they heard the bells stop jingling, because they knew he had been struck dead by God. To the Jews the message was clear, you could only come into God's presence when he allowed you.

And here is Paul, breaking that apart with his words. All people have access to God directly through Jesus Christ.

John 14:6

⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

When we are true followers of Christ, we have direct access to God through our faith in Christ. We do not have to stop in one of the outer courts and request access, our right to see and speak to God is not limited by our nationality, our race, our gender, our financial wellbeing, our age, our social status. Everyone of us has direct access to God, we can walk right up to the King of Kings and start a conversation anytime we wish, because we stand in grace.

We can enter and stand in the presence of God, because of his grace, his love, his mercy on us. We do not earn the right to be there, we are there simply on the merit of our faith in Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

Because of our Faith in Christ, we are God's adopted Children. We can enter into the throne room anytime. God is our father, he wants to hear our voices, he loves us and wants to show his love for us by listening to us whenever we want to talk with him. He wants to know our thought and feelings in times of trouble when we seek his help, and in times of joy when we want to share our thanks.

Which gives us the third blessing that Paul speaks of in these few verses of Scripture, 'Hope of the Glory of God.' This hope is not the modern common meaning of Hope. It isn't like I hope the Leafs win the Stanley cup, or I hope I passed that test I took, or I hope it doesn't rain this week when I have my day off.

The biblical hope is not so much of a 'hope so', but more of a 'know so'. Biblical hope is the knowing that the Glory of God will come, a king of happy certainty. So, what is the Glory that we can be certain will come into the lives of the faithful?

It is what we all lost when Adam and Eve first sinned in the Garden of Eden. Living in the eternal shining presence of God and His blessings. It will be us becoming what God has always intended us to be, His children, in His presence, under His care.

The 'Hope of Glory' we receive is the confident knowledge that the scripture is true and ever promise that God has made to his people in its entirety, from Genesis to Revelation will come true. That we are his Children, and on the day of Judgement we will be found justified, our debt of sin paid, and we will be granted entry into His eternal Kingdom.

That is a 'Know So' not a 'Hope So' for every faithful Christian. Christians can be confident in their salvation when they are confident in their faith. Christians can be confident because we are told in 1 John 5:11-12

1 John 5:11-12

- ¹¹ And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.
- ¹² Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

We can be happily certain of our eternal destiny because we have Christ. However, Paul does not stop there, he adds that we can also find this happy certainty in our lives when they are troubled here on Earth.

Paul calls for us to 'rejoice in our sufferings'. This is a struggle for us all, how are we meant to rejoice in suffering, when we are suffering, we are not meant to be laughing and having fun, and that is not what Paul is asking us to do.

Paul is telling us to find joy in our hearts even when we have troubles, tribulations, sorrow, and pain in this world. He tells us to find joy, because those suffering in our life '[we know] that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.'

'We know' those are the key words. There are so many things in this world that we do not know. We do not know why one person gets sick and another does not. We do not know why we have sudden financial difficulties or expenses or why random accidents happen, we do not know why we lose jobs or lose friends. We do not know why a storm wrecks one home and leaves the one next door untouched. We do not know why our children struggle at some things and excel at others. The list of things we do not know can go on forever and ever. The3 truth is that there is far more that we do not know than we do know.

But there are a few things that Christians do know.

Romans 8:28

²⁸ And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

All things are working for God's good, how can that be true in suffering, we spoke of it last week. One way that sufferings all work for the Good of God is that trial and tribulations, the troubles we have in this help us build up our spiritual wellbeing. Paul here is explaining how they create in us spiritual growth, spiritual maturity, and spiritual strength, just like going to the gym helps us build muscle.

Paul calls for us to rejoice in hard times because in those times, we should know that God is at work in us. He is building us up in our spiritual strength, allowing us to become more than we were the day before. All Christians will undergo suffering, of all different forms, in all different

seasons. God either sends these times upon us, or allows them to happen to us, because out of them he knows that they will produce something for His good.

God's job is not to make the lives of his followers here on earth easy. Believers are not exempt from the challenges of life – the people who teach that are false prophets, peddlers of a false hope in the health and wealth cult – teaching that God wants us all to be healthy and rich here on earth.

God gives us our salvation for free, but after that the real work of the Holy Spirit in us begins and it is an all-uphill road, with many curves and potholes and challenges along the way. And through each of the challenges, the trials, the tribulations, the pain, the sorrow, every aspect of life, we have God with us, we have our brothers and sisters in Christ with us, helping us to continue on the path to eternal salvation through our Faith in Jesus Christ.

We are not rejoicing in the suffering that we experience along the path of life; we are rejoicing in the character that we know is coming from our sufferings. Paul says that suffering creates endurance or in some translation's perseverance. These are the parts of a person's character that can only be practiced and strengthen in times of trouble. Your perseverance in never tested when life is easy, it is only tested when you are pushed to the limits of what you can handle; physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

It is that testing of our endurance, our perseverance that creates in us character. Like silver that is purified through smelting, when it is heated up the dross, the impurities are removed. The silver that is left after smelting is pure silver, the 'real thing'.

Job knew and understood this.

Job 23:10

¹⁰ But he knows the way that I take; when he has tried me, I shall come out as gold.

Job suffered, Job went through trial and tribulations, job experienced loss and through all of it he kept his faith. He knew that he was true and that he would come out pure at the end of his time of tribulation.

God takes us while we are raw, young, and untested rookies in our faith. Then through the process of our life, he turns us into brothers and sisters of proven character, brothers and sisters of faith who live lives that reflect our obedience to God to the rest of the world.

The suffering does its work in us, through it we develop endurance, perseverance, our charter is tested and purified, and all of this results in hope – the confident expectation that God is at work in us, and he will fulfill all of His promises that are in His scriptures. We are His adopted children; we are justified in His eyes, and we will enjoy eternal life in His kingdom.

We have hope in times of trouble because we understand that in those times God is there with us, sustaining us, giving us the strength and hope we need to persevere and keep going. We begin to see his work in ourselves, we become wise, kinder, we become gentler and more compassionate, we start to look more and more like Christians are called to be while here on earth.

The path can be challenging, but the end result is that we become people who have been refined, purified, tested, and strengthened because of the suffering we have gone through in life. We look back afterwards and realize that it was not our will and strength that carried us through those times but instead that it was God's help, God's will that brough us through those times, which leads to hope that all of his promises will be filled in us.

In our suffering we discover the hope we have for our eternal reward, we become less focused on the things of this world and more focused on the eternal glory we will have in the kingdom to come. We know we have hope because we have the Holy Spirit here with us, nothing in our life is wasted, nothing has no point, everything in our lives serves God's purpose. Hope will not disappoint, because in everything we have the Holy Spirit in our hearts which lets us have direct access to God. God's love for us was proven by the blood shed on the cross and the Spirit that lives within us.

In God we have a perfect, unconditional, true love. God knows who we really are, God knows all of our flaws and failings, God knows that we will never be perfect and yet God still loves us.

When we know God's love, when we have placed our faith and trust in Jesus Christ, when we have the Holy spirit at work in us, leading us in this life, we have 'Peace of Mind'. Because of the fact we have peace with God, we have peace of mind in all situations because we have Hope. 'We know' that we are justified through the blood of Christ, that we are free of the debt of sin, that we have been given direct access to our God while we live here on earth through the grace he has given us, and that we have hope 'a happy certainness' that we will enjoy an eternal life in the presence of God in the New Jerusalem for all of eternity and the things of this world pale in comparison.

Let us pray,

By Your Word You Have Brought Us out of Darkness

Lord God, heavenly Father,
we most heartily thank you
that by your Word
you have brought us out of the darkness of error
into the light of your grace.
Mercifully help us to walk in that light,
guard us from all error and false doctrine
and grant that we may not become ungrateful

and despise and persecute your Word, as your people did long ago, but receive it with all our heart, govern our lives according to it and put all our trust in your grace through the merit of your dear Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever.

Source: Veit Dietrich, d. 1549, Trinity 25 / Reformation

Music Ministry: "Each One Reach One" by Susan Parsons

Crown him with many crowns, the Lamb upon the throne: hark, how the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own!

Awake, my soul, and sing of him who died to be your Saviour and your matchless King through all eternity.

Crown him the Lord of life, who triumphed o'er the grave, and rose victorious in the strife for those he came to save. His glories now we sing who died and rose on high, who died eternal life to bring, and lives that death may die.

Invitation to Offering

Offering

Presenting our tithes and offerings is an act of worship. I want to encourage you to write a cheque and drop it in the mail to the church using your envelope, if you have one. (St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, PO Box 161, 1 Drummond St W, Perth, ON K7H 3E3). We also have

another option for you for giving and that is you can make an e-Transfer. This note from our treasurer:

E-transfers are now accepted. Please note the new email address for this purpose only. standrewsperthoffering@gmail.com If you have an Offering Envelope #, please include it in the message section of the INTERAC transfer page you fill in. If you wish any part of your donation to go to a specific fund (e.g., Presbyterian Sharing) please mention this in your message

Offertory Prayer

Gracious God,
everything we have comes from you.
You fill us with good things.
Our hearts and lives overflow with your abundance.
With thanksgiving, we bring to you our time, talents, and tithes.
Use these gifts that you have given us
to feed others as we have been fed,
to serve others as we have been served,
and to bless others as we have been blessed,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

Closing Hymn # 274: "Crown Him With Many Crowns" (V 1, 3)

Crown him with many crowns, the Lamb upon the throne: hark, how the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own!

Awake, my soul, and sing of him who died to be your Saviour and your matchless King through all eternity.

Crown him the Lord of life, who triumphed o'er the grave, and rose victorious in the strife for those he came to save. His glories now we sing who died and rose on high, who died eternal life to bring, and lives that death may die.

Pastoral Prayer

O Lord, we praise you with all our soul.

We praise you for the abundance of grace and mercy

that we unconsciously receive from you in so many different ways.

You overlook our iniquities.

You bring us back to good health.

You save us from evil and inundate us with your love and compassion.

Lord, you provide nourishment and rejuvenation

to our bodies, minds, and souls.

We also know, Lord, that through you,

there will be justice for the suffering of your people.

Thank you for graciously revealing yourself

to your children so long ago,

that we might have the privilege of knowing your will.

We are only deserving of eternal death as a result of our evil ways.

However, rather than eternally condemning your children in anger,

you bestow your unconditional and boundless love on us.

Through your incomprehensible love for us,

you free us completely from the price of our transgressions.

We cherish your compassion

just as a child cherishes the compassion of loving parents.

We know that, without your compassion,

we would be reduced to nothing but dust on this material planet,

alive and growing one day,

then dead and blown away with the wind the next,

fading away even from human memories forever.

Because of your compassion, Lord, we are allowed a life of eternity;

a gift that you have promised even to future God-fearing generations.

Help us and all future generations to hold tightly

to your precious covenant through obedience to your will.

Lord, from your mighty throne you rule over us all.

We call the cherubim that surround you, the seraphim that serve you,

and every believer in your domain to join our souls

in praising your holy name! Amen

Benediction

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen