SOUND DOCTRINE FOR SPIRITUAL SUCCESS – Studies in Romans
The Benefit of Justification (Romans 5:1-4)

"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 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. And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance proven character; and proven character hope. . .

Romans chapter five serves the dual purpose of a conclusion and an introduction. It is the conclusion to the first major section of the epistle, where Paul deals at length with the doctrine of justification by faith. On the other hand, he also uses the content of chapter five to introduce chapters six through eight, where we are given a description of the Christian life unlike anything found anywhere else in the New Testament. This is precisely why the apostle begins this transition by using the perfect tense twice, in order to indicate a past event which produces a lasting result, revealed to us in Romans 5:1-2, listed above.

The expression "peace with God" occurs in contrast to being alienated from God (v10). It refers to a positive and lasting relationship with God, established at the moment of our conversion to Christ. In receiving by faith this imputed righteous standing in God's grace, Paul will confirm to us in the verses which follow, that no amount of sinful behavior or circumstantial adversity will ever negatively affect our position in Christ. So, he uses the perfect tense to indicate that our justification will ultimately result in our glorification. He makes that very point more forcefully in Romans 8:30, describing God's unbreakable chain of redemption; consisting of predestination, calling and justification, culminating in glorification. In other words, there is no greater and more irrefutable statement to be found anywhere in Scripture, which confirms the security of our salvation than Romans 8:30. If you have been justified by God through faith in Jesus Christ, then God's unbreakable chain of redemption GUARANTEES that you will be glorified. The only question anyone lacking such an assurance must ask themselves is whether or not you have been truly justified by God as a result of placing your trust in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. If you made that decision of faith in all sincerity, then you have personally experienced God's plan of salvation and that salvation will culminate in your eternal glorification.

But here in Romans 5:2, he refers to it for the first time as the Christian's future hope. Then quite suddenly, the apostle provides us with an important reminder in regard to the present. Our eternal standing before God in His grace, which in turn produces an exultant hope for the future, should not be equated with a trouble-free Christian life, here and now. Paul was no promoter of a health/wealth gospel. Quite to the contrary, he reveals to us in v3 a more realistic picture of what it will be like as followers of our Savior. This present earthly life for the Christian will be marked by a fair share of adversity, difficulty and hardship; for the express purpose of developing a strong Christ-like character within each of us. Paul deals with this issue at length in Romans 8:18-39, proving that he was an unapologetic advocate for the doctrine of progressive sanctification. **His practical goal here is to let us know that a reliance upon our past justification, producing a supernatural hope about the future, should not result in a sense of complacency in the present. Instead, it must be coupled with a sincere desire for becoming more and more like our Savior, every day.**