***Access to the Grace of God
RO44-01***

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We are continuing with the study of the effects of justification, as the apostle Paul has summarized them in Romans 5:1-5.

I would remind you again that God has made two very fabulous provisions for every human being. Most Christians are not aware of this. Those who have heard it in one way or another are not impressed with the seriousness of these provisions, and what is at stake in each of them. It is interesting that when God the Holy Spirit came to the very end of the Bible, we would expect Him (as we would) to be prepared to say something now that is very dramatic; something very climactic; and, something that is very important to tie it all together – some final departing thought that would give direction to the believers. And indeed, that is exactly what He has done.

If you'll turn for a moment to Revelation 22:11-12, you will discover that here we have declared to us two fabulous provisions that God has for every human being. He made reference to these two fantastic provisions in His final closing statement of the New Testament. In Revelation 22:11, we read, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still. He that is filthy, let him be filthy still. That is describing the unbeliever, the lost – those have rejected salvation: "And he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and, he that is holy, let him be holy still." This referring to those who have accepted absolute righteousness and have been declared justified. They have been declared as holy as Jesus Christ, and now qualified to enter into heaven.

**Those Lacking Absolute Righteousness**

So, verse 11 is the Holy Spirit's final declaration concerning salvation. As a human being, you can be, on the one hand, unjust – that is, lacking absolute righteousness; and, you can be guilty in sin. Jesus Christ says, "Those who choose to do that, let them continue that." For they shall continue it for all eternity. People who go to hell will continue being sinners in hell if they are sinners on earth, but with the punishment and the pain accompanying that sin.

**Those Having Absolute Righteousness**

On the other hand, those who accept God's absolute righteousness (which we've been studying) and the consequent declaration of being justified wholly will have a totally different destiny because they I will continue to be righteous and continue to be holy in heaven forever with the happiness that accompanies that.

**Salvation**

So, at the very end of the Bible, God the Holy Spirit again points out that one of the great provisions that God has made for every human being is to get away from his unholiness, and to get away from his lack of righteousness (from his filthiness of sin), and to turn to God's righteousness and to God's holiness.

**Rewards**

Then notice verse 12. Immediately upon the reminder of salvation, the Holy Spirit (in this final important statement) refers to the Christian's rewards. Verse 11 speaks of salvation; and, verse 12 speaks of rewards: "And behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Of course, that could not be a reward of salvation, because salvation is not a reward. The word "reward" means something you get by earning it – by working for. And verse 12 clearly says that this is according to what you have worked for, and according to how you have worked for this. This is the reward that you receive.

**Bible Doctrine**

So, here, upon pointing out the importance of salvation, the Holy Spirit follows immediately with the other great provision that God has, and that is for rewards (eternal blessings) for Christian service. Entrance into both of these great eternal blessings is via the Word of God – Bible doctrine (Revelation 22:7). The ground of entering is knowing Bible doctrine. Both of these are secured on the basis of knowing the Word of God.

For this reason, Jesus Christ warns against sealing off Bible doctrine from people, and it explain to us why Satan seeks to do it. Revelation 22:10: "And He said unto me, 'Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book. The time is at hand.'" This is referring particularly to the Word of God as contained in the book of the Revelation – the warning not to seal off this book. And this is say which is repeated in other parts. In verses 18-19, God very specifically declares what He will do to those who restrict people from access to the Word of God.

So, I remind you, as we begin this study of God's two great provisions: salvation; and, rewards. It is a pity that so many have salvation who will never have rewards in heaven. And the apostle Paul wrote the book of Romans (this very book that we are studying) in order to stress the first of these – the salvation issues. When he comes to the end of the book, he begins dealing with matters of Christian conduct and Christian living. And at that point, he too emphasizes that (having achieved justification), rewards is the next thing that the Christian must set his eyes upon.

So, we have Romans 14:10, where Paul says, "But why do you judge your brother, or why do you set at nought your brother? For we shall all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ." So, wherever else you think you are going as a believer, this is one thing you should keep well in mind if you are going to the Judgment Seat of Christ. This comes here in the book of Romans in the section on Christian conduct. It is speaking about justified persons, and how he should act, and how he should be aware that rewards is the second great provision that God has for him.

So, while salvation is a grace gift never to be lost, our works as believers will be thoroughly judged by God. We will not be judged relative to our salvation, but we will be judged relative to our Christian service.

So, in Romans 14:12, Paul says, "So then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Make no mistake about that. You will give an account to God concerning your life as a believer.

**Do not Work for Salvation, but Do Work for Rewards**

2 Corinthians 5:10 says, "For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad." Christians who are out of touch with Bible doctrine divine viewpoint are going to suffer great disappointment in heaven because of the loss of rewards that they will experience. These are rewards which God has set apart for them, but which they will never receive, because they completely missed the fact that *they must work toward rewards even as they do not work toward salvation*. But they are both God's great provisions.

**Confession (to God) of Known Sins**

1 Corinthians 3:15 says, "If any man's work should be burned (that is, his Christian service works), he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet as by fire." And that's going to be a very terrible thing. We are not getting used to this topic right now, but there are many Christians who don't even know how to go about a service which is divine good production. Nobody can produce anything divine goods unless you know 1 John 1:9, and how it functions in your life. Unless you know the technique of confessing known sins, you can't even get to base one.

How many Christians do you know who understand the technique of confessing sins, and who understand how critical that is on a moment-by-moment basis in their daily lives? How many (in their Christian life) have even heard about this, and who don't take it too seriously? Or How many know how critical it is, and who seldom participate (who seldom use this technique)?

Well, you're going to say for it, and you're going to pay for it very, very dearly? And I call to your attention again that when God the Holy Spirit tied it all up, one of the last things he pointed was in those two verse in juxtaposition. Those two verses are side-by-side: salvation; and, rewards. That is not without reason. It is God's way of trying to say, "Now, look. Get saved. Take what I've offered you there. But then get yourself some rewards in heaven, because you're going to be a very disappointed person up there if you do not.

**Bible Doctrine**

Since doctrine is the access to these rewards, nobody can store rewards in heaven who does not have a firm grasp and understanding of Bible doctrines. So, our gathering in the study of the Word of God is therefore the most critical part of your life. It is the high point of your week. And I hope that you will understand that that's exactly what it is.

**Divine Good**

Christians who know these two divine provisions often do they see themselves as to how much divine good they're producing. And again, I must warn you that, while you think you're doing something for the Lord that is acceptable and pleasing to Him, He will not be deceived, and He will not overlook the realities of what you're doing. 1 Corinthians 4:4-5 says, "For I know nothing against myself, yet am I not hereby justified? But he that judges me is the Lord." Paul says, "While I can't say that I know anything out of fellowship about myself, yet the thing that really counts is the fact that the Lord knows."

"Therefore judge nothing before the time until the Lord comes, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the councils of the hearts, and then every man shall have praise of God." You're not going to kid God. You can get away with a great deal with people. Our words can often be restructured to the situation at the moment. But God knows the intent; God knows the purpose; and, God knows reality, and He is not deceived by the deceptions that we often try to play on ourselves and on other people.

Galatians 6:7 puts it this way: "Do not be deceived? God is not mocked. For whatever a man sows, that he shall also reap." No truer words were ever spoken.

**There is no Respect of Person**

Let's read one more reference in Colossians 3:23-25: "And whatever you do, do it heartily as to the Lord and not unto men, knowing that of the Lord you shall receive the reward of the inheritance. For you serve the Lord Christ, but he does wrong shall receive for the wrong which he has done. And there is no respect of person." Please notice the last part of that: *"There is no respect of person."* No matter how long you've been around in the Lord's work, and no matter who you are in the Lord's work, when God comes to judge, it's going to be a very realistic judgment. And where you have kidded others and kidded yourself, you will not be able to deceive the Lord.

So, please remember to great provisions. They're yours. God has provided them in eternity past. Salvation (if you secure that one) is the first one you must take. Then go on to the next high ground, the pinnacle of your Christian experience, in storing the rewards in heaven as a result of your Christian service.

In Romans 5 that we are studying, the apostle Paul presents some of the consequences that come to those who have secured the first plateau of salvation – those who have possessed justifications. These are various blessings that he names here from God, which are made possible by justification. Until divine justice is perfectly satisfied toward our sins, there are no blessings from God. Until God's divine justice is satisfied, He cannot bless at all, no matter what our need may be. The absolute righteousness which is imputed to the believer, however, gives God something finally in the believer that He can bless. The reason God blesses us is because He sees His perfection in us. It is because His absolute righteousness is in us that He can bless us.

Until you have that, you cannot be blessed. But having secured that justification, and having secure that absolute righteousness, now there is a ground for blessing. Now God sees something in you that He can bless. And that's what the apostle Paul is dealing with in these opening verses of Romans 5 – the blessings that are the result of God seeing absolute righteousness in us.

**Justification**

We have seed that he believer's past, in his dealings with God, is the fact that he has been declared justified by God. This means that he has "+R" – absolute righteousness. This has been imputed to his account, and now God can treat this believer as if he had never sinned. This justification is secured by faith as a gift from God. It's a legal pronouncement by God, based upon the payment that Jesus has made on the cross.

Now to seek justification by any human work is simply to doom yourself to the lake of fire. When you seek it by human works, or partly by human works, it always ends up as "-R." It always ends up as relative righteousness – less than what God demands. That the believer's pass.

**Peace with God**

We begin then to look at our present situation – the consequences of justifications. The believer's present, in his dealing with God, has two features. One is that he possesses peace with God. The word "with" means face-to-face, or in the presence of God. It refers to the peace of personal salvation. To have peace with God means that God's wrath against the believer has been removed. Peace with God means that there is a certain risk and contentment within your soul relative to your facing a holy God.

There are believers who, because they do not understand the basis of salvation, are always fearful of facing God. And in all likelihood, those who have not come to Him upon a grace basis, so they're not saved. So, they're fearful of death. They're fearful of checking out of this life because they really don't know where they're going as far as eternity is concerned. But when you have justification, God's wrath has been removed from you, and you have an experience internally of rest and of peace – an attitude of contentment.

**Assurance of Salvation**

So, it is not the viewpoint of Scripture that we should not have assurance. Paul says, "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. God's wrath is satisfied, and we know it is. This peace can only come for the believer as a great gift from God. If you seek salvation by some other way, then you will be uncertain about your destiny.

The agents of peace is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the object of our saving faith. For this reason, we say that the sinner does not make his peace with God. He cannot do that. He simply accepts the peace that Christ has made for him. There's no peace in anybody's soul until you are satisfied that somebody has paid for your sins. The peace and justice are connected. God's perfect justice is connected with our peace. And if you don't know for a certainty that God's justice has been satisfied against you, then you are going to be uneasy. Then you will wonder, "Am I really going to heaven when I die?" And that is a frightful thing – to find yourself dangling by a thread over the lake of fire. But if you know that God's justice has been satisfied, then you can have peace in your souls.

Please remember that Romans 4:25 pointed that out to us: "Who (Jesus Christ) was delivered on account of our offenses (our sins), but He was raised on account of the fact that justification was a reality." The resurrection of Jesus Christ is God's way of telling us that He is satisfied relative to the payment for your sins. The question is: are you willing to accept His provision.

**Access**

There is a second factor that we now begin in this verse as to our present status. Not only do we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, but beginning in verse 2, we are told: "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand." The word" "by" is the Greek preposition "dia." Here, "dia" equals "by means of:" "By means of whom (that is, the Lord Jesus Christ) also." This "also" is the Greek word "kai," and here it indicates that this is in addition to peace. This is not something that's the result of peace. In the first place, we have peace; and, in the second place, we have something else. "Kai" indicates that first we have peace with God. And for number two, we have something else – what he calls "access with God." This is in addition.

The word "have" is the Greek word "echo." "Echo" means "to possess:" "to have come to have" is the way we would translate it, because it's in the perfect tense. The perfect means that it happened in the past, and that we continue to have it in the present. In the past, at the point that a person believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, he secured this access, and he now has it. It is active voice. It is actually possessed by the believer as the result of his response to the gospel. It's in the indicative mood which is a statement of fact. Because it is in this perfect tense, it indicates that it's a permanent possession.

This is one of the grounds upon which we say that once you have your salvation, you can never lose it again. This was quite clear to the people who read the Scriptures in the original Greek when they were first written. The people who were readers of the Greek language just could not read the Greek New Testament without these tenses leaping out at them, which said to them once-and-for-all. Salvation is constantly presented to us in the aorist tense, which is a tense that is a point action. And it's a once-for-all thing that God does. We also have grace salvation constantly presented to us in the perfect sense, which begins here a point, and then goes on forever. To whatever the point of presence is, it goes on.

**Eternal Security**

So, as you read the Greek, this perfect tense leaps out (and here is one occasion of that) and it just screams eternal security at you. It is only ignorance that reads the English Bible and then has the gall to discuss something like eternal security. There's no way that you could do it. So, here in the word "echo," we have perfect sense. God is saying that you have an access to something. And we're going to see in a moment what it is. And you have this forever. "You have come to have" is a good way of translating it.

What we have come to have he describes by the word "access," and that is the Greek word "prosagoge." "Prosagoge" comes from two words. The first word is the preposition "pros." The word "pros" which means "to," but particularly remember that this preposition is the one that means face-to-face. It is the same one that we had previously about our having peace with God. The word "with" there is face-to-face – the Greek word "pros." And the other part of "prosagoge" here is the verb "ago." "Ago" means "to lead." So literally, this means "a leading into the face of or into the presence of." We might sometimes simply describe it by the word "entree." We have an entree with something – a leading into. This word denotes here an access through the favor or the assistance of another. It is a mediator who brings us to an esteemed person. When you have the word "prosagoge" here in the Greek, it means somebody who's got some contact, so to speak, who is leading you into touch with somebody who is an esteemed person. "Prosagoge" means that somebody who has some context is leading you into a position of benefit to you.

The word stresses, of course, the mediation of Jesus Christ in our justification. So, the Father accepts us into heaven unconditionally (1 Timothy 2:5). In other ways, Jesus Christ is the one who has provided our "prosagoge," our entree, entree into His presence. This word is used in this sense of an entree by the apostle Paul. In Ephesians 2:18, Paul says, "And through him we both have access by one spirit unto the Father; that is, by the Lord Jesus Christ. So, He is the one who leads us into the presence of the exalted God. Ephesians 3:12 says, "In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him." Here again, you has this word "access." The idea here is somebody who has the contact to lead you into the presence of God.

**A "Way-Shower"**

Many people, of course, delude themselves that they have an entree to God's blessing. Psalm 46:1 is often quoted by unbelievers, where we have the phrase that God is a very present help in trouble." Well, it is true. He is, but not for those of you who are not in the family of God. He is not a very present help to those who are not in God's family. The unbeliever thinks that if he just yells out, "Oh, God," that he has somehow secured an entry into the family of God. That is not so. It is self-delusion. Many look upon Jesus Christ as a "way-shower." That's a favorite with the cults. They do not look upon Christ as deity and as the son of God, but just as a good Man who showed us the way to God.

**In His Steps**

So, instead of being *the*, as John 14:6 says that He is, they look upon Him as simply a way-shower. That's where we get the idea where sometimes people say, "Well, do you want to be a good Christian? Then just try to follow in His steps." A man wrote a book one time called that: In His Steps. And it gave the idea that what you should do is every time you come to a situation in life, ask yourself, "What would Jesus do in this condition?" And then you were supposed to follow that course so that you were in His steps.

The trouble with that is that, first of all, it violates the principle that the Christian life is not lived on the basis of decisions that we make, but on the basis of the guidance of God that Holy Spirit gives us. And we do not walk in the steps of Christ on the basis of our decisions, but on the basis of the fact that doctrine has been stored in our human spirits, and the Holy Spirit takes that doctrine and keeps flashing the proper guidance to our mentality so that we are directed into a pattern that is pleasing to Jesus Christ. The problem with that whole concept is that most Christians don't have the information stored in the computer of their human spirit such that the Holy Spirit can flash up the guidance that they need. So, they're incapable of following in the steps of Jesus, and it simply devolves into an old sin nature exercise in religion. So, the Lord Jesus is more than a way-shower. That is a deluded concept of entree.

Something think that they have an entree to God by their religious rituals; by self-denial; or, by punishing themselves. A great reformer like Martin Luther was of that type. He sought his entree to God by all that he could do to his body. The rest of the monks thought he was practically insane as he would lie without his clothes on the cold stone floor of his cell in the monastery in order to somehow try to gain access to God. And it just burst as a light from heaven upon him when he found that verse earlier Romans that we've already looked at, that says that, "The just shall live by faith," not by punishing their bodies or by religious rituals that they may perform.

One of the favorite entrees to God, of course, is the intersession of dead saints. The Bible makes it very clear that people who have died cannot look down upon you and see what's going on. If somebody in your family has passed on, they do not sit up in heaven looking down, watching everything you do. Some people think that's the way it is. But the Bible makes it clear that the dead are cut off from the living. The dead who have gone to be with Christ are with Christ, and they have no communication; no access; no contact; no visual contact; and, no audible contact with those who are here on earth that they have left behind.

**Going through Saints**

Therefore, going through saints is a very useless, useless procedure. As a matter of fact, it is downright dangerous, because the Bible tells us that these who practice praying to people who are dead, on the assumption that they are saintly people (which the Roman Catholic Church, for example, teaches its members to do), are in fact praying to demons. In 1 Corinthians 8:4-6, Paul says, "And as concerning, therefore, the eating of those things that are offered as sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and there is no other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, as there are many gods and lords, but to us there is but one God: the Father, of whom are all things, and we are in Him, and one Lord Jesus Christ by whom are all things, and we by Him."

Now the apostle Paul, here in 1 Corinthians 8:4-6, says, "Idols are nothing." But people do offer sacrifices to these idol gods.

**Praying to Saints**

Not know the 1 Corinthians 10:19-21: "What shall I say then" That the idol is anything, or that which is offered and sacrificed idols is anything? But I say that the things which the gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God. And I would not that you should have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord (at the Lord's Supper) and the cup of demons. You cannot be partakers at the Lord's table and of the table of demons. Paul says that if you're the kind of a person who makes the contact to God through some other agency other than Jesus Christ, the only other agency you will contact is a demon agency. It can be an image that you have created out of stone or wood or something. Or it can be a person. It can be a Saint Joseph; a Saint John; of Saint Francis of Assisi; or, anybody else. And the result is that your praying to him is causing you to pray to a demon. So, those of you who are in the habit of praying to Saint John are praying to a demon (no personal reflection intended).

You need to realize that millions of people in Roman Catholicism are taught to utter prayers to Saint. And every time they utter a prayer, they are praying to the demons. And every time they come to taking that communion service of the mass, they're participating in a worship of demons. Isn't that something? If you participate in praying to saints, you have participated in demon worship. And Paul says that you cannot come and have fellowship at the Lord's table in communion while you're having fellowship with the demon's table through some contact with the demonic world – knowingly; or, unknowingly. You cannot have fellowship with both. The minute you start praying to a so-called "saint," you've stepped out of temporal fellowship, and you are actually expressing adoration for a demon. You are actually exercising an appeal for help to a demonic world. The dead do not hear you.

**Praying to the Virgin Mary**

Of course, the height of the prayer-to-the-saints system; this delusion of access; and, this false ground of access is, of course, the virgin Mary herself within the Roman Catholic system. And yet the Bible makes it clear to us that even the mother of Jesus could not approach Him on the basis of her earthly ties to Him – her physical side to him as the one who had borne him.

In John 2:3-4, we have the story of Jesus's first public miracle and His contact at the social event of the wedding: "And when they lacked wine, the mother of Jesus said unto Him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said unto her, 'Woman, what have I to do with you? My hour is not yet come.'" What Jesus was saying to her was, "Lady, that concerns you. What concerns Me has not yet arrived." And this was the Lord's way of indicating to her: "Don't presume upon the fact that you have a physical family relationship with Me to call upon Me to perform miracles for your friends." Isn't that interesting? You would have thought that as a very devoted Son, Jesus would have said, "Sure, mother. It's no problem for me. I'll take care of the lack of wine here. I'll save the party." That is not so.

Jesus, in effect, gently rebuked His mother: "You don't ask me to do things like that." She should have known who this was. She was told very clearly that this is the Son of God. Because you are His mother does not give you the ground to call upon Him to use the powers of deity to help out a social event for some of your friends.

This is also indicated in Matthew 12:47-50. And this is the saint of all saints that is prayed to in the Roman Catholic system: Then one said to Him, 'Behold, Your mother and Your brethren stand outside, desiring to speak with You.'" Mary and the half-brothers of Jesus came to where Jesus was speaking: "And He answered and told him, 'Who is My mother, and who are My brethren?' And He stretched forth His hand toward His disciples and said, 'Behold, my mother and my brethren. For whosoever shall do the will of My father, who is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother."

The Lord Jesus was creating such a stir with what he was saying that his mother and his half-brothers came and said, "Hey, Jesus, come here. We want to talk to you. And they thought that on the basis of family relationships, they could cause Him to step aside from the ministry in which He was engaged. And He turned and said, "My mother and brothers?" Here are my mother and brothers right out there. Look at them. These who have done the will of God – that's My family. So, even the virgin Mary had no special standing with Jesus Christ on the basis of human family relationships when it came to spiritual matters. She had to be saved by this Son just like anybody else.

So, if you want to pray to dead saints, you can go ahead and do it, but you're talking to demons. You're not talking to God. But you may say, "I'm really sincere in that." That sincerity is what will destroy you. Mankind has characteristically rejected access to God on God's basis.

**Adam**

We begin with Adam. If ever there was a man that had access (had entree) to God, there was one. He had it completely, and he chose to close the door by sin. His friendly fellowship was gone. He avoided God. He was naked in his righteousness. He tried to produce some human good covering in the form of fig leaf to hide the loss of righteousness. And God had to actually come in the garden, and call him by name, and seek him out. Adam lost his access, and he lost his interest in seeking God. The pattern of access was established on that occasion by God's killing the animals and giving Adam the clothing from the skins of those animals, and indicating to him thereby that access to God was to be based upon the payment of death.

You remember that Cain hated God's way of access, so he murdered his brother Abel. You remember that the blood access freed the slaves from Egypt while the Egyptians were destroyed, because they lacked the access by blood. The blood access on the day of atonement through the high priest alone preserved the nation for another year. Jesus came, presented as the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world – the final solution of the blood sacrifice for mankind's need of access to God.

**Sincerity**

So, man has always been sincere in one way or another. I don't think anybody could have accused Cain of not being sincere in bringing that vegetable offerings in place of a blood sacrifice. But sincerity is not going to cut it. I remind you of Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron. Here is another one of those examples that we have in Scripture of people who are sincere, who are approaching God upon their own basis, and not upon God's basis. It reminds you of David moving the ark, and doing it on his basis; and, then finding Uzzah, a fine young man, killed because he reached out and touched the ark. He was sincere. He was trying to do something good for God. But God says, "That's not the way you come to Me. I do not give you entree on any basis of your sincerity.

**Nadab and Abihu**

Nadab and Abihu were probably fine boys. They were the sons of Aaron. And, we read in Leviticus 10:1-2: "Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censor (that is, his little shovel). And he put fire therein and put incense thereon, and often a strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord that devoured them, and they died before the Lord."

Here the whole Mosaic priesthood system is being instituted. The two sons of Aaron are brought into the priesthood, of course. God started the sacrifice by fire which He sent down from heaven. And these two young men decide that they're going to burn the incense with fire that they have created (a "strange" fire). And God said, That is not the way you come to Me. That excess of incense represented the prayers of the saints going up to God, and the two of them died on the spot, because they did not follow God's access, but they followed their sincerity.

We may compare that with Leviticus, 9:24, where we read, "And there came a fire from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat, which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces." God had provided the fire. He said, "Now, that's the fire that you use. You put the sacrifice. I shot the fire from heaven. Now you get your fire for burning the incense from that." Instead, they offered their own fire.

So, sincerity of the cults; the religions of the world; and, of everybody else is going to get exactly no place. You may worship God, as people like to say, "in your own way," but please remember that God does not accept it.

Leviticus 16:1-2: "And the Lord spoke unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the Lord and died. And the Lord said unto Moses, 'Speak unto Aaron your brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil, before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark, so that he will not die. For I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat.'"

After the two sons died, God said to Moses, "Moses, now go tell your brother that I really mean business. I have set the way that men will approach Me. I have set the entry. I accept set the 'prosagoge,' and don't you try playing games and changing it, because the ways that I have set have great significance relative to righteousness; to sin; and, to the Lamb of God, My Son, which is coming. So, you go tell your brother Aaron that he better do it exactly the way I have prescribed, particularly when he comes into the holy of holies, or he'll die just as his sons did. So, you may worship your own way, but the result of your worship is that you will die as did the sons of Aaron.

**Grace / Justification**

Let's tie this us: "By whom also we have access by faith." "By faith is the Greek word "pistis," the word that means trust in God. The place of access is: "into this grace." The word "grace" is our familiar word "charis," which means "unmerited favor." And here it refers to a special grace in which we stand – a grace which, by the context, is very clearly justification. That's what he means by grace. The grace in which we stand is this justification that he has been speaking about. It is one very specifically in which we stand: "histemi." This word means to stand. That's just what it means. It has a position in view.

**Assurance of Eternal Salvation**

Again, it is perfect tense. Something happened in the past, and then it goes on forever. At every present point, we're still standing in this grace of justification. It is active voice. It is true of the believer's position. It is indicative. It is a statement of fact. The believer in justification does not stand in a precarious position. Here again is the assurance of eternal salvation.

**Extreme Unction**

Roman Catholics speak about dying in a state of grace in order to go to heaven. It is of great importance to a Roman Catholic that, within 15 minutes of his death, a priest be on the scene to administer extreme unction. That is the final rite of the church. It is the final moment when he may have absolution for his sins. There is nothing that a Roman Catholic fears more than to die outside of a state of grace. And he has those final 15 minutes to make it into a state of grace – to die in a state of grace. It is bad doctrine to think that you can produce that state.

Well, in a way, the Catholics are right. If you do not die in a state of grace, you are doomed forever. But only Jesus Christ can put you into a state of grace. And when He does ii, He puts you in a state that is permanent. Therefore, you need not have any fear of ever dying outside of the state of grace; that is, outside of a position of justification.

**The Lord Jesus Christ**

However, anyone who rejects the Lord Jesus Christ as the divine son of God, and as the Lamb of God, who has paid for the sins of the world, cannot be saved. Acts 4:12 12 makes that very clear: "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

So, the only entree (the only access) we have into justification is through Jesus Christ. If you seek it in any other way, then you are doomed. You are absolutely lost. There is no other access into the presence of God.

So, this is a great present reality with you. This is a grace in which we permanently stand. There is no other way to enter it except through the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's your present. You have peace with God. He's not angry at you anymore, and you have a personal contentment. And you have an access into justification where you permanently stand. That's the thing that is true of you now as the result of the salvation that you've received.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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[**Back to the Bible Questions index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/allarticles.htm)