



water from rock

## Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – September 12, 2023

The Lord be with you.

I have a word for you today. It's the word peace. Is there a more lovely, a more wonderful word than peace? That's why early Christians loved to greet one another with the word peace because that's what they had experienced, peace. The Bible calls God the God of peace. And Jesus it calls the Prince of Peace. Imagine Jesus standing in a storm-rocked boat, commanding the waves, the wind, with the word peace. Or imagine Jesus on that first Easter greeting scared out of the wits, disciples with the word peace. Your heart, my heart longs for peace. Most of all peace with God.

Well, listen to this today from the Bible, Romans chapter 5, verse 1, Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Hear Paul a former persecutor of Christians, a former blasphemer identifies with all who put their trust in Jesus Christ. Paul begins with the word, therefore. Therefore, since we are justified by faith. There's an old saying that when you see the word therefore in the Bible, you need to stop and see what it's there for, and here the word therefore, Paul is bringing to a conclusion what he has been saying in Romans Chapters 3 and 4. Therefore, therefore the people are justified not by works of the law, but people are justified by faith in God, by trusting in by simply taking God at His word. So therefore, since we are justified by faith. Now, the word justified translates the Greek word *dikioo*, and means to declare righteous. Sometimes I hear it said that justified means just as if I'd never sinned. Well, that actually weakens the meaning, the full impact of justification, because to be justified means so much more than just as if you never sinned. Justified means to be declared righteous. Justified is sinners being declared righteous by a righteous and holy God, and this verb *dikioo* is in what is called the *arres tense*, meaning a one-time completed action. That in the moment that we put our faith in Jesus Christ, God *dikioo* God declares us once and for all righteous. He declares as righteous, not by any works of the law that we have done, but he declares us righteous by our faith in Him, that we who have disobeyed God, we who have run from God fought against God, God justifies us. He declares us righteous; He puts us right with him. It is God who justifies us. It's not our faith. Our faith has no value in itself, faith's only value is that it connects us to Jesus, the faithful one. Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. You see all of this as found in are through Jesus Christ, who is the peacemaker, who was the Prince of Peace, the one mediator between God and humankind brings us peace with God, that can never be lost.



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Now, peace here, as he says, we have peace with God. It's not referring to the feeling of peace, but it is referring to the objective fact, to the reality that we do have in fact, peace with God. That we have been reconciled to God, we have been put right with God, the God is at peace with you because of what He has done for you in Jesus Christ. So, it is the state of being at peace. We who are formally hostile to God, we have peace with God, that get then gives to us the peace of God as we live without any fear of judgment, without any fear of separation from God's love, so that we do not fear of God as some heavenly policemen always watching out for us to do something wrong, we do not fear God as some stern judge, always ready to straighten us out. Here is how The Message translation renders Romans Chapter 5 verse 1, By entering through faith into what God has always wanted to do for us, set us right with him, make us fit for him, we have it all together with God because of our master, Jesus. That's a pretty soft pillow to go to sleep on tonight, that we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. That the moment you say, I do to Jesus, you become a member of God's family. Forever put right with him. Forever at peace with God.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thanks for listening until next time.