Romans 5:1-5 (NIV)
1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.
3 Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance;
4 perseverance, character; and character, hope.
5 And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

INTRODUCTION: (text as Scripture reading)
—[Christine Denté, from Out of the Grey, wrote this chorus for a song of hers: “When love comes to life the lost find their way / When love comes to life the blind can see the light of day / My mind, my heart, my spirit all testify / Everything changes when love comes to life”] Her words introduce another reason why the Love Chapter, 1 Cor 13, is so important to our lives. Love must “come to life,” if we are to manifest the childlike ways that reflect maturity in Christ.
—From a human viewpoint, salvation is concerned with being pardoned for our sins and getting right with God. But these lay the groundwork for His deeper work of restoring in our lives the glory of His “likeness.” That glorious likeness is His love: HOM.idea. First, let’s be sure of...

I. The Faith We Stand In— v.1-2a. Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.
A. The Bible shows faith to be the basis of our being “justified” [counted righteous in God’s eyes]—Rom 1:17. For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.” It’s “from first to last,” because...
1. Legal systems, even OT Law, can never justify sinners—Gal 3:11. Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, “The righteous will live by faith.” (That phrase is repeatedly quoted in the Bible.)
2. It was well-known in Israel’s past history [quoted directly from the Greek LXX of Hab 2:4 by the author of Heb 10:38, “But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.”]
3. Faith is God’s criteria for calling someone righteous. (It’s how He evaluated Abraham 600 years before the Law of Moses—Gen 15:6. Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.
B. Faith itself can justify no one! What God counts as righteousness is faith’s trust in the instruction and promises God gives to us.
1. When Jesus was asked what works God required, He answered in John 6:29, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”
2. Faith in God’s redeeming love given in Christ is the only way to regain “the peace of God” we lost through sin’s alienating power.
**II. The Glory We Hope For— v.2b-4.** And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.

A. Jesus came to restore everything we lost through sin. (Sin not only ruptured our relationship with God, but it stripped us of His glory—Rom 3:23-24, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.)

1. Sin made us lose “peace with God,” but faith restored that peace “freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.”

2. But what about “the glory of God,” the quality He gave us to reflect His “likeness”? Do we get that back? (Yes, we do! He wants to restore that as well—2 Thess 2:14. He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.)

B. We anticipate this with joy: “we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.” (With justification, it’s a done deal, a part of new birth, a present fact; but sharing in His divine glory is a growth process...)

1. Growth isn’t easy [When just a boy, I woke up screaming with my first charley horse. My mom came in and called it part of “growing pains.” I later learned charley horses were mild compared to life’s other “growing pains.”]

2. It’s why v.3 says “we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.” (Hardships can toughen us up into persistent characters.)

**TRANS: OR, if we fail to move forward in faith’s access to grace in Christ, we can remain childish characters. Childhood wounds inflicted, past hardships suffered, old injustices remembered, absent or neglected affection and nurture—these can cultivate present-day childish habits of immature behavior in the Christian life. God’s glory, the glory of His likeness, must be restored in us. That glory is His love, and His love is our hope. After faith restores lost peace with God, love restores His lost glory. Before diving in to explore 1 Cor 13, we must understand...**

**CONCLUSION: God’s glorious love predates creation. But, in His love, God wanted to share that love with creation... through humanity. God’s love is right now ours in Jesus Christ. But the childishness of spiritual immaturity must go for the childlikeness of love to grow. (“When love comes to life the lost find their way / When love comes to life the blind can see the light of day / My mind, my heart, my spirit all testify / Everything changes when love comes to life.”)]