

Romans: Peace with God Group Discussion Questions

Romans 5:12-21

God's Grace is Greater than Adam's Sin

Last week we learned that we can know God's peace even in the midst of our suffering. This week, we learn that God's grace is greater than Adam's sin.

Read Romans 5:12-21 aloud. What are some of your first impressions of these verses?

Romans 5:12-14: One man, Adam

Who is responsible for bringing sin into the world? Review Genesis chapters 2 and 3.

The Apostle Paul regarded Genesis 3 as historically true. According to Paul (and according to Jesus, as He says in Matthew 19:4-6), Adam and Eve were real people and what they did has a lasting effect up to the present day.

Why is it important to understand and accept that the Adam and Eve account is not an optional passage to be accepted or rejected, or allegorized away?

Sin entered the world through Adam, even though Eve was first to sin. There are several possible reasons why Adam is to blame for the fall of humanity. Adam was created first, and his wife was created to be a "suitable helper" (Genesis 2:18). God held Adam responsible for his family, as seen in the fact that God sought out Adam specifically (Genesis 3:9). Also, in His conversation with Adam and Eve, God questioned Adam first (Genesis 3:9-13), even though Eve sinned before Adam. In 1 Timothy 2:14, Paul makes a subtle distinction between the sin of Adam from the sin of Eve: "Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner." Eve fell into sin because of a deception; however, Adam was *not* deceived, which means he chose to sin. When Adam took the fruit from his wife, he knew full well what he was doing. He was not misinformed or misled; he chose disobedience against God's command.

Why do YOU think God held Adam responsible?

Why do you think Adam chose disobedience?

What evidence is there that everyone has sinned? See also Romans 3:23

Romans 5: 15-18 The Free Gift

The Greek word for “free gift” is *charisma*. It means, “a favour with which one receives without any merit of his own. The economy of divine grace, by which the pardon of sin and eternal salvation is appointed to sinners in consideration of the merits of Christ laid hold of by faith.”

Was the gift really free? Why or why not?

In your own words, describe what the “free gift” means to you.

V. 17 - 19 compares two men, Adam and Jesus. List the contributions of each man.

Example: The one offense of Adam brought condemnation. The free gift through Jesus resulted in justification.

How does this help you grow in your gratitude for Christ?

Romans 5: 20-21

What did the law cause sin to do? What is God’s provision? Grace.

The Greek word for grace is *charis*. “good will, loving-kindness, favour. of the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues” Sound familiar?

GRACE can also be understood as God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense

Assign these verses to your group members to read:

Ephesians 2:8-9, 2 Corinthians 12: 9-10, Hebrews 4:15-16, John 1:16-17, James 4:6, Romans 6:14, Titus 2: 11-14

What stands out to you from these verses?

Where have you experienced God’s grace in your life?

Romans 5:6-11

Reconciliation with God through Jesus Christ

Read Romans 5:1-11

- In **verse 6**, Paul states that “*while we were still weak (ESV)*” or “*while we were still helpless (NASB)*” Christ died for the ungodly.
 - What did Paul mean when he said that we were *weak* and *helpless*?
 - Prior to coming to faith in Christ, did you view yourself as “*weak*” or “*helpless*”? If not, how did you view yourself?
 - Why is seeing ourselves as “*weak*” and “*helpless*” pivotal to walking in daily dependence upon Christ?
 - How does **John 15:5** help us better understand our “*weakness*” and “*helplessness*”?

- **Verse 7** speaks of a person laying down their life for another person.
 - **John 16:13** states, “*Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.*”
 - What would it take for a person to decide to lay down their life for someone else?

- Paul implies in **Verse 7** that a person might give up their life for a good person. Then he makes a startling transition in **Verse 8**.
 - Read **Romans 5:8** from the ESV several times.
 - “*But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*” **Romans 5:8 ESV**
 - Have group members recite **Romans 5:8** several times.
 - What is significant in the way Christ layed down His life for us?
 - What does that say to you about the unconditional love of God?
 - It’s been said that people need love the most when they are the least deserving of love.
 - How does that statement and **Romans 5:8** parallel one another?

- **Verse 9** states that “*we have now been justified by his blood...*”
 - What does it mean to be *justified*?
 - Read **Hebrew 9:22**. How does this help us understand why we need the blood of Christ for our justification?
 - Justification is what the Reformers called an “*alien righteousness*” because the record of Jesus is given to us. We did nothing to earn or deserve it.

- What does that reality say and mean to you?
 - In his book *Deeper*, Dane Ortlund states, “*Sanctification is lifelong, gradual growth in grace. Justification, however, is not a process but an event, a moment in time, the verdict of legal acquittal once and for all... the process of sanctification is, in large part, fed by constant returning, ever more deeply, to the event of justification.*”
 - How is sanctification (growth in Christ) fed by constantly returning to our justification (declaration of righteousness in and through Jesus Christ)?
- **Verse 10** states that prior to salvation we were once “*enemies*” of God.
 - What does that mean exactly?
 - The latter part of **Verse 10** states “*now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.*”
 - What does the life of Christ save us from?
- **Verse 11** states that “*we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ*” due to his having reconciled us.
 - Let’s close our time together “rejoicing in God” for what He has done for us through Jesus Christ!
 - Share a word of thanksgiving for what God has done for you.
- **Next Step:** From what we’ve discussed, what is the “next right thing” for you to do in obedience to what you’ve learned?

Romans 5:2b-5

God's Peace Even Through Suffering

Last week we learned that because we have been justified through faith and received righteousness by faith we have peace with God. Peace with God does not mean we are now exempt from suffering but rather we have His peace in the midst of our suffering.

"...and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing 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." - **Romans 5:2b-5 (ESV)**

Verse 2b - We rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

- What does "hope of the glory of God" mean? (Consider Romans 8:18-23)
- Rejoice in the Greek language is "kauchaomai" meaning to boast, exult, or to glory in a thing. The definition of boast is: to speak of or assert with excessive pride; to possess and often call attention to.
- How do these definitions help you better understand what it means to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God? How do we practically do that in our everyday lives? How does looking to the future of the hope of the glory of God help us endure the here and now?

Verse 3-4 - *Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.*

As believers we not only rejoice in future glory but also in our present sufferings and trials. Our trials are often where we find sanctification, becoming more like Christ and growing closer with Christ.

This sequence of transformation that makes us more like Jesus is:

Tribulation/Suffering → Endurance/Patience/Perseverance/Steadfastness → Proven Character → Hope

- Our English word tribulation comes from a Latin word, tribulum. In Paul's time of writing, a tribulum was a heavy piece of wood with spikes in it, used for threshing the grain. The tribulum was drawn over the grain and it separated the wheat from the chaff. How does this information help you understand how our trials can often work for us and not against us?

- Tribulation in Greek is thlipsis, meaning a pressing, pressing together or pressure. The pressures of life can lead us to endurance and steadfastness or the opposite of giving up or walking away from the Lord. How has walking with Jesus through your trials helped you endure and remain steadfast in faith? How has facing trials and suffering strengthened you and enabled you to withstand more? What are some healthy, practical things we can do in the midst of trials to help us endure?
- What does proven character mean? What type of character is produced when we remain steadfast even in the trials of life? How have you seen this to be true in your own life? Have you experienced the opposite in your life; a time when a trial produced the opposite of faithful character? Share that experience.
- What type of hope is Paul talking about here?

Verse 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.

- Share about a time you may have put your hope in something or someone else and were left disappointed. How is it different when we put our hope in Jesus and the glory of God?
- When we first believed in Christ, the Holy Spirit poured out His love into our hearts, and His love for us continues to dwell in us. How does Romans 8:35-39 encourage you in light of this passage?
- What role does the Holy Spirit play in all of this?

Read Hebrews 12:2-3 for an example of Christ's suffering. How do we see Romans 5:2-5 fulfilled in the life of Jesus?

Next Step: From what we've discussed today, what do you sense God is saying to you? What do you think He wants you to do with what He's said?

April Memory Verse - Romans 10:9-10 (The Romans Road To Salvation): As a group, we'll work towards memorizing this verse (word perfect). It is part of the road map for group members to share the good news of the Gospel with others.

"Because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved." - **Romans 10:9-10 (ESV)**

Romans 5:1-2a

What were some of your insights from Easter this year? How has reflecting on Him been of help to you? What have you learned?

Read Romans 4:23-25 The words “it was credited to him” were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

& Romans 5:1-2a Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we[a] 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.

Paul says we now have peace with God.

How were we made righteous?

What does justification mean?

Why was Christ’s death and resurrection necessary for our justification?

Read Luke 10:25-37 - The Good Samaritan

How did the expert in the law attempt to justify himself?

In what ways do we attempt to justify ourselves?

What is the result of being made right with God?

What does it mean to you to have peace with God?

Paul says that we have gained access to the grace of God “by faith”.

Read Galatians 3:7-14

What does “by faith” mean? How would you explain it to someone who doesn’t understand the concept?

Read Galatians 2:20

What does it mean to live by faith in the Son of God?

What changes have you made as a result of your faith in Jesus?

What challenges have come from your decision to follow Jesus?

Read Luke 12: 22-34

What do these verses say to those who follow Jesus? Which verses are comforting?

Which verses are encouraging?