



R & R BIBLE STUDY 2019-20

breath-taking grace

THE BOOK OF ROMANS

LESSON 6

We did it! We made it through to chapter 5 where we get to breathe a bit and rejoice in the fruit, or blessings, of our justification. This chapter is packed full of wonderful truths! Some call this section the “benefit package of being a believer.” John Stott calls chapters 5-8 “Living Under Grace.” The first four chapters showed us how we came “Under Grace” and now Paul explains the blessings of being under that grace. (The “therefore” connects us to what Paul had written in the previous chapters.) Up to this point, we’ve learned that God is very angry with us, and has every right to be. We’ve also learned that there is nothing we can do about it. Our only hope is in Jesus! Through His death we are justified, or declared innocent, and through His life we are saved! Gosh, it doesn’t get any better than that! As you read through this chapter, it will be helpful to remember that Paul’s main point is that the legal declaration of justification creates a restored relationship with our Father. He wants to show us how the benefits of justification affect us both positionally as well as experientially.

Please remember to start with prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to be your teacher, giving you His wisdom and understanding. Also, please be open to reading the text in other translations, especially the New Living Bible. One different word may really help you understand a particular verse better. Have fun, study hard, and take time to rejoice in the blessings we have in Christ!

First Day

1. Today please read through the entire chapter as a whole. We’ll be taking a closer look at specific sections soon, but for now, read chapter 5 and observe the text. List facts you find. Do you see any repeated words, thoughts, or truths? Do you see any comparisons or contrasts? Do you see any particular flow of thought?

2. Do you see any immediate application for yourself?
3. What would you say is Paul's main point in this chapter? What do you think he was trying to accomplish?
4. As I said earlier, Paul made sure we knew God had the right to be angry with us. But something has changed, according to chapter 5. What does God, our Heavenly Father, think of us now?
5. In the last few chapters Paul addressed the "past tense" of our life as a Christian; "We have been justified." In this chapter, he moves into the present and future tense. What is our "present state"? How does Paul say our future is affected?
6. According to this chapter, what are some things we can glory or rejoice in?

7. List any questions you have after reading chapter 5. You don't have to find the answers now, just make sure you write them down.

Did you notice the words, peace, hope, love, faith, grace, and glory? I LOVE all those words! And they're all in this chapter! Don't let the "big words" scare you. Find a short, easy, definition to remind yourself of when you come across them, so the text will make more sense to you. If you need help, ask your leader. She'll be happy to help! (Me, too!) See you tomorrow, my friends!

Memory Verse of the Week: "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8

Second Day

Work on your memory verse. Notice those last four words ... some pretty important ones, don't you think?

1. Read Romans 5:1-21 again. Now go back and concentrate on verses 1-11. Please list the "blessings" we receive as believers as a result of our justification. (How many can you find?)

We now have a new relationship with God. After the first four chapters, it's hard to imagine that we can have "peace with God." Yet that's what He offers us. Christ's work on the cross has paid our debt and settled all claims against us. Our "standing" is different; we no longer appear before Him as condemned sinners, but as justified believers.

2. How do Colossians 1:21 and Romans 5:10 describe us before we were believers?

The word for “peace” in this text doesn’t simply depict a state of inner tranquility. It is an objective statement rather than a feeling. It means “a state of war has ended.” A “cease fire” if you will. It is a change of state rather than an inner feeling. I love what Swindoll said, “Through faith, we raised the white flag of surrender and became whiter than snow. We dropped to our knees in defeat and gained spiritual victory. With one stroke of faith, we signed a peace treaty with the Almighty and enlisted in His holy army of redeemed sinners. We are now at peace with God.” This kind of peace, though, should give us a sense of relief and confidence. John Witmer wrote, “A believer is not responsible for having peace in the sense of making it but in the sense of enjoying it!”

3. Read John 14:27, Colossians 3:15, and Philippians 4:7. What do you think is the difference between peace “with” God and peace “of” God? (List other verses on peace if you’d like!)

4. Are you experiencing the peace “of” God right now? Is there a situation or a relationship that tends to steal or destroy that peace? How do you get it back?

5. Is it possible to have peace while in the midst of a storm or trial? Read Luke 8:22-25. What do we learn from Jesus in this story? What specifically is He speaking to your heart?

6. Paul talks about another kind of peace in Romans 12:18 and Hebrews 12:14. What do these verses say about peace? Is there someone that you aren’t “living peaceably” with? What can you do?

- Faith in Christ not only gives us peace with God, but “access” or “introduction” into His grace. What do you think that means? (How do you obtain “access” to somewhere that should be off limits to you?)

By faith we are “ushered” into the presence of God. This verbiage describes a formal meeting where a common person would be brought into the presence of royalty, etc. Our faith has ushered us into the King’s presence, and now we can stand in His realm of grace. Swindoll wrote, “We are no longer required to adhere to the standards of the Law for God’s acceptance. We are written into His will – heirs to a family fortune beyond our wildest imaginations. This positional benefit we’ve received is due only to our justification.”

Warren Wiersbe makes an interesting point in his commentary on Romans. He wrote, “Jews were kept from God’s presence by the curtain in the Temple, and Gentiles were kept out by a wall in the Temple with a warning on it that any Gentile who went beyond would be killed. But when Jesus died, He tore apart the curtain (Luke 23:45) and broke down the wall (Ephesians 2:14).” Access only comes through Jesus, not a priest, a worship leader, or a church leader. No human being can “bring us into the presence of God.” Only Jesus can do that!

- Meditate on that truth for a bit. I don’t know about you, but the truth in Wiersbe’s quote really moved me. He did that for me ... He did that for you. We were once far, but now “made near” by the blood of Christ. The significance of that is staggering. Write your thoughts.

See you soon, ladies. I pray that the thought of “peace” and “access” have ministered to your heart. Can’t wait for tomorrow!

Third Day

What’s your memory verse?

- Read Romans 5:1-11 again, focusing on verses 3-11. Paul wants us to realize that we can rejoice, not only in Christ, not only in the hope of the glory of God, but in trials and sufferings as well. In verses 3-5, what does he say is the purpose of suffering? What does God do in us? And where does it lead?

I believe that Paul wants his readers to know that the joy found in Christ isn't only for the future; we can experience it now, even in times of trial and distress. Suffering can be a source of joy because it's building character in us. The word "produced" means "to work out." God is "working out" something in us.

2. It's easy for us to "rejoice in hope." Do you think "rejoicing in suffering" is a natural thing for humans to do?

3. How does suffering "produce" perseverance? (The word translated "suffering" or "tribulation" literally means "pressure," describing the distress brought upon us by outward circumstances.)

4. How does perseverance "produce" character?

5. I read that thinking we will immediately be able to "see the point" of some suffering is a "shallow hope." What do you think that means?

6. What's usually your perspective on suffering? How does our perspective seem to determine our ability to trust God through it?

7. Are you experiencing "distress" or some type of suffering? What might God be working in you? (Suffering is a deep process of change that God is doing in us, transforming us into the image of His Son.) Are you "accepting the suffering" and choosing to see God's hand, or are you "fighting against it" and moving farther away from Him?

In verse 5, Paul brings up “hope” again. Our hope in God is not an empty hope, but one with a certain future. The word “now” or “and” in verse 5 connects the thoughts to the previous one, showing us that somehow God’s love relates to our suffering. He allows suffering because He loves us, and His love sustains us through our suffering. It seems that Paul is indicating that God uses our sufferings as opportunities to remind us of His love for us. He does this by pouring His love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, Who was given to us as a gift. Ash wrote, “One of the ministries of the Spirit to the believer is to give us a present experience and assurance that God loves us. This pouring out happens at conversion (8:9) and goes on happening day by day.”

8. According to verses 6-8, how did God prove His love towards us? How did it prove the reality as well as the degree of that love?

9. Chris Ash states that Paul teaches us 5 things about the cross in verses 6-8. What does he say about each:
 - a. The timing of His death:
 - b. What kind of “exchange” was there?
 - c. What did he say about the recipients? (you and me)
 - d. What does it say about the magnitude of His love?
 - e. How was the cross “proof” of His love?

10. When you “feel” unloved, worthless, or even depressed, how can these verses bring hope to your heart?

Do you ever struggle with feeling worthy of His love, or that you’re “not enough” in some way? I know I do at times. I pray that we all grab hold of these amazing truths and believe them, rather than believe the lies of the enemy. Let’s allow His Word to cleanse both our hearts and minds as we learn to focus on His Words alone!

Fourth Day

Spend time on your verse.

1. Read Romans 5:1-11. (Also see verses 15 and 17.) Paul uses an expression... “How much more” in verses 9, 10, 15 and 17. In Paul’s “how much more” argument, what was his point?

2. What is a believer's assurance based on, according to verse 9?

Paul's point in these verses is that past justification and present reconciliation absolutely guarantee future salvation. Verse 11 sums up the passage, focusing on Jesus Himself, the agent of our reconciliation!

3. Read Romans 5:12-21. Paul now is going to spend time contrasting Adam (the first man) and the results of his sin and Jesus Christ (the second man) and the gracious provisions of His life and death. Notice that you can almost combine verses 12 and 18 because Paul's trying to explain himself in the "in between" marked by the parentheses. Do your best to list the five parallels/contrasts between Adam and Christ in verses 12-19.

4. Some may ask the question, "Why should the whole human race be guilty because of a sin one man committed?" How would you answer that, according to the truths above?

Verse 14 calls Adam a "type of Christ." This means "a person or event that shows in some way the shape of someone or something else." It seems that Paul is showing what a poor "type" he was! Chris Ash wrote, "It's a mistake to read verses 12-21 as a simple contrast between humanity 'in Adam' and the new humanity 'in Christ.' Paul's emphasis is on the 'how much more' of the grace that comes in Christ. His central point is that, just as one disobedience led to universal disaster, so the one obedience of Christ has the gracious power to undo all that disaster."

We weren't there when Adam sinned (Genesis 3:6), so why are we responsible for something we didn't do? Stott wrote, "Theologians tell us that Adam was acting as our 'federal head,' the representative of the whole human race. Therefore, whatever action he took, he took on behalf of the whole species. As a result, when he sinned, 'all sinned.' And when he was

sentenced to death, so were we. Universal sin led to universal death, making us, too, physically and spiritually separated from God.”

“It’s important to note that the ‘all’ or ‘many’ that are affected by Adam’s sin are all human beings who are in Adam, all by nature, all without exception. But the ‘all’ or ‘many’ affected by Christ’s obedience are ‘all’ human beings who are in Christ, all believers, all who are recipients of grace.”

5. Our justification and salvation by grace are called a “gift.” Does a gift benefit the receiver if it is not accepted by him? How, then, does this apply to salvation?

6. What did Adam’s sin lead to?

7. What did Christ’s sacrifice lead to?

8. How did our “standing before God” change as a result of Christ’s death on the cross?

Swindoll wrote, “Adam’s sin resulted in death; Christ’s gift results in life. But these two forces, death and life, do more than simply exist. They reign, like a king on the throne. And all people live under the rulership of one of these kings. Either they live under the dominion of death or they reside in the kingdom of life. Only those who have trusted in Christ have life.”

9. Perhaps someone in Paul’s audience asked about those who sinned before the Law was given, like Adam. Because where there’s no law, there can be no sin. How did Paul answer this argument in verses 13-14?

10. Random question. Describe what it’s like to live in a world “under sin and death;” a beautiful world that is marred by sin and death.

11. What’s the main point or Paul’s conclusion in verses 20-21?

Christ's gift of grace is amazing. And although sin and death increases, God's grace abounds much more. No matter how "bad" or guilty we are, the grace of Christ reaches further. Robert H. Mounce wrote, "The phrase 'abounded all the more' is actually a single, compound word in the Greek, *superabounds*, and is used only one other time in the Bible (2 Cor. 7:4). This word clearly shows that Christ's forgiveness and grace always exceeds the amount of our sin."

12. Why is that such a significant truth? What does it mean?

I'm so thankful His grace *superabounds*! I love that word! Gives me confidence in my faith. Not confidence and freedom to sin, but confidence in my security in Him. God's throne is a "throne of grace" that we can boldly approach (Hebrews 4:16) to receive mercy, forgiveness and grace for our every need.

Fifth Day

Write out your verse by memory.

1. Read Romans 5 again. Let's take some time and look at the chapter again as a whole. What are your thoughts about this chapter?
2. How does this abounding or overflowing grace change the way we think, or should think, about unbelievers?
3. Scripture teaches us that all pain and suffering is the result of being in a world under sin. How should this affect our view of pain and suffering?

4. What “proofs” of God’s love are found in this chapter?

5. How should knowing that our identity is “in Christ” and what He’s done for us, affect how we behave, think, and feel?

6. Do you struggle with knowing your identity is “in Him”? Do you tend to find your identity in other things, such as relationships, works, titles, etc.?

7. I love this quote, “it’s as if we walk on a rope bridge in a storm. Sometimes we feel very insecure. But the bridge is unbreakably tied to past justification at the one end and to future glorification at the other.” What does it mean? What are your thoughts on that?

Swindoll said, “The Christian life is the only real ‘happily ever after’ story, because our Lord is with us and He will lead us through this life, with all its trials, to the next one, where there is only joy. All because of Christ and His grace. And that’s no fairy tale, no fable. It is our destiny.”

8. Do you feel that you’re living in a “happily ever after” story? Do you tend to forget about the happy ending? How can focusing on that part of the story change how you’re responding to life’s circumstances?

9. Do you struggle with believing His grace “abounds more” than your sin? Are you still living in shame and defeat? Can you apply that truth to your life ... today?

Hopefully, this chapter challenged you and reminded you about the *superabounding* grace that we have in Christ. (Don't you LOVE that word?) May we rejoice in that grace, believe in that grace, experience that grace, and live in that grace! *Superabounding* ... and breathtaking!