

LESSON 8

JULY 25, 2021

UNIT II. FAITH AND SALVATION SEEKING RECONCILIATION

DEVOTIONAL READING: Isaiah 53:1-12

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Romans 5:1-11

PRINT PASSAGE: Romans 5:1-11

KEY VERSE

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:1, KJV)

.....

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:1, NIV)

LESSON AIMS

As a result of experiencing this lesson, you should be able to do these things:

- Identify the relationship between faith in Christ and justification in the sight of God.
- Repent of personal failures to obtain the peace that God gives.
- Celebrate your justification through faith in Christ.

KEY TERMS

Access (verse 2)—Greek: *prosagóge* (pros-ag-ogue-ay’): a bringing to; to have contact with.

Glory (verse 2)—Greek: *doxa* (dox’-ah): praise; honor; the unspoken manifestation of God.

Grace (verse 2)—Greek: *charis* (khar’-ece): a gift or blessing brought to man by Jesus Christ; kindness.

Hope (verse 2)—Greek: *elpis* (el-pece’): expectation; trust; confidence.

Justified (verse 1)—Greek: *dikaioó* (dik-ah-yo’-o): shown to be righteous; declared righteous.

Peace (verse 1)—Greek: *eiréné* (i-ray’-nay): oneness; quietness; rest; peace of mind.

PREPARING THE LESSON

- Refer to the *Townsend Press SS Commentary Teacher’s Edition* for an additional lesson plan—with word studies, insights on teaching adults, learner matrices, etc.
- Review last week’s student assignments (“Your Life” and Your World!”).
- Thoroughly review your student book for your adult or young adult class.
- Please note that you have the option of using your subscription bundle supplements, i.e., Lesson Scenario, Student Activity Sheet, SSL-AAG

WHY THIS LESSON MATTERS

People often struggle with the pain and consequences of broken relationships. How can these relationships be reconciled? Only justification by faith in Jesus Christ can reconcile the ruptured relationship between God and humanity.

THE LESSON IN FOCUS

Most Christians long to repair or reconcile broken relationships. Longing for peace and harmony, people spend their lives seeking and nurturing supportive relationships with those who genuinely care for them. Without meaningful relationships, the world can be a cruel, lonely place. Because of a bad experience, some are reluctant to seek reconciliation or to mend old relationships—but as we grow and mature, we regularly realize that everybody needs support. Ecclesiastes 4:9 (NIV) celebrates the beauty of partnership: “Two are better than one, because they have good return for their labor.” We are blessed when someone does for us what we did not earn or deserve, or steps in to help us accomplish that which otherwise might have been difficult or impossible for us.

THE LESSON IN CONTEXT

Because of Christ’s sacrifice, we have been justified, or pronounced “not guilty,” before God. The power of Jesus’ atonement releases us from sin and from the guilt and shame that accompany sin. Those who are justified have peace with God. This peace provides us with authorized access to God and confident awareness that because we are no longer enemies of God (see Romans 5:10), we have no need to fear God’s judgment (see Romans 5:9). Through Christ’s sacrifice, we have peace, hope, love, and power over sin. Since we have no fear, we can walk with authority over the enemy, allowing God’s light to shine throughout the world. Through Christ, believers have been adopted into the family of God and inherited eternal life. God reached down to humanity to become our Friend to walk beside us, and our Father to guide and protect us. Knowing the ultimate victory that awaits every child of God, Jesus taught His followers to rejoice in persecution (see Matthew 5:11-12; compare James 1:2, 12)—for since we know the end, we have no reason to worry. We have already won and are overcomers. The nature of Christian boasting differs from the nature of the world’s boasting (see Romans 15:17; etc.), for we boast in Christ and not in or of ourselves. Romans 5:3-4 speaks to how adversity can lead to the Christian’s increasing sanctification and strength in the Lord.

OPENING INQUIRY (Choose from the questions below.)

1. Share a situation whereby you wanted to reconcile with someone but could not.
2. What were the obstacles that prevented reconciliation?
3. Since then, have you made any additional efforts to seek reconciliation? Why or why not?

INSIGHTS

As believers, we understand the wonderful gift of salvation we received by Jesus’ sacrifice on the Cross. We appreciate God’s unconditional love in applying His amazing grace to our lives. We rest in the peace of God even though we are constantly bombarded with media stories of violence and destruction. The overload can be frightening, but through Christ we can remain steadfast in faith and claim a victorious finish. There will be times when Christians may sin and feel that they have fallen out of fellowship with God. The good news is that when we accept and acknowledge this state, confess our sin, and return to Him in real repentance, He will restore our joy and fellowship by the grace of Jesus Christ.

EXPLORATION

Every believer must know God intimately as both a friend and Father. Our faith in God must be unwavering to sustain us through the tough times faced by every believer. Even in adversity, however, we can rejoice in knowing that we are made stronger by our endurance.

Nothing that happens nor anything we do can separate us from the love of God (see Romans 8:39).

ADDITIONAL EXPOSITORY INSIGHTS FOR THE TEACHER

Commentary on *Romans 5:1-5*

KJV

THEREFORE BEING *justified* by faith, we have *peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:
2 By whom also we have access by faith into this *grace* wherein we stand, and rejoice in *hope* of the *glory* of God.

3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

NIV

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 boast in the *hope* of the *glory* of God.

3 Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance;

4 perseverance, character; and character, hope.

5 And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

The doctrine of being “declared righteous by faith” is one of the major themes of Paul’s letter to the Romans. From this theme, certain conditions and responses follow. The main verb forms used in verses 1-3 can be understood as indicating possession: “we have peace . . . (and) we boast/glory in affliction”; or as exhortations, “Let us enjoy the peace we have . . . (and) let us boast/glory in afflictions.” These verbs are used in the present tense to express constant activity. The peace Paul references is peace with God. This is an objective state for the one who is declared righteous by faith. Such a person has been reconciled to God; therefore, the hostility and animosity between God and the believer is gone. Instead, there is a blessed peace with God that surpasses all earthly understanding. This peace allows for a sweet fellowship and complete access to the presence of God. This is a result of being declared righteous by God’s grace, which is the unmerited or unearned favor of God that declares believers as righteous who put their trust in Christ Jesus. Hope plays a vital part in the life of the believer, for it has to do with all that God has promised to do for the believer in Christ. This hope becomes clearer in the day-to-day pressures of life. The believer glories in tribulations because he/she knows they will make clearer the vision of what lies ahead, specifically strengthening our hope as the tribulations produce a hope that has conviction within and is unshakeable. The order of the list is significant: tribulation, endurance, character, and hope (verses 3-5), as God seeks to get us to trust Him in all things.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Please review the appropriate student book's related biblical exposition section.)

- **Adult Question:**
Share a time when you were very overwhelmed and could only trust God. How did you feel and handle the situation?
- **Young Adult Question:**
We have all experienced suffering. Do you think Paul's assessment is correct: suffering produces endurance and strengthens one's ability to live by faith, totally trusting God?

Commentary on *Romans 5:6-8*

KJV

6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

NIV

6 You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.

7 Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die.

8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

The weakness referred to in verse 6 references our moral weakness rather than a physical limitation. In today's boastful society, many people brag about their accomplishments and seek public attention on social media for what they do for others. In a world where people shamelessly announce and publicize how they have helped someone, it is very rare to find someone who is actually willing to die on another's behalf, even if the person is considered to be righteous. It is more reasonable to imagine that a person might dare to die for the good person because of the impact of his life—but consider what God did for us. He proved His incredible love for us by directing Jesus to die for us while we were still lost in our sins. Many of us imagine that we would consider dying for a good person or a noble cause, but who would freely give his/her life for an ungodly person? There are four times the Greek word *hyper* is used in this section (in verses 6 and 8, and twice in verse 7). The word has such a broad meaning that no single English word can express it. *Hyper* encompasses the idea of “for the benefit of”; “on behalf of”; and “instead of.” If these words are placed with the English word *for* (as in most translations), then the full significance of Christ's death “for” us is conveyed. The beauty of the Gospel is that not only does God graciously extend His love toward us through eternity, but also, He demonstrates it just when we need it most.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Please review the appropriate student book's related biblical exposition section.)

- **Adult Question:**
We all have on-time testimonies about God's grace manifested in our lives. Why do you think people fail to sincerely seek reconciliation with God and others?
- **Young Adult Question:**

Paul describes the unsaved as “powerless.” Given that every person has free will, in what ways are sinners powerless in the presence of sin? Explain.

Commentary on *Romans 5:9-11*

KJV

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

NIV

9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him!

10 For if, while we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!

11 Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Paul quickly shifts the scene from our former state as sinners to our current state as believers. If God loved us and sent Jesus to die for us while we were sinners, then how much more now, having been declared righteous by the blood of Jesus, does God love us? He has saved us, through Jesus, from His future wrath. The grounds for our justification is Jesus’ blood. By Jesus’ ultimate sacrifice for us, we secured eternal life and salvation from God’s wrathful punishment (see 2 Thessalonians 1:9). The justified, who were once God’s enemies, have now been reconciled to God. Jesus is the basis of this reconciliation. We were reconciled by His death while we were still sinners. Paul points to the believer’s union with Jesus (see 1 Corinthians 6:17) and sharing in the resurrected life and spiritual power of Jesus (see Colossians 3:4). The reconciliation, however, does not remove us from the trials and troubles of this world; we must also suffer with Christ. Believers glory or boast in what God has done, affirming their devotion to God through the Lord Jesus Christ. Through Jesus alone, we are reconciled with God the Father (see 2 Corinthians 5:18-19). By grace, we receive reconciliation as a gift from God. We are recipients of a relationship of peace and harmony brought about by God through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Please review the appropriate student book’s related biblical exposition section.)

- **Adult Question:**

How can our testimonies draw others to Christ?

- **Young Adult Question:**

How would you explain to others the significance of Jesus’ taking the full weight of God’s punishment for sin upon Himself at the Cross? Explain.

LIFE APPLICATION

Refer to Adult Book

(See student lesson’s “Your Life” section.)

— This week, meditate on your faith and salvation. Consider how God has reconciled you back to Him and the many times He saved you from sin and shame.

(See student lesson's "Your World!" section.)

— This week, after you have thoroughly meditated on your relationship with God and His amazing grace upon your life, consider three people with whom you have never shared the Good News of Jesus Christ. Introduce them to Jesus through your testimony(ies). Pray for a strategic focus and delivery that will guide them to Christ.

Refer to Young Adult Book

(See student lesson's "Your Life" section.)

— Having been justified by faith through the blood of Christ, you are at peace with God and have access to God's grace. This grace allows you to glory in tribulations. May this lesson move you to repent of personal failures to obtain the peace that God gives.

(See student lesson's "Your World!" section.)

— Christ died to deliver the world from the penalty of sin. Sin comes with guilt, shame, and the penalty of facing God's judgment. The price for sin is death—that is, an eternal separation from God's presence. That is why the whole world needs Jesus.

NEXT WEEK'S LESSON

The lesson topic for Sunday, August 1, 2021, is "Seeking Confidence." The Devotional Reading is Psalm 19:1-14, the Background Scripture is Romans 10:5-17, and the Printed Text is Romans 10:5-17.

CLOSING PRAYER

Dear Lord, we are so grateful for the grace that has reconciled us to You. We rejoice in the privilege of knowing You. According to Your will, help us to mend broken relationships and be reconciled to those we love. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS SALVATION FOR ALL WHO BELIEVE (July 26–August 1, 2021)

MONDAY, July 26:	"Obey God with Heart and Voice"	(Deuteronomy 30:6-14)
TUESDAY, July 27:	"God's Salvation Announced"	(Isaiah 52:1-10)
WEDNESDAY, July 28:	"Call on the Name of the Lord"	(Joel 2:28-32)
THURSDAY, July 29:	"Gentiles Believe by Faith"	(Galatians 3:6-14)
FRIDAY, July 30:	"For the Salvation of the Gentiles"	(Romans 10:1-4)
SATURDAY, July 31:	"Regret for Not Hearing Christ's Word"	(Romans 10:18-21)
SUNDAY, August 1:	"Salvation Is for All People"	(Romans 10:5-17)