

THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS

Lesson 8 – Study Questions

Romans 5:6-21

Review: *From your experience at last week's Cornerstone meeting, share something that helped build your faith.*

DAY ONE

Read Romans 5:6-8

NOTE: Remember that the chapter and verse numbers were not part of the original text. They were added much later for the sake of facilitating scriptural study. This week's lesson continues to teach of "justification." For 2,000 years the Catholic Church has taken all of Sacred Scripture into the core of her theology harmonizing all of the biblical texts. Thus, we can agree with our Protestant friends and say as Christians we have been (past tense) justified and saved through our faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. But we also agree with our Lord that there is another sense in which we are being saved and justified by cooperation with God's grace in our lives, and we hope to finally be saved and justified by our Lord on the last day: "I tell you, on the day of judgment men will render account for every careless word they utter; for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." (**Matt. 12:36-37**) *Catholic Answers, Tim Staples: "Justification: Process or One-Time Deal?" 9/19/2014*

1. As today's lesson begins, our Commentary suggests that we go back and reread 5:1-6. Record verse 6 before you begin today's lesson.

2. According to verse 7, Paul states that rarely will anyone be willing to die for another no matter how righteous that person is. What exception to this sacrifice does he give? Can you think of another exception?

3. What is your idea of a “righteous person?” Do you think it differs from Paul’s definition?

4. Refer to our Commentary. In what way does Msgr. Mikesch describe verse 8? Cite some of his reasons for this.

5a. According to verse 8 how does God prove his love for us? (Good memory verse)

b. How does the sacrifice in verse 8 differ from the sacrifice mentioned in verse 7? Do you find anything amazing about this?

THINK: Take a look back at Romans 5:1-5 and see if today’s lesson is clearer now: “Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.”

6. CONNECTION: Today’s verses are very powerful. Paul tells us that Jesus loves us with such depth that he is willing to die for us, even while we are sinners. As Kevin Perrotta says in Amazing Grace: Romans, “Paul assures us that God will help us get through the sufferings and sorrows of this world in such a way that we will become more like him...The Spirit within us assures us of God’s love and gives us a love for God that motivates us to live in a new way.” Think of a way in which you feel your love for God motivates you to try to live as much like Christ as you can.

Let thoughts of God's great mercy and love lead you to write a prayer of gratitude today.

DAY TWO

Read Romans 5:9

7. As today's lesson begins, it is important that we take a moment to reflect on the meaning of "the wrath of God" as Paul is using it. Begin by looking up several synonyms for "wrath." Then look up the definitions of anger.

8. In verse 9 Paul states that "Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God." What do you think Paul's use of the words "been," "now" and "will be" indicate in this verse?

9. How do we know that Paul, when using the word "wrath," is not saying that God is angry with us? (refer to the Commentary)

NOTE: The "wrath" Paul speaks of is not personal anger in God. The wrath is the terrible doom that befalls sinners – the deadly consequences of sin. This doom does not express any desire in God to see us punished. Christ did not deflect God's anger from us, since God already regarded us with infinite love. This loving God is certain to expend every effort to bring us safely home to himself. *Perrotta*

10. In the Summa Theologica, medieval scholar St. Thomas Aquinas declared anger as "...the name of a passion. A passion of the sensitive appetite is good in so far as it is regulated by reason, whereas it is evil if it set the order of reason aside." Though we see anger as sinful, with Aquinas' statement in mind, can anger sometimes be appropriate? What would be an example?

11. Read and record one or more of the following, which help us to understand that justification is through the grace of God as well as a process we work for with the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit:

2 Corinthians 6:1

Galatians 5:6

Ephesians 2:10

12. CONNECTION: In today's lesson we have concentrated on understanding how, since we have been justified by Jesus' great gift of passion and resurrection, we can be saved through him from the wrath of God. As Msgr. Mikesch says in the Commentary, "Paul knows that wrath is what we deserve because of our sins. But God chooses to love, rather than condemn." Love can guide us to the proper direction of anger. Perhaps a loving response has helped you to resolve a situation in which you could have been angry. In what ways can your faith lead you in this positive direction?

Even our Lord is said to have shown the emotion of anger, but he acted in love. Read and record Mark 3:5 and let these thoughts lead you to prayer.

DAY THREE

Read Romans 5:10-11

13. As we concluded yesterday's lesson, Paul assured us that we can be saved from God's judgment because of God's love, as evidenced by Jesus' death.

Msgr. Mikesch describes this as Step 1 in our path to salvation. In verse 10, how does Paul describe our relationship with God **before** we were reconciled to him?

14. In verse 10 Paul reassures us that we are saved while still sinners. In this verse there is a focus on reconciliation in the present. How does the definition of reconciliation apply to our relationship with God and our path to salvation?

15. In verse 11 Paul says that we can even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Referring to the Commentary, how does Msgr. Mikesch explain the phrase "to boast in God"?

NOTE: Paul does not mean that God's people should strut around bragging about the blessings they have received. This boast is directed entirely to God, who has achieved our reconciliation with him in the Messiah. It is the Lord's work that calls for celebration. *Hahn and Mitch*

The word "rejoice" is used in place of boast in some Biblical translations.

16. In what way do you see that reconciliation can apply to both the present and the future?

17. Jesus conferred authority to carry out the mission of forgiving sins to his disciples, who in turn passed this on to others whom they sent. Read John 20:20-23 and record verse 23.

18. CONNECTION: Paul is certain that the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus has brought us reconciliation and peace with God. But because of our fallen human nature we can choose to continue to sin—to separate ourselves from God and his will for us. In Catholicism we have the Sacrament of Reconciliation to restore us to a right relationship with God and with each other. In what ways have you experienced the truth of this?

Read Colossians 1:13-14 and today write a prayer expressing to God your thoughts about this great gift.

DAY FOUR

Read Romans 5:12-14

NOTE: In one of Paul's most mysterious passages (v. 12), he writes, "Therefore, as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned."

Paul does not mean that death comes to each person because each person has committed actual sin. A newborn child, for instance, has committed no actual sin. Rather Paul is alluding to the fact that "in Adam" every human person is born with a mortal and fallen nature. *Hahn and Shea*

19. Read verse 12 (included above), then thoughtfully consider the following statements. Identify which you think is correct according to the Catholic Church's doctrine of original sin. (you may refer to CCC 400-409)

We are sinners because we sin

We sin because we are sinners

20. Hahn and Shea pose the question “How is it that Adam’s sin could have such an effect on the human race?” and then explain that it is because Adam and Eve are the father and mother of us all. What is the relationship between their premise and Paul’s effort to integrate both the Roman Jews and Gentiles in the Christian Church?

21. Read and record verse 13, and note why sin would not be accounted for prior to the law.

22. In verse 14 Paul names two men, Adam and Moses. Read the following and briefly note what you learn about each:

Genesis 3:17-19 (Adam)

Sirach 45:1-5. (Moses)

NOTE: In Roman 5:1-11 Paul “works out the implications of the life of faith for individuals. They are at peace with God, even though they may undergo suffering”...At this point (Romans 5:12-21) Paul enlarges his perspective to encompass the whole history of humanity from creation to consummation, as typified by two individuals, Adam and Christ. The former represents sin and death, whereas the latter represents grace and life. *Murphy-O’Connor*

23. Contrasting Adam and Christ has been a rich source of Christian study. “Just as sin entered the world through the tree in the Garden, so redemption came to

the world through the tree of the cross.” *Cameron* The last part of verse 14 says that Adam was a “type of the one who was to come.” Look up the biblical meaning of “type” and briefly explain how this applies to Adam.

24. CONNECTION: The sin of Adam had far-reaching effects. Sin is a deep rupture between who we are and who we were created to be. It is a break in relationship between us and our God and even more, the effects of sin are never contained or isolated but continue to spread out in an ever-widening circle. Like the sin of Adam, the repercussions of this can touch the lives of others in even future times and places. Think of an example of how one person’s sin could spread and affect others even to the future.

Regardless of the devastation wreaked and the far-reaching consequences of sin, our God is more powerful. Only he can make all things new. Read Revelation 21:3-5 and let these thoughts lead you into prayer.

DAY FIVE

Read Romans 5:15-17

25. In verse 15 Paul speaks of “one man’s trespass.” Recalling what you learned in verses 12-14, to what does this refer?

26. In verse 16 Paul contrasts the “one trespass” and the “free gift.” Record what he says of each.

THINK: Whereas only one trespass brought condemnation, consider how much greater is the free gift that brings justification for the many trespasses.

27. From Genesis 3:17-19 and 22-24, what were the consequences of Adam's sin?

28. Choose one of the following and record the rewards of Jesus' "free gift" found in the following verses.

John 1:29

John 17:1-2

29. In verse 17 Paul contrasts the old way of death with the new way of life. He again employs the method of logic that "if A is true then we can be more certain that B is true." Complete the following phrases:

If because of the one man's trespass

Much more surely

Exercise dominion in life

30. CONNECTION: Our Christian faith tells us that death is not the end of our life. We believe that the death experience is our passage from this earthly dimension in the world to the eternal dimension of heaven. Perhaps you have been with someone who exemplified this Christian confidence at the time of death. Share some of your thoughts on this experience, or on your expectations of heaven.

Read John 5:24. Let thoughts of death as a birth into new and eternal life begin your prayer.

DAY SIX

Read Romans 5:18-21

31. In the four verses we examine today, Paul repeats the theme of the last few days. In verse 18 we learn that Jesus' obedience brought about our righteousness. What is the result of this gift?

32. In verse 19 Paul says that Jesus was obedient. What gift did we receive as a result of his obedience?

THINK: In Philippians 2:8 we read of the full extent of Jesus' obedience, "he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross." Take a moment or two to meditate on this great act of love.

33. According to verse 20, sin increased when the law came in. Yet, what was the positive outcome?

34. Considering the message of verse 21 how would you explain the relationship between grace and sin?

35. Throughout Scripture there are many examples of God's abounding grace. Look up one of the following verses and record who was forgiven and for what.

2 Samuel 12:9-13

2 Chronicles 33:9-13

Luke 23:34

36. CONNECTION: Remember how in earlier chapters Paul stressed the sinfulness of both Jews and Gentiles, emphasizing that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God? In verse 21 Paul is holding out Christ's free gift of salvation to all. He is offering the grace of God that can overpower all sin and give eternal life to all who will receive it. We all have places in our lives where God's grace may not reign or have dominion. Our doubts, fears, weaknesses, temptations, faults and failings can give power to sin. Record one, or more, of these that has power over you and next to each write: "God's saving grace that comes through Jesus Christ reigns over this area of my life."

Read Psalm 51:10-12. Let thoughts of God's grace overpowering evil lead you into prayer.

Read pages 37-41 in the Commentary by Rev. Msgr. Gregory R. Mikesch, M.Div., M.A. The Cornerstone Catholic Scripture Study acknowledges that scripture quotations in this study are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, Catholic Edition. Copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

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