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# ROMANS: THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN TEACHING

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## WEEK 5 – WHAT JUSTIFICATION BRINGS

**QUESTION 1)** The first 4 chapters of Romans were about “Justification” – how God declares us “not guilty” of our sins through the work of Jesus Christ. The natural response of the flesh to that information is to say, “Well, if my sins don’t deter my salvation and my good works don’t contribute to my salvation, then they must not matter.” How would you respond to that logic?

**BACKGROUND:** The Apostle Paul spent 4 chapters explaining God’s solution to mankind’s problem of brokenness, lostness, and sin. God sent his Son, Jesus, to switch places with us at the cross. There, everything bad we’ve done was transferred to him, and everything good he did was credited to us through faith (Rom. 1:17). This “good news” is the gospel that the pagans, who struggle with sinful self-indulgence, need to hear. It’s the gospel that religious people, who struggle with sinful self-righteousness, need to hear. It’s the gospel that even the “heroes” of God’s people like Abraham and David needed. And this gospel is freely offered to all. But now what? Justification changes our life eternally, but how should it transform our lives presently?

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### PEACE AND HOPE (ROM. 5:1-11)

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Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; <sup>4</sup> perseverance, character; and character, hope.<sup>5</sup> 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.

<sup>6</sup> You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. <sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

<sup>9</sup> Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him! <sup>10</sup> 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! <sup>11</sup> Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

**QUESTION 2) Paul says that justification brings “peace with God” and “access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.” (vs. 1 and 2) What does peace with God mean to you? Does anything make you doubt that you will reach glory? If so, what – and how do these verses encourage you?**

**QUESTION 3) Paul says that justification brings glory in suffering. Specifically, his line of logic is that suffering → perseverance → character → hope. Can you explain his logic of how one leads to the next? And why do you think “hope” is the ultimate goal of a Christian in this life?**

**QUESTION 4) Verse 8 is one of the Bible’s best statements for defining “love.” Also read 1 John 3:16. Between these two passages, what would you say is the biblical definition of love? How does the world tend to get this wrong?**

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### DEATH THROUGH ADAM, LIFE THROUGH CHRIST (ROM. 5:12-21)

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12 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned —

13 To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone's account where there is no law. 14 Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come.

15 But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! 16 Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. 17 For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!

18 Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. 19 For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

20 The law was brought in so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, 21 so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**QUESTION 5) In verse 14, the Apostle Paul makes a very interesting point about how death (and sin) reigned over mankind even from Adam to Moses, when they had no written Law. How does this shape your understanding of “sin” as more than rule-breaking?**

**QUESTION 6) In verses 15-19, Paul is obviously making a comparison between what happened to humanity through Adam and what happened through Christ. Explain the point that he’s making in your own words.**

**QUESTION 7) When Paul says, “*The law was brought in so that the trespass might increase.*” (vs. 20), it almost sounds like he’s saying that God’s holy law caused the sin. We already said in Question 5 that this wasn’t the case. So what is Paul saying? What was the purpose of God giving the Law?**

In a postmodern era that denies universal truth, some churches have very intentionally stopped talking (at least overtly) about “sin.” When you read literature from the early “seeker sensitive” churches of the 1980s & 90s, it becomes very clear that this was a key strategy to making church more palatable to more people. To what extent do you think we need to continue to talk about the Law today? Why? At what point would we be dwelling too much on it?

**SUMMARY:** *Justification makes a difference. When God declares us “not guilty” of our sins through the work of Jesus, this changes our eternity from hell to heaven, but it also changes our present from selfishness to selflessness. If we believe Jesus has truly done everything necessary for our salvation, then we are free to stop concerning ourselves so much with ourselves and start concerning ourselves more with the glory of God through the service of others.*

## CLOSING PRAYER (GATHER PRAYER REQUESTS)

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