

ROMANS

Lesson 5

Romans Chapter 5

We continue our study of Romans and again look at a key piece of doctrine as Paul tells us about what happens after we are saved. We will be examining two key terms in our Christian faith and walk: justification and reconciliation. Once we can fully understand both of these, we can begin to live a life that does not fear death, that puts our sins behind us, and gives us a greater understanding of our relationship and walk with God.

One of the obstacles that we need to help the lost overcome as they try to understand God's calling and their relationship to Him is that of the effect of sin, and the need for them to find justification and reconciliation through accepting the Gospel message and believing in Christ. This means of course that we must first fully understand these things as well. I pray that this lesson will open your eyes more fully, to gain a complete understanding of the effect of sin on mankind and on all of God's creation, and what justification and reconciliation mean in relation to our salvation experience.

Before you begin to read this lesson's passage, find a regular dictionary and write down in the space below the definition for the words listed below; then answer the question that follows.

1. Justified or Justification means:
 2. Reconciled or Reconciliation means:
 3. Now look up 2 Corinthians 5:17-20, and write here what the role of the saved, i.e., the Christian, is. What are we told that we are to do, once we have been saved?
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Now, please read Romans 5 from the Contemporary English Version (CEV) below, or Romans Chapter 5 from your favorite version.

Romans 5

What It Means To Be Acceptable to God

¹By faith we have been made acceptable to God. And now, because of our Lord Jesus Christ, we live at peace with God. ²Christ has also introduced us to God's undeserved kindness on which we take our stand. So we are happy, as we look forward to sharing in the glory of God. ³But that's not all! We gladly suffer, because we know that suffering helps us to endure. ⁴And endurance builds character, which gives us a hope ⁵that will never disappoint us. All of this happens because God has given us the Holy Spirit, who fills our hearts with his love. ⁶Christ died for us at a time when we were helpless and sinful. ⁷No one is really willing to die for an honest person, though someone might be willing to die for a truly good person. ⁸But God showed how much he loved us by having Christ die for us, even though we were sinful.

⁹But there is more! Now that God has accepted us because Christ sacrificed his life's blood, we will also be kept safe from God's anger. ¹⁰Even when we were God's enemies, he made peace with us, because his Son died for us. Yet something even greater than friendship is ours. Now that we are at peace with God, we will be saved by his Son's life. ¹¹And in addition to everything else, we are happy because God sent our Lord Jesus Christ to make peace with us.

Adam and Christ

¹²Adam sinned, and that sin brought death into the world. Now everyone has sinned, and so everyone must die. ¹³Sin was in the world before the Law came. But no record of sin was kept, because there was no Law. ¹⁴Yet death still had power over all who lived from the time of Adam to the time of Moses. This happened, though not everyone disobeyed a direct command from God, as Adam did.

In some ways Adam is like Christ who came later. ¹⁵But the gift that God was kind enough to give was very different from Adam's sin. That one sin brought death to many others. Yet in an even greater way, Jesus Christ alone brought God's gift of kindness to many people.

¹⁶There is a lot of difference between Adam's sin and God's gift. That one sin led to punishment. But God's gift made it possible for us to be acceptable to him, even though we have sinned many times. ¹⁷Death ruled like a king because Adam had sinned. But that cannot compare with what Jesus Christ has done. God has been so kind to us, and he has accepted us because of Jesus. And so we will live and rule like kings.

¹⁸Everyone was going to be punished because Adam sinned. But because of the good thing that Christ has done, God accepts us and gives us the gift of life. ¹⁹Adam disobeyed God and caused many others to be sinners. But Jesus obeyed him and will make many people acceptable to God.

²⁰The Law came, so that the full power of sin could be seen. Yet where sin was powerful, God's kindness was even more powerful. ²¹Sin ruled by means of death. But God's kindness now rules, and God has accepted us because of Jesus Christ our Lord. This means that we will have eternal life.

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Finally, consider the following questions:

1. In Romans 5:1-2, what do we now have, based on our accepting God's gift of salvation through the blood of Jesus?
2. What does Philippians 4:7 tell us of this relationship with God, now that we are saved?
3. Paul has spent the previous four chapters of Romans telling us about the importance of faith, not works; and that through this faith, we are "justified" in God's presence. He then shows us that because of our justification, we are therefore "reconciled" with God, and this reconciliation brings us peace with God. This produces a peace that will pass all worldly understanding and greatly influence how we live out our new eternal lives. Read Colossians 1:20-23. Considering this passage, and the definition for reconcile that you looked up earlier, how would you define "reconcile" now? Write it out in the space below. What does being reconciled mean to you, based on this passage and your study so far?

4. Having peace with God gives us two important things: access to God and security with God, both of which are impossible to have while living a life lost in sin. What do the following two verses tell us about the benefits of having peace with God, i.e., being reconciled with Him?
 - a. Ephesians 3:12
 - b. Hebrews 4:16
5. Romans 5:3-11 speaks of suffering and what it produces in Christians. Fill in the blanks from these verse excerpts: "...suffering helps us to _____, and endurance builds _____, which gives us a _____ that will never disappoint us."
6. Have you ever personally known a "mature" Christian? Based on what you know or remember about that person, does what Paul says about suffering make sense?
7. The suffering that Paul is referring to in this passage is specific to what we suffer as a result of our relationship to God and His Son Jesus, i.e., suffering for the sake of the kingdom and the Gospel message. But all of us have also known suffering that comes with living an imperfect life in an imperfect world. Let's take a moment and see what God's word says about suffering. What does each of the following verses tell us about suffering?
 - a. 2 Corinthians 4:17
 - b. Romans 8:18
 - c. 2 Thessalonians 1:5
 - d. Acts 14:22
8. Now re-read Romans 5:12-14 and contrast these verses with Romans 5:15-21. You will see that the first group of verses tells how peace with God was lost, and the second group tells how peace with God was recovered, i.e., reconciled, and restored to its original state. There are two Adams mentioned in these verses, as Paul sees Christ as a type of Adam, a second Adam, if you will. What similarities do you see between Adam and Christ that would cause Paul, and us, to see Christ as a second Adam? (Hint, jot down each thing that Adam did that is mentioned in these verses, as well as the "but" that Paul says about God and Christ. See how many parallels you can find between Adam and Christ.)

9. Universalism can at times be a lost person's response to your message about the gospel and the need for repentance. In fact they sometimes will cite Romans 5:18-19 as one of their references. In Universalism, the belief is held that in the end, the God of love who desires "all" to be saved, will indeed save all. The reasoning then follows that, if this is so, then one can live their life in their own way, e.g., be kind to neighbors, don't kick the dog, etc.; and God, in his great love for all mankind, will save all of them. How can we respond to this approach? What do the following verses tell us about salvation and Christ's role?
- a. Hebrews 9:27-28
 - b. 1 Corinthians 15:22
 - c. Ephesians 1:10
 - d. Mark 16:16

In summary then, we see that peace with God is a gift, and not something we can earn or a function of how we "feel". It gives us direct access to God at all times, and it teaches us that suffering and tribulation in a believer's life can have purpose and meaning. That which was lost in Adam was regained even more in Christ.

Being reconciled with God means that He has restored us to our original intended relationship with Him. It means that we each become "a new creature", and God sees us without the sin that came with our old life. Because of our access to God, the peace we have with God, and the certainty of our salvation, we can live a life free from worry, assured of our heavenly home and eternal destination.

When we understand that the life we live today on this earth, and the suffering that comes with it, is only temporary and doesn't compare to the "joy that awaits us", then we can indeed live a life of victory. Living this reconciled life is what will set each of us apart from our lost loved ones, our neighbors and co-workers. It is this witness that each of them will notice and will surely ask you about.

Peter tells us in 1 Peter 3:15 to "Honor Christ and let him be the Lord of your life. Always be ready to give an answer when someone asks you about your hope." [CEV]

I pray that this lesson's study will build up that hope, that joy, and that freedom within you, as you consider what it means to now be fully reconciled with God. May each of us live the life of victory that Christ's shed blood has purchased for us.

May He richly bless you as you study His Holy Word with us this week.

Yours in Christ,

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