

Facilitator Notes for *Set Free!* – A Study in Romans
Lesson 7 – *Recipe for Faith* – Romans 5

**PLEASE DON'T READ THESE NOTES UNTIL YOU HAVE COMPLETED YOUR LESSON.
 HEARING GOD FOR YOURSELF IS WAY BETTER THAN MY COMMENTS!**

Questions

Read **Romans 5:1-11**.

This passage begins with the word *therefore*, which is a signal that Paul is connecting what he just said with an important point he is going to make. (When you see the word *therefore*, always explore what **therefore** is **there for!**) *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith . . .* Review what *justification* means (definition can be found in *Lesson 5*), **how** we are justified (**4:23-24**) and what *faith* is (definitions can be found in the **Response** section of *Lesson 6*).

1. What *pronoun* does Paul use in these verses? **We** To whom, then, is he speaking to (**5:1**)? **He is speaking to all those who have been justified (made right with God and given a righteous status) by faith in Jesus Christ (trusting what Jesus did for us). Paul is writing to Christ-followers in the Roman church and he includes himself.**
2. Because we have been justified, what specific benefits do we receive through Jesus Christ (because of what he did for us)?

VERSE	WHAT WE RECEIVE
5:1	peace with God
5:2	gain access by faith into grace OR we are brought into and stand in a place of highest privilege
5:9	justified (made right with God) and saved from the wrath of God (God's judgment)
5:10	reconciled to God (restored to friendship) and saved (delivered from eternal punishment)
5:11	reconciliation or becoming friend with God

- ♥ Which of the things listed above is most meaningful to you? Why?
- ♥ What changes have you seen in your life since you have received and experienced these things?

3. Before we had *peace with God* (**5:1**), **what** caused the hostility between us and God and **who** was responsible for it (**Romans 8:6-7; Colossians 1:21**)?

Our sinful nature, which is hostile to God, is the cause of the hostility between us and God because it cannot obey God and live life as God designed it to be lived – in love and fellowship with him. Our sin alienates from God and makes us enemies – spiritually at war with him and opposing his standards. Humans are enemies of God, not the reverse. The hostility must be removed from humans if reconciliation is to be accomplished. Our sinful nature is always hostile to God even though the hostility may not be overt, for it may show itself as passive resistance or indifference. Any interest we have in God is placed there by the Holy Spirit working in our heart, mind and conscience. This is grace – God reaching out to us when we are not interested and don't deserve it.

What caused the "ceasing of hostilities" between us and God (**Romans 5:10; Colossians 1:22**)? **We cannot reconcile ourselves to God. If there is to be a reconciliation, it has to come from God's side, not ours. On our own and apart from grace we are entrenched in rebellion. **We are reconciled to God through the death of his Son, Jesus.** God took the initiative in bringing the peace between us. When Adam and Eve sinned, harmony between God and humans was destroyed. When Christ died on the cross, he made peace possible between God and humans. It took nothing short of the death of God's Son to persuade humanity to lay down its arms and accept the gift of peace (Mark 12:1-12). The cross is God's supreme act of love and made it possible for us to be in relationship with him again. When we surrender to Jesus and accept what He has done for us, God graciously ends the hostilities between us.**

♥ Is this peace with God dependent on you in any way? Why or why not?

See answer above

♥ How important is this peace to you? How has your relationship with God changed because of it?

♥ How is peace **with** God different from the peace **of** God?

The peace **OF** God (tranquility of heart and mind regardless of circumstances; absence of anxiety) is the fruit of our living in dependence and union with the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). The peace **WITH** God that Paul is talking about is a fact, whether or not we accept it or experience it. It was established by Jesus through his death and resurrection, which opened the way for our reconciliation with God.

4. Peace with God results in access (5:2). What **access** or **place of highest privilege** is gained through what Jesus did for us (**Ephesians 2:18; 3:12**)?

We have **access to God**. We may come into his presence by the Holy Spirit. The word access has the meaning of being allowed entrance or admission into the presence of a more powerful person through the help of another. Because of what Jesus did on the cross, we can come fearlessly into God's presence, assured of a glad welcome!

In Paul's day, Gentiles were kept out of the sacred places of the temple by a wall that set apart the court of the Gentiles from the rest of the temple complex. The Jews were kept out of the holy of holies by a thick veil or curtain. When Christ died, He figuratively broke down the dividing wall for the Gentiles (Eph. 2:14) and literally caused the tearing open of the veil for the Jews (Luke 23:45), thereby giving all those who receive Christ access into the presence of God. We no longer have to wait outside or depend on another to go in for us. We are now able to approach the throne of God ourselves, with freedom and confidence!

Why does God give us this access (**Hebrews 4:16**)?

So the we can **receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need!**

♥ Are you comfortable with having this kind of access to God? Why or why not?

♥ When do you find that you most need this access given to you through Jesus?

♥ **How often** do you take advantage of this access? Do you think you could ever "wear out your welcome?" Why or why not?

5. Peace with God means **reconciliation** with God. Read **5:10-11** in both the **NIV** and **NLT**. **What** was restored between God and us and **how** was it done?

Friendship with God was restored through the death of Jesus. Reconciliation is more than God just calling a truce; rather, he lavishes his blessings on us! God confers the status of righteousness on us and gives himself in friendship to us. We can have a whole new relationship with God that was not possible before and we are delivered from eternal punishment for our sins.

Reconciliation is the act whereby God makes the sinner right with himself, thus ushering the justified sinner into real participation in the life of the risen Christ, which is characterized by peace (5:1) and hope (5:2). St. Chrysostom of the First Century said this about reconciliation: "If God gave a great gift to enemies, will he give anything less to his friends?"

♥ Reconcile carries the idea of **making friends of enemies** (5:10). In what ways were you formerly God's enemy, at war with him (**Ephesians 2:1-3**)? What did this look like in your life?

♥ Do you consider yourself a friend of God? Why or why not? If so, what kind of friend are you: Acquaintance? Fair-weather friend? A friend in need? Best friend? Bosom buddy?

♥ What kind of friend of God would you like to be? How will you go about being this kind of friend?

6. The justified person has reason to **rejoice**. We rejoice in the hope of someday sharing God's glory (5:2) and we rejoice in our new relationship with God (5:11). In what else are we to rejoice or take joy (5:3)?

We rejoice in our sufferings (problems and trials)

Why (5:3-4)?

Because suffering produces perseverance (endurance) , perseverance produces strength of character and character produces hope (our confident expectation of salvation).

Perseverance, Character and Hope – *Perseverance* is the ability to endure in the midst of difficulties. It means to "remain standing under", to "patiently endure" and to "keep on keeping on." It is the opposite of discouragement. When we **persevere** we develop *character*, which is the "quality of being approved after testing" (**Job 23:10**). *Character* develops over time and through testing and there is no other way to get it. As we persevere in our life of faith, we develop a Christ-like character. As our **character** matures, our *hope* is strengthened. Biblical **hope** is not wishful thinking; rather, it is *confident expectation* that rests on the person and promises of God. **Hope** is knowing that God's promises are guaranteed (because of who God is), even though we may be waiting for the promises to be fulfilled. A strong **hope** in the promises of God gives us strength to endure the difficulties of this life; we know that the difficulties are temporary and that God has promised to use them for our good as we continue to hope and trust.

♥ What is the reward of perseverance, character and hope (**Hebrews 10:35-36**)? Does this make it worth it for you? Why or why not?

If we endure, we will richly rewarded and will receive all that God has promised

♥ Does suffering *automatically* produce perseverance, character and hope? Why or why not? What are some other things suffering could produce in a person's life? What part does faith play in this process?

We can have all sorts of reactions to our trials and problems in this life. We can sigh and submit to evil around us or we can become bitter and angry or we can whine and wonder, "Why me?" But when we choose to trust God and what he is doing in our life and actually rejoice because we know God is doing something in us that will have eternal value, we will persevere and as a result have character and hope.

♥ What is your usual first response to suffering? What growth did you experience from a recent trial?

7. On what is our hope based and why won't hope ever disappoint us (**5:5**)?

Our hope is based on the person and promises of God – and the fact that is coupled with God's love that is lavishly "poured" in us by the Holy Spirit who lives in us. Because we have the Holy Spirit IN us, given to us as a gift, we know our hope will never disappoint us. (We will learn much more about the Holy Spirit as we go on in our study of Romans).

8. What are all the ways that God's love is amazingly different from human love (**5:5-8**)?

Human love is often given when it is deserved or earned. We love after a person "turns over a new leaf" or in some way demonstrates they deserve our love. There are rare cases where a human will die for another, but usually because the other person is good and deserving and the person dying sees his sacrifice as worth it.

God demonstrated his love to us while we were still sinners, not after we got our "act together." There is an American expression that comes from *Poor Richard's Almanack* that says, "God helps them who help themselves" but Romans 5:6-8 teaches us that God helps those who cannot help themselves! God loved us as we were – powerless (utterly helpless), ungodly and sinners -- and he demonstrated his love for us by dying in our place so that we could be restored to relationship with him. God loves us even when we are still sinners and he will do whatever it takes to bring us back to himself (John 3:16).

God's love is *agape* love – an *unconditional love* originating solely from the Giver and independent of any merit in the recipient. It is not an "if" love or an "earned" love. It is an undeserved love given "in spite of" who we are.

♥ What does the image of God's love being poured into your heart (**5:5**) suggest to you?

♥ What effect does God's love for you have on your love for others? Can we love others as God loves us? Why or why not?

♥ What makes you sometimes doubt God's love for you? What in these verses might help you during these times?

Read **Romans 5:12-21**

The first and last Adam – In **Romans 5:12-21**, Paul contrasts Adam and Christ and their impact on the human race. In ways we don't entirely understand, what Adam did in the garden and what Jesus did on the cross impacts all of humanity for all time. However, we should never think of Adam and Christ as two opposite, but equal forces on humanity. Jesus Christ is far superior to Adam, just as the effects *grace*, *righteousness* and *life* far outweigh the effects *sin*, *judgment* and *death*. The last Adam's power to save is far greater than the first Adam's power to destroy!

9. Why are we all sinners, even before we have an opportunity to personally sin (5:12, 18-19)?

When Adam sinned, sin entered the human race and all became sinners because we inherited our sinful nature from our parents (who inherited it from their parents, etc.). (To get the full story, read Genesis 3.) Adam's sin infected the human race so that we are not free to choose not to sin, yet each sin is freely chosen! Adam's sin was the root, and our sin is its offshoots.

In Romans 5:12, there seem to be three downward steps or stages in human history, from one person sinning to all people dying. First, sin entered the world through one man – through his disobedience. Secondly, death entered the world through sin. As Adam was the door through which sin entered, so sin was the door through which death entered. Thirdly, death came to all people, because all sinned (inherited Adam's sin nature).

- ♥ How do you feel about Adam's sin being credited to you? Do you think it is fair? Why or why not?
- ♥ When was a time when others reaped the consequences of your wrong actions? When you reaped the consequences of the wrong actions of others? What does this reveal about the nature of sin?
- ♥ How do you feel about Christ's righteousness being credited to you (5:18-19)? Do you think this is fair? Why or why not?

10. Fill in the blanks below to compare and contrast the actions of Adam and Christ.

(5:15) Many died because Adam sinned. Many are forgiven because of Christ.

(5:16) Judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation.

The gift (of forgiveness) followed many sins and brought justification (acceptance by God).

(5:17) Through Adam, death reigned. Through Christ we reign in life

(5:18) The result of one sin is condemnation. The result of one righteous act is justification (made right in God's sight)

(5:19) Through Adam's disobedience, many are made sinners.

Through Christ's obedience, many are made righteous.

- ♥ Why are Jesus' actions more powerful than Adam's?

Paul makes it clear that the "gift" is NOT like the "trespass" (5:15). Adam and Christ may be antitypes, but they are not equally balanced. It took less effort for Adam's disobedience to release sin and death than for Christ's obedience to overcome sin and death. It was easier for Adam to lead to ruin than it was for Christ to lead to life. As one led to condemnation, so will a great one lead to righteousness. Adam's act of self-assertion cannot hold a candle to Christ's act of self-sacrifice. The results of Christ's act of self-sacrifice and obedience are far superior to results of Adam's disobedience. Life is more powerful than death, righteousness is more powerful than sin and justification is more powerful than condemnation. What Jesus did reversed the effects of what Adam did!

- ♥ In what way does grace increase when sin increases (5:20)?

No matter how rampant sin is, grace is more rampant yet! The power of redemption in Christ outstrips the power of destruction in sin. As we shall see in Romans 8, God can actually turn wickedness to good. No matter how great and powerful sin is, God's grace is greater and more powerful!

- ♥ How can you move from the *reign of sin and death* to the *reign of life* (5:17, 21)?

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 . . . but all who receive God's wonderful, gracious gift of righteousness will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ.

- ♥ If **Romans 15:12-21** was the only information you had about God, what conclusions would you come to about his character? What are some words you would use to describe this God? Would this be a God that you would want to love and have a relationship with? Why or why not?

Response

Paul assures us that because we are justified (granted a righteous standing before God), we have something to which we can look forward – a glorious future with God as we share in the glory for which we were originally created (**5:2**). This is our HOPE (confident expectation) that helps us persevere and endure our difficulties **now** because we know a better day is coming!

Consider the following verses and note what it is that we look forward to.

<p>Romans 8:16-19, 23 We are heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ and we will share in Christ's glory. We will receive full rights as God's children including the new bodies he has promised us!</p>	<p>1 Corinthians 15:42-44 Our new bodies will be full of power and glory and they will never die. They will be "spiritual" in that they will relate and interact with God who is spirit.</p>
<p>Colossians 3:4 When Jesus comes back, we will share in his glory. The day is coming when the Christ of faith whom we now worship will be the Christ revealed for what he is to the astonished gaze of all humanity. Then the church universal will be revealed for what it is, also to the astonishment of the world. Christ will then be so united with his people that the honor and magnificence displayed by him will be displayed by them also!</p>	<p>1 John 3:2 We can't even imagine what we will be like when Jesus comes back to earth. But we do know that we will be like him and we will see him as he really is.</p>

- ♥ How will the hope of these promises help you in your current circumstances?
- ♥ What can you do to keep hope alive as you go through hard times?

BELOW IS THE SUPPLEMENTARY SCRIPTURE FOR THIS LESSON THAT CAN BE PRINTED OUT FOR SMALL GROUP TIME.

NIV

Romans 8:6 The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; **7** the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

Colossians 1:21-22 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. **22** But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—

Ephesians 2:18 For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

Ephesians 3:12 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Ephesians 2:1-3 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, **2** in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. **3** All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

Hebrews 10:35-36 So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. **36** You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

Romans 8:16-19, 23 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. **17** Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. **19** The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.

23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

1Corinthians 15:42-44 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; **43** it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; **44** it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

Colossians 3:4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

1John 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

NLT

Romans 8:6 If your sinful nature controls your mind, there is death. But if the Holy Spirit controls your mind, there is life and peace. **7** For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will.

Colossians 1:21-22 This includes you who were once so far away from God. You were his enemies, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions, **22** yet now he has brought you back as his friends. He has done this through his death on the cross in his own human body. As a result, he has brought you into the very presence of God, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault.

Ephesians 2:18 Now all of us, both Jews and Gentiles, may come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us.

Ephesians 3:12 Because of Christ and our faith in him, we can now come fearlessly into God's presence, assured of his glad welcome.

Hebrews 4:16 So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it.

Ephesians 2:1-3 Once you were dead, doomed forever because of your many sins. **2** You used to live just like the rest of the world, full of sin, obeying Satan, the mighty prince of the power of the air. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. **3** All of us used to live that way, following the passions and desires of our evil nature. We were born with an evil nature, and we were under God's anger just like everyone else.

Hebrews 10:35-36 Do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord, no matter what happens. Remember the great reward it brings you! **36** Patient endurance is what you need now, so you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised.

Romans 8:16-19, 23 For his Holy Spirit speaks to us deep in our hearts and tells us that we are God's children. **17** And since we are his children, we will share his treasures—for everything God gives to his Son, Christ, is ours, too. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering. **18** Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will give us later. **19** For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. **23** And even we Christians, although we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, also groan to be released from pain and suffering. We, too, wait anxiously for that day when God will give us our full rights as his children, including the new bodies he has promised us.

1Corinthians 15:42-44 It is the same way for the resurrection of the dead. Our earthly bodies, which die and decay, will be different when they are resurrected, for they will never die. **43** Our bodies now disappoint us, but when they are raised, they will be full of glory. They are weak now, but when they are raised, they will be full of power. **44** They are natural human bodies now, but when they are raised, they will be spiritual bodies. For just as there are natural bodies, so also there are spiritual bodies.

Colossians 3:4 And when Christ, who is your real life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory.

1John 3:2 Yes, dear friends, we are already God's children, and we can't even imagine what we will be like when Christ returns. But we do know that when he comes we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is.