



Lesson 7 ~ The Ceasing of Hostilities

Romans 5

Discussion Starter

- Who, in your family while you were growing up, tried to keep the peace? What did they do?

Introduction

So far, in this letter, Paul has shown the *need* for justification (our being made right in God's sight) and *the way* of justification. Now, in **Romans 5**, he will reveal some *blessings* that come to the person who is justified. **Romans 5** is a spectacular passage of Scripture. It has been compared to a mountain pass from which one delights in the magnificent view after having labored through the inclines and switchbacks of argumentation in the earlier chapters of this letter.

What a contrast we see between the harsh tone of **Romans 1:18**, "*The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness . . .*" and the generous tone of **Romans 5:1**, "*We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ . . .*" After painstakingly exposing the sinful condition of humanity, Paul now declares that the desperate straits of the sinner have been transformed into *peace with God!*

Preparation

1. Before you read **Romans 5**, ask God to open your eyes so that you may see wonderful truths in his Word (**Psalm 119:18**). You may want to make the following prayer your own:

Triune God – Father, Son and Spirit,

I admit that I cannot understand the truth found in God's Word with only my mind.

I agree that spiritual truth has to be understood with my heart as well as my head.

So I ask You to give me spiritual understanding as I do this lesson.

*I pray that You would enable me to see, hear and understand,
with my spirit, all that You want to teach me.*

I ask this in the powerful name of Father, Son and Spirit.

Amen

2. Read **Romans 5** slowly and thoughtfully. As you read and reread, **underline or highlight** any verses, phrases or words that are meaningful to you. Put a **question mark** beside anything you don't understand. Put a ✓ beside anything you would like more information about.

You may also want to read the Scripture in another translation. The Scripture handouts for these lessons contain the *New International Version (NIV)* and the *New Living Translation (NLT)*. The questions are phrased to be answered from **either** of these versions. Other translations and paraphrases should only be used as supplementary texts to help your understanding.

3. Sum up the Scripture passage for this lesson in a short sentence, phrase or title.

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? To whom, then, is he speaking (5:1)?
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	
5:2	
5:9	
5:10	
5:11	

- ♥ 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)?

What caused the "ceasing of hostilities" between us and God (Romans 5:10; Colossians 1:22)?

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

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

- ♥ 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?

- ♥ 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**)?

Why (**5:3-4**)?

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

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**)?

- ♥ 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 _____ because Adam sinned. Many are _____ because of Christ.

(5:16) _____ followed one sin and brought _____.

_____ followed many sins and brought _____.

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

(5:18) The result of one sin is _____. The result of one righteous act is _____.

(5:19) Through Adam's _____, many are _____.

Through Christ's _____, many are _____.

- ♥ Why are Jesus' actions more powerful than Adam's?
- ♥ In what way does grace increase when sin increases (**5:20**)?
- ♥ How can you move from the *reign of sin and death* to the *reign of life* (**5:17, 21**)?
- ♥ If **Romans 5:12-21** 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.

Romans 8:16-19, 23	1 Corinthians 15:42-44
Colossians 3:4	1 John 3:2

- ♥ 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?