

SESSION 4

Restored Relationship

ROMANS 5:1-11, 18-21

CHRIST DIED FOR SINNERS, MAKING RECONCILIATION WITH GOD POSSIBLE FOR ALL.



Reconciliation paints a picture of love at work. Imagine two children in trouble with their mom. When their mother confronted them about their disobedience, their responses were tinged with disrespect. Their bad behavior built a wall between them and their mother. She knew that something had to be done to restore the relationship. Because she loved her children, she took the first step toward making things right. So did God when Christ died for us.

*WHEN HAVE YOU SEEN RECONCILIATION IN ACTION LATELY?
WITH WHOM HAVE YOU SOUGHT RECONCILIATION?*

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

In chapter 4, Paul emphasized justification by faith in Christ. He pointed to Abraham, who lived before God gave the law. Abraham was justified by faith rather than by his works (Rom. 4:3). This occurred also before he was circumcised (4:9-12). Just as Abraham was justified by his faith, God justifies people today through faith—not works. No one can be reconciled to God by good deeds or good intentions. Reconciliation is the result of justification. Because God has justified us, He has also reconciled us to Himself.

In Romans 5, Paul listed three results of reconciliation. First, reconciliation with God brings a new peace with God (5:1-5). Those who are justified by faith in Jesus now live at peace with God. Grace gives them a new standing with the Father and hope for eternity. In addition, Christ followers can rejoice because even their afflictions are used to nurture their spiritual maturity.

The second result of reconciliation is that it witnesses to God's unconditional love (5:6-11). Jesus died as a substitute for the ungodly. His death served as a perfect sacrifice for sin and a perfect demonstration of God's love.

Finally, reconciliation initiates a growing grace in the life of the believer (5:12-21). Jesus reversed the curse of Eden. While Adam's disobedience led humanity into condemnation, Christ's obedient sacrifice leads to justification and reconciliation for all who accept Him in faith. Sin creates a universal problem, but it cannot compare to the overwhelming grace of Jesus. He has brought sin's reign of death to an end, offering reconciliation and eternal life to everyone who believes. Jesus accomplished what the law could not. The law highlighted sin, leading to more guilt; but Jesus redeems individuals from sin's power.



1 Therefore, **A** since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. **2** We have also obtained access through him by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we boast in **the hope of the glory of God.** **B** **3** And not only that, but we also boast in our afflictions, because we know that affliction produces **endurance,** **C** **4** endurance produces proven character, and proven character produces hope. **5** This hope will not disappoint us, because **God's love** **D** has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. **6** For while we were still helpless, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly. **7** For rarely will someone die for a just person—though for a good person perhaps someone might even dare to die. **8** But God proves his own love for us in that **while we were still sinners,** **E** Christ died for us. **9** How much more then, since we have now been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from wrath. **10** For if, while we were enemies, we were **reconciled to God** **F** through the death of his Son, then how much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. **11** And not only that, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received this reconciliation. [. . .] **18** So then, as through **one trespass** **G** there is condemnation for everyone, so also through one righteous act there is justification leading to life for everyone. **19** For just as through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so also through the **one man's obedience** **H** the many will be made righteous. **20** The law came along to multiply the trespass. But where sin multiplied, grace multiplied even more **21** so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace will reign through righteousness, resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A. Paul had spent four chapters focused on humanity's need for justification. Based on that, he shifted to reconciliation in Romans 5.

B. Rather than wishful thinking, the Greek word for "hope" indicates utter confidence in God's promises.

C. This is a steadfastness produced by suffering. It includes the capacity to remain faithful through difficulty.

D. This is not an abstract consideration of God's love, but a reality demonstrated through action—particularly in Christ's death for sinners.

E. Christ met us where we were. We did not have to "clean up" for Him. He paid the price for our sins while we were still under God's wrath (v. 9).

F. The Greek wording suggests two opposing sides coming to the same conclusion. However, God alone initiated our reconciliation to Himself through Jesus. We receive it as a gift as part of our justification by faith.

G. A reference to the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. Their rebellion corrupted the entire human race.

H. Jesus's death on the cross reconciles people to God. He reversed the curse of sin and made righteousness possible by faith.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. A New Peace

(Rom. 5:1-5)

Believers should embrace their new relationship with God.

- **How does “peace with God” affect your life today and in eternity?**

2. A Proven Love

(Rom. 5:6-11)

Individuals can be reconciled to God thanks to the loving sacrifice Jesus offered on the cross.

- **Who would you be willing to die for? How do those individuals compare to people you consider your enemies?**
- **How does Jesus’s death prove His love for humanity?**
- **How should we respond to this awesome gift of justification and reconciliation with God?**

3. A Growing Grace

(Rom. 5:18-21)

Our lives can be transformed by the matchless grace of Jesus.

- **How do I know Jesus’s death was meant for me?**

Apply the Text

Identify all the promises given to believers in this week’s focal passage.

- **Which of these truths is hardest for you to embrace right now? How can your group encourage one another to live in that promise?**

KEY DOCTRINE:

Salvation (Justification)

Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God. (See Romans 3:28; Titus 3:5-7.)

BIBLE SKILL:

Study the life of a key character in Scripture.

Use a Bible dictionary and other Bible study tools to learn more about the life of Esau, focusing on the reconciliation of Esau and Jacob. Identify the events that prompted Esau to hate his twin brother Jacob. Read Genesis 33 and reflect on the brothers’ reconciliation. Consider: What anxiety did Jacob feel about reconciliation? What had to happen before the two brothers could be reconciled? How did Jacob try to reconcile with gifts and good works? Why was reconciliation ultimately dependent on Esau’s grace?

TALK IT OUT

Focus on Romans 5:19. Do you usually try to figure things out on your own, or ask for help?

Paul emphasized that Jesus undid the curse that began in the garden of Eden. Adam's disobedience brought separation from God, but Jesus's obedience brought forgiveness and a restored relationship with Him. Jesus broke the power of sin. Because of Him, sin and death no longer have the final word. Everyone who believes in Christ receives reconciliation and eternal life.

Discuss the contrast between Adam's disobedience and Jesus's obedience. What were the differences in the outcomes and the impact? How does this verse help explain why effort and good intentions alone cannot save us?

Because Jesus died on the cross for us, we don't have to earn God's approval. We can trust Christ, be released from guilt and shame, and live each day in the new life He has given us. Our hope is found in what Jesus has done for us, not in our own efforts.

**Discuss your responses to this question:
Am I trusting Jesus today, or just trying to
fix myself?**

Memorize Romans 5:19, being mindful of the sacrifice Jesus made for you.

Prayer Requests / Notes

DAILY EXPLORATION



Day 1: Romans 5:1-2

Pay attention to the word “therefore.”

The word *therefore* looks back to everything Paul has said up to this point about the need for justification (chaps. 1–3) and the means of justification (chap. 4). The phrase “since we have been justified” indicates Paul is now turning his attention to those who have placed their faith in Christ. Because we have been justified, we have “peace with God.”

Peace with God through Christ gives way to other blessings. One of them involves access. Jesus opens the door to a personal relationship with God. With the door opened, we step into the wonders of His magnificent grace to us. Because of His grace, we’re forgiven. Furthermore, we have new life in Him that will never end. Abiding in His grace, we’re anchored to Him. He is our rock-solid foundation, and nothing can separate us from Him. Another blessing of God’s peace comes in the form of hope. We can “boast in the hope of the glory of God.” Previously, Paul said all people fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). But those who have been justified by faith reflect His glory and find hope. While we cannot boast in our own efforts to be right with God, we can boast in the peace that He has brought to us through reconciliation.

What do you think it means to “stand” in grace?



Day 2: Romans 5:3-5

Identify the benefits of peace with God.

Another blessing of reconciliation involves unshakable hope even when we face afflictions. Peace with God does not always mean freedom from suffering. In fact, peace with God may result in suffering for the sake of the gospel. Jesus said, “You are blessed when they insult you and persecute you and falsely say every kind of evil against you *because of me*” (Matt. 5:10, emphasis added). Believers can rejoice in affliction because they recognize God is at work in those difficult circumstances.

Paul listed benefits that accompany suffering for the sake of the gospel. When we suffer for the gospel, God produces endurance in us. This endurance involves perseverance in continuing to live for Christ. Endurance produces character, and character produces hope. This hope is a deep sense of peace that God has a plan for our lives that no circumstance can derail (Rom. 8:28).

The hope we have is rooted in God’s love. For this reason, our hope in Him will “not disappoint” us. Paul wrote that God pours out His love on us—it covers us completely. His love is “poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit.” As believers, the Holy Spirit indwells us. The Spirit of God nourishes us with the love of God, so that our hope in Him grows stronger in difficult times.

How does “peace with God” affect your life today and in eternity?



Day 3: Romans 5:6-11

Re-read verse 8 several times, then turn it into a prayer of thanksgiving.

Before being justified through Jesus, we were in a state of helplessness. Earning our salvation was not possible. We can never be good enough to make ourselves right with God. In the face of our helplessness, Christ died for us even though we were ungodly. Jesus dying for ungodly people does not make any logical sense to us. That's exactly what He did. Christ's death for us can be traced to one motivation: God's "own love for us."

Some people think they must "get right" before God will accept them. Verse 8 proves the error of that way of thinking. We can never be good enough to deserve what Christ did for us. If you ever wonder about God's love for you, the cross should be all the proof you need.

Because we have been justified by God through faith in Christ, we have been saved from His wrath. Believers will never suffer the wrath of God because Jesus suffered as their substitute on the cross. In verse 10 Paul used the word *reconciled*. The word reconciled indicates there was something broken that needed to be fixed. In this case, it was our relationship with God. It is worth noting that our reconciliation to God was initiated by God, accomplished by Christ, and is received by us. Jesus is the reconciler; we are the objects of His reconciliation.

What does it mean to you that God loved you and acted on your behalf before you changed?



Day 4: Romans 5:18-19

Reflect on how Jesus's "one righteous act" changed everything.

"One trespass" refers to Adam's sin. Because sin entered the world through Adam, there is condemnation for everyone. Adam's sin condemned Adam, and it condemned everyone else who came after him. Adam's children—and everyone who has lived since Adam—inherited a sin nature, evidenced by Cain killing his brother (Gen. 4:8).

Thankfully, that is not the end of the story. Jesus's "righteous act" changes everything. Because of what Jesus did, "there is justification leading to life for everyone." By everyone, Paul did not imply that Christ's atoning death automatically provided justification for all people. "Life for everyone" in verse 18 means believers, not unbelievers. Eternal life is not given to those who do not believe—only to those who put their faith in Christ.

Adam's act of disobedience had a ripple effect on everyone everywhere. Also, we are accountable to God because we have chosen to sin against Him ourselves. Just like Adam, we face the certainty of God's judgment. In stark contrast to the darkness of eternal punishment that awaited us, the obedience of Christ glistened with the brilliant light of eternal hope. Through His obedience, Jesus changed everything for us. By being obedient, He became the appropriate sacrifice for our sinful disobedience. His sacrifice will have an eternal effect on us.

How would you explain to someone how Jesus changed everything for us?



Day 5: Romans 5:20-21

Pay attention to how Paul contrasted the reign of sin and the reign of grace.

Once again Paul discussed the law. The “law came along to multiply the trespass.” God’s law clarified more precisely what disobedience and sin looked like. The law multiplied sin in the sense that it increased awareness and accountability. But while the reality of sin grew more troubling, the presence of grace became even more amazing.

In light of Paul’s explanation so far, we’re wise to take a long look at the breathtaking gift of God’s lavish grace to us. We’re sinners because we belong to Adam. Furthermore, we have chosen to disobey God ourselves. Therefore, we’re accountable for our disobedience to Him, and His law gives us no excuse for being confused about what sin looks like for us. Our sin separates us from God, and it leads to death. When death reigned over us like a brutal tyrant from whom we could never escape, God’s grace came to our rescue and delivered us. Not only has God in His grace liberated us from death, He also placed us in His kingdom. We live under the reign of His amazing grace, and we live eternally with Him “through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Why is grace a better motivator for obedience than law?

APPLY THE TEXT

As you reflect on your personal relationship with God, how has the truth about being justified through Christ influenced your attitude about yourself? What difference has knowing that you’ve been reconciled through Christ made in your daily life? Find a quiet time and place this week to write down your reflections.

JOURNAL

