

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, Oct. 31, 2010

Passage: Romans 3:19-4:12

Memory Passage: Rom. 1:16-17

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Prov. 17:5, Luke 7:29 & Rom. 8:29-30.** Martin Luther described the doctrine of justification by faith as “the article of faith that decides whether the church is standing or falling.” It was the primary doctrine recovered during the Reformation. Write down a definition of “justification by faith.” Be as complete as you can.
- (b) What does the word “justify” mean in Prov. 17:5 & Luke 7:29? Which phrase best describes its meaning: “To make one righteous or not guilty,” or “to declare one righteous or not guilty?” Is this distinction important? Why or why not?
- (c) What does Rom. 8:29-30 teach you about justification? Who is the One at work in this verse?
- (d) *Family:* (Before your lesson: Cover two glass or plastic plates with mud and let them dry. Also, find a solid white towel or part of a sheet that will completely cover one plate.) Read Gen. 15:1-6. Showing the plates, ask, “What is wrong with these plates?” Explain that the dirt represents sin. Then take one plate to the sink or outside to a hose and wash it clean, dry it, and place it next to the dirty one. Next take your white cloth and completely cover the dirty plate and say, “plate, you are now clean!” As your family objects that the plate is not really clean, use this as a way to teach about God “crediting” Christ’s righteousness to us even though we were/are still sinners. God sees us as righteous because he has credited Christ’s righteousness to our account and now sees us as righteous.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Rom. 3:19-31.** What do you learn about the law & some of its purposes in vs. 19-20? What is the relationship between the law & justification?
- (b) Why is “the righteousness of God” a necessity (also see Rom. 1:16-18, 3:21-23)? How is it obtained? How is it not obtained?
- (c) What is the relationship between v. 23 & v. 24? What do “all” people (vs. 23, 25) deserve? What gift do they receive if they have “faith in Jesus Christ?”
- (d) Write a psalm of praise to God for His free gift that was given to you, a sinner who falls short of His glory!
- (e) *Family:* Choose an action for which your children would be punished by being sent to their room. Ask, “What would happen if you did _____?” When they say, “We would be in trouble!” tell them that they are correct, and that they would probably be sent to their room. Now ask them what they would think if you (dad or mom) went into their room to take their punishment for them and allowed them to go do what they wanted. “Would you be less guilty of your action? Would there still be a penalty paid for your sin?” **Read Rom.21-25** and teach your children about Christ’s work as a propitiation (something/someone who turns God’s wrath against us into favor for us) by His blood for those who receive it by faith.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Rom. 3:19-31.** How did God accomplish the justification of believing sinners? What does “propitiation” mean? What did God accomplish by putting Jesus forward as a propitiation?
- (b) Describe the role of “faith” in our justification.
- (c) Why might God’s righteousness have been called into question (v. 25)? What did God accomplish for Himself by demonstrating His righteousness in justifying sinners?
- (d) Contemplate vs. 27-28. What kind of boasting is excluded? Why? How are you prone to boast in your justification? In what ways do you take credit for your justification?
- (e) *Family:* Prepare a plate of snacks (carrots, grapes, candy, cookies, whatever you desire) to pass out during the lesson. **Read Ephesians 2:8-9.** Discuss these verses with your family, defining any words that you need to define. At the end of the discussion ask, “What does it mean to be saved through faith?” In an effort to demonstrate this, tell your family that the snacks represent salvation. When you offer them a snack, if they can’t use their hand to take the snack then they can’t receive it (when they want to use their mouth just dismiss it by saying “that would be bad manners!”). In the same way, faith is the “arm” which receives salvation. God saves those who have true faith in Jesus (Rom. 3:26).

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Rom. 4:1-12.** How did Abraham receive God's righteousness? How is this different from what Paul just taught in 3:19-31?
- (b) What is the difference between a person "becoming" righteous & a person having righteousness "counted" or "credited" to them? What would happen if our sins were forgiven but we did not have righteousness credited to our account?
- (c) Explain the difference between the 2 people contrasted in vs. 4-5.
- (d) *Family:* Be prepared with a bunch of grapes and pieces of paper that say "I owe dad 3 grapes" (vary the number owed on each one, but make them all debts). Teach your family what it means to have Christ's righteousness credited to their account by guiding them through the following three steps: 1. Ask how they will pay for their debt. After discussion, give them each the exact number of grapes they need to satisfy their debt (this represents our sin problem: grapes = righteousness). 2. Ask them how they feel now that they don't owe any grapes, but then tell them that the price to get out of bible study is one grape (this represents our need for Christ's righteousness even after our sins are forgiven. Without it we will just sin again and be separated from God). 3. Then give each person one grape (This represents Christ's continuing righteousness credited to our account).

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Rom. 4:9-12 & James 2:14-26.** Why was Paul so intent on us understanding that Abraham was counted righteous (Gen. 15:6) before (14 years before) he was circumcised (Gen. 17:23-24)? How does knowing that God justifies those who are still in sin by crediting them with Christ's righteousness help us become better evangelizers? Better counselors? Better disciples?
- (b) Do these two passages (Romans 4 & James 2) contradict each other? Why or why not? How are they complimentary?
- (c) Since we are justified by faith, why is faith not a work in which we can boast? What does justification by faith have to do with our daily sanctification? How would an improper view of justification affect our sanctification?
- (d) *Family:* Spend this time together reviewing what you have learned this week and re-teaching your family the doctrine of justification by faith.

DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) Without looking at your Day 1 definition but considering everything you learned this week, write a definition of justification by faith. How do your definitions differ? Write down three ways that the doctrine of justification by faith is important for your life.

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Justification by Faith