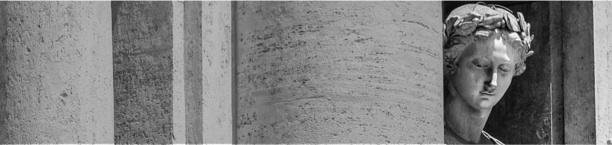
Romans 5.1-11 is one of the most thematically dense passages of the New Testament. These verses are not easy to label because Paul mentions so many different topics: “peace with God”/“reconciliation” (vv. 1, 10, 11), “access to grace” (v. 2), hope in the glory of God and for final salvation (vv. 2, 5, 9, 10), joy in suffering (vv. 3–4), and God’s love for us (vv. 5–8).

One thing is clear: these verses reveal the importance of the term "grace". Grace reminds us that God intervenes on behalf of his rebellious creation out of his own free will and without any obligation (see 4:4–5). But what we sometimes forget, and what Paul’s words in 5:2 remind us of, is that grace stands over the entire Christian experience. We not only get into relationship with God by grace; we live out that relationship day-by-day by grace. Thus, we must never fall into the trap of thinking that we can put grace behind us.

We can never outgrow grace. Our relationship with God is the fruit of His gracious visitation. The blessings (friends, fellowship, opportunities) we enjoy are an expression of His grace. Here is a simple truth: every dimension of the Christian life is lived out within the sphere of God's grace in Jesus. Grace is both our "gravity" and it is our "oxygen". Sever gravity's pull and you will find yourself adrift in a spiritual universe that is filled with hundreds of alternatives that ultimately express some version of legalism. Deprive yourself of oxygen and you will suffocate in a spiritual vacuum of insecurity with God because only grace can embrace us with God's love and assurance.



LifeGroup

Resource Guide

# for the week of 5 October: RUINED by grace

LifeGroups are a great place to welcome and celebrate God's grace together…

ENJOY your LifeGroup! Mark

on grace…

*Until a man is forgiven and knows it, he is not the slightest use to God.*

*– William Temple*

*All those that are justified, God vouchsafes, in and for his only Son Jesus Christ, to make partakers of the grace of adoption; by which they are taken into the number, and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God; have His name put upon them; receive the Spirit of adoption; have access to the throne of grace with boldness; are enabled to cry Abba, Father; are pitied, protected, provided for, and chastened by Him as by a father; yet never cast off, but sealed to the day of redemption and inherit the promises, as heirs of everlasting salvation.*

*– Westminister Confession XIV*

Where do you go and what do you do to experience peace and quiet that is meaningful for you?

**NOTE**:

NASB95 refers to the New American Standard Bible 1995 edition.

NLT refers to the New Living Translation, 2nd edition.

# Reviewing Romans 5.1-11…

Read Romans 5.1-11. What do you think it means to be "justified by faith" (NLT: "made right with God)?

What does it mean to have "peace with God"? Is this different than having "peace of mind"? Why or why not?

According to Paul, we "rejoice when we run into challenges and trials" (New Living Translation). Why?

Getting to know one another better ...

Read 2 Corinthians 11.21-29. Do you think Paul is rejoicing here? Why or why not?

Why, according to Paul,  are we not disappointed even though we find ourselves in disappointing/difficult circumstances?

What does/might "rejoicing amidst trials" look like for you? Have you ever experienced this?

What do you think it means to be “helpless"?

What do you think it means to be reconciled with God?

# Reflecting on Romans 5.1-11 together…

Do you think people can have peace with God apart from Jesus' death on the cross for us?

Paul uses "helpless", "sinners", and "enemies" to describe our condition before coming to faith in Jesus. Do you think this describes your experience? Why or why not? Does growing up in a Christian home change how we see ourselves?

According to Paul, do trials reflect God's disapproval, punishment, or judgment?  What is the relationships between trials and God's relationship with us?

Do you think that life-challenges/problems are always an opportunity to grow spiritually? Why or why not?

# Praying for my group...

How can your LifeGroup encourage faith that can choose to rejoice amidst trial and disappointment?

Is Romans 5.1-11 a message that is relevant to you and/or the people in your life? Why or why not?

What impact should "reconciliation" and "justification" have upon your LifeGroup? Your Christian friendships? Your non-Christian relationships?

What do we learn about God's character from these 11 verses?

Sermon notes…

Pumpkins for the kids, a hay ride, a dunk tank, games, a petting zoo with pony rides, face panting, cookie decorating, crafts, kettle corn, a cake walk and a yummy BBQ!

Have your picture taken by Big Mac, our huge pumpkin! You can take a guess at how much he weighs too, and if you are correct, you can take him home with you at the end of the day.

# Highlighting...

Bring your family, friends, and neighbors and enjoy a great day with us!!

**Children’s Ministry Musical Rehearsals - Oct 5-26** 12noon-1:30pm   
in the Children’s Center

**Night Shift Class with Jim Foreman - Oct 12** 8:30-9:45am   
in the Youth Center

**Inspired Hands - Oct 18 9am-2pm**in the Children’s Center

**Third Sunday - Oct 19 6:30-8pm**in the Worship Center

**FORGE Men’s Retreat - Oct 17-19**at Camp Cedar Crest

**Pumpkin Fest - Oct 25 11am-2pm**on the playground